

Mong Leng – English Dictionary, revised

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To the memory of Makira Boobook.

Abstract: A dictionary of the Mong Leng dialect of Hmong with many examples from texts, revised and expanded with additional entries and additional examples.

Hmong is spoken in China, in Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar, and in the Hmong diaspora outside of Asia. In Laos and Thailand and in the diaspora outside of Asia the two principal varieties of Hmong are:

(1) *Moob Leeg* (Mong Leng) or *Moob Ntsuab* (Mong Njua, Green Mong, Blue Mong)

(2) *Hmoob Dawb* (Hmong Daw, White Hmong)

This dictionary represents the first variety: Mong Leng also known as Mong Njua (Green Mong).

The name of the ethnic group is pronounced ‘Mong’ by speakers of the first variety and ‘Hmong’ by speakers of the second. Some writers take *Hmong* to be the standard spelling and write *Hmong Njua* or *Green Hmong* even though that is not the way speakers of that variety actually pronounce it. Even Mong Leng writers sometimes write *Hmong* or *Hmoob* when they are referring to the Hmong generally.

The inspiration for this dictionary comes from my late wife Brenda Johns and from Michael Johnson. Brenda and I spent several decades reading and translating folklore, traditional songs, ritual chants, modern fiction and poetry, modern essays, and modern scholarly writing in both Mong Leng and Hmong Daw. Michael has been doing research on phonological reconstruction and comparison based on his fieldwork on a large number of different Hmong dialects in China, Vietnam, and Thailand. He wished to include Mong Leng in his comparative tables but was frustrated by the lack of available information. He has done a small amount of fieldwork with Mong Leng informants and he has also been working with Mong Leng Bible translations but the only dictionary available to him was Thomas Amis Lyman’s *Dictionary of Mong Njua* (Mouton, 1974). Apart from Lyman’s insistence on using an idiosyncratic transcription of his own devising rather than standard spelling, imposing on users the burden of retranscribing everything, Lyman’s dictionary is not comprehensive. Time and time again, Michael would look for a particular word that he needed for his tables and fail to find it in Lyman.

Fortunately, there is another Mong Leng dictionary, which is written in standard spelling, which Michael does not have a copy of but which I do have a copy of: Lang Xiong, Joua Xiong, and Nao Leng Xiong’s *English – Mong – English Dictionary* (privately printed, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1983). Many times, I was able to find the word Michael needed in my copy of Xiong, Xiong, and Xiong. But Xiong, Xiong, and Xiong is not comprehensive either. Sometimes we could not find the word Michael needed either in Lyman or in Xiong, Xiong, and

Xiong. It was time to turn to a third source: the publications of Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., a cultural and educational organization in Illinois.

In this dictionary, I have tried to incorporate everything from the Mong-to-English section of the Xiongs' dictionary and everything from the Xiongs' appendices on verb intensifiers (pp. 553-556) and color intensifiers (pp. 556-557), as well as some material from the English-to-Mong section of the dictionary, and I have added text examples from Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications. The text examples amplify many of the Xiongs' entries and add some entries that are not in the Xiongs' dictionary.

This dictionary is still not comprehensive. Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications are very rich and there is much in them that Brenda and I did not get to. The same is true of Laaj Soobleej Hawj's book *Tswv Yim Moob* (Mong Ideas) (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, no date). It has a tremendous amount of information on different aspects of Mong culture and history, of which Brenda and I read and translated only a small portion. Nonetheless, I hope that the present dictionary will be at least a step forward.

I uploaded an earlier version of this dictionary to Academia.edu on June 21, 2021. Since that time, I have made another pass through several of Mong Volunteer Literacy's texts and discovered things that Brenda and I missed or misunderstood. I have also had the benefit of continued conversations with Michael Johnson. I have added a number of example sentences, I have rewritten some entries, and I have added some new entries. I dedicate this revised version to the memory of my cat, Makira Boobook, who died during the time I was writing it. During her life, Makira helped me write by purring for and kept me sane by telling me when it was time to go away from the computer and pay attention to her.

I would like to thank Michael for his help in correcting the translations of some of the examples from Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications and other help in translation and analysis. Michael was particularly helpful in identifying names of plants and animals. I am also grateful to Michael for his help in identifying words and expressions recently borrowed from Chinese. Because of Michael's help, and, in particular, because of Michael's knowledge of Southwestern Mandarin, which is the type of Chinese with which Mong Leng is primarily in contact, this dictionary has become two dictionaries. The first, which was the original concept, is a dictionary of Mong Leng, based primarily on the Xiongs' dictionary and on Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications. The second is an etymological dictionary of Sino-Mong. The Chinese etymologies complicate things a little bit but I hope very much that they are not unbearably distracting. Michael's expertise in Chinese and knowledge of Southwestern Mandarin were simply too good to pass up.

For most of the Chinese words cited in this dictionary, I give only the pinyin. Belatedly, as I was finishing up the dictionary, I began inserting the characters, but by then it was too late to go back and insert characters for the words I had missed.

In addition to Brenda and Michael, I'd like to mention three other people: Djoua Xiong (Xeev Nruag Xyooj), Lopao Vang, and Nathan White. Xeev Nruag Xyooj is the director of Mong Volunteer Literacy. He not only sent me and Brenda copies of Mong Volunteer Literacy's

publications but also answered our questions about the meanings of certain words used in those publications. Lopao sent me and Brenda a copy of Laaj Xoobleej Hawj's book *Tswv Yim Moob* (Mong Ideas). Nathan commented on the examples from Mong Volunteer Literacy's texts, in some cases calling my attention to grammatical features of interest and in some cases correcting my translations, and made a number of important suggestions regarding the organization and presentation of this dictionary.

Before going any further, I need to say something about Mong Leng spelling. It has some peculiarities that confuse people not familiar with them:

- (1) A consonant letter at the end of a syllable represents a tone. For example, *tub* is pronounced 'tu' with high tone.
- (2) Doubling a vowel indicates that the vowel is nasalized or followed by an 'ng' sound. In other words, *aa* is pronounced 'ang', *ee* is pronounced 'eng', and *oo* is pronounced 'ong'.
- (3) *W* is a vowel similar to 'u' but pronounced with the corners of the lips spread.
- (4) *Q* is similar to 'k' but further back in the mouth with the back of the tongue touching the uvula.
- (5) *R* is similar to 't' but pronounced with the tip of tongue curled up toward the roof of the mouth.
- (6) *X* is similar to English 's' in 'sip'.
- (7) *S* and *z* are similar to English 'sh' in 'ship' and 'z' as 'azure'.

Tone *g* is characterized by breathy voice. Sometimes an *h* is added in spelling, possibly to emphasize the breathiness. I have very few examples and I'm not sure exactly what's going on, but one good example is an interjection spelled *Vhuag!* Nathan White, who has heard speakers pronounce this interjection, describes it as "a very breathy *vuag*". Another example might be *txhig* 'to perform funeral ceremonies'. The corresponding forms in Hmong dialects other than Mong Leng suggest that the basic Mong Leng form may be *txig* (which I have not actually seen) and that in *txhig* (which is the form that actually appears in texts), the *h* might have been added to emphasize the breathiness.

We may also get the reverse situation. There is a word which the Xionsgs in their dictionary spell *txhaws* meaning 'to stuff up, to block, to plug an opening'. But in one text this word appears repeatedly as *txhawg*. Why change the tone from *s* (low tone) to *g* (breathy tone)? Could it be to emphasize the aspiration of the initial consonant *txh*?

Usually, syllables that begin with a vowel in spelling actually begin with a glottal stop. Usually, since the glottal stop is automatic, there is no need to write it. However, Nathan White has pointed out to me that there are a few words, such as the final particle *os*, that have a smooth vowel onset, with no glottal stop. The orthography used in the Xionsgs' dictionary and in Mong

Volunteer Literacy's publications has no way of indicating smooth vowel onset. This is something which is going to need to be studied by people with access to spoken Mong Leng.

Nathan also pointed out to me that final particles spelled with different tones, such as *oj*, *os*, and *ov*, may actually be the same particle with different intonations. The orthography used in the Xiongs' dictionary and in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publication may have no systematic way of writing intonation (pitch that serves to distinguish sentences) as opposed to tone (pitch that serves to distinguish words). Intonation may be marked by punctuation marks, such as an exclamation point (!), a question mark (?), or ellipses (...), or it may be marked by using tone as a stand-in for intonation, as in the particles *oj*, *os*, and *ov*, but, like most written languages, Mong Leng appears to lack a complete and systematic notation for intonation. Intonation as well is going to need to be studied by people with access to spoken Mong Leng.

Another thing which may cause confusion is that Mong Leng spelling is variable with regard to writing spaces between words and syllables. A phrase meaning 'to take hold of' appears in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications as both *tuav nkaus* and *tuavnkaus*. A phrase meaning 'tonight' appears in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publication as both *mo nuav* and *monuav*. The Xiongs' dictionary usually writes a space in words such as *quas puj* 'woman' and *teb chaws* 'country'. Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications usually omit the space: *quaspuj*, *tebchaws*.

There is variation in spelling between *i* and *w* after sibilants. For example, the word for the sheet of ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house opposite the main door is written both *xim kaab* and *xwmkaab*, the word for 'elephant' is written both *ntxhi* and *ntxhw*, and the word for 'sparrow' is written both *tsig* and *tswg*. There is also variation in spelling between *r* and *ts*. For example, the classifier for plants is written both *rob* and *tsob*, the word for 'pleat' is written both *nre* and *ntse*, and there is a verb intensifier which is written both *rhe* and *tshe*. I am not prepared at this point to discuss the phonological phenomena which underlie these variations in spelling. I call attention to them to alert the reader that, if a word is not found under the spelling with *i* or with *r*, they should check the spelling with *w* or with *ts*, and vice versa.

There is also tone variation:

Tone *-j* and tone *-m* vary with tone *-g*.

Tone *-m* varies with tone *-d*.

Tone *-s* and tone *-v* vary with the tone written with no final consonant.

Hmong tone variation has been the topic of much study by linguists. Again, I call attention to it here merely to alert the reader that if a word is not found under one spelling, they should check the other.

In the Xiongs' dictionary, the consonant *q* is variably written as *q* and *g*. For example the word for 'meal' appears as both *qav* and *gav* and the word for 'eye' appears as both *qhov muag* and *ghov muag*. Usually this causes no confusion, because no Mong Leng words actually begin with *g*, *gh*, or *ng*. For clarity and consistency, therefore, wherever the Xiongs write *g*, *gh*, or *ng* at the beginning of a word, I have changed it to *q*, *qh*, or *nqh*.

Mong Leng does have words beginning with *ng*. The consonant *ng* is rare. The Xiongs do not even have a section for it in their dictionary. It appears in *us ngus* ‘goose’, which is not in the Xiongs’ dictionary but which is recorded in other sources. Otherwise, *ng* appears only in onomatopoeics. My procedure therefore was as follows. When the Xiongs write *ng* in an onomatopoeic, I have not changed it. But when the Xiongs write *ng* in a word which is *not* an onomatopoeic, and which is spelled with *nq* elsewhere in the Xiongs dictionary or in other sources, I have changed it to *nq*.

At the end of a word, for the tone *g*, the Xiongs always write *g*, never *q*, and I have made no changes in their spelling of the tone.

I also need to clarify a point about the term *classifier*. The Xiongs do not use this term in their dictionary. Instead they use the term *article*. They equate Mong noun classifiers with the English definite article ‘the’. In their dictionary entries for nouns, they write elements that can precede the noun – most often, though not always, classifiers – in parentheses at the beginning of the gloss, for example:

av, n. (dlaim) glass, mirror.

For clarity, I have taken the liberty of emending this to:

av ‘(classifier *dlaim*) glass, mirror’

I have, however, kept the Xiongs’ terms ‘phonetic intensifier’ (i.e. onomatopoeic), ‘typical intensifier’, and ‘color intensifier’, used in the appendices on page 553-557.

I should also mention that, because of my own frustrations as a dictionary user, I use a lot of repetition in this dictionary to make it easier to find things. Example sentences may appear multiple times, in the entries for each of the different words in the sentence. Compounds are listed under each part of the compound. If a word is semantically complex, I sometimes list the different meanings as separate entries, rather than combining everything into a single complicated entry.

I have quoted what the Xiongs say about syntax and semantics but have been sparing with my own thoughts. My hope is, rather, that the example sentences, both from the Xiongs’ dictionary and from texts, will provide material for the reader to come up with his or her own syntactic and semantic analysis. Thus this dictionary is not a finished linguistic product. It is a database which I hope will be useful to linguists in their research.

Now it is time to list my sources:

(1) Mong Volunteer Literacy’s publications.

(2) *Tswv Yim Moob* (Mong Ideas) by Laaj Soobleej Hawj. This book was privately printed but the author is a member of Mong Volunteer Literacy, so the spelling is the same as that in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s publications.

(3) The Xiongs' dictionary. The Xiongs write a space between the syllables in words such as *quas puj* 'woman, wife', which Mong Volunteer Literacy writes with no space: *quaspuj*. Otherwise, the Xiongs' spelling is the same as Mong Volunteer Literacy's.

(4) *L'initiation du mort chez les Hmong* (The Hmong initiation of the dead), by Jacques Lemoine. Lemoine is a French anthropologist who worked with Hmong in northern Laos and in France. Xeev Nruag Xyooj, the director of Mong Volunteer Literacy, taught him how to write Mong Leng, so his spelling of Mong Leng is that same as that of Mong Volunteer Literacy. *Initiation* provides the full Mong Leng text of a version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, along with a French translation and extensive discussion and commentary.

(5) *Grandmother's Path, Grandfather's Way* by Lue Vang and Judy Lewis. This book treats both the White Hmong (*Hmoob Dawb*) and the Green Mong (*Moob Ntsuab*) subgroups. Vang and Lewis include examples, in Green Mong and English translation, of the traditional song genre called *lug txaj* in Green Mong, and they include descriptions, in Green Mong and English translation, of traditional needlework. Vang and Lewis write hyphens in compounds such as *zoo-sab* 'happy'. Mong Volunteer Literacy very rarely uses a hyphen. Otherwise, Vang and Lewis's spelling is the same as Mong Volunteer Literacy's.

(6) *Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Daw / La Memoire des Hmong Vert de Anning* (Memoire of Walnut Valley / Memoire of the Green Mong of Anning) by Yaaj Yag and Yves Bertrais (Association Communauté Hmong, 1976). This is an important book because it shows that Green Mong in Anning County in central Yunnan Province in China have the same traditions as Mong Leng / Green Mong in Laos, Thailand, and the diaspora outside of Asia. Yaaj and Bertrais's spelling differs from Mong Volunteer Literacy's spelling in three ways:

1. They write *d* in words which Mong Volunteer Literacy spells with *dl*. This is purely a matter of orthographic convention. The policy of the Association Communauté Hmong is to spell this consonant the same way as the corresponding consonant is spelled in White Hmong, even though the Green Mong pronunciation is different from the White Hmong pronunciation. Therefore I will change *d* to *dl* when quoting from Yaaj and Bertrais.
2. They always write spaces between syllables, whereas Mong Volunteer Literacy frequently omits the space when the syllables are linked semantically or syntactically. As I said above, the use of spaces is variable in written Mong Leng. In quoting from Yaaj and Bertrais, I will use spaces as they do.
3. They spell the word for 'not' as *tsis*, whereas Mong Volunteer Literacy spells the word for 'not' as *tsi*. This may reflect a real regional difference in pronunciation. Therefore, in quoting from Yaaj and Bertrais, I will spell the word for 'not' exactly as they spell it.

In all other respects, Yaaj and Bertrais's spelling is like that of Mong Volunteer Literacy.

(7) I have very few citations from Lyman (Thomas Amis Lyman, *Dictionary of Mong Njua*, Mouton, The Hague, Paris, 1974). First of all, Lyman's dictionary is readily available. I wanted to devote my time and my efforts to the harder-to-find sources. Second, there are many variant

pronunciations in Lyman and some of the variants are rather different from the pronunciations suggested by the spellings in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications. Such variants are of great interest to linguists but need a special study of their own, which I am not prepared to do right now. I cite Lyman (changing his idiosyncratic transcription to Mong Volunteer Literacy's spelling) when he helps identify a bird or animal mentioned in the Xiongs' dictionary or in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications and when he provides examples illustrating additional meanings of a word or expression listed in the Xiongs' dictionary or appearing in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications.

(8) Finally, there are works upon which I have drawn, not for Mong Leng forms, but rather for clarifying the meaning of certain words and expressions listed in the Xiongs' dictionary or appearing in Mong Volunteer Literacy's publications, and for information on Hmong cultural practices and beliefs. These include *Entre la Maladie et la Mort: Le Chamane Hmong Sur les Chemins de l'Au-delà* (Between Sickness and Death: The Hmong Shaman on the Paths of the Beyond) and *Un Village Hmong Vert du Haut Laos* (A Green Hmong Village in Northern Laos) by Jacques Lemoine, the *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* (Hmong-Chinese Pocket Dictionary), the *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (Hmong Lexicon), Yves Bertrais's Hmong-French dictionary, Ernest E. Heimbach's White Hmong – English dictionary, Michael Johnson's *A linguist's compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*, and the works of Nusit Chindarsi, David Crockett Graham, Ma Xueliang and Jin Dan, Jean Mottin, Catherine E. Pake, Ruey Yih-fu and Kuan Tung-kuei, Shi Rujin, Tsab Chij, Yaj Vam Thaiv, and Kao-Ly Yang. With regard to the work of Jacques Lemoine, I should point out that Lemoine mixes White Hmong forms and Mong Leng forms together without telling us which is which and sometimes uses French spellings, not giving the Hmong spelling at all, but his work is of immense value for non-linguistic information. He is one of our best sources on Hmong material culture and on Hmong shamanism. Nusit Chindarsi, similarly, writes Mong Leng in an unsystematic English spelling but he is probably our best overall source on traditional Hmong religion.

Here is a complete list of my sources arranged alphabetically:

A linguist's compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature, by Michael Johnson, in preparation.

Bertrais, Yves. 1978. *Dictionnaire Hmong-Français* (Hmong-French Dictionary), Assumption Press, Bangkok.

Ceebpov = *Ceebpov* (Gold Amulet), told by Ntxhoo Xub Yaaj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985.

Chindarsi, Nusit. 1976. *The Religion of the Hmong Njua*, The Siam Society, Bangkok.

Cim Xeeb = Yaaj Yag and Yves Bertrais, *Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Daw / La Memoire des Hmong Vert de Anning* (Memoire of Walnut Valley / Memoire of the Green Mong of Anning), Association Communauté Hmong, Javouhey, French Guiana, 1986.

Dlaab Qhuas = *Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?* (Where Does Mong Traditional Religion Come From?), containing material recorded from Num Tswb Xyooj, Ntxhoo Xub Yaaj, and Xauv Yeeb Xyooj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985.

Entre = Jacques Lemoine, *Entre la Maladie et la Mort: Le Chamane Hmong Sur les Chemins de l'Au-delà* (Between Sickness and Death: The Hmong Shaman on the Paths of the Beyond), Pandora, Bangkok, 1987.

Graham, David Crockett. 1937a. The Customs of the Ch'uan Miao, *Journal of the West China Border Research Society* IX:12-70.

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Grandmother's Path = Lue Vang and Judy Lewis, *Grandmother's Path, Grandfather's Way*, Hmong Preservation Project, Rancho Cordova, California, 1984.

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Initiation = Jacques Lemoine, *L'initiation du mort chez les Hmong* (The Hmong initiation of the dead), Pandora, Bangkok, 1983.

Kawm Ntawv 2 = *Kawm Ntawv Moob Phoo 2* (Mong Primer Volume 2), written by Xeev Nruag Xyooj and Xaiv Phaj Thoj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Wheaton, Illinois, 1984.

Kevcai Ntawv = *Kevcai Ntawv (Grammar)*, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, no date.

Kwvhuam = *Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug* (Tales of Marriage Customs), told by Xeev Pov Thoj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Wheaton, Illinois, 1981.

Lug Nruag Dlaab = *Lug Nruag Dlaab* (Stories About Spirits), told by Khu Ntxawg Hawj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj and Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1986.

Lug Nruag Lom Zem = *Lug Nruag Lom Zem* (Fun Stories), told by Khu Ntxawg Hawj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj and Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1986.

- Lug Nruag Tsuv* = *Lug Nruag Tsuv* (Stories About Tigers), told by Khu Ntxawg Hawj and Nom Tooj Vaaj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj and Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Wheaton, Illinois, no date.
- Lug Nruag Txa* = *Lug Nruag Txa (Yeeg)* (Stories About (Magical) Transformations), told by Khu Ntxawg Hawj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj and Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1986.
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- Nuj Sis Loob* = *Nuj Sis Loob* (The Story of Nuj Sis Loob), told by Ntxhoo Xub Yaaj and Nom Tooj Vaaj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985.
- Pake, Catherine E. 1986. *Herbal Medicines Used by Hmong Refugees in Thailand*, master's thesis, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota.
- Phoo Kawm Koom* = *Phoo/Phau Kawm Koom Moob Leeg / Hmoob Dawb* (A Shared Mong Leng / White Hmong Primer), created by Xaiv Phaj Thoj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Wheaton, Illinois, 1984.
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- Rog Vwm* = *Moob Ua Rog Vwm (1919-1921)* (The Mong Wage the Crazy War, 1919-1921), told by Khu Ntxawg Hawj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj and Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985.
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- Tsab Chij. 1988. *Hmoob Nyob Paj Tawg Teb* (The Hmong of Wenshan), Association Communauté Hmong, Javouhey, French Guiana.
- Tswv Yim* = Laaj Soobleej Hawj, *Tswv Yim Moob* (Mong Ideas), privately printed, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, no date.
- Txooj Moob* (The Mong Community), a magazine published by Mong Volunteer Literacy.
- Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* = *Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug Ntxhais Ntxawm* (Pure One Who Faces Heaven and Grandfather Nyooglaug's Youngest Daughter), told by Maiv Xyooj Vaaj, recorded by Xaiv Phaj Thoj and Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Wheaton, Illinois, 1984.
- Ua Npausuav* = *Ua Npausuav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb* (A Dream of a Visit to the Spirits' Country), told by Qiam, recorded by Ntsuab Vaaj and Xaiv Phaj Thoj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Wheaton, Illinois, 1984.
- Village* = Jacques Lemoine, *Un Village Hmong Vert du Haut Laos* (A Green Hmong Village in Northern Laos), Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, 1972.
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- Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* = *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* (Big Yob and Little Yob), told by Ntxhoo Xub Yaaj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985.
- Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (苗语词汇集) (Hmong Lexicon), Honghezhou Minzu Yanjiusuo (红河州民族研究所) (editors), Jianshui, Yunnan, 1990.

- a ‘no, well’ (Xiongs).

- ab ‘bitter’ (Xiongs):

taub ab ‘gourd’ (Xiongs), ‘the bitter gourd (used to make dippers)’ (Lyman p. 315).

Kuv xum noj tshuaj ab tsi xum nyaj mob

‘I prefer taking bitter medicine over suffering a pain’ (Xiongs).

Num ku quas vuag noj nplooj quas ab haus dlej dlhau sab

‘Toil is harsh, leaves are bitter to eat, water is too much for one’s heart’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

Mej nim noj noj txiv laujtauv toog nkaaj quas ncab es ab mej sab los tsis ab?

‘You eat and eat the lauj tauv fruit, as dark as indigo, are your hearts bitter or not?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

Ob tug muab mov kuam cej mov kuam xua ntse hauvpaug zaubab rua Nuj Yob noj es tsi noj los tshaib, noj los nim ab ab Nuj Yob sab!

‘They give steamed buckwheat and steamed rice bran and the stems of bitter greens to Nuj Yob to eat; if he does not eat them he is hungry, if he eats them, how bitter they are to Nuj Yob’s heart!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74.)

- ab ‘Say!’, ‘Okay, ...’, ‘Come on, ...’, ‘Hey!’:

“Ab! mej lub nam zog tuabneeg nuav es coob taag npaum nuav es qab npua quaj zug quas zawg, dlev tum ntshu quas lawg, huas tsi pum ib nyuas tug tuabneeg nyob qhovtwg naw?”

‘Hey! This village of yours with so many people and chickens and pigs crying out all over the place, dogs barking loudly, but we don’t see a single person anywhere?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

“Ab! npawg koj nyob twbywv es kuv ua su wb noj koj le moog”.

‘Ah, cousin, you stay here quietly and I will make lunch for the two of us to eat and then you will go.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32.)

Ab tsi ntshai! ... kuv paab koj.

‘Hey, don’t be afraid! ... I’ll help you’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 21).

Ab! haus ib nyuas txum pib cawv tsaiv.

‘Okay, now have a little cup of liquor first’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

Ab! Npawg Sub Tuam, laub ib txum pib cawv

‘Come on, Cousin Sub Tuam, pour a cup of liquor’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

Ab! ua le los ua le!

‘Okay, go ahead’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 29).

Ab yog tas koj tsi kheev los thov txav cov plaubhau rua kuv lauj!

‘Very well, if you won’t [give me the head], then please cut off the hair for me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31.)

Ab! quas tsuv tum dlev hov ntawd

‘Damn that dog!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 66.)

Ab! tug quas tsuag kod, ntshai koj ua npug tag, koj yuav rawm tuag!

‘Hey, rat! Your speaking is really a bad omen. You’re sure in a hurry to die!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **Ab!** ‘Yes!’:

“Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?” “Ub! tsiv os. Tsiv! kuv tsi qha le ntshai hwy!” “Qha maj! qha rua wb tsuav mas.” “Aub! tsi qha. Ntshai hwy lawm”. “Ab! qha. Qha tsuav peb le suavdlawg tsiv”.

‘Sir, why are you fleeing?’ ‘Oo, fleeing. Fleeing! I can’t tell you, I’m too frightened!’

‘Tell us! Tell us what it is.’ ‘No, I can’t tell you. I’m too frightened.’ ‘Yes, tell us.

Tell us so we all can flee.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

- **ab**, intensifier:

Nwg nkaag moog ib nyuas ntsiv xwb, txawm tawm plawg rua ib lub nam tebchaws ci ntsaag quas ab.

‘When he had gone a small distance [into the cave], he emerged into a gleaming, bright country’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43).

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab

‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **Ab:** *Nkauj Ab* ‘Mademoiselle Ab’, a being that shamans speak of:

When one arrives at the entrance of the bridge, there is a crowd. As for me, I get down from my horse, I leave my horse there. I say that I’m going to the other side and I ask to be given a permit, and to be lent a mount. I borrow a horse of the dead, a wooden horse (a bier made of sticks) to pass to the other side. There, there is another huge lake, where Ngo A [Nkauj Ab] is. If, once there, I learn that the soul has already been washed, this signifies that the sick person has died. There is nothing left for me to do but go back. For one begins to wash the face at the home of Ngao A [Nkauj Ab] before beginning the rites of washing and dressing in this world. In this case, I have barely returned from my shamanic journey when it is announced to me that the sick person has died! (*Entre* pp. 160-161.)

Indeed, the road leading to Ngao A [Nkauj Ab] is without a doubt the direct way to the Beyond, the one that leads to death and to reincarnation (*Entre* p. 161).

In the text in *Entre*, the name Nkauj Ab is written in French spelling, inconsistently as Ngo A and Ngao A, but the Mong Leng spelling is given in the Index.

- **Ab:** *Nkauj Ab Nraug Oo* ‘the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth’, in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the parents of the first human children:

Quas tsi raug nraag ntej, yog Nkauj Ab raug nraag ntej.

‘Who appeared first? The Mist Maiden appeared first.
Quas tsi raug nraag hau, yog Nkauj Ab raug nraag hau!
 Who appeared in the beginning? The Mist Maiden appeared in the beginning.
Nkauj quas Ab ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa naj tsis muaj tub.
 The Mist Maiden had been married for seven long years but had no children.
Nraug Oo ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa xyoo tsis muaj nyuas.
 The Cloud Youth had been married for seven long years but had no little ones.
Ntxwj Nyoog qheb lug lug has qheb lug lug nroo tas;
 Ntxwj Nyoog opened his words and spoke, opened his word and roared:
Meb rov moog tu tub ntawm ntiv teg, tu nyuas ntawm ntiv ntaas.
 “Go back. Cut off sons from your fingers. Cut off children from your middle fingers.”
Yawm quas Saub qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas;
 Grandfather Saub open his mouth and spoke, gathered his words and roared:
Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj, le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshua quas thawv peb
tshaus rua nraag taj, noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.
 “O Mist! O Fog! Come down to the plain, take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift
 three sieves’ full down onto the plain, so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a
 great noise to fill the world.
Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev, noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj
teb.
 O Mist! O Fog! Come down to the road, let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring
 down to fill the earth.” ’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7.)

Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub, qom tsi sawv tsim noob neej,
 ‘Long ago, who arose to create the seeds of humankind?
Nkauj Ab Nraug Lis Oo meb sawv tsim noob neej.
 The Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth arose to create the seeds of humankind.
Nkauj Ab, ua ncauj qas ntxhas moog tau xyaa naj, Nkauj Ab tsi muaj tub.
 The Mist Maiden had been a young woman for seven years, but the Mist Maiden had not
 had children.
Nraug Oo tsi nraug lis loo moog tau xyaa xyoo, Nraug Oo tsi muaj ki.
 The Cloud Youth had been a young man for seven years, but the Cloud Youth had not
 had offspring.
Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub
sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.
 Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in
 your finest clothes and seek knowledge (?) on Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of silk and you will
 have children.”
Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub
sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.
 Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest
 clothes and seek understanding (?) on Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get
 them.” ’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

- **ab au quas sua** ‘mist and fog’ personified:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj,
 ‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain

le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj,
 Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain
noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.

so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world.

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev,

O mist! O fog! Come down to the road.

noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj teb.

Let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring down to fill the earth' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **abhau** '(classifier *tug*) great barbet bird, *Megalaima virens virens*' (Lyman p. 69):

taujaab abhau nim quaj ntshoo quas qeeg tes nim khua khua nwg sab.

'the blue-throated barbets and great barbets sang continuously, and so he became became very melancholy' (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

Below is a photograph of the great barbet, *Megalaima virens*, kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **ab oo** ‘haze’ (Xiongs).

- **Ab yab!**, exclamation of disgust of impatience:

A man throws a pestle at a rat and misses, whereupon the pestle says:

Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le.

‘Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **Ab yab!**, exclamation of joy:

A spirit couple, delighted that people have arrived at their house, say:

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

‘Ho ho! Welcome!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36.)

- **aj!** ‘alas!’:

Ntuj nis ntuj nis es! Raab teb quas rooj ntug nua u ... aj!

‘Heaven, O Heaven! Lands under distant skies ... alas!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* page 69).

- **aj**, final particle:

“Koj ntshai tsuv tsi ntshai?” “Awb! tsuv yog kuv txivdlaab, kuv tsi ntshai aj”.

‘Are you afraid of tigers?’ ‘No! Tigers are my maternal uncles, I’m not afraid of them.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **as:** *sov as!* ‘I don’t know’ (Xiongs).

- **Asmesleskas** ‘America’:

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob Moog Asmesleskas

‘The Mong Go To America’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 193).

- **av** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) glass, mirror’ (Xiongs):

tsom av ‘to look at oneself in the mirror’ (Xiongs).

lub tsom av ‘the mirror’ (Xiongs).

- **av** ‘marsh’:

Tes leejnam nim dlha dlha moog txug ncuab lub nam tsev nruab av.

‘So the mother ran to the house in the middle of the marsh’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **av**, final particle with exclamations and vocatives:

Siv Yig Muas, av! koj txawmpeeb tog lawm los tsi tau?

‘Hey, Siv Yig Muas, are you ready to fight?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

Laam tau av! Luas tua nua luas tua noj hlwb huas!

‘Whatever you like! But when he was killed, he was killed and his brains were eaten, you know’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Ntshab nis Ntshab!, av, taab koj kuas kuv moog hu nam puj Suav qhev laug na

‘Ntshab, O Ntshab! A moment ago you sent me to call the old Chinese slave-woman’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

- **av qhov muag** ‘(classifier *lub*) eye glasses’ (Xiongs).

AA

- **Aakiv** or **Aas Kiv** ‘English’, from Lao *angkit*:

Phoo Txhais Lug Aakiv – Moob – Aakiv

‘English – Mong – English Dictionary’ (Xiongs, title).

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? ‘Do they speak English?’ (Xiongs, entry for *txawj*.)

- **aab mob** ‘small parasite’ (Xiongs).

- **aav** ‘(classifier *co*) soil, ground’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **aav: lu aav** ‘covered with dirt’:

Tsi xob zwb koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav

‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

Tes ob tug nim tsiv ob tug nam lu aav nywb quas nyo rovqaab lug.

‘They ran away and returned home all covered with dirt’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

tug nyaab ib nyuas xauj tes leejtxiv tau ib plhaw, leejtxiv qaug tuab nam rawg qaab sawv tseeg ua nam taubqaab lu aav quas nyo

‘When he got a glimpse of the daughter-in-law, he felt his heart jump and fell down on his behind and stood up covered with dirt from head to toe’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **aav: xw aav** ‘to dig out soil from a hole’ (Xiongs).

- **aav nplaum** ‘clay’ (Xiongs).

- **aav pob** ‘the earth crumbles, an avalanche’:

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **aav qeeg** ‘earthquake’ (Xiongs).

- **aav xuav** ‘loose ground with small stones’ (Xiongs).

- **Aas Kiv** or **Aakiv** ‘English’, from Lao *angkít*:

Phoo Txhais Lug Aakiv – Moob – Aakiv
‘English – Mong – English Dictionary’ (Xiongs, title).

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? ‘Do they speak English?’ (Xiongs, entry for txawj.)

AI

- **ai**, final particle with exclamations and vocatives:

Ntuj ai! caag koj yuav muaj zoo qab saam ua lauj le hab lauj!
‘By Heaven! How do you come to have such delicious capons?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

Saub ai im! Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoo
‘O Saub! The sky has grown dark’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

- **aib**: *miv aib* ‘darling’:

Ntuj nis kuv miv aib Ntxawm, kuv ncu ncu koj kuv tsi tuaj dlaabndlub le lauj.

‘By heaven, my darling Ntxawm, I’ve missed you so much that I haven’t slept’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

Ntuj nis miv aib, zag nua tes kuv noog noog koj has es kuv tsi haus cawv lawm lauj.
Caag kuv yuav ncu ncu kuv tug miv aib zoo nkauj ua luag nuav dlag. ‘By heaven, darling, from now on I will listen to you and will not drink liquor any more. Oh, how I missed my beautiful darling’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **ais**, particle indicating that something is to follow:

koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

‘If you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and seek knowledge (?) on Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them’ (*Initiation* p. 122).

AU

- **au**, intensifier:

Huas tej nam taujvaub los nim quaj: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!” ntshu quas au rua tim tej haavzoov

‘But the blue-throated barbets cried: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!”, making a great noise in the forest’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

- **au**: *ab au quas sua* ‘mist and fog’ personified:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj,
‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain
le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj,
Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain
noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.

so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world.

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev,

O mist! O fog! Come down to the road.

noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj teb.

Let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring down to fill the earth' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **aub** 'to carry, to bear something on the back' (Xiongs):

Nwg le moog nrhav nrhav pum ib tug quaspuj tuaj aub dlej

'He went to search and saw a woman carrying water' (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 93).

nwg aub tuab lub nam taubhau zaaj ua qaug dlaab qaug dle

'he staggered along carrying on his back the dragon-head' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

*Pug Xeev Txwjlaug nim aub pob nam kub qaug ntaaj qaug ntawg lug nkaag plawg rua
huv puab txaaj.*

'The Ruler's wife carried the bundle of gold on her back, stumbling with the weight of it, into their bedroom' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

"Puj! koj aub lub kawm tuaj ua dlaabtsi?" "Awv, aub tuaj aub nraug nqaj huas".

"Grandmother! Why are you carrying that basket on your back?" "Oh, I brought it to carry young men's meat." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev

'They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **aub** '(classifier *tug*) dog' (Xiongs).

- **Aub!** 'Oh!', 'Listen!', 'Do you know what?', 'Alas!', 'Hey!', 'Well, ...':

Aub! ua le lov. 'Oh! Is that what happened?' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

"Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?" "Aub, raab rag nuav coj tuaj tua nraug huas".

"Why have you brought that knife?" "Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

Aub, nam puj dlaab has tas; ua ntaaj hlau te ib ntaag txuas nkaus ntaag txuas nkaus,

huas yog ua ntaaj fuabtxhib pleev quav qab nua tes nam puj dlaab ha tuag nua

'Listen! The female spirit said, if we make swords of iron, each time we cut her she will join right back together, but if we make swords of fuabtxhib wood smeared with chicken droppings she will die' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

*Tes rooj tsuas quas nkaus. Tes aub! nrug puj dlaab nam ntchais nyob tsausntuj quas nti
huv nam qhov tsuas.*

'The door of the cave closed. And then, do you know what? The young man stayed with the female spirit's daughter in the darkness of the cave!' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

*Aub nyob ib tsaam tes cov nam dlaab ua zoj ua zig moog lug txug tes dlaab ua zoj ua zig
lug tsev lawm.*

'Well, in a little while the spirits had been running round and round long enough so the spirits ran round and round and came home' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

“Aub! yog kuv moog ua teb peg qaab tsuas es nquab tuaj txav txav, kuv lawv moog es kuv tau ntawm nam puj dlaab paug”.

“Well! It is that I went to make swidden fields up at the base of a cliff and doves came and cut down [my crops], I followed and I got them from the female paug spirit.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

Aub! ob tug nyuj nuav kub zuag heev lau.

‘Well! The horns of these two oxen are very sharp’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntug povtseg!

‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

Koj dlib kuas puj Sub tuaj. Koj has tas, Phub! aub au! Puj Sub! Koj tuaj los tau?

‘Call Grandma Sub as one calls wild game. Call her like this: Pooh! Hey-hey! Grandma Sub! Can you come?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

Aub mes-es txawm yuav txawj has le kod!

‘Oh, so that’s what the goats learned to sing!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 36.)

- **Aub!** ‘Oh my!’, Good grief!’:

“Es koj puas ntshai naab pluajce?” “Aub! naab pluajce, tsi has oj. Kuv ntshai ntshai le oj”.

“Then are you afraid of ribbon-snakes?” “Oh my! Don’t talk about ribbon snakes. I’m very afraid of them.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 22-23.)

Nyob nyob tes Yob ntsuag ntsuag tsua rov tuaj, tuaj na aub! ua caag nam ncej puj dlaab muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Some time later, Yob the orphan came back, and when he got there, why – good grief! – the female-spirit post was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **Aub!** ‘No!’:

“Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?” “Ub! tsiv os. Tsiv! kuv tsi qha le ntshai hwy!” “Qha maj! qha rua wb tsuav mas.” “Aub! tsi qha. Ntshai hwy lawm”.

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” “Oo, fleeing. Fleeing! I can’t tell you, I’m too frightened!”

“Tell us! Tell us what it is.” “No, I can’t tell you. I’m too frightened.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

- **aub:** *mi-aub* ‘meow’, ‘pussycat’:

Awv! nim naj mo zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev, ua tsaug tej! Txiv tuab qws ua nwg mi-aub nua!

‘Hurrah! Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner. Thank you, father! You got him good with that pestle, making him go meow!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

huas tshuav tuab nam dlev pw caws ceeg ntawm ntug qhovcub huas tshwsmlov pw caws ceeg peg qhovtsus quaj: “mi-aub! mi-aub!”

‘All that remained was a dog curled up by the fire and a cat curled up on top of the stove crying, “Miau! Miau!”’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26.)

Los Xaab tsim dlheev, sawv tseeg: “Mi-aub! Koj nam nib?”

‘Los Xaab awoke suddenly and got to his feet: “Pussycat, what happened to your mistress?”’ (Ceebpov p. 26.)

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwmlob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj pawg, quaj mi-aub. Ua le le ntawd tes Los Lwm nim dlha quas loo moog tas; “Los Tuam av! mi-aub sas! yog nam miv mi-aub os”.

‘But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried “Miau”. So Los Lwm ran back and said, “Oh, Los Tuam, it’s just a pussycat, a little bitty pussycat!”’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

- **Aub yaub!**, interjection, both positive and negative, ‘Hooray!’, ‘Good grief!’ (see also *Haub-yaub!*):

Aub yaub! Ua tsaug tej! naj nub naj mo tum kuv, tuab nam txhwb tawg ua nwg, Awv! nua vuaj!

‘Hooray! Thank you! Every day and every night he bites me. That piece of firewood made him go Ouch!’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67.)

Aub yaub! kim kim le tsi yuav.

‘Good grief! That’s too expensive’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 68).

- **Auj!** ‘Oh!’:

Auj! Yog nyob ntawm nwg hauv sab tseem tshuav ib dlaim tawv tsi tau hle nawj!

‘Oh! It is that there still is left on his chest a piece of skin that has not been removed!’ (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 44.)

- **aum**, final particle:

Yuav has tau koj qas laug haub aum

‘We will speak loud and long to persuade you’ (Cim Xeeb p. 77).

- **auv**: *mi-auv* ‘meow’:

Tes khaws nkaus nam qws tuav hovtxob tuab qws miv, miv quaj miv-auv! nua.

‘Then they whacked the cat with a pepper-pestle, the cat went meow!’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67).

- **auv**: *nchu auv quas nab* ‘to produce smoke in great clouds’:

Tes rauv suavtawg auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lus, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

‘Fires were lit in all the banana leaf houses, smoke coming up in great clouds’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 24).

AW

- **aw**, final particle with exclamations:

Ntuj aw! Siv Yig Muas!

‘By heaven, Siv Yig Muas, ...’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 20).

Ub! Ntuj nis nam Dlaav aw!
 ‘Good heavens, Eagle!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

- **aw**, final particle when addressing someone:

Awb! ob leej yawm dlaab aw.
 ‘Hello, you two guys.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19; young women speaking to young men of a different clan.)

“Puj aw, peb moog ua zoj ua zig os puj?”
 “Grandmother, shall we go run round and round, grandmother?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27; spirit-children speaking to a female spirit.)

“Puj aw, peb lug qev koj tsev pw ib mos”.
 “Grandmother, I’ve come to ask for permission to sleep in your house for one night.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28; human being speaking to a female spirit.)

“Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagnuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?”
 “Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31; man speaking to Saub, the being to whom people go for advice).

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.
 “Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31; human being speaking to a female spirit).

“Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg”.
 “Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32; human being speaking to a female spirit).

- **Awb**, ... ‘Well, ...’:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.
 “Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **Awb!** ‘Oh, ...’, ‘Hello!’, ‘Oh my!’:

Awb! cov plaubhau xwb koj yuav yuav los txav kag teg plaubhau rau.
 ‘Oh, if all you want is the hair, go ahead and cut off a hank of hair for yourself’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Awb! ob leej dlaab yawm aw.

‘Hello, you two guys’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Awb! moog saib nam ris nraug nqaj lug oj!

‘Hello! Let’s go see the young-man meat that you’ve brought’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

Awb, sawv es yaws chaw es yuav nqee mivnyuas plig luas mas.

‘Oh my! I got up to gather up my bedding and I found myself holding in my arms a little soul’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hww tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.

‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **Awb!** ‘Yes!’:

“Aub! ua le lov. Es yog wb tua tau nam puj dlaab nua meb ua wb quaspuj nua meb puas kaam moog?” “Awb! yog meb tua tau mas wb moog xwb lau!”

“Oh! Is that what happened? So if the two of us kill the female spirit, will the two of you become out wives, are the two of you willing?” “Yes! If you can kill her, we will.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **Awb!** ‘No!’:

“Koj ntshai tsuv tsi ntshai?” “Awb! tsuv yog kuv txivdlaab, kuv tsi ntshai aj”.

“Are you afraid of tigers?” “No! Tigers are my maternal uncles, I’m not afraid of them.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **Awj!** ‘Yes’, ‘Agreed’:

“... koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej es wb noj peg hauv dlej tsaam ntsiv qas qas wb.” “Awj! ua le los tau os!”

“... You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream, and we’ll eat upstream, in a moment you’re going to disgust us.” “All right.” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69.)

- **aws** ‘epidemic’ (Xiongs).

- **aws** ‘yes’ (Xiongs).

- **awv** ‘clothing (word used in folksongs)’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 94 eud), ‘pleats’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 40 eud), ‘the embroidered bib front worn by women at the New Year’s festival’ (Lyman p. 71):

The meaning ‘clothing’ given by *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* seems to be most likely the original meaning, whereas the meanings given by *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* and Lyman look like they may be specialized senses used only in certain contexts. What the exact meaning is in the following examples is uncertain:

nqaws tab ... nqaws awv

‘the folds of their skirts ... the folds of their awv’ (*Initiation* p. 137).

Nwg muab kag cuaj npoo-awv paav rua nam maum nyuj.

‘She quickly tried nine awv-hems to the cow’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 21).

- **Awv!** ‘Yes!’, ‘Hurrah!’, ‘Yes, but ...’:

Awv! qaab hab luas muaj!

‘Yes! It’s delicious!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28.)

Awv! nim naj mo zuv zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev, ua tsaug tej! Txiv tuab qws ua nwg mi-aub nua!

(a rat thanking a man for hitting a cat) ‘Hurrah! Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner. Thank you, father! You got him good with that pestle, making him go meow!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

Awv, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov.

‘Yes, but I’m out of breath. Let me rest a bit first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

“Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?” “Awv, tuaj los tuaj lau!”

“Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, let us come!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **Awv!** ‘Ouch!’:

tuab nam txhwb tawg ua nwg, Awv! nua vuaj!

‘That piece of firewood made him go Ouch!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

- **Awv, ...** ‘Oh, ...’:

“Puj! koj aub lub kawm tuaj ua dlaabtsi?” “Awv, aub tuaj aub nraug nqaj huas”.

“Grandmother! Why are you carrying that basket on your back?” “Oh, I brought it to carry young men’s meat.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **awv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov awv [to make the sound awv] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

B

The letter B is used only as a tone marker.

C

- **ca** ‘to hide’ (*Xiongs*).

- **ca** ‘to set in order, to arrange, to marshal’ (*Xiongs*):

muab cov phoo ntawv tum zoo zoo ca ‘pile the books well in order’ (*Xiongs*).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **ca** ‘to allow, to permit’ (*Xiongs*):

Nwg yeem ca puab ntaus ‘s/he is willing to let them beat her or him’ (*Xiongs*).

zaam, kev ca puab ua ntej

‘give them the way to go first’ (*Xiongs*) [since *zaam kev* ‘to yield the way’ is a

constituent, the comma separating *zaam* and *kev* may be a typographical error].

“Yuaj! yog kuv tej nyuas qab os. Ca es kuv muab kaw. Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog”.

“Gracious! It is my chicks. Let me lock them up. You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **ca** ‘(classifier *tug*) zebra squirrel’ (Xiongs), ‘Asiatic striped squirrel (*Tamiops* spp.)’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Txuj suavceeb ca le txa kag ua ob tug nyuas ca dlha sis ntsig dlha sis ntsig moog moog lug lug.

‘The headband then changed instantly into two little zebra squirrels running and punching each other, running and punching each other, back and forth, back and forth.’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62.)

Koj sim tuaj saib ob tug ca nraag saib! Ob tug ua ib yaam le thaus wb has tag!

‘Come take a look at the two zebra squirrels down there. They’re doing just what we used to do!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62.)

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nraug rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel, oh little zebra squirrel! You had mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

Below is a photograph of an Asiatic striped squirrel provided by Michael Johnson:



- **ca:** *hom ca* ‘to reserve’ (Xiongs).

- **ca:** *khaws ca* ‘to keep’ (Xiongs).

khaws khoom ca kom tau noj ntev ‘to store things in order to be able to eat them for a long time’ (Xiongs).

- **ca:** *muab tseg ca* ‘to reserve, to set aside’ (Xiongs).

- **ca:** *ntxim yuav muab neu rua sab ca* ‘memorable’ (Xiongs).

- **ca:** *tseg ca ua tshuaj* ‘keep as something special, worthy, or effective’ (Xiongs).

- **ca:** *tso ca* ‘to leave’ (Xiongs).

- **ca:** *yeem ca* ‘to prefer’:

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub ‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs).

- **ca ib tsaam** ‘in a moment’, ‘later’:

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam.
‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj
[typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **ca le** ‘to let it go; to leave well enough alone’:

Muaj ib nub tes puj Siv Yig Muas tsi ca le huas puj Siv Yig Muas tas ...

‘But one day Siv Yig Muas’s wife did not leave well enough alone, and said ...’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **ca sab** ‘to esteem’, ‘to hope’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg. Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom

tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hluab yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model. My hope is that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **cab** ‘pine tree, fir tree’ (Xiongs):

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *la*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11; the dead person’s ‘home’ is the coffin, which may be made of any hard, decay resistant wood).

Thuv refers to conifers of the genus *Pinus*, but exactly which species may vary from place to place and dictionary glosses of *thuv* may not always be accurate. *Cab* definitely also means some type of conifer but not only which species but also which genus may vary from place to place and, again, dictionary glosses of *cab* (and its cognates in other Hmong dialects) may not always be accurate. The original meaning of *cab*, still common in Hmong dialects in northwestern Guizhou (the original locus of Mong Leng and closely related dialects), was probably China fir (*Cunninghamia*). Michael Johnson, in *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*, suggests that in Laos, where there is a much reduced variety of conifers compared to northwestern Guizhou, people may have begun to confuse the terms *thuv* and *cab* and may have extended them to trees other than those to which they referred in northwestern Guizhou.

- **cab** ‘wax’ (Xiongs):

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

caab cab, the batik design that is the foundation for the main part of the baby-carrier. Blue Hmong women are the batik artists. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133.)

nplai cab, batik triangle on a skirt (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145).

The base fabric of the middle section of the skirt (*nthu tab*) is the *cab* or batik. It’s indigo on white, or indigo on light blue. There are several designs for the batik pattern, and very

few of the women in the U.S. remember all of them. Most of the designs are called *txaj tab* or ‘skirt mark’. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145.)

- **cab**: *tswmcab paajntoos* ‘votive candle’:

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab
 ‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **cab tswv nkhaus**, on a skirt, a zig-zag line in the batik, where fabric will later be sewn (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145).

- **cag** ‘alive, lively, flowing (water)’ (Xiongs) (see also *caj*).

- **caj** ‘alive, living, lively’ (Xiongs) (see also *cag*):

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”. “Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag”. “Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”

‘If she is to live, she’ll live. If she is to die, she’ll die. If she is to live, she’ll live’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

Tshaav ntuj lawm nam peb nub tis ua kub, noob xyoob caj tsis nyog ntxhoo xyoob hlub.

‘For three days the weather was hot. The seeds of bamboo could not live long enough for bamboo branches to grow’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 76-77).

- **caj** ‘to be’:

Ib lub zog tsi caj ib lub moos.

‘One village can’t be a city’ (line from a proverb) (Lyman p. 337).

Koj yawm qas laug os, koj taub hau ntoo tsis nyog ntuj, koj nyob koj caj neeg. Koj tuag koj caj dlaab.

‘O elder, you did not have the protection of heaven. Once you were here. Once you were a human being. But now you are dead. Now you are a spirit’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 74).

- **caj** ‘(classifier *raab*) pliers, tongs, pincers’ (Xiongs).

- **caj sa** ‘living, strong, to gain strength, to come to life’ (Xiongs).

- **caj ... tuag** ‘intensely; to a huge extent’:

Ob tug nim tu hlo ib lub nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj dlaav tuag

‘The two of them had decided on a place where they told their servants to prepare an exceedingly broad clearing’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Coob caj coob tuag lug ndlaug toj ndlaug peg.

‘Their vast multitudes filled the hills and the highlands’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsu quas naa, khi khi cos ntsu quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsu quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev

‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home’
(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **caj xua** or **caj xuas**, a kind of bird. In one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the caj xua brings the seeds of bamboos and trees from “behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade”, i.e. from heaven:

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyoob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug.

‘Let me tell you, O elder, the origin of bamboo and trees.

Noob xyoob noob lis ntoo tsua yuav lug tau Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog qaab nrau lis caav kws.

The seeds of bamboo and trees came from behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade.

Yawm lis Saub tsua yuav tso tau noog caj qas xua rua taag Ntxwj Sib Nyoog tej qaab nrau lis caav.

Grandfather Saub sent the caj xua behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade.

Noog caj qas xua tsuas yuav ris qas kho nam peb le nub, ris tau nam peb le lub noob xyoob nrug noob le ntoos.

The caj xua carried seeds for three days and carried away three seeds of bamboo and trees.

Noog caj qas xuas moog txug Ntxwj Sib Nyoog tej qaab moog rau caav kws, tsua yuav ris qas kho nam peb li hli, yuav ris tau nam noob xyoob noob le ntoo nam peb le teg.

The caj xua went behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade and carried seeds for three months and carried away three handfuls’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

- **cam** ‘stupid, foolish’ (Xiongs).

- **cav** ‘to persecute’ (Xiongs):

lug txaj puj cav nyaab ‘song of a woman ill-treating a daughter-in-law’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 13).

In stories, *cav* refers to a ruler imposing tests on a young man who wishes to marry his daughter:

Koj yawmtxiv tsi cav koj los tseg, huas yog koj yawmtxiv cav koj nua cais koj hu kuv lug paab koj.

If your father-in-law does not impose tests on you, well and good, but if your father-in-law imposes tests on you, then call me to come help you (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Puab nyob lug tsi tau ntev, Yawm Nyooglaug, ob tug yawvtxiv [sic] txawm hu Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moog, lub twv cav tas: “Vauv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb! Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog ...”

When they had been living together for not very long, Grandfather Nyooglaug, the couple’s father-in-law [i.e. the wife’s father, the husband’s father-in-law], summoned Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and issued him a challenge: “Son-in-law Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, you say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear. ...” (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

- **cav** ‘(classifier *tug*) conduit, pipe, water line made with bamboo’ (Xiongs).

- **cav** ‘how’:

Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **cav** ‘why, ...’, ‘but, ...’:

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev

‘But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **cav**: *na cav* ‘why, ...’:

tug nug hlub saib na cav yog ob tug tug muam tag

‘the older brother looked and, why, it was indeed their sister’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **caa** ‘(classifier *pob*) trunk, stem’ (Xiongs) (see also *caav*):

In a folktale, Yob the orphan, in hot pursuit of a female dove who has taken an ear of millet from his field, follows her as she dashes under stones and logs:

Puj nquab quas plawg qaab zeb, puj nquab quas plawg qaab caa los Yob ntsuag ntsuag quas plawg qaab caa.

‘The female dove, right under a stone, the female dove, right under a log, then Yob the orphan, right under a log’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **caa**: *dlej caa* ‘wellspring, source of a stream’ (also written *dlej caag*):

Dlej txheeb le txheeb, dlej ndlwg le ndlwg. Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

‘The water grew clearer and clearer. The water flowed more and more freely. It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog’s wellsprings’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas rau khau paaj pum dlej caa nyob qhov zaaj.

‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your embroidered shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the dragon’ (*Initiation* p. 120).

- **caa**, initial particle (see also *caav*):

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130; the household spirits are doing this to try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house).

- **caab** ‘(classifier *tug*) earthworm’ (Xiongs).

- **caab** ‘to lead with a rope or string, to take along’ (Xiongs):

Suav tuaj Suav muab kuv txiv tua lawm huas Suav muab kuv caab moog ua qhev lawm.
 ‘When the Chinese came, the Chinese killed my husband but the Chinese led me away to be a slave’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

- **caab**: *cuag caab xuv* ‘straight to the goal’ (Xiongs).

- **Caab**: *Vwb Caab*, the Nam Ou, a tributary of the Mekong:

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab
 ‘The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

Probably from Chinese 乌江 *Wūjiāng* ‘Black River’: “Presumably a well known river name from back in the day that was transferred to the Nam Ou.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **caab cab**, the batik design that is the foundation for the main part of the baby-carrier. Blue Hmong women are the batik artists. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133.)

- **caab ke quas zig** ‘slowly, in a long line’ (Djoua Xiong, personal communication):

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb
 ‘The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **caab saab** ‘to extend a filament’:

Dlej txag ca sis zim, luas tsuj kaab laugsaab caab saab zim rua luas neev.
 ‘Cold water has washed into his tracks. Spiders have strung their threads inside his footprints’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

Dlaab caab saab rua puj Sub tuaj.
 ‘The spirits extended a filament for Grandma Sub to come down upon’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **caag** ‘(classifier *tug*) root; origin, source’ (Xiongs). See also *caaj ceg*.

- **caag**: *dlej caag* ‘wellspring, source of a stream’ (also written *dlej caa*):

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas meb rau khau npuag pum dlej caag nyob qaab qhov tsu.
 ‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your satin shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the tiger’ (*Initiation* pp. 120-121).

- **caag**: *npaum le caag* ‘how many, how much’ (Xiongs):

luj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how big].

muaj nyaj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how much money is there].

xaav txawj neeb npaum le caag los yog nwg moov tsi txug hab luj loog tsi hum mas yeej tsi txawj ua neeb ib zag

‘however much he wants to know how to [perform] shamanic ceremonies, if his destiny/merit does not reach and the faint voice does not fit then he will never know how to perform shamanic ceremonies’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **caag**: *tej tog caag*, expression of uncertain meaning in the following:

*lub ntuj dlaav xws tej tog caag,
Neej moog los nyob tsi puv,
Dlaab moog los nyob tsi taag*
‘the sky is as wide as tej tog caag
If human beings go to dwell, it will not be filled,
If spirits go to dwell, it will not be finished’ (*Initiation* p. 124).

- **caag**: *ua caag* ‘what is the matter, what happens’ (Xiongs):

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!
‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **caag**: *ua caag* ‘why?’:

Koj nim tsiv lug ua nkaujfaa rua nuav lawm ais, ua caag tsi qha wb paub?
‘You just ran off and deserted your family. Why didn’t you tell us?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15.)

*Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig
nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv
qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’
nua yog le caag tag?*

Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that? (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Maaj maam maj! Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!
‘Gently! Why are you going at my wound with such force?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

- **caag**: *ua caag* ‘how?’:

*Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj
yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”*

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **caag**: *ua caag* ‘how ... !’:

Hiv! Hiv! Ob yawm yij yawm dlaab nua ua caag yuav txawj sis thaam ua luaj le ntawd!
‘Hee hee! These two brothers-in-law, how they can talk!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84;
spoken in response to ribald wordplay.)

- **caag**: *ua le caag* ‘how, how you do it’ (Xiongs).

Ua rua Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm tsi paub ua le caag zoo

‘It made it that Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm did not know what would be good to do’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44).

- **caag**: *ua le caag* ‘why?’:

Yog ua le caag koj yuav tsi kaam has kuas koj tug kheej moog hab?
‘Why are you not willing to tell all of your [subjects] to go?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 33.)

Koj yuav moog qhov twg? Hab yog ua le caag koj yuav chim ua luaj?
‘Where are you going? And why are you so angry?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

- **caag**: *ua le caag* ‘whatsoever’:

Tab sis tsi pum tuaj tshwm ua le caag le. ‘But they didn’t see anyone whatsoever come out at all’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **caag dlaaj**, a medicinal plant administered orally to treat stomach ache after eating bad food and to treat weakness, impotence and problems urinating in men (Pake 1986, p. 113, No. 106):

Koj moog txug paag dlej ab. Paag dlej ab tes ua ab! Koj haus tsi tau, koj fuas hawv peb tug caag maaj peb tug caag dlaab [typo for dlaaj?]. *Fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab haus, fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab hlv koj txha moog cuag taug koj pug koj yawg.*
‘Go until you reach the lake of bitter water. The lake of bitter water is bitter indeed! If you cannot drink it, snatch up three maple roots and three dlaab [typo for dlaaj?] roots. Snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to drink, snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to suck on, and then you will be able to to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

- **caag ... yuav** ‘why?’:

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!
‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17) [“why are they not of value?”]

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”
“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **caaj** ‘lump’ (Xiongs).

- **caaj ceg** ‘origin, source, ancestor’ (Xiongs) (see also *caag*):

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb.

‘Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month of the lunar calendar they do not perform the ceremony of cutting off the Sub’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **caaj qwb** ‘the back of the neck’ (Xiongs).

- **caam** ‘to stick to, to paste, to glue’ (Xiongs).

- **caam** ‘to quarrel, to dispute’ (Xiongs):

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam. Yog koj caam yeej, le pub koj koj moog. Huas yog koj caam tsi yeej, cais tsi pub hlo le!

‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you. If you win the argument, I will let you take him. If you do not win the argument, I will not’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

- **caam**: *laug caam* ‘(classifier *lub*) chopping block’ (Xiongs).

- **caam thawj** ‘indocile’ (Xiongs).

- **Caas**: *NaaJ Caas* ‘Nam Chan’, the name of a village:

kuv lub zog yug yog NaaJ Caas ‘my village of birth was Nam Chan’ (Xiongs).

The name ‘Nam Chan’ appears to be Lao.

- **Caas**: *Vees Caas* ‘Vientiane [the administrative capital of Laos and the province in which the administrative capital is located], from Lao *Viang Can*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4):

lub xeev Vees Caas ‘Vientiane Province’ (Xiongs).

- **caav** ‘to dispute, to quarrel, to discuss, to argue’ (Xiongs), ‘to spread the fame of’, from Chinese *jiǎng*:

Ob tug nim sis caav nruj muag quas nyee.

‘The two of them argued fiercely’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

Luas tsuas caav koj yawm yij Nkaaj / teg ncaaj teg tuav ntaaj, / teg nceeg teg tuav neev.

‘People just spread the fame of your brother-in-law Nkaaj: / With a straight arm he wields a sword. / With a steady hand he wields a crossbow’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 75).

- **caav** ‘(classifier *tug*) dead tree trunk, stem’ (Xiongs) (see also *caa*):

Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog tej qaab nrau lis caav

‘behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s logs’, i.e. behind the wooden stockade that surrounds heaven, i.e. in heaven (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!

‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

- **caav**, initial particle (see also *caa*):

Caav has tau koj qas laug, ...

‘Let me now tell you, O Elder, ...’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

- **cai** ‘(classifier *txuj*) reason, right’:

kev cai ‘(classifier *txuj*) custom, law, practice’ (Xiongs).

- **Cai**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Lis** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

- **cai** (see also *cais* ‘hall’): *nplaj cai* ‘the earth’:

Thau nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Meb yog nplaj quas cai le leej tuabneeg meb tuaj quas tsw?
‘The two of you are from the earth. Why have you come?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv
‘The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj Quas Cai coj moog cog peb tsob rua nraag taj, cog peb tsob rua nraag kev.
‘Earth planted three plants down in the plain, planted three plants down in the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

Nplaj Quas Cai le qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas
‘Earth opened its mouth to speak, gathered its words and roared, saying ...’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

Koj yog Nplaj Quas Cai leej tuabneeg koj tuaj quas tsw? ‘You are a person for the earth. Why have you come?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

- **cai** (see also *cais* ‘hall’): *qaum cai* ‘heaven’:

Thau nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv
‘The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **caij** ‘to ride, to drive, to go boating, sailing’ (Xiongs).

- **caij** ‘(classifier *lub*) time, period, interval of time’ (Xiongs):

lub caij qub ‘the same time’ (Xiongs).

Taav caij moog kawm ntawv lawm. ‘It is time to go school’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav toun [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hwv
‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

- **caij**: *tsev caij tsheb nqaaj* ‘train station’:

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm
‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

- **caij nplooj hlaav** ‘(classifier *lub*) spring’ (Xiongs).

- **caij ntuj kub** ‘summer’ (Xiongs).

- **caij ntuj naag** ‘rainy season’ (Xiongs).

- **caij ntuj no** ‘winter’ (Xiongs).

- **caijnyoog** ‘time’:

Peb Moob suav caijnyoog yog siv tsaj lub npe ua cov cim ntaus caij ntaus nyoog.

We Mong count time by using the names of animals to remember the seasons and the times.

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.

A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months.

Moob siv moog zoo le nuav:

The Mong use them as follows:

HLI – TSAJ HLI

Month – Animal of the Month

1 hlis – luav hli

1st month – month of the rabbit

2 hlis – zaaj hli

2nd month – month of the dragon

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month

4 hlis – neeg hli

4th month – month of the horse

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month

[Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.]

6 hlis – dlev hli

6th month – month of the dog

7 hlis – qab hli

7th month – month of the chicken

8 hlis – lab hli

8th month – month of the monkey

9 hlis – npua hli

9th month – month of the pig

*10 hlis – naag hli****

10th month – month of the rat***

*** *xub sau naag rua lub 10 hli, naag taag huv ib lub xyoos.*

*** if one begins to catch rats in the tenth month, the rats will be gone for a year.

*11 hlis – nyuj hli*****

11th month – month of the ox****

**** *nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag* [typo for *tsaug?*] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

**** in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain, the harvest is in this month.

12 *hlis – tsuv hli******

12th month – month of the tiger*****

***** *noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

***** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

- **caij pw** ‘bedtime, sleeping time’ (Xiongs).

- **cais** ‘to branch, to divide, to portion out, to share, to distribute, to send away, to separate’ (Xiongs):

kev cais ‘separation, sending away, branching’ (Xiongs).

cais qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to be separated continuously].

- **cais** ‘a period of time’:

Yog le tsi tau, ca peb fib mej quas tsug. ... Yog le ca peb fib mej quas cais.

‘If we have lost the contest, let us return to you for a rematch after a time. ... Let us return to you after a while’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 3).

Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab tsi txawj mob, qom cais tsi muaj tuag. Meb muab kuv Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws ntaus tuag taag. Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab yuav muaj mob, qom cais yuav muaj tuag.

‘On the face of the earth human beings for millennia have not known illness. For ages there has been no death. The two of you have beaten me, Nplooj Lwg the Toad, to death. On earth human beings for millennia will experience illness. For ages there will be death’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **cais** ‘then’, ‘Well, ...’, ‘so now it’s time for’, ‘whereupon’:

Luas has tas, ‘koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?’ nua cais koj teb has tas, ‘yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb’ nua nawb!

‘When he says, “What would you like to eat?”, then you answer that if he has some dry planks, then all you want is a bit of dry plank together with rice in cold water’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

Yawm Dlaab, nwg tug yawm yij, moog hloov tau khaubdluag los cais ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab txawm moog txhigtuag lawm.

‘When the Spirit, the man’s brother-in-law, had changed his clothes, the two brothers-in-law then went to the funeral’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

Cais Yawm Dlaab ib tsuag tim u

‘Well, there was the spirit with an armful [of meat]’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!

‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab, cais Muam Paajqawm ua lwj ua lam, npaum twg yuav nrug puab rovqaab hab.

‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home, whereupon Muam Paajqawm insisted at all costs on going back with them’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **cais** ‘hall’ (see also *nplaj cai* ‘earth’, *qaum cai* ‘heaven’):

qhov rooj cais ‘the hall door’, the side door of a house as opposed to the main door (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **cais kuj** or **cais ... kuj** ‘so ... then’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab kuj muab tso rovqaab lawm.

‘So the spirit then sent [the man’s father] back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **cais ... txawm** ‘accordingly’, ‘then ... and’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej

‘The Spirit accordingly flew down to the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Tseem tawv ntau, yog ntev nua cais ua peb co, tuablu txawm ua ob co ntaag!

‘If you keep causing trouble, why then lengthwise you’ll make three pieces, and crosswise you’ll make no more than two!’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **cais ... txhaj** ‘so ... then’:

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quasnyaab rua nwg rau.

‘So the sister then took off her straw sandals and gave them to him to put on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua tug nwg dlaab ntxawm, tug nug ntxawg

‘and finally the Spirit said to his brother-in-law, the woman’s younger brother’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

cais nwg tug muam txhaj has rua tug nug ntxawg tas

‘the sister then said to her younger brother’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **caiv** ‘to prohibit, to forbid’ (Xiongs):

Xeem Xyooj caiv qai thau moog kev.

‘The Xyooj clan has a tabu against eating eggs while traveling’ (Lyman p. 337).

Tsi caiv dlaabtsi, xijpeem noj xijpeem haus.

‘There is no tabu. You may eat and drink what you like’ (Lyman p. 337).

Caiv tsi caiv?

‘Is your house tabu?’, customary greeting-phrase used by a Mong of another village who has come from afar to visit (Lyman p. 337).

Ob tug moog txug na, ob namtais yawmtxiv tseem nyav ua npua rooj taag. Puab tseem tsi tau caiv dlhau.

‘When the two of them arrived, [Muam Paajqawm’s] parents had just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit. They were not yet past the period of prohibition’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 18).

Ntxawd, koj koj koj vauv tuaj saib peb kuas, peb nyav ua npua rooj taag. Peb tsi tau caiv dlhau. Meb moog su tom qaabtxhaab tog, ib tsaam peb caiv dlhau meb le mam lug tsev.

‘Dear, you’ve brought your husband to see us, but we’ve just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit. We’re not yet past the period of prohibition. The two of you go rest by the granary and wait. As soon as we’re past the period of prohibition you can come into the house’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

Nusit Chindarsi describes an example of a prohibition that he observed in a Mong Njua village in Chiangmai province in Thailand:

Some of Faitei’s relatives could not come to the ceremony [of sacrificing a pig to the door spirit] that night; they were invited to have their pork in the morning, otherwise no relatives would be allowed to come into the house for three days (Chindarsi 1976:115).

- **caiv**: *kev caiv* ‘prohibition in a taboo’ (Xiongs).

- **Caiv**: *Tuam Caiv*, name of one of the fighters in the Rog Vwm (Crazy War), the Mong rebellion against the French in Indochina from 1919-1921:

Taus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”

When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!” (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

- **caiv qhauv** ‘to fast, do not want to eat’ (Xiongs).

- **caub** ‘(classifier *tug*) foe, adversary, opponent’ (Xiongs).

- **caug**, ‘numeral for tens’ (Xiongs) (see also *caum*):

peb caug ‘thirty’ (Xiongs).

Pebcaug ‘New Year Celebration in Mong culture’ (Xiongs), which takes place on the thirtieth day of the last month of the lunar calendar.

plaub caug ‘forty’ (Xiongs).

tsib caug ‘fifty’ (Xiongs).

- **caug**:

hauv caug ‘knee’ (Xiongs).

plov tub hauv caug ‘(classifier *lub*) kneecap’ (Xiongs).

- **cauj** ‘quickly, rapidly, fast’ (Xiongs).

- **caum**, ‘numeral for tens’ (Xiongs) (see also *caug*):

rau caum ‘sixty’ (Xiongs).

xyaa caum ‘seventy’ (Xiongs).

yim caum ‘eighty’ (Xiongs).

cuaj caum ‘ninety’ (Xiongs).

- **caum** ‘to chase’:

txhaub dle caum mos lwj ‘urge dogs to follow a deer’ (Xiongs).

- **caum cuag** ‘to catch’:

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*
‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

- **caum qaab** ‘to run after’ (Xiongs).

- **caum tau** ‘to catch’ (Xiongs).

- **cauv** ‘finish’ (Xiongs). Possibly from Lao *cóp* ‘to end, to finish, to terminate’.

- **caw** ‘to invite, to bid, to call upon’ (Xiongs).

- **caw** ‘liquor’ (see also *cawv*):

dlej caw ‘(no classifier) drink, liquor, alcohol’ (Xiongs).

Ntaus peb txheej ntawg rua nam tuag. Ua ib txoj caw, muab nam qab tsuj tuag.

‘Cast the divinatory rods three times to communicate with the dead person. Pour out one serving of liquor and trample the chicken to death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **cawm** ‘to save, to support, to get a person or an animal out of danger, to rescue’ (Xiongs).

From Chinese *jiù*.

- **cawm**: *hlaab tauv cawm sa* ‘(classifier *txuj*) safety belt’:

sa txuj hlaab tauv cawm sa ‘put on the safety belt’ (Xiongs).

- **caws** ‘to set a trap’ (Xiongs).

- **caws** ‘to contract; bent, crooked, stooping’ (Xiongs):

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov*

p. 22).

- **caws** ‘to lay down, to sleep’ (Xiongs).

- **caws qa** ‘to hop’:

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwmlob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj pawg, quaj mi-aub.

‘But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried “Miau”.’ (Ceebpov p. 27.)

- **caws plhaw** ‘to hop’ (Xiongs).

- **cawv** ‘(no classifier) alcohol, liquor’ (Xiongs) (see also *caw*):

kuv nam txum ib hub cawv ‘my mother ferments a jar (a barrel) of alcohol’ (Xiongs).

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus

‘Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 23).

kuv muab Sub Tuam nqug lug haus cawv hov.

‘I will pull Sub Tuam over to drink the liquor’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 23).

has laub ib txum pib cawv rua Sub Tuam haus.

‘pour a cup of liquor for Sub Tuam to drink’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 23).

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 31.)

- **cawv**: *haus cawv xeeb* ‘to drink liquor in honor of someone’s birthday’:

Muaj ib xyoos, Nuj Yob namtxiv txawm moog nrug Yawm Xeev haus cawv xeeb, cais puab txhaj muab ob tug txhaus cawv tuag taagnrho lawm lauj!

‘One year, Nuj Yob’s parents went to a wine drinking ceremony in honor of the ruler’s birthday, and he forced liquor upon them until they died’ (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 73).

- **cawv**: *ib txum cawv* ‘a batch of liquor’:

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus hab tua ob tug lauv qab saam coj moog tso rua peg.

‘Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full, and kill a capon and bring it and leave it up there’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 23).

- **cawv**: *qaug cawv* ‘drunk’ (Xiongs):

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.

‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 32).

- **cawv**: *tug quav cawv* ‘drinker’ (Xiongs).

- **ce**: *naab pluajce* ‘ribbon-snake’, ‘a small, white, very poisonous snake’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 55), ‘a kind of snake with a flat body’ (Bertrais):

“*Es koj puas ntshai naab pluajce?*” “*Aub! naab pluajce, tsi has oj. Kuv ntshai ntshai le oj*”.

“Then are you afraid of ribbon-snakes?” “Oh my! Don’t talk about ribbon snakes. I’m very afraid of them.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 22-23.)

“*Nuav yog dlaabtsi niv yuam?*” “*Koj tsi saib ntshai yog naab pluajce pob*”. *Tes aub yaub! nam puj dlaab nam ntshais tuag pis tsag lawm lauj.*

“What is this?” “You don’t suppose it might be a ribbon snake.” Then – oh my! – the female spirit’s daughter died instantly. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23.)

- **ceb** ‘dirty’ (Xiongs).

- **ceb laaj** ‘difficult’, from Chinese *jiānnán*:

ntshai koj moog thawj dlev, ceb laaj zuv luas tsev.

‘Now if you are reborn as a dog, you will have the hardship of guarding someone’s house’ (*Initiation* p. 138).

- **ceb muag** ‘dirty face’ (Xiongs).

- **ceg** ‘(classifier *tug*) leg’ (Xiongs):

tu ceg ‘to be mutilated’ (Xiongs) [have one’s leg cut off].

- **ceg** ‘(classifier *tug*) branch; (no classifier) section’ (Xiongs):

Rua cuaj ceg kab es muaj ntawv moog thawj thab, / lug rua ceg kws es muaj ntawv moog thawj thws.

‘Where the street branches into nine were documents of reincarnation. / At the intersection were documents of rebirth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **ceg kaum** ‘(classifier *lub*) corner’ (Xiongs).

- **ceg rooj** ‘table leg’ (Xiongs):

Ntxawm moog nqaa hlo plaub choj nyaj lug xab ceg rooj.

‘Ntxawm brought four ingots of silver to put under the legs of the table’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **ceg txawb** ‘(classifier *tug*) stand, leg stand’ (Xiongs).

- **cej** ‘under, below’:

ndlwg quas ndlo rua Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab moog cej zeb. ... Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj

quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

‘It flowed under Ntxwj Nyoog’s stones. ... It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog’s wellsprings’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Txib leej tub tij khaiv leej tub kwv ntsuag zog cej yaag peb nti, ntsuag zog sau yaag plaub nti coj lug ua neej dlaab lub chaw txuas lug.

‘We sent your older son and told your younger son to measure three finger-lengths below the joint, and four finger-lengths above the joint, and bring it to serve as the place of connection between humans and spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11; referring to making the bamboo divinatory rods which are cast during the funeral ceremony to ascertain whether communication has been established between the human world and the spirit world).

- **cej** ‘buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum* and *Fagopyrum tataricum*)’ (Bertrais cej; *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* jex; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* jex; additional citations in Michael Johnson, *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*):

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam muab ib naab moov cej hab ib naab moov kuam rua koj nqaa moog tsev.

If you want to go home, tell your sister to give you a bag of buckwheat flour and a bag of grits to carry home. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13.)

- **cej dlaab** ‘neck, throat’:

txhaa cej dlaab ‘cervical vertebrae’ (Xiongs).

Nwg raab taus yaa moog ntsa nkaus tug nam zaaj ib saab cejdlaab

‘The axe flew through the air and impaled the dragon on one side of his neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

nwg raab taus phua tawg kws nwg laim moog ntsa nam zaaj cejdlaab

‘his axe for splitting firewood which he had flung and impaled the dragon’s neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

Dlaig nkaus nwg cejdlaab

‘It will catch in his throat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **cejdlaab poob** (literally “the neck falls”) ‘one’s head is cut off’:

Siv Yig Muas tuab ntaag cejdlaab poob tawv.

‘Siv Yig Muas beheaded him with one blow of his sword’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

Siv Yig Muas tuab ntaag cejdlaab poob ntsoog

‘and Siv Yig Muas with one blow of his sword cut off his head’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **cej laag** ‘wall’, ‘walled city’, in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the walls or walled cities that a dead person encounters on the journey to heaven:

Koj leej tub tuag, xaa koj tuaj txug nuav, cej laag qaab ntaiv ntuj.

‘O you who have died, I have brought you this far, to the wall at the bottom of the stairway to heaven.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14.)

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas tev taum qej taum rhawv tes koj tsi tim saib.

‘When you reach the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, pay no attention to those who peel lima beans and rhawv beans.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas nug koj has tas; Koj yog nplajteb leej tuabneeg, koj yuav lug ua dlaabtsi?

‘When you reach the wall at the top of the stairway to heaven, they will ask you: You are a human being of the earth. Why have you come here?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj. Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj

‘Go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven. Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, muaj peb txuj kev.

‘Go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, where there are three roads’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas qab qua koj qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if their chicken crows first and your chicken responds, then it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors’ dwelling’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18).

- **cem** ‘to open, to lift the cover, to uncover’ (Xiongs).

- **ces** ‘then, so’ (Xiongs).

- **ces** ‘(no classifier) tea’ (Xiongs):

lub taub rau dlej ces ‘teapot’ (Xiongs).

- **cev** ‘to give, to hand out, to tender’ (Xiongs):

Rooj Ntawv Cev Lug

‘The Publication Board’s Words of Presenting [this Book to Its Readers]’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 3, title of Preface).

muab tug neeg cev nkaus hluas rua dlaab Ntxawg

‘brought the horse and handed its tether over to Uncle Ntxawg’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **cev** ‘(classifier *lub*) body’ (Xiongs):

Hlub ua ntxhej tis ntxhuv dlaab ... Hlub ua ntxhej pes ntxhuv cev.

‘It grew luxuriantly in spirit ... It grew luxuriantly in body’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **cev** ‘(no classifier) suit of clothes’ (Xiongs):

cev rig tsho nuav xoob lawm ‘this suit is big’ (Xiongs).

Koj moog nrhav tau koj puj qaab tab le chaw. Koj yawm qaab tsho le cev kws
‘Go find the bottom section of your grandmother’s skirt, the bottom part of your grandfather’s jacket’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 78).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **cev**, a kind of tree, called *gòupí shù* ‘gou-bark tree’ in Chinese (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 159 jed), the fibers of whose bark are used to make a kind of strong paper and to weave cloth:

Xueliang Ma and Jin Dan describe *gòupí* paper as follows:

Gòupí paper is a kind of relatively thick and solid paper, made using *gòupí* fibers as the raw material, not suitable for writing, often used to wrap clothing or used to protect against rain and damp after being steeped in tung oil (Ma and Jin 1983:297-298).

During the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, the dead person’s mouth is covered with a piece of cloth. According to Yaj Vam Thaiv:

If one has no cloth, one can just cut a piece of bamboo paper or of cev paper about the width of a palm or so (Yaj 1987:47).

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the dead person is instructed to tell the spirits not to try to follow the chanter as he returns to the world of living. In one version, the dead person is instructed to say:

Tes kuv rau khau maaj kuv tsuj tau ncaaj. / Yawm txiv yawm quas tsi rau khau cev tsuj taw yuamkev.

‘I am wearing shoes made of hemp. My steps are straight. / The old man is wearing shoes made from the bark of the cev-tree. His footsteps wander from the path’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

In the same version of the *Qhuab Ke*, the dead person is instructed to look at the paper hung in the house in order to know whether it the house of his ancestors:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors’ garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors’ house.

Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev

tshab.

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors' new home.

Roog taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors' garden!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18.)

- **cev**: *lawv cev* 'to fit well' (Xiongs).
- **cev**: *nchuav cev* 'to miscarry, to abort' (Xiongs).
- **cev**: *ntxuav cev* 'to take a bath' (Xiongs).
- **cev**: *nyob txug ... yum cev* 'to seek knowledge':

In the version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant presented in *Initiation*, the primordial human couple are told that they must *nyob txug* and *yum cev* Ntxwj Nyoog's bed in order to be able to have children:

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: "Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to nyob txug Ntxwj Nyoog's bed of silk and you will have children."

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: "Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to yum cev Ntxwj Nyoog's bed of satin, and you will get them." ' (*Initiation* p. 122.)

In his French translation of this couplet (*Initiation* p. 21), Lemoine translates the expression as "seek knowledge (*querir la connaissance*) on Ndzeu Shi Nyong's bed". The meaning may be that the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth must learn how to have sex first before they will be able to have children.

- **cev**: *sawv cev* 'to represent':

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.

A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

- **cev nyas**, the main section of the baby-carrier (*Grandmother's Path* p. 133):

plawv cev nyas, the center of the main section of the baby-carrier. The batik foundation is indigo/white or indigo/light blue with red and yellow applique sewn in the spaces left in the batik pattern. (*Grandmother's Path* p. 133.)

- **cev taab seeb** 'not being pregnant' (Xiongs). From Chinese *dānshēn* 'single, unmarried, without a boyfriend'.

- **cev teg** 'to stretch out one's hand to do something':

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj

nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **cev xeeb tub** ‘to be pregnant’:

cev xeeb tub tau ob hli lug lawm ‘being pregnant for two months already’ (Xiongs).

- **ceeb** ‘to surprise, to wonder’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jīng* ‘to surprise, startle, alarm’.

- **ceeb**, from Chinese *jiān* ‘within a definite time or space’, in *yaajceeb* ‘the yang world, the world of living human beings’, from Chinese *yángjiān*, and *yeebceeb* ‘the yin world, the spirit world’, from Chinese *yīnjiān*:

One speaks of being “on the yang world” (*sau yaajceeb*) but “in the yin world” (*rua yeebceeb*).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world, but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world which are causing the person to be sick’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **Ceeb**: *Looj Ceeb* ‘Long Cheng [a town in northern Laos], from Lao *Lòong Cèeng*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4):

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

- **ceeb**: *tseem ceeb* ‘important, worthwhile, worthy’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhèngjīng*:

Kev lis kev cai yog ib yaam kws tseem ceeb heev
‘Tradition is something which is very important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Qhov kws tseem ceeb tshaaj plawg
‘The thing that was most important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **ceebpov** ‘gold amulet’, name of the title character in *Ceebpov*, who magically enters a gold amulet, from Chinese *jīn bǎo*:

Muaj ob namtxiv Suav muaj ib tug ntxhais lub npe hu ua Ceeb Pov nua
‘There was a Chinese couple who had a daughter named Gold Amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8)

hab wb muab lub nyuas ceebpov nua rua koj koj moog yaug ncauj yaug lug
‘and we will give you this gold amulet to take with you as your means of sustenance’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9; in giving Los Xaab the ceebpov (gold amulet), the Chinese couple are giving him their daughter Ceeb Pov, who, unbeknownst to Los Xaab, is inside the ceebpov).

Tes cov nyuj cov neeg dlha ndlaag quas nab lug rua huv lub nyuas ceebpov tes pluj taag rua huv.

‘The vast herds of cattle and horses all disappeared into the little gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov*

p. 17).

Cav Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug txawm muab lub nyuas ceebpov nyag tuag kab lawm lauj. Los Xaab pw pw Los Xaab tsim lug na cav nyuas ceebpov dlu dlav

‘At once, Los Tuam and Los Lwm stole the gold amulet. Los Xaab was sleeping, and when he awoke, there was no trace of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 25-26).

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam mlob npuav quas nreeg ceebpov

‘The cat took the gold amulet firmly in his mouth’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Rov lug txug tes Ceeb Pov tawm plawg huv lub nyuas ceebpov lug

‘They had brought her back and so now Ceeb Pov came right out of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **ceebtoom** ‘to inform, to advise, to prevent, to forestall’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jīngdòng*.

- **ceeb tsheej** ‘heaven, paradise’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jīngchéng* ‘capital city of a country’:

ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heaven’ (Xiongs).

lub ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heaven’ (Xiongs).

ntsig txug ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heavenly’ (Xiongs).

This City is nothing other than the totality of the beyond. The use of this Chinese term is an expression of the influence of the Chinese Hell, conceived of as a citadel (*Initiation* p. 100).

Of all the shamans that I know, there are hardly any other than Chong Tchor, Tsa Seu, Tchang Ying, and myself who are able to cross the Kong Tong bridge, which leads to the City (*Tiing Tch’eng*, ceeb tsheej). When one arrives at the entrance of the bridge, there is a crowd. As for me, I get down from my horse, I leave my horse there. I say that I’m going to the other side and I ask to be given a permit, and to be lent a mount. I borrow a horse of the dead, a wooden horse (a bier made of sticks) to pass to the other side. There, there is another huge lake, where Ngo A [Nkauj Ab] is. If, once there, I learn that the soul has already been washed, this signifies that the sick person has died. There is nothing left for me to do but go back. For one begins to wash the face at the home of Ngao [sic] A before beginning the rites of washing and dressing in this world. In this case, I have barely returned from my shamanic journey when it is announced to me that the sick person has died! (*Entre* pp. 160-161.)

- **ceeg**: *caws ceeg* ‘curled up’:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **ceem** ‘to temper metal’ (Xiongs).

- **ceem**: *muaj ceem* ‘hard, forcefully’:

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

- **ceev** ‘to keep, to guard, to store’ (Xiongs):

phau ntawv ceev nyaj ‘accounting book’ (Xiongs).

- **ceev** ‘fast, quickly’ (Xiongs):

lub tsheb dlha ceev ‘the car runs fast’ (Xiongs).

Nwg txawm dlha ceev ceev tawm ‘s/he then quickly runs away’ (Xiongs).

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **ceev faaj** ‘to be careful of, to be prepared, to be alert, to be thoughtful’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jǐnfǎng* ‘to guard against, beware of’.

- **ci** ‘to shine, to glitter, to sparkle; bright, brilliant, shiny’ (Xiongs):

ci nplaag ‘sparkling, flashing’ (Xiongs).

na cav ca le pum kem qhov ci kaa quas lug rua tom u lawm.

‘he suddenly saw from afar something gleaming in the distance’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

ob tug nam lujtxwv dlub dlub mas nim rog rog ci quas npuaj

‘two black mules, fat and gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Ob tug nim xauj xauj tes Los Xaab quaspuj ib nyuas tig saib; Ci nplaag!

‘They kept peeking at them and then Los Xaab’s wife turned to look and she was gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncu ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

Nwg nkaag moog ib nyuas ntsiv xwb, txawm tawm plawg rua ib lub nam tebchaws ci ntsaag quas ab.

‘When he had gone a small distance [into the cave], he emerged into a gleaming, bright

country' (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43).

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab
 'there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly' (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **ci** 'to toast' (Xiongs):

ua cav Lob Lw, nwg tug quasyawg taabtom ci ib tug nqaj nraaj dlawb ua npau roj ua txhe huv qhov cub.
 'and, why, Lob Lw, her husband, was toasting the meat of a white pheasant, boiling the fat and letting it drip into the fire' (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

- **ci**: *kawm txuj kawm ci* 'to study':

cais koj nrug kuv ua dlej ua num hab kawm txuj kawm ci peb lub hlis kuas tav
 'so you work with me and study for three months so that you are ready' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Yog tas, koj xaav kuas kuv nyob kawm txuj kawm ci, cais kuv yuav tau nyob ua le koj has.
 'If it is that you want me to stay and study, then I will stay as you said' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Thaus kawg, Yog Nraug Ntsuag txhaj zoo sab nrug nwg tijlaug nyob kawm txuj kawm ci.
 'Finally, Yob the Orphan was happy to stay to study with his older brother' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntshais kawm txuj kawm ci, hab kawm laajlim tegtaw thaus yau lug tav hluas taagnrho.

'Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm and studied magic and martial arts from the time they were small till the time they came of age' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

- **ci**: *txujci* 'knowledge, know how' (Xiongs).

- **cig** 'to burn, to light up, to set fire, to inflame' (Xiongs):

cig plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to flame up].

The Xiongs do not translate *cig plawg*. The translation 'to flame up' is from Heimbach (p. 13 *cig plaws*).

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab
 'there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly' (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **cim** '(classifier *lub*) season; period; planting cycle' (Xiongs). From Chinese *jì* 'season'.

- **cim** '(classifier *lub* or *tug*) a mark, a sign; to remind, to remember, to mark, to bear in mind, to remark' (Xiongs), from Chinese *jì*:

mej ntaus cim le caag tseg?

‘what sign will you give us to remember you by?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 61).

- **cim**, rhythmic syllable in poetry:

Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws teb lis nqhawv qaab cim zeb tuaj

‘Nplooj Lwg the Toad replied at once from under the stone’ (*Initiation* p. 123).

- **cim ... ca** ‘to bring to mind’:

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwm kaab mas lub ntsab yog has tas, puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca ntawm dlaim ntawv hov nua nawb.

‘The essential meaning of the three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper is that they bring to mind Vaajkaav’s mouth and two eyes, there on the paper’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

- **cimxeeb** ‘memory’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *jì* ‘to remember’ + *xīn* ‘heart’:

Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Dlaw

‘Memoire of Walnut Valley’ (*Cim Xeeb*, title).

- **cis**, rhythmic syllable in poetry:

Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws teb lis nqhawv qaab cim zeb tuaj

‘Nplooj Lwg the Toad replied at once from under the stone’ (*Initiation* p. 123).

- **cisnkeeg** ‘lazy’ (Xiongs):

koj tsi yoom qheb qhovrooj tug dlev dlub thawj dlev cis nkeeg hov lug tsev le huas

‘I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

- **cisqais** ‘(no classifier) secret, fault, mistake’ (Xiongs).

- **co** ‘(no classifier) pieces, a bit, part, portion’ (Xiongs) (see also *cov*):

nqaj ‘(thooj, co, cov) meat, flesh, prey’ (Xiongs).

Tseem tawv ntau, yog ntev nua cais ua peb co, tuablu txawm ua ob co ntaag!

‘If you keep causing trouble, why then lengthwise you’ll make three pieces, and crosswise you’ll make no more than two!’, i.e. I’ll chop you to bits with my sword (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **cob** ‘to confide, to give up to’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jiāo*.

- **cob** ‘to be about to connect, to almost come together, like the tips of buffalo horns almost touching’ (Djoua Xiong personal communication), from Chinese *jiāo*:

ua nkhaus quas vog le nam kubtwm yuav si cob.

‘the two lines [of soldiers] curving around them in the shape of a water buffalo’s horns with the tips almost touching’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 4).

- **cob** ‘to train, to teach’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiāo*:

cov tuabneeg kws paub ua neeb twb yog cov dlaab nuav ua cov cob hab qha paub.

‘the people who knew how to perform shamanic rites, it was in fact these spirits who were the ones who trained and taught them’ (*Ua npausuav* p. 22).

- **cob** ‘to join, to solder, to weld’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jiāo* ‘glue, gum, resin, sap, anything sticky, to stick something on something, to stick things together’. In Chinese and in White Hmong **cob** means only to glue with gum or resin but in Mong Leng it also means to weld or to solder.

xwbcob ‘sticklac (used by the Mong to cement knife handles)’ (Xiongs).

- **cob**: *tig ib neig* [typo for *ncig*?] *cob nkaus* ‘make a complete turn’ (Xiongs).

- **Cobtsib** ‘(classifier *leej*) the Vietnamese’ (Djoua Xiong personal communication). From Chinese *Jiāozhǐ*, an ancient state in what is now Vietnam.

- **cog** ‘to grow, to plant’ (Xiongs).

- **cog** ‘to promise’:

tes yog qhov kws peb sis cog tseg.

‘and so it will be as we promised one another’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 61).

- **cog lug** ‘to promise, to swear, to agree; to promise, to agree upon’ (Xiongs):

kev cog lug ‘a promise, an agreement’ (Xiongs).

- **cog taum** ‘to immunize against smallpox’ (Xiongs).

- **coj** ‘to guide, to lead, to manage’ (Xiongs):

tug coj ‘the leader, the guide’ (Xiongs).

tug thawj coj ‘the leader, the guide’ (Xiongs).

coj rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to manage firmly?]

- **coj** ‘to bring’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas coj zuag nrug kojle? ‘Do you bring a comb with you at all?’ (Xiongs.)

Muab tau nam lauv qab tes coj nyaj hab nam lauv qab lug tsev lawm.

‘He picked up the rooster and brought the silver and the rooster home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

When a person is born, their placenta, called their *tsho* ‘upper garment, shirt’, is buried in the floor of the house. When a person dies, they must return to the house where they were born and dig up their “shirt” to wear before they can continue on their journey to meet their ancestors:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag coj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj

ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrau ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuj ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **coj lug sib tim** ‘to compare with each other’ (Xiongs).

- **com** ‘to tie, to fasten, to bind’ (Xiongs).

- **com** ‘palanquin’, from Chinese *jiào*:

Taag ntawd, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug kuj caij quas nreeg sau lub nam com ntshw kws tawgpaaj quas paug

‘Then Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab came riding firmly on an elephant-palanquin which was festooned with flowers’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub. Cais luas yuav tsum muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw, hab muab com kwv kuv moog xwb!

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law. Then they have to take ntshuav and elephants, and take a palanquin and carry me on their shoulders!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **com**: *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm*, names of two major characters in a folktale:

In the story “Ob Txivtub hab Dlaabntxaug” (The Father and Son and the Ntxaug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 34-38), a man and his son are on their way to visit their kinsmen and they stop at the house of a ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit invites them to spend the night. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the man to sleep on and says that the boy can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night the boy begins to groan. The man lights a lamp and gets up to look and sees that the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters have become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest and that the boy is dead.

The man flees in terror and meets *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm*, who insist that he tell them why he is fleeing. The man says that he is fleeing because he and his son fell into the country of the ntxaug spirits and the ntxaug spirits killed his son.

Yaaj Comxwm and *Pej Comxwm* tell the man not to be frightened and ask him to take them to the ntxaug spirits. When they arrive, the ntxaug spirit couple welcomes the three of them and invites them to spend the night.

The ntxaug spirits spread out bedding in the main room for the man to sleep on and say that *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm* can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirits’ two daughters. In the middle of the night, there is no sound coming from the bed, so the male ntxaug spirit lights a lamp and gets up to look. He sees that his daughters have each been cut in half (“one made two sides, two made four sides”). He calls upon his daughters to join themselves back together and they do so, but then they are each cut in half again.

“These two oxen have sharp horns”, cries the male ntxaug spirit and calls upon other ntxaug spirits to come and do battle with Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tuck razors in their mouths, the folds of their arms, and the hollows of their knees. When the ntxaug spirits attack them, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm cut off the ntxaug spirits’ hands.

The ntxaug spirits are terrified and ask how they can escape. Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the ntxaug spirits to go inside a gourd. Then Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm plug up the gourd and throw it into a river. A Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river catches the gourd in his net and starts to unplug it but, when the Chinese man hears the ntxaug spirits inside the gourd say that as soon as they are free they are going to eat him, the Chinese man plugs the gourd up again and throws it back in the river and the river carries it away.

Once the ntxaug spirits are gone, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm sort through the ntxaug spirits’ silver and find such a huge amount of silver that they are unable to carry it home and so the story ends.

- **com txaj** ‘a bundle of ritual paper or spirit-money’:

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, a bundle of ritual paper is given to the dead person to reimburse the spirits of the place:

Neej Tsu as koj nyob Phuaj Hoos nua teb le chaw, sov koj haus luas pes tsawg dlej, tsauv luas pes tsawg le tawg, muab ib com nyaj nuav rua koj coj moog them luas nqe dlej nqe tawg koj le tau kev moog tov Neej Tsu!

‘O Neej Tsu ... when you lived here in the area of Phou Hong [a mountain in Laos], you drank I don’t know how much of someone else’s water, burned I don’t know how much of someone else’s firewood. Take this bundle of money with you to pay for the cost of the water and the firewood and you will be able to go on your way, Neej Tsu!’ (*Initiation* p. 131).

In a folktale a Pujntxoog (a female spirit) is explaining to Nuj Yob (the protagonist) that Nuj Yob’s dead father has made arrangements in the spirit world for her to marry Nuj Yob:

Nuj Yob, koj txiv muab tau peb com txaj ntawd saws kuv rua koj nua es
‘Nuj Yob, your father paid me these three bundles of money on your behalf’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84).

- **cos** ‘(classifier *lub*) pimple, papule, pustule, wart; birth mark, bud, knot; button’ (Xiongs):

pob cos ‘knot’ (Xiongs).

- **cos hauv caug** ‘(classifier *lub*) kneecap’ (Xiongs).

- **cos pob** ‘a knot’:

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging

everywhere, poor to the point of death' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **cos plav** 'scar' (Xiongs).

- **cos taw** 'ankle' (Xiongs).

- **cov** '(classifier *tug*) elephant's trunk' (Xiongs).

- **cov** 'indefinite article used before a plural noun' (Xiongs):

cov cuabyeej toom txeem 'the household goods' (Xiongs).

cov miv nyuas 'children' (Xiongs).

cov raug quab yuam 'the oppressed people' (Xiongs).

cov tuab neeg pluag 'poor people' (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
'The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975' (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim 'the soldiers will have to withdraw' (Xiongs).

Cov tub saab qhwv tau puab lawm. 'The thieves encircled them already' (Xiongs).

cov txiv nuav xwm hwm lawm 'these fruits are too small' (Xiongs).

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo 'to be among good friends' (Xiongs).

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem
's/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people' (Xiongs).

Puab ua cov tshawv kev 'They are the ones who create the way' (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwm lawm
'They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly' (Xiongs).

Tsi xob zwv koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav
'Don't sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes' (Xiongs).

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej
'Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light' (Xiongs).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

'All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy' (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

'Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other a little book like

this to serve as a model' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

'During the 1700's, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand' (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!
'I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Another word of similar meaning is *tej*. It appears that, at least in some contexts, *cov* and *tej* may be used interchangeably:

Los Tuam and Los Lwm were taking care of a place where their servants (*cov qhev*) had prepared an exceedingly broad clearing and had unpacked the horses and had made obeisance to Los Xaab, and as they were about to approach, Ceeb Pov said, "Los Xaab, oh Los Xaab, take the cattle, the horses and the servants (*tej qhev*) and shut them up." He called loud and long and the servants (*cov qhev*) quickly drove the cattle and horses to him (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **cov**, used as a classifier with mass nouns (see also *co*):

cov dlau 'snow':

cov dlau taab tom yaaj 'the snow is melting' (Xiongs).

cov dlej 'water':

txhuav cov dlej tawm 'pump the water out' (Xiongs).

cov kua 'juice':

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev 'the juice spills because it is too full' (Xiongs).

cov mov 'rice':

cov mov muav [typo for *nuav*?] *zas heev* 'this rice is very soft' (Xiongs).

cov nqaj 'meat':

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm 'they already sorted out the quality meat' (Xiongs).

cov ntsev 'salt':

cov ntsev zeem lawm 'the salt melts' (Xiongs).

cov phev 'sperm' (Xiongs).

cov thee ‘charcoal’:

cov thee tsi tau kub txaus ‘the charcoal is not hot enough’ (Xiongs).

cov txo ‘remainder’:

cov txo yog hlau ‘the remainder is metal or iron’ (Xiongs).

- **cov** ‘the group’:

tug ntshab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le

‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs) [“this smell overcomes completely the whole group”].

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38) [“that group then fled completely into the gourd”].

- **cov** ‘unclear, ambiguous, not straight’ (Xiongs).

- **cov kws** ‘those who, the one’s who’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm

‘Those who were timid fled first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **cov lug** ‘one’s words, a speech’:

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “Peb yuav tsum sib hlub”

s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

- **cov qhua vauv** ‘the bridegroom’s party’ (Xiongs).

- **cov qhua xeem** ‘clans and surnames’:

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua

‘When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with houses roofed with banana leaves’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **cov twg** ‘who (plural)’ (Xiongs).

- **coob** ‘many’ (Xiongs):

Mej coob tshaaj peb ‘you are more than us’ (Xiongs).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’

(*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **cooj** ‘(classifier *lub*) henhouse, poultryhouse, henroost’ (Xiongs).
- **coos** ‘do not have enough; needy’ (Xiongs).
- **cu** ‘to shake, to agitate’ (Xiongs).
- **Cu** ‘Mien’. The ethnic name *Cu* may be a bilingual pun, since in Mong Leng *Cu* ‘Mien’ is homophonous with *cu* ‘to shake’ and in Chinese *Yáo*, a general term for the Mien and other peoples, is homophonous with *yáo* ‘to shake’.

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. ... Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thoov: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg
 ‘We Mong have many Clans. ... Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

- **cu**: *kev cu* ‘shaking, agitation’ (Xiongs).
- **cub** ‘(no classifier) group, bunch’ (Xiongs).
- **cub** ‘to steam, to cook on steam’ (Xiongs).
- **cub** ‘fireplace’:

ib cub tawg ‘a fire’ (Xiongs).

qhov cub ‘fireplace’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub ‘Lying on the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ (*Dlaab Qhuas*, contents and p. 35, title of a story explaining the origin of the custom referred to in the title).

- **cub**: *dlaab ntug cub* ‘spirit of the edge of the fireplace’:

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab
 ‘You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **cub**: *nraag qaabcub* ‘down by the fireplace’:

“*Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhib ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?’*”

“*Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?’*” (*Lug Nruag*

Tsuv p. 44.)

- **cug** ‘(classifier *tug*) treadmill’ (Xiongs; *Tswv Yim* p. 15):

tsag 1/ Raab tsag txaug qhov cug.

‘tsag 1/ Cutter for chiseling the hole a in treadmill’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **cug** ‘to collect in a vessel’ (Xiongs):

“*Coj lub fwbtaub tuaj ua dlaabtsi?*” “*Lub fwbtaub nuav, coj tuaj cug nraug ntshaav*”.

“Why did you bring the gourd dipper?” “This gourd dipper, I brought it to catch young men’s blood.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **cug** ‘to set on one’s back’:

cug zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to set on one’s back for a moment].

cais nam tsuv ca le lug cug nrausqaum

‘then the tiger set her on his back’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

- **cug**: *tuav cug* ‘to work a treadmill’ (Heimbach p. 329 *tuav cos*):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“*Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es*”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **cuj** ‘strongest, biggest’ (Xiongs).

- **cum**: *xaab cum* ‘tripod’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 5). From Chinese *sān* ‘three’ + *jué* ‘foot’.

- **cuv**, intensifier:

tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev

‘lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave’

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **cua** ‘to bite, to chew, to crack, to break with the teeth’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug muab cov nam nplej cua cua taag ob tug le hlub.

‘When they had chewed up the stock of rice they were fully grown’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64).

- **cua** ‘(no classifier) the wind’ (Xiongs):

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for *qaum*?] *teb dlhau qaab teb.*

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the

speaker is a cloud).

- **cua**: *khaub lig cua* ‘tornado’:

khaub lig cua muab tshoob lawm ‘the tornado blows away’ (Xiongs).

- **cua**: *naag xub naag cua* ‘thunderstorm’:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **cua**: *txais cua* ‘to guess’:

Nwg laam txais cua le xwb ‘s/he just guesses’ (Xiongs).

- **cua**: *xuv tooj cua* ‘(classifier *lub*) radio’ (Xiongs, *Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **cua** **suv** ‘warm air’ (Xiongs).

- **cuab** ‘to set a trap, to lend a snare, to trap, to snare, to entrap’ (Xiongs):

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog.

‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

- **cuab** ‘to begin’:

Nqai raug phom hab ntoo ntaus tes tug tuag cuab teb le kws has sau nuav. Kuas xaus ib yam le nqai 4 ntaag.

‘In the cantos about being shot and struck by a tree, the dead person begins his or her reply as written here, and ends as in canto 4’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

- **cuab** ‘(classifier *lub*) family’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiā*:

taab cuab taug ‘to be able to support the family, to self support’ (Xiongs).

thaj cuab tsiv ‘to move out with the whole family’ (Xiongs).

- **cuab npua** ‘to call pigs’ (Heimbach p. 19 *cuab npua*):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **cuab tim** ‘to realize what is going on’ (Xiongs).

- **cuab thoj**: *txiv cuab thoj* ‘(classifier *lub*) the guava (fruit)’ (Xiongs). Probably from a Chinese compound *jiā táo* ‘household peach’ which has survived in Mong but not in Chinese.

- **cuab qauv** ‘to begin the model’ (Xiongs).

- **cuabtsaav**, one of the funeral officiants:

The chapter titled Kev paamtug (Funeral Rites) in *Kawm Ntawv* 2 describes the duties of the cuabtsaav as follows:

TUG CUABTSAAV: Yog tug muab dlejcawv nqajmov lug ntawg rua tug tuag tau nqaa moog noj taugkev. Nwg siv ib txwm txheej ntawg lug ntawg.

‘The cuabtsaav is the one who brings water and liquor, meat and rice, to the divination ceremony for the dead person to eat on the way. He uses a pair of divinatory rods to divine’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14).

- **cuab yeej** ‘materials, supplies, tools, implements’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiāyuán* ‘home’:

covcuabyeej ‘tools, equipment, utensils’ (Xiongs).

covcuabyeej toom txeem ‘household goods’ (Xiongs).

cuab yeej cuab taam ‘household things’ (Xiongs).

hab puab coj suav tej cuab yeej toom txeem lug taagnrho.

‘and they carried away all of the household goods of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **cuag** ‘to reach, to catch up, to catch, to make up (time), to overtake, to meet with, to get to, to extend to’ (Xiongs):

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **cuag** ‘related through the marriage of one’s children’:

puj cuag ‘mother-in-law of my daughter’ (*Village* p. 174).

yawg cuag ‘father-in-law of my son or of my daughter’ (*Village* p. 174).

Txawm yog yawm cuag hab puj cuag nrug meb tuaj los ca le coj nrug meb lug tsev.

‘If my daughter’s father-in-law and my daughter’s mother-in-law accompanied the two of you, bring them with you to the house’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 121).

- **cuag**: *caum cuag* ‘to catch’:

Koj yuaav [typo for yuav] tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab

‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

- **cuag caab xuv** ‘straight to the goal’ (Xiongs).

- **cuaj** ‘nine’ (Xiongs):

cuaj caum ‘ninety’ (Xiongs).

cuaj pua ‘nine hundred’ (Xiongs).

cuaj txheeb ‘nine thousand’ (Xiongs).

- **cuaj li nree** ‘to stiffen, become rigid’:

Lug naag tshauv cuaj li nree txhaa caaj qheb.

‘In the light rain it stiffens and becomes as rigid as the core of the branches of a chestnut-tree’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **cuam** ‘(classifier *tug*) gibbon’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Below is a photograph of a gibbon kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **cuam** ‘to put in between, to press together in a frame, or between two strips of wood’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jiā*.

- **cuam**: *kaabcuam* ‘a steel frame’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 104). From Chinese *gāngjià*.

- **cuam**: *paab cuam* ‘to help out’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **cuam khum** ‘selfish’ (Xiongs).

- **cuas**: *dlo cwj quas cuas* or *dlo cwb quas cuas* ‘smooth and featureless’:

Ib tug nyuas tub, tug nyuas ntxhai, kuas ob tug nam dlo cwj quas cuas le ob lub toob.
‘A little boy and a little girl, but they were smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

Ab yab! meb nim zuv meb ob tug nam nyuas txug taav nuav dlo cwb quas cuas le ob lub nam toob.

‘Hey! the two of you watch your two children, up to now smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **cuav** ‘false, deceitful, counterfeit, wrong, feign, not real’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiǎ*:

Ntuj sua teb thaus u, muaj ob tug kwvnpawg Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, hab Cuav Tshoj Tim.
‘In the world of long ago, there were two cousins: Pure One Who Faces Heaven and False One Who Faces Earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

muab tug nyuas vaub cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!
‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **cwb** or **cwj**: *dlo cwj quas cuas* or *dlo cwb quas cuas* ‘smooth and featureless’:

Ib tug nyuas tub, tug nyuas ntxhai, kuas ob tug nam dlo cwj quas cuas le ob lub toob.
‘A little boy and a little girl, but they were smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

Ab yab! meb nim zuv meb ob tug nam nyuas txug taav nuav dlo cwb quas cuas le ob lub nam toob.

‘Hey! the two of you watch your two children, up to now smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **cwj mem** ‘(classifier *tug*) pen’ (Xiongs).

- **cwj mem qhuav** ‘(classifier *tug*) pencil’ (Xiongs).

- **cws** ‘(classifier *tug*) shrimp’ (Xiongs).

CH

- **chaa ntuj** ‘clearing’ (see also *chaav*):

Moog moog tes txawm moog tawm plawg ib chaa ntuj.
‘They travelled until they came out into a clearing’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 11).

- **chaav** ‘(classifier *lub*) room, hall, ward’ (Xiongs) (see also *chaa ntuj*):

Txig tub nyaab hlub pw chaav nuav

‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

hab Ntxawm txhaj yuam pis ntag nwg tawm moog rua lwm chaav tsev lawm.

‘Then Ntxawm pushed him out into another room of the house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **chaav chaw pw** ‘bedroom’:

Tug nam zaaj raug mob lawm es lug pw ntsaaj quas lawg tom nwg chaav chaw pw xwb.

‘The dragon was suffering from his wound and was lying and groaning in his bedroom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **chaav noj mov** ‘dining room’ (Xiongs).

- **chaav nyob** ‘living room’ (Xiongs).

- **chaav pw** ‘bedroom’ (Xiongs).

- **chaav plhob** ‘bathroom, water closet’ (Xiongs).

- **chaav tsev hauv taag** ‘main room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **chaav tsev ua noj** ‘kitchen’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **chais** ‘(classifier *raab*) knife’ (Xiongs), ‘razor, small knife, pocket knife’ (Lyman p. 348):

nav chais ‘blade’ (Xiongs).

raab chais chais plaub ‘razor’ (Xiongs).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv

qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **chais** ‘to peel, to shave, to slice off, to bark, to pick, to pare’ (Xiongs).

- **chaub** ‘to crawl on the belly’ (Xiongs).

- **chaw** ‘bed, bedding’:

Txaaj chaw rua tub ntxhais hluas ‘The bed for the younger sons and daughters’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Pua chaw ntawm ntug cub rua puj dlaab nam ntxhais pw hov.

‘They spread out bedding by the fire for the female spirit’s daughter to lie on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

Awb, sawv es yaws chaw es yuav ngee mivnyuas plig luas mas.

‘Oh my! I got up to gather up my bedding and I found myself holding in my arms a little soul’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **chaw** ‘the right thing or person, the one I really want’, ‘the important thing’:

Ca le tu luas moo ais luas moog luas lauj! Kuv twb nrhav tau chaw

‘Let me break off the engagement with that other guy and let him go his own way. I’ve found the one I really want’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 9).

saib yog koj xaiv tau koj chaw lawm nua, ca le moog koj lug tsev!

‘If you’ve chosen the one you really want, bring him to the house!’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 10).

Koj has tas koj xaiv tau koj chaw lawm nua es ... Zagnua zoo los nyob, tsi zoo los nyob xwb!

‘You said that you’ve chosen the one you really want. Now you’ve got to stay with him whether it’s good or not!’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **chaw** ‘a length of cloth’:

Koj moog nrhav tau koj puj qaab tab le chaw. Koj yawm qaab tsho le cev kws

‘Go find the bottom section of your grandmother’s skirt, the bottom part of your grandfather’s jacket’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 78).

- **chaw** ‘(classifier *lub*) place, space, region, area’ (Xiongs) (see also *chaws*):

Puab txauv chaw lawm ‘They already changed place’ (Xiongs).

Qaab yem khaav hab chaw nyob ‘Porch and place to sit’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

In quadrisyllabic expressions, the word *tebchaws* ‘country’ is split into *teb ... chaw*:

tsiv teb tsaws chaw ‘to flee out, to emigrate, to move’ (Xiongs).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog.
‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **chaw**: *hov txhua chaw* ‘things, goods, articles (including food)’ (Lyman p. 119):

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.

‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth and ran home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **chaw**: *zoo chaw* ‘good place, safe place’ (Xiongs).

- **chaw nraim cev** ‘refuge’ (Xiongs).

- **chaw nyob** ‘address, habitation’ (Xiongs).

- **chaw pw** ‘bed’ (Xiongs):

nwg nim muaj chaw nyob ua si, chaw dlaa dlej, chaw ua num hab muaj chaw pw tuabsi.

‘It had a playroom, a room for bathing, a workroom and a bedroom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **chaw txuas lug** ‘place of communication’, the bamboo divinatory rods used to establish communication between humans and spirits:

Txib leej tub tij khaiv leej tub kwv ntsuag zog cej yaag peb nti, ntsuag zog sau yaag plaub nti coj lug ua neej dlaab lub chaw txuas lug.

‘We sent your older son and told your younger son to measure three finger-lengths below the joint, and four finger-lengths above the joint, and bring it to serve as the place of communication between humans and spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11).

- **chawj** ‘to leave out, to give up, to leave aside, to let go, to insist someone accept an offer’ (Xiongs) (probably, with some changes in meaning, from Chinese *qiú* ‘to beg, entreat, request; to seek, strive’, sometimes with an understood negative, e.g. ‘to give up’ = ‘to [not] strive’):

chiv chawj puam lam ‘all in disorder’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qī qiú bā lài* ‘seven strivings and eight accusations’.

puam chawj ‘let it go, it doesn’t matter, no great importance’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bà qiú* ‘stop striving’.

- **chaws** ‘to pass through an opening’ (Xiongs):

Nwg haus, nwg chaws teg nam tauj rua tom u tom nua.

‘He took the water into his mouth and sprayed it through a handful of reeds in all directions’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **chaws** (see also *chaw*):

teb chaws ‘country, state’ (Xiongs).

thoob teb chaws ‘the whole country’ (Xiongs).

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws. Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries. At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

In quadrisyllabic expressions, the word *tebchaws* ‘country’ is split into *teb ... chaw*:

tsiv teb tsaws chaw ‘to flee out, to emigrate, to move’ (Xiongs).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw

‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21)

ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘these two became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **chaws**: *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **chawv** ‘hardly, rudely, fiercely, severely, urgently, brutally’ (Xiongs).

- **che** ‘(no classifier) spiral, turn, winding; to wind, to make spirals’ (Xiongs). Also written *chev*.

- **cheb** ‘to sweep’ (Xiongs):

kev cheb ‘sweeping’ (Xiongs).

tug cheb ‘the sweeper’ (Xiongs).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug muab nam ncej puj dlaab cheb cheb dlu quas dlav

‘Yob the orphan swept out the female-spirit post thoroughly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **chev** ‘(no classifier) spiral, turn, winding; to wind, to make spirals’ (Xiongs). Also written *che*.

- **cheeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) interior’ (Xiongs):

Lub cheeb tsev Moob

‘The interior of the Mong house’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 22).

- **cheej** ‘(no classifier) a Hmong ancient length measurement from the lower part to the upper

part of a fist' (Xiongs). From Chinese *quán* 'fist'.

- cheej:

fuaam cheej 'to be dying, to be in agony' (Xiongs).

huam cheej 'to writhe in death throes' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

This is a fun loan from 划拳 *huáquán* "to calculate fist" = "to play a game in which the participant guesses the figures the opponent will express with fingers, often as a drinking game". This game is a bit like rock-paper-scissors. When drinking the men will play the game, with a lot of loud enthusiasm, the loser must down another cup of raw liquor. The wild gesticulations of throwing out one's hand with the finger-figures (various configurations of the fingers) look a bit like the death throes of a chicken or animal as it frantically tries to flap its wings/run off at speed. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- cheem 'to try to stop, to stop, to prevent, to hinder' (Xiongs), from Chinese *quàn* 'to advise, urge, exhort, admonish':

kev cheem 'hindrance, impediment, objection' (Xiongs).

Nwg ob sim yuav tua, Ntxawm saib ntshai yuav tsi zoo heev, Ntxawm txhaj cheem Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseg.

'He tried a couple of times to kill it but Ntxawm saw that it might be a very bad idea so she restrained Txheeb Tshoj Theeb' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

- chib 'offending, that hurts' (Xiongs).

- chij '(classifier *tug*) flag, banner' (Xiongs). From Chinese *qí*.

- chim '(no classifier) a short period of time' (Xiongs).

- chim 'to be angry, not pleased unhappy' (Xiongs), from Chinese *qì*:

pob chim 'what makes one angry' (Xiongs).

- chim: *xov chim* 'a rebel', i.e. not a legitimate king (Djoua Xiong, personal communication).

- chim: *sawv xov chim* 'to rebel' (Djoua Xiong, personal communication):

Tabsis tomqaab nuav luas kuj has tas yog luas sawv Xov Chim xwb, vim tas Faabkis yuav txeeb lub tebhaws cais suavdlawg txhaj sawv lug tua tsi pub Faabkis txeeb nkaus xwb.

'But afterwards it was said that people were only rebelling, because the French were going to take away the land, so everyone rose up and came to fight the French, just to prevent them from taking the land' (*Rog Vwm* p. 1).

- chim laaj xeeb 'to be displeased' (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *qì* 'to get angry' + *nán* 'difficult' + *xīn* 'heart':

Ces yuav chim laaj xeeb om. 'We're so unhappy, such pain in our hearts', ending formula for certain Lug Txaj (traditional songs) (*Grandmother's Path* p. 107).

- chim nruj muag quas nreeg 'fiercely angry':

Tes chim nruj muag quas nreeg lauj.
 ‘He became fiercely angry’ (Ceebpov p. 28).

- **chiv** ‘holiday, Sunday’ (Xiongs).

- **chiv** ‘(no classifier) manure, fertilizer’ (Xiongs).

- **chiv**, intensifier:

Cais cov nam hluas nkauj sau qaum ntuj sis ntshi pis chiv
 ‘The young women of heaven whispered to one another’ (Lug Nruag Txa p. 23).

- **chiv** ‘to begin, to start, to originate’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qǐ*.

- **chiv chawj puam lam** ‘all in disorder’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qī qiú bā lài* ‘seven strivings and eight accusations’.

- **chob** ‘to pierce, to sting, to rouse’ (Xiongs).

- **chob** ‘to sew’ (Xiongs):

Ib nub chob lawm cuaj phaab tsoog, / Ib koob lawm cuaj rha laug
 ‘In one day she sewed nine pieces of clothing, / With one needle nine stitches of embroidery’ (Lug Nruag Lom Zem p. 7).

- **choj** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) blanket’ (Xiongs):

ib pob choj
 ‘a bundle of blankets’, ‘a bedroll’ (Kwvhuam pp. 9, 23).

Nwg poob lug nyob ntseev laj, ua tej nam choj luj luj.
 ‘It had fallen face up, forming a huge blanket.’ (Kwvhuam pp. 14-15).

- **choj** ‘(classifier *tug*) bridge’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *qiáo*:

tuam choj ‘to build a bridge’ (Xiongs).

In a folktale, an orphan who has been blinded by his elder brother gropes his way until he comes to a *tsev tuav sab* ‘house for taking hold of the heart’, which is glossed parenthetically as *tsev tuam choj* ‘house with a bridge erected’. He rests there and overhears a tiger, a bear, and a wild boar conversing and learns how to heal his blindness (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 131). The accompanying illustration of the *tsev tuav sab* or *tsev tuam choj*, showing three planks laid in a fork in the road forming a Y-shape, with an open pavilion with a gabled roof – like a covered bridge – built above them, looks exactly like the drawings in Chindarsi (1976:35-37) of the bridges set up on the road to enable wandering souls to come back home.

- **choj neeb**, the bridge which the the *neeb* or helper-spirits that assist a *txiv neeb* (shaman) use to cross between the spirit world and the human world:

Above the [shaman’s] altar is fastened a white cloth, the other end of which is attached to the wall above the door. It is supposed to be the path of the doctor spirits for walking in and out to the altar (Chindarsi 1976:60).

On the arranged day, he installed for the ceremony a small altar consisting of a single board suspended from the wall on the uphill side of the house of his disciple. From there, he deployed the bridge of the helper spirits (*choj neeb*, from Chinese k'iao), a band of black or indigo blue cloth that connects transversely, across the house, the shaman's altar with the front door which faces it (*Entre* p. 19).

- **choj nyaj** 'an ingot of silver':

Ntxawm moog nqaa hlo plaub choj nyaj lug xab ceg rooj.

'Ntxawm brought four ingots of silver to put under the legs of the table' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

'The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

The discussion of ritual paper in Mottin (1982:104-105) suggests that an ingot of spirit-money (*ib choj nyaj dlaab*) may be a sheet of ritual paper in which holes have been cut in the shape of ingots. In one story, a dead man has paid an ingot of silver in the spirit world to arrange for a Pujntxoog (a kind of female spirit connected with tiger spirits) to marry his orphaned son and take care of him. Generally in stories, things of value in the spirit world appear on earth as humble things, and this may be true of the *choj nyaj dlaab* in this story. It is likely that it appears on earth as a sheet of ritual paper like that described by Mottin:

Nuj Yob tig hlo moog saib saib tim lub nyuas kem zeb na cav muaj ib choj nyaj dlaab

'Nuj Yob turned to look at a small crevice in the stone and lo and behold, there was an ingot of spirit-money' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 85).

Nuj Yob saib taag cais tug nam Pujntxoog txhaj moog muab dlaim nyuas khaubhlaab qhwv pis zog choj nyuas nyaj hab cov ntim cov khob nqaa lug tso rua huv nam Pujntxoog lub mej loos lawm.

'When Nuj Yob was finished looking, the Pujntxoog took a rag, wrapped the ingot and the bowls and the cups and put them in her storage basket' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 85).

- **choj plawv xaub** 'thick cotton blanket' (Xiongs).

- **chom** 'bent, crooked, stooping' (Xiongs).

- **chov** '(no classifier) venom' (Xiongs).

- **chua** 'to snatch, to grab':

cais nwg ca le sawv tseeg tim kaum tsev lug ntaus los ntaus chua los chua

'he leapt up from the corner and began hitting and grabbing her' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15).

nwg chua nta ngog, ngog tsi tau.

'when he snatches it to swallow, he will not be able to swallow it' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Muam Paajqawm dlha loo moog saib na cav yog nwg raab nam ncaas. Nwg txhaj chua

nta lug ca lawm.

‘Muam Paajqawm ran to look, and, why, it *was* her jew’s harp. She snatched it down’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 16).

D

The letter D is used only as a tone marker.

- **deeb**, the sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.

there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

Since the letter *d* is not otherwise used as a consonant in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s spelling for Mong Leng, it is uncertain what sound it is intended to represent.

DL

- **dla** ‘spoon (measurement)’ (see also *dlav*):

ib dla puv nkaus ‘a spoonful’ (Xiongs).

- **dlab** ‘a kind of bird’ (Xiongs), ‘bulbul’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Puj Dlab Has Lug Nruag

‘Grandmother Bulbul Tells Stories’ (name of a Mong Volunteer Literacy publication Series comprising *Ceebpov*, *Kwvhuam*, *Nuj Sis Loob*, *Txheeb Tshoj Theeb*, *Ua Npausuav*, *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, and *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*).

Txawm muaj tuab paab nam dlab yaa lug noj txiv laujtauv.

‘A flock of bulbuls flew down to eat the laujtauv fruit’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

Below is a photograph of the brown-breasted bulbul, kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **dlag** ‘typical intensifier, used after the phrase to indicate how much’ (Xiongs p. 553):

luj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how big].

muaj nyaj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how much money is there].

- **dlag**, final particle:

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag.

‘I am a Ruler’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

Peb coj mej ntxhais ntxawm moog txug taavnuav dlag es, nubnua peb yuav tuaj fij meej ntawm nuav.

‘We have taken your youngest daughter up to now, today we want to come to return to the door here’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 120; the speaker is a man paying the customary visit to the wife’s parents shortly after the wedding).

- **dlag taub hau** ‘headache, to have a headache’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaj** ‘to shake, to agitate, to push and pull’ (Xiongs).

- **dlav** ‘(classifier *raab*) spoon’ (Xiongs) (see also *dla*):

cuaj dlav yim phaaj zaub

‘nine spoons and eight platters of vegetables’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **dlav**, intensifier:

nam ntxaa dlu quas dlav dlaabtsi tsi muaj le
 ‘the grave was empty’ (*Yob Hlub has Yob Yau* p. 11).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug muab nam ncej puj dlaab cheb cheb dlu quas dlav
 ‘Yob the orphan swept out the female-spirit post thoroughly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **dlav nraaj tab** ‘batiking knife’:

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.
 ‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

- **dlaa** ‘to take a bath, to bathe’ (Xiongs):

muab dlaa ‘to wash, to bathe’ (Xiongs).
phuam dlaa dlej ‘(classifier *txuj*) bath towel’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaa**:

Nws quaj dlaa quaj dlaa los tuav tsi tau tug kwv txhais teg
 ‘He kept weeping but he could not take hold of his younger brother’s hand’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **dlaab** ‘(classifier *tug*) ghost, spirit, devil’ (Xiongs):

tug dlaab yeeg ua ib tug naab ‘the ghost changes into a snake’ (Xiongs).
cov tuabneeg kws paub ua neeb twb yog cov dlaab nuav ua cov cob hab qha puab.
 ‘the people who knew how to perform shamanic rites, it was in fact these spirits who were the ones who trained and taught them’ (*Ua npausuav* p. 22).

Hlub ua ntxhej tis ntxhuv dlaab ... Hlub ua ntxhej pes ntxhuv cev.
 ‘It grew luxuriantly in spirit ... It grew luxuriantly in body’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

koj nyob koj caj neeg. Koj tuag koj caj dlaab.
 ‘Once you were here. Once you were a human being. But now you are dead. Now you are a spirit’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 74).

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev. Yog koj los tsi yog? Yog koj tig ndlag quas lag moog xib dlaab, tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev, hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog.

‘Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes [i.e. burial clothes], in the house. Was it you? If it was you, then, as you turn toward the spirits, lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave, for I am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2, addressed to the dead person at the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* [Showing the Way] funeral ceremony).

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj; muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntxhais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food. They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **dlaab**, unidentified plant:

Koj moog txug paag dlej ab. Paag dlej ab tes ua ab! Koj haus tsi tau, koj fuas hawv peb tug caag maaj peb tug caag dlaab. Fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab haus, fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab hlw koj txha moog cuag taug koj pug koj yawg.

‘Go until you reach the lake of bitter water. The lake of bitter water is bitter indeed! If you cannot drink it, snatch up three maple roots and three dlaab roots. Snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to drink, snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to suck on, and then you will be able to to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

It is possible that *caag dlaab* is a typo for *caag dlaaj*, a medicinal plant administered orally to treat stomach ache after eating bad food and to treat weakness, impotence and problems urinating in men (Pake 1986, p. 113, No. 106).

- **dlaab**: *cej dlaab* ‘neck, throat’:

txhaa cej dlaab ‘cervical vertebrae’ (Xiongs).

Nwg raab taus yaa moog ntsa nkaus tug nam zaaj ib saab cejdlaab

‘The axe flew through the air and impaled the dragon on one side of his neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

nwg raab taus phua tawg kws nwg laim moog ntsa nam zaaj cejdlaab

‘his axe for splitting firewood which he had flung and impaled the dragon’s neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

Dlaig nkaus nwg cejdlaab

‘It will catch in his throat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **dlaab**: *laig dlaab*:

laig ‘to sacrifice, to offer food to spirits or ancestors’ (Xiongs):

The chapter titled *Laig Dlaab* in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 63-75) explains the origin of offering food to the ancestors.

- **dlaab**: *nam dlaab* ‘mother’s brother’s wife’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **dlaab**: *nam ncej pujdlaab* ‘female-spirit post’:

The word *ncej* means ‘post, pillar, stake, support’. Often it refers to houseposts. Some versions of the *Qhuab Ke* or Showing the Way funeral chant, when speaking of the spirits associated with different parts of the house, speak not of the spirit of the fireplace, the spirit of the main room, and so forth, but rather of the spirit of the *ncej* of the fireplace, and so on, i.e. of the housepost that is located in or near that part of the house.

In the story “*Nam Ncej Pujdlaab*” (The Female-Spirit Post) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 26-29), Yob the orphan (*Yob ntsuag ntsuag*) comes upon a *ncej* in which a female spirit

(*pujdlaab*) lives.

Eb! nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog cuab cuab ntxab ib nub tsausntuj tes nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug txug ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab.

‘Well! Yob the orphan was setting traps all day until nightfall and so Yob the orphan arrived at the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

He goes inside, sweeps it out nicely, and sleeps there.

The female spirit then asks to a group of spirit children (*cov mivnyuas dlaab*) to spit a glob of saliva (*ib phawb quavncaug*) on the road and put a fern leaf (*ib rev nplooj suab*) there. The next morning, when Yob the orphan comes to the road, he finds a pile of silver (*ib pawg nyaj*) and a rooster (*ib nam lauv qab*).

A second person comes and asks permission to sleep in the female-spirit post but this person pierces the post with arrows.

Tes hlaw muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

This time, the female spirit instructs the spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog (*dlev lab muag*) in the road and to place a stick (*ib tug paas*) there. When the person who pierced the post with arrows comes to the road, he finds a tiger and a snake. The tiger kills him at once and the snake and the tiger eat him.

- **dlaab:** *nyaj dlaab* ‘spirit-money’:

The discussion of ritual paper in Mottin (1982:104-105) suggests that an ingot of spirit-money (*ib choj nyaj dlaab*) may be a sheet of ritual paper in which holes have been cut in the shape of ingots. In one story, a dead man has paid an ingot of silver in the spirit world to arrange for a Pujntxoog (a kind of female spirit connected with tiger spirits) to marry his orphaned son and take care of him. Generally in stories, things of value in the spirit world appear on earth as humble things, and this may be true of the ingot of silver in this story. It is likely that it appears on earth as a sheet of ritual paper like that described by Mottin:

“Nuj Yob, koj txiv muab tau peb com txaj ntawd saws kuv rua koj nua es, koj sim moog saib maj!” Nuj Yob tig hlo moog saib saib tim lub nyuas kem zeb na cav muaj ib choj nyaj dlaab ‘ “Nuj Yob, your father paid me these three bundles of money on your behalf. Go look!” Nuj Yob turned to look at a small crevice in the stone and lo and behold, there was an ingot of spirit-money’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 84-85).

- **dlaab:** *puj dlaab* ‘female spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 18-29):

Noob caaj thaus u av...muaj ib zog nam Moob nyob tau yuam kev kev rua dlaab chaw lawm tes muaj ib nam puj dlaab pheej tuaj muab cov tuabneeg tua tua noj taag tshuav ob nam hluas nkauj tseg ca ua npua rooj.

‘Long ago, there was a Mong village that went astray and came to live in the spirits’ country and so there was a female spirit who kept coming and killed and ate all the people leaving two young women to perform the door-pig ceremony [ceremony of

offering a pig to the spirit of the door]' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

'We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **dlaab:** *puj dlaab paug* 'female paug spirit':

In the story "Yob hab Pujdlaab Paug" (Yob and the Female Paug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 30-33), Yob follows a dove that is stealing millet from his field and comes to the home of the female paug spirit.

The female paug spirit promises to lock up her birds so that they will not steal Yob's crops. Then the female paug spirit invites Yob to lunch. She knocks on a steamer and it fills with rice. She knocks on a bottle and it fills with liquor. She knocks on a wok and it fills with meat.

After lunch, Yob says that he is drunk and asks the female paug spirit to go cut him a cane to walk with. While she is gone, Yob steals the steamer, the bottle, and the wok and runs home.

One of Yob's friends comes by and Yob invites him to lunch. Yob knocks on the steamer and it fills with rice, he knocks on the bottle and it fills with liquor, he knocks on the wok and it fills with meat.

Yob's friend asks Yob how he got these things, and Yob says that he got them from the female paug spirit. Yob's friend then says that he will visit the female paug spirit and get such things. This time, however, the female paug spirit knows that Yob's friend is going to steal from her, so she leaves a steamer and a wok that fill, not with rice and meat, but with feces and she leaves a bottle that fills, not with liquor, but with urine.

One possible translation of *puj dlaab paug* is 'avenging female spirit' (from *paug* 'to fight back, to revenge, to pay back'), which would make sense insofar as the spirit in the story gets back at the young man who was going to steal from her by leaving him a steamer, wok, and bottle that fill with feces and urine.

- **dlaab:** *tais dlaab* 'wife's brother's wife, brother's wife (woman speaking)' (*Village* p. 175).

- **dlaab:** *tshev dlaab tshev tuag* 'to scold severely':

"Ntuj nis kuv miv nyaab es tub Los Xeeb nim lawv lawv sab, kuv tsi paub kuv nim tshev dlaab tshev tuag ntshai kuv tug miv nyaab nim tu tu sab".

"By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law, my son Los Xaab followed his heart. I did not know, and I said terrible things to you. I'm afraid that my dear daughter-in-law must think very ill of me" (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **dlaab:** *txiv dlaab* 'mother's brother', also written *txwv dlaab*:

"Koj ntshai tsuv tsi ntshai?" "Awb! tsuv yog kuv txivdlaab, kuv tsi ntshai aj".

"Are you afraid of tigers?" "No! Tigers are my maternal uncles, I'm not afraid of them." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **dlaab:** *txiv dlaab* ‘wife’s older brother’:

In a story about a young woman who marries a spirit (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 6-17), the woman’s younger brother is referred to and addressed as *dlaab ntxawg* ‘wife’s younger brother’ and the woman’s older brother is referred to and addressed as *txiv dlaab* ‘wife’s older brother’:

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua nwg txiv dlaab, tug nug hlub, has tas: “Txiv dlaab! nubnua koj tuaj saib wb ...”

so the Spirit then said to his wife’s older brother, the woman’s older brother, “Wife’s older brother, today you’ve come to see us ...” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16).

- **dlaab:** *txwv dlaab* ‘mother’s brother’ (*Village* p. 175). See also *txiv dlaab*.

- **dlaab:** *ua npua dlaab / npua rooj*, name of a ceremony:

The chapter titled *Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj* ‘Doing the Spirit Pig / Door Pig’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 57-61) explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.

Chindarsi (1976:113-119) devotes seven pages to the ceremony. He calls it “The Ceremony of the Door Spirit” and includes it under the heading “Ceremonies distinguishing sub-clans” in his chapter titled “Ceremonies and Beliefs Affecting Social Cohesion”. Chindarsi includes seven drawings showing how different people divide up the meat of the pig.

- **dlaab:** *yawm dlaab* ‘wife’s brother’ (*Village* p. 175):

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke, txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo.

‘The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there, and there was a little minivet on a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 80).

- **dlaab:** *yawm dlaab* ‘a guy’, ‘a young man not of one’s own clan’:

In a folktale, two young women are the only people left in their village after a female spirit has eaten everyone else. Two young men who are out hunting arrive in the village and are startled to find it deserted. The two young women come out of their house and say

Awb! ob leej yawm dlaab aw.

‘Hello, you two guys.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

Dlaab is used in kinship terms for relatives on the mother’s side. A person belongs to their father’s clan. Relatives on the mother’s side belong to a different clan. By addressing the young men as *yawm dlaab*, the young women may be implying that they assume that the young men belong to a different clan, , and therefore that they are potential marriage partners, since marriage in traditional Hmong culture must be between people of different clans.

- **dlaab cub** ‘spirit of the fireplace’:

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.
 All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle
 your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130; the household spirits are doing this to try to prevent the dead
 person from leaving the house).

- dlaab ... dle:

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle
 ‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- dlaab ntug cub ‘spirit of the edge of the fireplace’:

*Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag
 lug ntsuag koj npaab*
 ‘You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and
 block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5;
 household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person
 must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- dlaab ntuxaug (mistyped as *dlaab ntuxauz*) ‘wild spirit’ (Xiongs):

One possible translation of *dlaab ntuxaug* is ‘skinny spirit’ (from *ntuxaug* ‘skinny, thin’), an
 idea supported by Graham (1954:45), who describes *dlaab ntuxaug* as ‘dry lean demons,
 the very thin demons without flesh’.

Lyman (p. 222), who seems to have known only of female *ntuxaug* spirits, translates *puj
 ntuxaug* as ‘the Emaciated Widow’ (I don’t know why Lyman calls her a widow) and
 describes her as “one of the most dreaded demons of the jungle (if your blood falls on the
 leaf of a jungle plant, this demon will then cast a spell on you)”.

Heimbach’s White Hmong dictionary translates *dab ntuxaug* as ‘A powerful spirit greatly
 feared. It has certain places of abode and if troubled it may cause the death of whole
 families. Plagues or epidemics are often blamed on this spirit.’

Bertrais’s White Hmong dictionary translates *dab ntuxaug* simply as ‘spirits who live in
 the soil’.

Yet another translation is given in *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (p. 24 dlangb nzous), which
 glosses *dlaab ntuxaug* as ‘will o’ the wisp, ignis fatuus’.

In the story “Ob Txivtub hab Dlaabntuxaug” (The Father and Son and the Ntuxaug Spirit)
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 34-38), a man and his son are on their way to visit their kinsmen
 and they stop at the house of a *ntuxaug* spirit. The *ntuxaug* spirit invites them to spend the
 night. The *ntuxaug* spirit spreads out an oxhide for the man to sleep on and says that the
 boy can sleep in the bed with the *ntuxaug* spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night
 the boy begins to groan. The man lights a lamp and gets up to look and sees that the
ntuxaug spirit’s two daughters have become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest
 and that the boy is dead.

The man flees in terror and meets two people named Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm,
 who insist that he tell them why he is fleeing. The man says that he is fleeing because he

and his son fell into the country of the ntxaug spirits and the ntxaug spirits killed his son.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the man not to be frightened and ask him to take them to the ntxaug spirits. When they arrive, the ntxaug spirit couple welcomes the three of them and invites them to spend the night.

The ntxaug spirits spread out bedding in the main room for the man to sleep on and say that Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirits' two daughters. In the middle of the night, there is no sound coming from the bed, so the male ntxaug spirit lights a lamp and gets up to look. He sees that his daughters have each been cut in half ("one made two sides, two made four sides"). He calls upon his daughters to join themselves back together and they do so, but then they are each cut in half again. "These two oxen have sharp horns", cries the male ntxaug spirit and calls upon other ntxaug spirits to come and do battle with Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tuck razors in their mouths, the folds of their arms, and the hollows of their knees. When the ntxaug spirits attack them, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm cut off the ntxaug spirits' hands.

The ntxaug spirits are terrified and ask how they can escape. Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the ntxaug spirits to go inside a gourd. Then Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm plug up the gourd and throw it into a river. A Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river catches the gourd in his net and starts to unplug it but, when the Chinese man hears the ntxaug spirits inside the gourd say that as soon as they are free they are going to eat him, the Chinese man plugs the gourd up again and throws it back in the river and the river carries it away.

Once the ntxaug spirits are gone, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm sort through the ntxaug spirits' silver and find such a huge amount of silver that they are unable to carry it home and so the story ends.

- dlaab ntxawg 'wife's younger brother':

In a story about a young woman who marries a spirit (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 6-17), the woman's older brother is referred to and addressed as *txiv dlaab* 'wife's older brother' and the woman's younger brother is referred to and addressed as *dlaab ntxawg* 'wife's younger brother':

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua nwg dlaab ntxawg, tug nug ntxawg, has tas: "Dlaab ntxawg, koj tuag txug ko ..."

so the Spirit then said to his wife's younger brother, the woman's younger brother, "Wife's younger brother, you've come ..." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- dlaab paug: *puj dlaab paug* 'female paug spirit':

In the story "Yob hab Pujdlaab Paug" (Yob and the Female Paug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 30-33), Yob follows a dove that is stealing millet from his field and comes to the home of the female paug spirit.

The female paug spirit promises to lock up her birds so that they will not steal Yob's crops. Then the female paug spirit invites Yob to lunch. She knocks on a steamer and it

fills with rice. She knocks on a bottle and it fills with liquor. She knocks on a wok and it fills with meat.

After lunch, Yob says that he is drunk and asks the female paug spirit to go cut him a cane to walk with. While she is gone, Yob steals the steamer, the bottle, and the wok and runs home.

One of Yob's friends comes by and Yob invites him to lunch. Yob knocks on the steamer and it fills with rice, he knocks on the bottle and it fills with liquor, he knocks on the wok and it fills with meat.

Yob's friend asks Yob how he got these things, and Yob says that he got them from the female paug spirit. Yob's friend then says that he will visit the female paug spirit and get such things. This time, however, the female paug spirit knows that Yob's friend is going to steal from her, so she leaves a steamer and a wok that fill, not with rice and meat, but with feces and she leaves a bottle that fills, not with liquor, but with urine.

One possible translation of *puj dlaab paug* is 'avenging female spirit' (from *pauj* 'to fight back, to revenge, to pay back'), which would make sense insofar as the spirit in the story gets back at the young man who was going to steal from her by leaving him a steamer, wok, and bottle that fill with feces and urine.

- dlaab plaag txuas 'spirit of the area adjacent to the main room':

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- dlaab qhuas or **dlaab ... qhua**, traditional Mong animist religion:

Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?

'Where Does Mong Traditional Religion Come From?' (*Dlaab Qhuas*, title).

Thau u, luas tsi yog ua "Dlaab". Nwg yog ua "Qhua" xwb.

Long ago, it was not that a person did "Dlaab". It was that he or she did "Qhua" only. (*Dlaab Qhuas*, preface.)

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai Dlaab Qhuas.

'There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist' (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

The literal meaning of *dlaab qhuas* is uncertain, since *qhua* means both 'clan' and 'guest', and may have other meanings as well. "Spirits of the clan" seems to me to be a more likely interpretation than "guests", but it is not certain that either interpretation is correct. Xeev Nruag Xyooj's book *Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?* 'Where Does the Mong Way of Dlaab Qhuas Come From?' (Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985) comprises seven chapters, as follows:

- Qhuabke ‘Showing the Way’, which gives the text of the Showing the Way funeral ceremony.
- Moob Tusub ‘The Mong Sever the Sub’, which explains the origin of the ceremony performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar for getting rid of the spirit that causes bloody accidents.
- Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’, which explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.
- Ntawv Xwmkaab ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’, which explains the origin and significance of the sheet of ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house, opposite the main door.
- Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj ‘Doing the Door Pig / Spirit Pig’, which explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.
- Laig Dlaab ‘Offering Food to the Ancestors’, which explains the origin of this important part of Mong traditional religion.
- Moob Xaam Noobnyoog ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’, which lists the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) after whom months and days are named, describes the symbolic significance of these animals, and describes methods for calculating and keeping track of dates.

- **dlaab roog** ‘spirit of the door’:

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **dlaab rooj txaag** ‘spirit of the bedroom door’:

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,

‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,

Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.

Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 129).

- **dlaab rooj txus** ‘spirit of kitchen door’:

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab.

‘The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- Dlaab Teb ‘the Country of the Spirits’:

Ua Npausuav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb ‘A Dream of Going to See the Country of the Spirits’ (*Ua Npausuav*, title).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- dlaab tsi ‘what’ (Xiongs):

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb

‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

Luas has tas, ‘koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?’ nua cais koj teb has tas, ‘yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb’ nua nawb!

‘When he says, “What would you like to eat?”, then you answer that if he has some dry planks, then all you want is a bit of dry plank together with rice in cold water’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”

“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- dlaab tsi ‘why?’:

“Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?” “Aub, raab rag nuav coj tuaj tua nraug huas”.

“Why have you brought that knife?” “Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!

‘Los Xaab, all you’ve got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16.)

Siv Yig Muas txha nug nwg tas; “koj quaj dlaabtsi Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos?”

Siv Yig Muas asked him: “Why are you crying, Tub Kwm Ntsos?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 20).

Siv Yig Muas tes moog saablaaj ib tug ntoo rua ib tug ntoo. Saib ib lub qaab zeb rua ib lub qaab zeb. Moog moog tes pum nam dlaav. Dlaav nyob sau ceg ntoo qhuav. Dlaav has tas; “Siv Yig Muas, koj los sav! Koj tuaj dlaabtsi?”

Siv Yig Muas then went to consult with one tree after another. He looked at one cliff after another. He walked and walked and then he saw the eagle. Eagle was sitting on a

dry tree branch. Eagle said: “Siv Yig Muas, hello! Why have you come?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 22.)

- **dlaab tsi** ‘anything’:

dlaab tsi ntxiv hab? ‘anything else?’ (Xiongs).

nam ntxaa dlu quas dlav dlaabtsi tsi muaj le
‘the grave was empty’ (*Yob Hlub has Yob Yau* p. 11) [“the grave was bare, there wasn’t anything”]

Tsi caiv dlaabtsi, xijpeem noj xijpeem haus.
‘There is no tabu [“one does not prohibit anything”]. You may eat and drink what you like’ (Lyman p. 337).

- **dlaab tsi** ‘any’:

puas muaj xwm dlaab tsi? ‘Is there something happening [“any occurrence”]? Is there any news?’ (Xiongs.)

tsaav neeg dlaabtsi ‘any nation’:
Nwg ua rog txug tsaav neeg dlaabtsi los kov tsi yeej le.
‘Whatever nation [“any nation”] he waged war upon, they could not touch him.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54.)

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb aws, tsi yog ua npug dlaabtsi le, hab tsi txhob ntshai!
‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, it’s not a bad omen [“any bad omen”] at all, and don’t be afraid!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

- **dlaab tsi**: *ib yaam dlaab tsi* ‘something’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaab tsi**: *ua dlaab tsi* ‘why?’:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas nug koj has tas; Koj yog nplajteb leej tuabneeg, koj yuav lug ua dlaabtsi?
‘When you reach the wall at the top of the stairway to heaven, they will ask you: You are a human being of the earth. Why have you come here?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

- **dlaab tsi**: *ua tug dlaabtsi* ‘why?’:

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi?
‘Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

- **dlaab tsi los tau** ‘anything’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaab txus** ‘spirit of the stove’:

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus
‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirit of the fireplace and of the stove,
Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.
All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she

must leave).

- **dlaab xwmkaab** ‘spirit of the ritual xwmkaab-paper pasted to the wall of the main room opposite the main door’:

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **dlaag** ‘to lie, to cheat, to deceive, to delude, to disappoint’ (Xiongs) (see also *dlaaj*):

lug dlaag ‘lies, lying’ (Xiongs).

tso dlaag ‘to joke, to have fun, to tease’ (Xiongs).

dlaag ntsuav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to lie].

- **dlaag** ‘yellow’ (see also *dlaaj*):

taub dlaag ‘(classifier *lub*) pumpkin’ (Xiongs).

tooj dlaag ‘brass’ (Xiongs).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **dlaag**: *qhau dlaag qhau zug* ‘to humble oneself’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

- **dlaaj** ‘yellow’ (Xiongs) (see also *dlaag*):

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

dlaaj lig or *dlaaj quas lig* ‘light yellow’ (Xiongs p. 556).

dlaaj nruv or *dlaaj quas nruv* ‘bright yellow’ (Xiongs p. 556).

dlaaj vog or *dlaaj quas vog* ‘many yellow things all over’ (Xiongs p. 556).

- **dlaaj** ‘to lie’ (see also *dlaag*):

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **dlaaj**: *caag dlaaj*, a medicinal plant administered orally to treat stomach ache after eating bad food and to treat weakness, impotence and problems urinating in men (Pake 1986, p. 113, No. 106):

Koj moog txug paag dlej ab. Paag dlej ab tes ua ab! Koj haus tsi tau, koj fuas hawv peb tug caag maaj peb tug caag dlaab [typo for *dlaaj*?]. *Fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab haus, fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab hlv koj txha moog cuag taug koj pug koj yawg.* 'Go until you reach the lake of bitter water. The lake of bitter water is bitter indeed! If you cannot drink it, snatch up three maple roots and three *dlaab* [typo for *dlaaj*?] roots. Snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to drink, snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to suck on, and then you will be able to to meet your ancestors' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

- **dlaaj**: *ua dlaaj ... ua dlu* or *ua dlu ... ua dlaaj* 'to spread wide one's arms and one's fingers':

Household spirits try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house. The dead person must explain to them that he or she has died and therefore must leave.

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag, Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev. 'you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door, Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way' (*Initiation* pp. 129).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev. 'Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove, All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way' (*Initiation* p. 130).

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab 'The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab 'You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab 'When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab. 'The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread

apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

- dlaaj ntseg quas ntsuv 'pale and wan':

Kuv tes kuv moov tsam zoo es kuv moog tes kuv moog mob mob hab kuv moog nrug Suav nyob nyob es kuv ha rov tug nam dlaaj ntseg quas ntsuv le nuav lug luas muaj!

'But my luck was such that I got sick and went to stay with a Chinese and came back pale and wan like this!' (*Ceebpov* p. 15.)

Muab quas nyaj noj taag haus taag lug tug nam khaubhlaab quas nyo, dlaajntseg quas ntsuv.

'He used up all his money and he is ragged, pale and wan' (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- dlaaj quas nyo 'pale and sickly':

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

'He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly' (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- dlaam, intensifier:

dlej ca le npau pis dlaam

'water boiled out' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

- dlaav 'large, big, wide' (Xiongs).

- dlaav 'eagle, eaglet' (Xiongs), 'generic term for birds belonging to the order *Falconiformes*, e.g. eagles, hawks, falcons, ospreys, kites, vultures, buzzards' (Lyman):

tug dlaav yuj ncig peb dlaim teb 'the hawk is flying around our farm' (Xiongs).

In a story explaining the origin of the ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub (*Tusub*), Eagle formulates a plan whereby Siv Yig Muas can kill the evil tyrant Sub Tuam and his son and then helps Siv Yig Muas carry out the plan. After their deaths, Sub Tuam and his son become sub, the spirits that cause bloody accidents:

Siv Yig Muas tes moog saablaaj ib tug ntoo rua ib tug ntoo. Saib ib lub qaab zeb rua ib lub qaab zeb. Moog moog tes pum nam dlaav. Dlaav nyob sau ceg ntoo qhuav. Dlaav has tas; "Siv Yig Muas, koj los sav! Koj tuaj dlaabtsi?"

Siv Yig Muas then went to consult with one tree after another. He looked at one cliff after another. He walked and walked and then he saw the eagle. Eagle was sitting on a dry tree branch. Eagle said: "Siv Yig Muas, hello! What brings you here?" (*Dlaab*

Qhuas p. 22.)

A story about the origin of marriage customs refers to what are either *dlaav dlub yug yaav* (black eagles?) or *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav lai nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav lai nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
 ‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav lai nyug txwg
 ‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **dlaav hlau** ‘(classifier *lub*) airplane’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws** ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde
 ‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **dlai** ‘to hang, to hang up, to hook, to cling to, to grasp’ (Xiongs):

dlai rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to cling or grasp tightly?]

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj lws kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.
 ‘The kind [of bell] that traveling salesmen hang from the mules which they bring went “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!”’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13.)

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.
 ‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **dlaig** ‘to stop, to plug up, to cork, to cling to, to corner’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaig nkaus** ‘to get caught, to get stuck’:

Dlaig nkaus nwg cejdlaab
 ‘It will catch in his throat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **dlaim**, ‘relative to sheet, leaf’ (Xiongs):

dlaim kas ntaas ‘board, wooden plank, from Lao *kadaan*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

dlaim npug ‘a cover’ (Xiongs).

sau ib dlaim ntawv ‘write a letter’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau txais dlaim ntawv le ‘They did not receive the letter yet’ (Xiongs).

tug dlaav yuj ncig peb dlaim teb ‘the hawk is flying around our farm’ (Xiongs).

Txiv! Tsi xob kov dlaim nyuas ko! Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.
 ‘Father! Don’t bother with that! It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’
 (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **dlais** ‘(classifier *tug*) bear’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats,
 bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Es koj ntshai nam dlais tsi ntshai?
 ‘Then are you afraid of bears?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **dlaiiv** ‘(classifier *tug*) big wasp living in the ground’ (Xiongs), ‘giant hornet’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Tuag moog txug sau tes Nyaj vab tuam teem muab teem txim, tso quas nkawj quas dlaiv plev, hab tso quas yoov tum ua dlaab ua tuag le hov rua.
 ‘When they died and arrived on high, then Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem found them guilty and released wasps and giant hornets to sting them and released mosquitoes to bite them mercilessly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

In the Xiāngxī or West Hunan dialect, the cognate of *dlaiv* is spelled *dab ghuead*, where *dab* is simply a noun prefix and *ghuead* is the actual root corresponding to *dlaiv*. Shu Rujin’s dictionary of the Xiāngxī dialect (page 85) glosses *dab ghuead* as 土蜂 *tǔfēng* (‘soil bee’ or ‘soil wasp’) and then adds the following vivid description, translated by Michael Johnson:

A type of [bee] similar to a honeybee but five or six times bigger, lives in hives underground, purple-red in colour, very loud, very poisonous; if it stings people or livestock then if light there will be swelling for some days, if heavy then people and livestock will die.

The Xiāngxī dialect is not closely related to Mong Leng, so the fact that *dlaiv* has a cognate in the Xiāngxī dialect is evidence that this word may go back to Proto-Hmongic. Moreover, this root is monosyllabic, whereas some insect names are unanalyzable disyllabic roots. I don’t have any Mong Leng examples in this dictionary (with the possible exception of *npauj npaim* ‘butterfly’) but Michael has examples in other dialects. Michael writes that Shi Rujin’s “in depth description of the Asian Giant Hornet leaves us in no doubt as to why this insect has its own unique monosyllabic root in Proto-

Hmongic.”

Below is a phonotograph of the Asian giant hornet (*Vespa mandarinia japonica*) that Michael sent me:



- **dlau** ‘snow’ (Xiongs) (see also *dlaus*):

cov dlau taab tom yaaj ‘the snow is melting’ (Xiongs).

thob dlau ‘to shovel the snow’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaug** ‘to hatch, to be hatched’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaum** ‘to climb, to cling to, to go up, to creap, to ascend’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaus** ‘(no classifier) snow’ (Xiongs). See also *dlau*.

- **dlauv** ‘to hang, to drop the end of a rope’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaw** ‘too much flavored’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaw**: *dlej ab dlej dlaw* ‘bitter and salty water’:

Cais tug nam Pujntxoog txawm moog cug kag tau peb taus nplooj dlej ab dlej dlaw (dlej ntshaav) lug faib rua puab ib leeg ib taus.

‘So the Pujntxoog then quickly dipped out three leaf-fuls of bitter and salty water (blood water) and apportioned to each of them one leaf-ful’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 17).

A Pujntxoog is a kind of female spirit associated with tiger spirits. Bitter and salty water is the water of forgetfulness. Spirits are able to drink it, but living human beings can not.

- **dlaw ntsev** ‘salty’ (Xiongs).

- **dlaw**: *txiv dlaw* ‘walnut’ in *Haav Txiv Dlaw* ‘Walnut Valley’, a Green Mong village in Anning County in Yunnan Province in China:

Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Dlaw ‘Memoire of Walnut Valley’ (*Cim Xeeb*, title).

- **dlawb** ‘white, clear’ (Xiongs):

dlawb lag or *dlawb quas lag (laj)* ‘not quite white, something white passes by once’ (Xiongs p. 556).

dlawb paug or *dlawb quas paug* ‘pure white’ (Xiongs p. 556).

tsuav nam txhaa taubhau dlawb paug, khuav nceev tid e!

‘all that’s left is the gleaming white skull, wedged in over there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

dlawb quas vog ‘many white things all over’:

Tshev quas tawg le hov, tshev tshev Los Xaab quaj quaj kuamuag poob dlawb quas vog nrau zoov

‘He berated him in this fashion until the tears rained from Los Xaab’s eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

- **Dlawb:** *Moob Dlawb* ‘White Hmong’, also written *Hmoob Dawb*, the spelling used by the White Hmong themselves:

Tsi taag le ntawd, Moob muaj ob hom lug: lug Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg. Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

‘Moreover, there are two dialects of Mong: White Hmong and Mong Leng. When they are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different, but the kernel of the language and the letters of the alphabet are the same’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘Mong people have two kinds of clothing: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Moob Dlawb le, quas yawg naav tsig (losyog rig) taug luv (pov taub).

‘Among the White Mong, the men wear trousers – *tsig* (or *rig*) – with a short – *luv* (*pov taub*) – seat’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– *MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG* –

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

Phoo/Phau Kawm Koom Moob Leeg / Hmoob Dawb

‘A Shared Mong Leng / White Hmong Primer’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom*, title).

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hluv, hab nyob ua npoj ua luag lug lawm ntev.

‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love, and lived as friends and companions for a long time’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

Kuv yog Moob Leeg kuas kuv has tau lug Hmoob Dawb.

‘I am Mong Leng but I can speak White Hmong’ (*Seev Yom Too, Txooj Moob* No. 5 page 23).

- **dlawg:** *suav dlawg* ‘everyone, everybody’ (Xiongs):

suav dlawg tuaj txhij lawm ‘everyone is here’ (Xiongs).

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab
 ‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg.
 ‘the two sides wrote up a contract and had everyone witness it’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

cais suavdlawg txhaj nyob ua zog ua moog rua ntus ntawd.

‘and everyone came to live in villages and towns at that time’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hlub, hab nyob ua npoj ua luag lug lawm ntev.

‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love, and lived as friends and companions for a long time’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **dlawg**: *sawv dlawg* ‘everybody, everyone’ (Xiongs). *Sawv dlawg* is an unusual spelling, possibly reflecting White Hmong influence. Elsewhere in the Xiongs’ dictionary, and in my other sources, the word for ‘everybody’ is spelled *suav dlawg* or *suavdlawg*.

- **dlawj** ‘to pull out, to root up, to snatch’ (Xiongs).

- **dlawm** ‘to stumble, to trip’ (Xiongs).

- **dlawmtsua** ‘mountain pass’:

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj

‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the

mountain pass' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

- **dlaws** 'to unlace, to untie, to unbind, to loosen, to release, to set free, to liberate, to discharge, to unfasten, to detach' (Xiongs).

- **dle** 'to pick fruit, to pinch' (Xiongs).

- **dle**, intensifier:

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle
'He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane' (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **dle** 'dog' (see also *dlev*):

txhaub dle caum mos lwj 'urge dogs to follow a deer' (Xiongs).

- **dle nrho** (Xiongs p. 555), not translated:

The Xiongs list *dle nrho* as an example of the intensifier *nrho* 'completely' but they do not translate *dle nrho*. One possible interpretation might be 'to pinch off completely'.

- **dleb** 'far' (Xiongs):

dleb dleb 'very far' (Xiongs).

dleb heev 'very far' (Xiongs).

dleb ntawm 'far from' (Xiongs).

- **dleg** (see also *dlej*): *poob dleg* 'to drown':

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

'Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat' (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **dlej** '(no classifier) water, liquid' (Xiongs) (see also *dleg*):

dlej txaws 'the water splashes' (Xiongs).

haus dlej 'to drink water' (Xiongs).

rhaub dlej 'to boil the water' (Xiongs).

txau dlej 'to squirt water' (Xiongs).

- **dlej** '(classifier *tug*) river, stream' (Xiongs):

tug dlej nuav moog tshuam rua dlej Mississippi
'this river merges with the Mississippi River' (Xiongs).

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab

'The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan'

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **dlej**: *haav dlej* ‘river, stream’ (Xiongs):

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej, nwg moog ntxuav hab hloov piskag khaubdluag ua tuab nam yawm hluas zoo nraug quas si lug tsev.

‘So the Spirit then flew to the river, he went to bathe and he changed his clothes so that he became a very handsome young man and came back to the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **dlej**: *haav dlej* ‘gutter’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *muaj dlej* ‘watery’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *nraag qaab dlej* ‘downstream’:

koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej
‘You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69).

- **dlej**: *paag dlej tauv* ‘dam pool’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *phuam dlaa dlej* ‘(classifier *txuj*) bath towel’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *nqhes dlej* ‘thirsty’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *qhov dlej txhawv* ‘(classifier *lub*) spring (river)’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *taub nqaa dlej* ‘gourd’ (Xiongs) [gourd for carrying water].

- **dlej**: *taug dlej nqeg taug* ‘downstream’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *txa dlej* ‘untight, poorly done, fragile, easily broken’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej**: *ywg dlej* ‘to water’ (Xiongs).

- **dlej ab** ‘bitter water’ or **dlej ab dlej dlaw** or ‘bitter and salty water’, i.e. blood, the water of forgetfulness:

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant the dead person is instructed to drink bitter water in order to forget his or her earthly life and be able to remain in heaven with his or her ancestors:

Haus taag nam dlej ab nam peb lu, koj yuav tsis nrug ncu. Koj yuav haus taag nam dlej ab qas tag, nam ncauj le yuav yaug taag, koj le txaj oob txaj ntsim tsis ncu taag nplaj lis teb.

‘When you have drunk three mouthfuls of the bitter water, you will lose your memory. When you have drunk the bitter water truly, when your mouth is completely rinsed, you will forget all that you treasured on the face of the earth’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

Koj moog txug paag dlej ab. Paag dlej ab tes ua ab! Koj haus tsi tau, koj fuas hawv peb tug caag maaj peb tug caag dlaab [typo for *dlaaj*?]. *Fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab haus, fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab hlv koj txha moog cuag taug koj pug koj yawg.*

‘Go until you reach the lake of bitter water. The lake of bitter water is bitter indeed! If

you cannot drink it, snatch up three maple roots and three dlaab [typo for dlaaj?] roots. Snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to drink, snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to suck on, and then you will be able to to meet your ancestors' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

In a story in which a Pujntxoog (a kind of female spirit connected with tiger spirits) abducts a woman's husband and the woman, pretending to be her husband's sister, goes with her husband hoping to to rescue him, the three of them journey into the spirit world, and reach a river of bitter and salty water (*dlej ab dlej dlaw*). The Pujntxoog tells the "sister" that she must drink the bitter and salty water as a test of whether she will be permitted to continue to accompany the man and the Pujntxoog. The bitter and salty water is referred to parenthetically as *dlej ntshaav* 'blood water':

Cais tug nam Pujntxoog txawm moog cug kag tau peb taus nplooj dlej ab dlej dlaw (dlej ntshaav) lug faib rua puab ib leeg ib taus.

'So the Pujntxoog then quickly dipped out three leaf-fuls bitter and salty water (blood water) and apportioned to each of them one leaf-fuls' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 17).

- **dlej cag** 'flowing water' (Xiongs).

- **dlej caa** 'wellspring, source of a stream' (also written *dlej caag*):

Dlej txheeb le txheeb, dlej ndlwg le ndlwg. Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

'The water grew clearer and clearer. The water flowed more and more freely. It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog's wellsprings' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas rau khau paaj pum dlej caa nyob qhov zaaj.

'Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your embroidered shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the dragon' (*Initiation* p. 120).

- **dlej caag** 'wellspring, source of a stream' (also written *dlej caa*):

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas meb rau khau npuag pum dlej caag nyob qaab qhov tsu.

'Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your satin shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the tiger' (*Initiation* pp. 120-121).

- **dlej caw** '(no classifier) drink, liquor, alcohol' (Xiongs).

- **dlej nphau nphwv** 'turbulant water' (Xiongs).

- **dlej nyaab** 'flood':

puab thaam txug dlej nyaab 'They talk about the flood' (Xiongs).

- **dlej suv** 'warm water' (Xiongs).

- **dlej tuag** 'stagnant water' (Xiongs).

- **dlej txa** 'leaking water' (Xiongs).

- **dlej tsaws tsaag** 'waterfall' (Xiongs).

- **dlemdle** 'loose, not tight' (Xiongs).

- **dlev** (classifier *tug*) ‘dog’ (Xiongs) (see also *dle*):

lug dlev ‘cursing, filthy language’ (Xiongs).

tug dlev dlub tsej ‘the black dog barks’ (Xiongs).

tug dlev zuv tsev zoo heev ‘the dog watches the house very well’ (Xiongs).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The sixth month of the year is the month of the dog:

6 hlis – dlev hli

6th month – month of the dog (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the fourth day of the first month is:

luav hli – dlev xab 4 ‘month of the rabbit – dog day 4’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that the day of the dog is an auspicious day for a younger brother to get married:

Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd. Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day. For younger brothers, good for the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

Some Mong sacrifice a dog (rather than a rooster) to serve as the dead person’s guide on the journey to the afterlife. One version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant says that the dog will help drink the bitter water (*dlej ab*) which the dead person must drink before continuing the journey to meet his or her ancestors:

Koj haus tsis taug no ces koj yuav hu nam dlev nqeg nrug haus kws

‘If you cannot drink, call the dog to come down and drink’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 78).

Calling someone a dog can be a strong insult. In one story, a father is angry because, after he gave each of his three sons money to make their fortunes, the third born son appears to have become a servant of the Chinese and lost all the money, returning home poor, sick, and ragged. The father says to his first and second born sons:

“I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur (*tug dlev dlub thawj dlev cis nkeeg*). If you open the door to him, I’ll kick you out of the house. Let him crouch outdoors. Let him crouch outdoors like the dog that he is. Let him lie down to sleep like a dog does and know what poverty and misery really mean. I was concerned about his livelihood, so I gave him money, and yet he has gone and wasted his opportunity. Let him sleep outside until he is bent double, and then he’ll know.” (*Ceebpov* p. 20.)

“Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur (*tug dlev tsoob hov*) was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat.” (*Ceebpov* p. 22.)

“Oh, so what happened was that ill-omened mutt (*tug dlev dlub thawj*) last night when it was raining ran away to find a fire to warm himself down with the Chinese; and so he spent the night down there with the Chinese. Is that it?” (*Ceebpov* pp. 22-23.)

“Why don’t you try running to see if those two scummy dogs (*ob tug dlev kua qai*) are really there.” (*Ceebpov* p. 23.)

Later in the same story, the third born son, Los Xaab, is angry at a dog (*dlev*) and a cat (*tshwsmlov*), but he expresses his anger by calling them *ob tug dlev* ‘two dogs’:

“Alas, alas, you vermin (*Ab! Ab! Es ob tug dlev kod*)! When Old Tuam and Old Lwm came to steal your mistress, why didn’t the two of you tell me?” (*Ceebpov* p. 26.)

A bit later, Los Xaab, again angrily addressing both a dog and a cat, says:

Ab! ab! ab! Ob tug dlev kod yuav rawm tuag. Kawg kag moog nrhav nam, tsi moog nrhav mas muab tua taamsim nuav kag.

‘Alas, alas, alas! You good-for-nothings must be in a hurry to die. If you don’t find your mistress, I will kill you immediately’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **dlev dlub thawj** ‘a dog that knows not its master, one that wanders about seeking food from one and all, also used figuratively of persons in serious scolding or cursing’ (Heimbach 1979:35):

In my Mong Leng materials, specifically in *Ceebpov*, the expression *dlev dlub thawj* is used only in its figurative sense, referring to a human being:

koj tsi yoom qheb qhovrooj tug dlev dlub thawj dlev cis nkeeg hov lug tsev le huas.
‘I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

Ab! yog le tug dlev dlub thawj naagmo naag lug es tsiv moog nte tawg nraag Suav
‘Oh, so what happened was that ill-omened mutt last night when it was raining ran away to find a fire to warm himself down with the Chinese’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 22-23).

- **dlev labmuag** ‘red-eyed dog’, animal used as a guide and helper in folklore:

In one story, a young woman's parents give her a puppy with red eyes (*ib tug mivnyuas dlev labmuag*) and instruct her that wherever the red-eyed dog stops, she is to marry the man who lives there and settle there (*Kwvhuam* p. 9). In a second story in the same volume, a young woman's husband tells her that every day when she goes to work in the fields, *coj dlev labmuag nrug koj ua ke tuaj!* 'bring the red-eyed dog with you' (*Kwvhuam* p. 24).

In a quite different story, a red-eyed dog is really a tiger. When someone pierces a female spirit's house with arrows, she instructs a group of spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog by the side of the road:

"Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os".

"When you go, as soon as you're ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

When the person who pierced the spirit's house with arrows comes to the road, what he finds is a tiger and snake. The tiger kills him, and the tiger and the snake eat him.

- **dleev** 'to date' (Xiongs).

- **dleev** 'to cajole, seduce, entice, beguile; to deceive jestingly, allure by false pretences' (Lyman pp. 155-156).

I thought it best to separate the negative meaning of *dleev*, 'to seduce, to allure by false pretences', given by Lyman from the positive or neutral meaning, 'to date', given by the Xiongs, although these are almost certainly different senses of the same word. The negative meaning occurs in the opening lines of one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

*Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.*

'Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **dleev**, intensifier:

Tes txha has qhauv rua dlev hab mlo ob tug noj taag ob tug le quaj dlub quas dleev lawm.

'Then he gave the dog and the cat some food and when they had finished eating, they began to howl' (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **dlib** 'to call up an animal with a familiar scream' (Xiongs):

Koj dlib kuas puj Sub tuaj.

'Call Grandma Sub as one calls wild game' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32).

- **dlib** (classifier *lub*) ‘cucumber’ (Xiongs).
- **dlib lab plawv** ‘watermelon’ (Xiongs).
- **dlib paag** ‘melon’ (Xiongs).
- **dlig** ‘to blind’ (Xiongs).
- **dlig muag** ‘blind’ (Xiongs).
- **dlim** ‘to escape, to be free from guard’ (Xiongs):

dlim plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [freed suddenly, escaped].

The Xiongs do not translate *dlim plawg*. The translation ‘freed suddenly, escaped’ is from Heimbach (p. 34 *dim plaw*s).

“*Ob tug nyuj nuav kub zuag hwv lawm, yuav ua le caag txha dlim lau*”.

“The horns of those two oxen are very sharp, how can we escape?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37.)

“*Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd tes mej dlim naw*”.

“If you want to escape, flee into that gourd and then you’ll escape.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **dlo** ‘bald, clear, having nothing’ (Xiongs):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **dlo cwj quas cuas** or **dlo cwb quas cuas** ‘smooth and featureless’:

Ib tug nyuas tub, tug nyuas ntxhai, kuas ob tug nam dlo cwj quas cuas le ob lub toob.

‘A little boy and a little girl, but they were smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

Ab yab! meb nim zuv meb ob tug nam nyuas txug taav nuav dlo cwb quas cuas le ob lub nam toob.

‘Hey! the two of you watch your two children, up to now smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **dlob** ‘to root up, to pull out’ (Xiongs):

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam nteg ib nam pujqab dlawb rua koj nqaa. Koj ib ke moog ib ke dlob plaub nua nawb!

‘If you want to return home, ask your sister to catch a white hen for you to carry with you. As you walk, pull out its feathers!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16.)

- **dlog** ‘(classifier *tug*) onion; (classifier *lub*) bulb’ (Xiongs).

- **dlov** ‘to roll’ (Xiongs):

Cuav Tshoj Tim dlov pobzeb moog txhawg qhovntuj taag lawm

‘Cuav Tshoj Tim had rolled stones completely stuffing up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 23).

Npawg Ntxawg, lub qhov kws kuv nqeg lug nyob sau nuav, tabsis luas dlov pobzeb lug txhawg taag xwb.

‘Cousin Ntxawg, the place where I descended is on top of here, but he has rolled stones and blocked it up’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **dlov** ‘to roll up, to wind’ (Xiongs).

- **dlov** ‘to shoot down, to knock down’ (Xiongs).

- **dlu** ‘to mix up, to mix’ (Xiongs):

na cav tawm plawg ib tug hluasnkauj lug dlu dlu teb lub paag dlej.

‘why, out came the young woman who had been muddying the pond’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 8).

- **dlu** ‘bare, empty’:

dlu lug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [all bare].

nam ntxaa dlu quas dlav dlaabtsi tsi muaj le

‘the grave was empty’ (*Yob Hlub has Yob Yau* p. 11).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug muab nam ncej puj dlaab cheb cheb dlu quas dlav

‘Yob the orphan swept out the female-spirit post thoroughly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **dlu**: *ua dlu ... ua dlaaj* or *ua dlaaj ... ua dlu* ‘to spread wide one’s arms and one’s fingers’:

Household spirits try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house. The dead person must explain to them that he or she has died and therefore must leave.

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,

Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.

‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,

Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* pp. 129).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,

All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his

arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab.

'The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

- dlub 'black' (Xiongs):

Koj yos puas tau koj lub tsho dlub? 'Do you find your black shirt?' (Xiongs.)

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dlub 'My mother dyes her skirt in black' (Xiongs).

muab lub thoob lab lug theej thoob dlub

'replace the red pail with the black one' (Xiongs).

Muab raab txab dlub rua kuv sob 'Give me the black scissors please' (Xiongs).

tug dlev dlub tsej 'the black dog barks' (Xiongs).

dlub ncab or *dlub quas ncab* 'very black' (Xiongs, entry for *ncab* and p. 556).

plaubhau nim dlub dlub suaj quas nyo suaj quas zaws nraag laujtaws

'with black hair falling and tumbling to her heels' (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

'That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- Dlub, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Thoj** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

- dlub: *dlev dlub thawj* 'a dog that knows not its master, one that wanders about seeking food from one and all, also used figuratively of persons in serious scolding or cursing' (Heimbach 1979:35):

In my Mong Leng materials, specifically in *Ceebpov*, the expression *dlev dlub thawj* is used only in its figurative sense, referring to a human being:

koj tsi yoom qheb qhovrooj tug dlev dlub thawj dlev cis nkeeg hov lug tsev le huas.
 ‘I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

Ab! yog le tug dlev dlub thawj naagmo naag lug es tsiv moog nte tawg nraag Suav
 ‘Oh, so what happened was that ill-omened mutt last night when it was raining ran away to find a fire to warm himself down with the Chinese’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 22-23).

- **Dlub:** *Moob Dlub*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **dlub:** *Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Nxtawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **dlub**: *tsuv dlub* ‘panther’ (Xiongs).

- **dlub ... dleev**, intensifier:

Tes txha has qhauv rua dlev hab mlob ob tug noj taag ob tug le quaj dlub quas dleev lawm.

‘Then he gave the dog and the cat some food and when they had finished eating, they began to howl’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **dlub quas nyo**: *uab dlub quas nyo* ‘crow-black’:

tug nam uab dlub quas nyo ‘the [horse] was crow-black’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **dlub yug yaav** ‘black’?:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

But later in the story, the same eagles are called *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’:

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg
‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **dlua** ‘to tear down, to rip’ (Xiongs):

dlua rhe (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to rip apart].

- **dlua** ‘to pass on, to go’ (Xiongs):

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj; muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food.

They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **dlua** ‘no more smell’ (Xiongs).

- **dlua** ‘not at all’ (Xiongs).

- **dlua** ‘again’ (Xiongs).

- **dlua** ‘than’ (Xiongs):

luj dlua ‘bigger than, greater than’ (Xiongs).

Pa [typo for *Paaj?*] *yau dlua min* [typo for *Mim?*]
‘Pang is smaller than Mae [typo for *Mee?*]’ (Xiongs).

*hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub
has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.*

‘and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **dlua**: *saaj dlua* ‘the middle portion is bent down, overloaded at the middle’ (Xiongs).

- **dlua**: *taav su dlua* ‘afternoon’ (Xiongs).

- **dlua ndlais** (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [out of sight].

- **dluab** (classifier *dlaim* or *tug*) ‘picture, photo, drawing, shadow’ (Xiongs):

Kuv xaa dlaim dluab nuav tuaj rua koj ‘I send you this photo (or picture)’ (Xiongs).

- **dluab**: *ntsuj dluab* ‘(classifier *tug*) spirit, soul’ (Xiongs).

- **dluag**: *khaub dluag* ‘clothes’ (Xiongs):

xaws khaub dluag ‘to sew clothing’ (Xiongs).

tshuab xaws khaub dluag ‘sewing machine’ (Xiongs).

zab khaub dluag ‘to dry clothes’ (Xiongs).

- **Dluag**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Hawj** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9):

The term *qhua* can also mean ‘clan’ in general, as in the following example from a folktale, in which both the Mong clan names *Dluag* and *Mob* and the Chinese clan names *Yaaj* and *Lauj* are referred to as *qhua*. Two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“*Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas* [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];
*cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj*”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (*vaaj*), became the clan *Yaaj*;

these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
 these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
 these got caught on the top of a reed (tau), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **dluaj** ‘peach’:

tsob ntoo txiv dluaj ‘peach’ (Xiongs) [peach tree].

lub txiv dluaj ‘peach’ (Xiongs) [fruit].

Tes cov nam txiv dluaj sav sav Tes Los Tuam nim dlha quas loo moog dle kag tau tej nam tshuajtaub tes muab faib hlo Los Tuam ib tshuajtaub, Los Lwm ib tshuajtaub, Los Xaab ib tshuajtaub.

‘Now the peaches were ripe and Los Tuam ran over and picked some tshuajtaub and divided them up, giving one tshuajtaub to himself, one tshuajtaub to Los Lwm and one tshuajtaub to Los Xaab’ (*Ceebpov* p.15).

- **dluas** ‘(no classifier) base’ (Xiongs).

- **Dluas**, typo or variant spelling for the clan name Dluag:

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

*“Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;
 cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for Dluag];
 cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;
 cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tau, ua qhua Lauj”.*

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
 these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
 these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
 these got caught on the top of a reed (tau), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **dluav** ‘(classifier *lub*) hip, haunch’.

- **dluav** ‘(classifier *tug*) shovel, rower’ (Xiongs):

dluav phuaj ‘(classifier *tug*) oar’ (Xiongs).

- **dluav** ‘to cover, to wrap up, to roof, to thatch, to overspread’ (Xiongs).

DLH

- **dlha** ‘to run, to work (machine clock)’ (Xiongs):

dlha dlhees (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to run].

dlha quas dlhees (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to run].

dlha qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to run continuously].

Dlha tuab tug hawb zawg le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he ran alone, wheezing].

dlha zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to run for a short instant].

koj dlha thaubqaab ‘you run backward’ (Xiongs).

lub plawv dlha ‘the heart is beating’ (Xiongs).

lub tsheb dlha ceev ‘the car runs fast’ (Xiongs).

Nwg txawm dlha ceev ceev tawm ‘s/he then quickly runs away’ (Xiongs).

- **dlha ib saas** ‘a short run’ (Xiongs).

- **dlha loo** ‘to run’:

Muam Paajqawm dlha loo moog saib na cav yog nwg raab nam ncaas.

‘Muam Paajqawm ran to look, and, why, it was her jew’s harp’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 16).

Los Xaab nqeg hab Ceeb Pov nqeg tes ob tug lujtxwv dlha quas loo rua thoobpuab nkaag plawg rua huv pluj plag lawm hab.

‘Los Xaab dismounted and Ceeb Pov dismounted and their mules ran into the shoulder-bag and disappeared as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

- **dlha ndlaag quas nab** ‘a huge herd runs’:

Tes cov nyuj cov neeg dlha ndlaag quas nab lug rua huv lub nyuas ceebpov tes pluj taag rua huv.

‘The vast herds of cattle and horses all disappeared into the little gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

- **dlha yaas** ‘to run’:

Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm txhaj dlha yaas moog muab kag nwg raab taus phua tawg

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter ran to fetch his axe for splitting firewood’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **dlhaas** ‘to cut out with an axe’ (Xiongs).

- **dlhau** ‘to pass, to go beyond, to exceed, to reach out, to surpass, to head off; over’ (Xiongs):

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs).

dlhau plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [through, has gone or come through].

The Xiongs do not translate *dlhau plawg*. The translation ‘through, has gone or come through’ is from Heimbach (p. 40 dhau plaws).

- **dlhau** ‘one after another’:

lig hlaav suavtawg ib kem dlhau ib kem

‘He stuck a burning brand in crevice after crevice’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **dlhau**: *ntau dlhau* ‘too much’:

Koj yuav toum [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hww

‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

- **dlhawv ... dlhev**, intensifier:

quaj dlhawv quas dlhev: “*Ntuj nis kuv miv nyaab es ”*.

and cried out abruptly: “By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law ...” (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **dlhawv ... dlheev**, intensifier:

Leejnam moog txug quaj dlhawv quas dlheev: “*Ntuj e! kuv miv nyaab aw ... ”*

‘When the mother arrived, she cried out abruptly: “By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law...” ’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 23-24).

- **dlhev**, intensifier:

Tug quaspuj rhaub kag yag roj npau quas dlhev

‘His wife quickly heated up a wokful of oil until it was at a rolling boil’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

quaj dlhawv quas dlhev: “*Ntuj nis kuv miv nyaab es ”*.

‘and cried out abruptly: “By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law ...” ’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

Tes nam mlob hab nam dlev ob tug quaj dlhuj quas dlhev tes ob tug ha moog lauj.

‘The cat the dog cried out and off they went’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

- **dlhees** or **quas dlhees** ‘typical intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 553):

dlha dlhees (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to run].

dlha quas dlhees (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to run].

- **dlheev** ‘abruptly, off hand, suddenly’ (Xiongs):

Leejnam moog txug quaj dlhawv quas dlheev: “*Ntuj e! kuv miv nyaab aw ... ”*

‘When the mother arrived, she cried out abruptly: “By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law...” ’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 23-24).

- **dlhuj ... dlhev**, intensifier:

Tes nam mlob hab nam dlev ob tug quaj dlhuj quas dlhev tes ob tug ha moog lauj.

‘The cat the dog cried out and off they went’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

- **dlhuav** ‘do not want to take or to have any more or over again’ (Xiongs).

E

- **eb**, interjection, ‘eh!’ (Xiongs):

Eb! nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog cuab cuab ntxab ib nub tsausntuj tes nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug txug ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab.

‘Well! Yob the orphan was setting traps all day until nightfall and so Yob the orphan arrived at the pillar of a female spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- es ‘then, so’ (Xiongs):

Muaj ob tug hluas moog plhob plhob moog txug caag es qab npua quaj zum quas zawg
‘There were two young men who were hunting who arrived and, why, so chickens and pigs were crying out all over the place’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuagneeg tua noj taag, tshuav wb xwb es tseg wb ca ua npua rooj. Es tseg wb ca xwb os.

‘We came to live by mistake in Spirit-land so the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people, there remain us two only so it will leave us two to perform the ceremony of the door pig. So it leaves us two only’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Es yog wb tua tau nam puj dlaab nua meb ua wb quaspuj nua meb puas kaam moog?

‘So if the two of us kill the female spirit, will you the two of you become our wives, are the two of you willing?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

Es yuav ua le caag le tuaj?

‘So what must we do?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

“Es koj ntshai naab raajkubsai tsi ntshai?”

“Then are you afraid of cobras?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- es, clause final particle:

Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ...

Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ... (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

“Nuj Yob, koj txiv muab tau peb com txaj ntawd saws kuv rua koj nua es, koj sim moog saib maj!”

“Nuj Yob, your father paid me these three bundles of money on your behalf. Go look!” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 84-85).

Peb coj mej ntxhais ntxawm moog txug taavnuav dlag es, nubnua peb yuav tuaj fij meej ntawm nuav.

‘We have taken your youngest daughter up to now, today we want to come to return to the door here’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 120; the speaker is a man paying the customary visit to the wife’s parents shortly after the wedding).

Ua caag luas nim xaav tas luas sab zoo nua es, caag kuv lug na nim yuav tsi ntim ib pob mov

‘They thought that they were good-hearted, but when I set out for home they did not pack me a ball of rice’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

Kuv yuav moog nyob huv hab es, koj khuam lub naab thoobpuab xwb.

‘I am going to go inside as well, and you will just hang the shoulder-bag on your shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **es**, sentence final particle:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **es**: *mes es* ‘goat’ (Xiongs).

EE

- **ee** ‘light brown’ (Xiongs).

- **eeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) saddle’ (Xiongs).

F

- **fav** ‘to swing’ (Xiongs).

- **faa** ‘adulteress, adulterer’ (Xiongs):

In one story, *faa* refers to an unmarried young woman who goes to the spirit world to escape the cruelty of her older brother. He tracks her down and says:

Nam nkaujfaa nua! Koj nim tsiv lug ua nkaujfaa rua nuav lawm ais, ua caag tsi qha wb paub?

‘Family-deserter! You just ran off and deserted your family. Why didn’t you tell us?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15).

Dictionaries define *nkaujfaa* as (1) a woman who elopes, (2) a woman who is unfaithful to her husband, or (3) a woman who divorces her husband. The meaning here is that the sister went off on her own without telling her brothers where she was going.

- **faa**: *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **faab** ‘upset, distressed, confused, allergic’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *huāng*.

- **faab** ‘tufted, leafy, weedy, overgrown’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *huāng*.

- **faab**: *lajfaab ... toobfaab* ‘south ... east’, from Chinese *nánfāng ... dōngfāng*:

Ib tug tsiv rua lajfaab ib tug tsiv rua toobfaab.

‘One fled to the south, one fled to the east’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64).

- **faab**: *xwm faab xwm meem* ‘square’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *sìfāng* ‘four sides, square’ + *sìmiàn* ‘four sides’.

- **faab fo** or **faab quas fo** ‘lively, vividly’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 553):

ua num faab fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to work intensely].

ncaws faab quas fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to kick, dig, or peck intensely].

huas cov nam qhev mas nim lawv paab nam yaaj, nam tshis, lujtxwv, nyuj neeg mas muaj

peevxwm lug ua quas tauj quas tsuag faab quas fo; tsua nov luv ua nqaaj ua ngug lug.
 ‘and servants were herding a flock of sheep and goats and mules and cattle and horses. They had the ability to trample up the grass and brush to a complete mess, all one could hear was a great commotion of snapping stems and branches’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- Faab Kis ‘French’:

haiv neeg Faab Kis ‘the French people’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg Faab Kis ‘a French person’ (Xiongs).

Kuv maam txhais ua Faab kis ‘I will translate it into French’ (Xiongs).

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb, puab txawm tua phom phiv phoov moog rua Faabkis.

‘The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market, and they [the Mong partisans] fired their guns *phiv phoov* at the French’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- Faab kis teb ‘France’:

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”].

- faaj ‘sulphur’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *huáng*.

- Faaj, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name), for which there is no corresponding *qhua* (Mong clan name) (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Huáng*.

- faaj: *Moob Suavfaaj*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- faaj: *tsev loj faaj* ‘(classifier *lub*) jail, prison’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *láo fáng* ‘jail house’.

- faaj kum ‘a giant tree’ (Xiongs), ‘banyan tree’ (Lyman p. 114).

- faaj tim ‘emperor’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *huángdì*.

- faam ‘to dazzle, to blind the eyes’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *huàn* ‘shining, brilliant’.

- faav ‘to dislike, to detest’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *fǎn* ‘to turn over, oppose, be against’.

- faib ‘to share, to portion out, to distribute, to divide’ (Xiongs):

faib kom txhua ‘distribute to everyone’ (Xiongs).

- faib ‘to branch’ (Xiongs).

- fais: *luv fais* ‘railroad train, from Lao *lōt fǎy*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **faivfuaj** ‘flashlight’ (Xiongs). From Lao *fáy fàa* ‘electricity, electric light’.

- **faus** ‘to bury, to turn over the earth, to inter’ (Xiongs):

Moog saib tuag twg tes muab hlau faus saib!

‘Go and see, and wherever he died, take a mattock and bury him’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **fawb** ‘to search, to look for, to dig’ (Xiongs):

When a person is born, their placenta, called their *tsho* ‘upper garment, shirt’, is buried in the floor of the house. When a person dies, they must return to the house where they were born and dig up their “shirt” to wear before they can continue on their journey to meet their ancestors:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag koj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **fee** ‘to turn the face away’ (Xiongs).

- **fee plhu** ‘to turn the face away or at angle’ (Xiongs).

- **feem** ‘(no classifier) percentage, portion, part’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *fèn*.

- **feem ntau** ‘for the most part’:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **fi** ‘to send, to forward message’ (Xiongs).

- **fij** ‘(no classifier) flight, trip, time’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *huí* ‘number of times’.

- **fij meej**, from Chinese *huí mén*, ‘to return to the door’, to pay the customary visit to the wife’s parents shortly after a couple has been married (see also *rov rooj*):

In the story “Taub Qaub” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 113-129), Taub Qaub’s mother dies in childbirth and Taub Qaub’s father dies soon thereafter. Taub Qaub, who is only a young child, does not know how to perform a proper funeral for his father, who, therefore, comes back in the form of a tiger. The tiger takes care of Taub Qaub and, when Taub Qaub is grown, helps Taub Qaub find a wife. When it is time for Taub Qaub and his wife, accompanied by Taub Qaub’s tiger-father, to *fij meej*, the neighbors, terrified to find a tiger in their midst, kill Taub Qaub’s father. By now, however, Taub Qaub has learned to perform funeral rites, and sends his father off properly to join his ancestors.

Taub Qaub, meb muab tug laagnpua nuav tu kuas zoo zoo es pegkig kuv xaa meb moog fij meej lawm meb namtais puab.

‘Taub Qaub, the two of prepare this pig well and tomorrow I will escort the two of you to

return to the door to your wife's mother' (*Lug Nraug Tsuv* p. 119).

Peb coj mej ntxhais ntxawm moog txug taavnuav dlag es, nubnua peb yuav tuaj fij meej ntawm nuav. Kuv yog 'Taub Qaub'.

'We have taken your youngest daughter up to now, today we want to come to return to the door here. I am Taub Qaub' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 120).

- **fim** 'to be acquainted with, to have met, to let know, to make friendship' (Xiongs). From Chinese *hui* 'to get together, assemble; to meet, to see'.

- **Fis Liees**:

teb chaws Fis Liees 'the country of Finland' (Xiongs).

tuab neeg Fis Liees 'a Finn' (Xiongs).

- **fiv** 'to make a request for aid with the promise of future payback' (Xiongs).

- **fo**: *faab fo* or *faab quas fo* 'lively, vividly' (Xiongs), 'typical intensifier' (Xiongs p. 553):

ua num faab fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to work intensely].

ncaws faab quas fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to kick, dig, or peck intensely].

huas cov nam qhev mas nim lawv paab nam yaa, nam tshis, lujtxwv, nyuj neeg mas muaj peevxwm lug ua quas tauj quas tsuag faab quas fo; tsua nov luv ua nqaaj ua nqug lug.

'and servants were herding a flock of sheep and goats and mules and cattle and horses. They had the ability to trample up the grass and brush to a complete mess, all one could hear was a great commotion of snapping stems and branches' (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **fob** 'to mix up, to compress with hands' (Xiongs).

- **foo** 'to dye, to color' (Xiongs).

- **foob** 'to cover over, cover up (e.g. with cloth or paper); to cover over and fasten; to close by covering over' (Lyman p. 115), 'to seal something shut' (Heimbach p. 46), from Chinese *fēng* 'to seal':

foob qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [continuously sealed?]

The Xiongs do not translate *foob qeeg*. I infer the meaning 'continuously sealed' from the definitions of *foob* in Lyman and Heimbach but I am not certain that this is correct.

- **foob pob** 'bomb' (Xiongs).

- **fooj** 'to file a complaint, to accuse' (Xiongs). From Lao *fōng*.

- **foom** 'to wish, to wish for' (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *fōng*.

- **fus** 'lifeless, lusterless, died down (fire); to die down' (Xiongs):

fus ndlais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [extinguished].

- **fuab** '(no classifier or classifier *cov*) cloud' (Xiongs):

ib tauv fuab 'a cluster of clouds' (Xiongs).

ib twv fuab ‘a cloud’ (Xiongs).

tsaus fuab quas nti ‘completely overcast’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28, *Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

In the first of the two stories in *Kwvhuam*, Muam Nkauj Ntsum has been instructed by her parents to find a husband with the help of a dog who will stop when they come upon someone whom Muam Nkauj Ntsum should ask to marry her. The first creature they meet is a cloud:

Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab nwg tug dlev taug kev lug txug ntawd ib ntog kev, ua cav txawm muaj ib twv fuab dlawb yaa lug quas luag.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum and her dog followed the road to that place partway along the road, and, why, there was a white cloud flying lug quas luag’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum asks the cloud to marry her:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

The cloud replies that she should marry, rather, the wind, who is much stronger than the cloud, being able to blow the cloud from east to west and from north to south (*Kwvhuam* p. 10).

- **fuab cua** ‘(no classifier) weather’ (Xiongs).

- **fuabfwm**: *pejxeem fuabfwm* ‘the people’:

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg muab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug paam puv xyaa-nub xyaa-mo

‘The people all had a funeral for the Ruler and Yob the Orphan for a full seven days and seven nights’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26.)

- **fuab qaag** ‘betel-palm’:

Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog

‘You say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

- **fuabtais** ‘king, queen, ruler’:

Referring to a male ruler:

NTU NTAWD, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nyob ua Fuabtais kaav Ntujsua Teb Tompeg.

‘AT THAT TIME, His Majesty was King over the Upper Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16).

Cais Yawm Fuabtais txhaj moog tau Nkauj Nubqub lug ua nwg tug nam yau ntxiv hab.
 ‘So the King took, in addition, Star Maiden as his junior wife’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16).

Referring to a married couple ruling jointly as king and queen:

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

hab tsaa Txheej Tshoj Theeb ua fuabtais nyob rua tog qaabteb hov. Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv pujoyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaab hab hab ua fuabtais kaav tebhaws

‘he set Pure One Who Faces Heaven up to reign over the south. Pure One Who Faces Heaven and Grandfather Nyooglaug’s Youngest Daughter brought Pure One Who Face Heaven’s parents to live with them in the south and rule over the country’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

Nuj Sis Loob, hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug txhaj sawv lug ua fuabtais

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab became king and queen’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **fuabtais:** *pug fuabtais* ‘the wife of a king’:

Tabsis, Pug Fuabtais ca le tshev

‘But the Queen scolded him’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

Thaus kawg, Yawm Txivyaig ca le foom lawv le Pug Fuabtais xaav lawm.

‘Finally, Grandfather Txivyaig decreed as the Queen wished’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

pub rau Yawm Fuabtais, Pug Fuabtais Hlub, hab Pug Fuabtais Yau puab noog [typo for moog?] taagnrho.

‘they allowed the King, the Senior Queen [senior wife of the king], and the Junior Queen [junior wife of the king] all to go’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **fuabtais vaajntxwv** ‘king, queen, ruler’:

Referring to a male ruler:

Ab! peb foom kuas nwg tau moog ua fuabtais vaajntxwv lauj!

Ah! Let us bestow a blessing on him that he shall become king’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

Referring to a married couple ruling jointly as king and queen:

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **fuabtxhib** ‘Chinese sumac’, also called ‘nutgall tree’ or ‘Chinese gallnut’, a tree, *Rhus*

chinensis, native to southern China and Southeast Asia, called 盐麸木 *yánfūmù* ‘salt bran wood’ or 五倍子树 *wúbèizǐ shù* ‘gallnut tree’ in Chinese (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 99 *fuab cib*; see the entry for *Rhus chinensis* in *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature* for further citations and discussion):

The wood of the *fuabtxhib* tree was used to make cannons by the Mong fighters in the rebellion against the French in Indochina (1919-1921):

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down *fuabtxhib* trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

In folklore and Mong belief, *fuabtxhib* is harmful to spirits:

Aub, nam puj dlaab has tas; ua ntaaj hlau te ib ntaag txuas nkaus ntaag txuas nkaus, huas yog ua ntaaj fuabtxhib pleev quav qab nua tes nam puj dlaab ha tuag nua

‘Listen! The female spirit said, if we make swords of iron, each time we cut her she will join right back together, but if we make swords of *fuabtxhib* wood smeared with chicken droppings she will die’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

Below is a photograph of Chinese sumac from the Wikipedia article on *Rhus chinensis*:



- **fuam** ‘to grow, to expand, to grow larger, to enlarge, to broaden, to grow loose’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *fā*.

- **fuam cheej** ‘to be dying, to be in agony’ (Xiongs) (also written *huam cheej*):

This is a fun loan from 划拳 *huáquán* “to calculate fist” = “to play a game in which the participant guesses the figures the opponent will express with fingers, often as a drinking game”. This game is a bit like rock-paper-scissors. When drinking the men will play the game, with a lot of loud enthusiasm, the loser must down another cup of raw liquor. The wild gesticulations of throwing out one’s hand with the finger-figures (various configurations of the fingers) look a bit like the death throes of a chicken or animal as it

frantically tries to flap its wings/run off at speed. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **fuam yeeb** ‘to crave opium or cigarettes’ (Xiongs).
- **fuas** ‘to gather hurriedly, to catch up, to pull out from one another’ (Xiongs).
- **fwb** ‘to feed’ (Xiongs).
- **fwb**: *tim fwb* ‘(classifier *tug*) assistant teacher’ (Xiongs).
- **fwb**: *xib fwb* ‘(classifier *tug*) teacher’ (Xiongs) (also written *xwb fwb*), from Chinese *shīfu*:

Nwg yog tug xib fwb ‘s/he is the instructor’ (Xiongs).

- **fwb**: *xib fwb qha xaam phaaj* ‘(classifier *tug*) math teacher’ (Xiongs).
- **fwb**: *xwb fwb* ‘teacher’ (also written *xib fwb*), from Chinese *shīfu*:

xwb fwb qha ntawv ‘teacher’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **fwbtaub** ‘(classifier *lub*) gourd dipper’ (Lyman p. 116):

Nam puj dlaab txawm ris ib lub kawm, coj ib raab rag hab ib lub fwbtaub.

‘The female spirit then carried on her back a basket, and had brought a knife and a gourd dipper’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

“*Coj lub fwbtaub tuaj ua dlaabtsi?*” “*Lub fwbtaub nuav, coj tuaj cug nraug ntshaav*”.
 “Why did you bring the gourd dipper?” “This gourd dipper, I brought it to catch young men’s blood.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **fwj** ‘to hold’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *fú* ‘to support with the hand’.
 - **fwj** ‘(classifier *lub*) bottle’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *hú*:
- laam fwj* ‘(classifier *lub*) bottle’ (Xiongs).
- ib lub laam fwv qhuav* ‘an empty bottle’ (Xiongs).
- **fwj**: *phim fwj* ‘honor, to do deference, to respect’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pèifú*.
 - **fwj txob** ‘black pepper’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *hújiāo* ‘pepper’.
 - **fwm** ‘to protect, to watch’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *hù*.
 - **fwm**: *pejxeem fuabfwm* ‘the people’:

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg muab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug paam puv xyaa-nub xyaa-mo

‘The people all had a funeral for the Ruler and Yob the Orphan for a full seven days and seven nights’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26.)

- **fws** (classifier *lub*) ‘sweat, perspiration’:

ntofws ‘sweating’ (Xiongs).

tawm fws ‘to perspire’ (Xiongs).

Puab txawm nov khob khob huv lub hleb tuaj, cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug moog cem hlo dlaim nam txivtxag saib, Yob Nraug Ntsuag pw ua ib ce ntxig fws quas zaum.
 ‘They then heard knocking from inside the coffin, and Yob the Orphan’s older brother lifted the lid of the coffin to look, and, why, Yob the Orphan was lying there his whole body perspiring slightly’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

- **fwv** ‘strong, powerful, watchful’ (Xiongs).

- **fwv**, intensifier:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj, le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj, noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.
 ‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain. Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain, so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

Luas tej mas nim ua zaam lab quas vog, hab nojnqaj hauscauw ntshu quas fwv rua tom u tom nua.
 ‘Everyone else was dressed up in speckled red clothing, feasting and celebrating all over the place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

G

The letter G is used only as a tone marker.

H

- **ha** ‘and, also’ (also written *hab*):

Ha muab nyaj muab kub rua leejtxiv ris tuab quas nam nraa.
 ‘She also gave a packload of silver and gold to her father-in-law to carry on his back’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **hab** ‘and, also’ (Xiongs) (also written *ha*):

Lob Lw le mam qhau hlo hau, qhau dlaag qhau zug taug kev moog nrhav txiv tuam mej koob, txiv tuam mej zeeg, hab le mam rov qaab moog has Muam Nkauj Ntsum.
 ‘Lob Lw then humbled himself and set out on the road to find marriage negotiators, marriage go-betweens, and once more ask to marry Muam Nkauj Ntsum’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

Luas yog ntxhais fuabtais hab luas txawj ntse heev.
 ‘Someone was a princess and someone was pretty smart’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Huas yog koj quaj cais koj yuav tau nyob nuav ua peb qhev, hab lug yuav peb tug qhev ntawd.
 ‘But if you cry out, then you will have to remain here as our slave, and marry that slave

of ours over there' (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Mo nuav yog kuv pw ib mos ais kuv quaj cais kuv nrug mej nyob hab ua mej qhev moog. Huas yog kuv tsi quaj le cais kuv yuav yuav mej tug qhev nuav hab mej paab qhev ntawm nuav taagnrho nrug kuv moog.

'Tonight, if during the night I cry out, I will remain with you and become your slave. But if I do not cry out, then I will get this slave of yours here, and all your other slaves, to take with me' (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

'The Maiden Ntsum's mother and father, HIS MAJESTY, reigned in heaven, but the Maiden Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth' (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

'All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy' (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

'I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog.

'Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
'Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!
'I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug; xws le:

Moob Sib,

Moob Dlub,

Moob Yobtshuab,

*Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),
Moob Ncuavpas,
Moob Suavfaaj,
hab lwm lub npe*

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects, such as:

*Moob Sib,
Moob Dlub,
Moob Yobtshuab,
Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),
Moob Ncuavpas,
Moob Suavfaaj,
and other names*

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **hab** ‘also, too, as well’ (see also *hav*):

ib yaam le hab ‘also’ (Xiongs).

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab
‘you should save some money too’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tuaj ib vuag nuav hab ‘s/he comes by here for a short period of time too’ (Xiongs).

Cais Yawm Fuabtais txhaj moog tau Nkauj Nubqub lug ua nwg tug nam yau ntxiv hab.
‘So the King took, in addition, Star Maiden as his junior wife’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16).

Los Xaab nqeg hab Ceeb Pov nqeg tes ob tug lujtxwv dlha quas loo rua thoobpuab nkaag plawg rua huv pluj plag lawm hab.

‘Los Xaab dismounted and Ceeb Pov dismounted and their mules ran into the shoulder-bag and disappeared as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

- **hab** ‘so as’:

yuav tsum tu hab qhov txhaab xam tsi voog
‘the abcess should be taken care of so as not to get worse’ (Xiongs).

- **hab**, final particle:

Koj tseem yuav yig hab lov? ‘Will you try to refuse?’ (Xiongs).

Kuv vaam tas koj yuav tuaj koom peb rooj qav hab
‘I hope that you will participate in the feast with us’ (Xiongs).

Wb! tau hab huas!
‘Yes, indeed!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil

dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **hab** 'to braid, to weave' (Xiongs).

- **hab**: *ibhab* 'so many, many' (Xiongs).

- **hab**: *nplaj hab* 'blood sucker' (Xiongs).

- **ham**: *limham* 'cruel, fierce' (*Kwvhuam* p. 19). From Chinese *lihài*.

- **hammeem**: *thwsxas hammeem* 'to behave wickedly':

Tej kws moog thwsxas hammeem es tua tua tuabneeg
'Those who behave wickedly and commit murder' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **has** 'to say, to talk' (Xiongs):

has koj zaaj lug tuaj 'give your idea or your point of view' (Xiongs).

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub
'I prefer going right into court' (Xiongs) ["I prefer to go and speak immediately in the courthouse"].

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm
'S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore', 'S/he, perplexed, remains in silence' (Xiongs).

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? 'Do they speak English?' (Xiongs.)

has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

'to speak Mong more clearly than we at present' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **has** 'to ask to marry':

Lob Lw le mam qhau hlo hau, qhau dlaag qhau zug taug kev moog nrhav txiv tuam mej koob, txiv tuam mej zeeg, hab le mam rov qaab moog has Muam Nkauj Ntsum.
'Lob Lw then humbled himself and set out on the road to find marriage negotiators, marriage go-betweens, and once more ask to marry Muam Nkauj Ntsum' (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

- **has** 'to sing':

has koj zaaj lug txaj 'sing your song' (Xiongs).

has zaaj tshoob 'sing customary and wedding ceremony songs' (Xiongs).

- **has** 'to pick up with a spoon' (Xiongs).

- **has**: *le has* 'as notified':

Koj yuav tsum muab txheeb saib puab muaj le has.
'You will have to verify to see if it is as notified' (Xiongs).

- **has**: *tsua has*, progressive marker:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **has**: *yog has tas* ‘if, whether’ (Xiongs).

- **has dlej** ‘to row’ (Xiongs).

- **has lug thob quav** ‘to speak with repetition (said of someone having speech problems)’ (Xiongs).

- **has lug yaa** ‘to lie, to tell something that is not true’ (Xiongs).

- **has plaub** ‘to involve in a hearing’ (Xiongs).

- **has rua** ‘talk to, tell someone’ (Xiongs).

- **has tas** ‘to say that ...’:

puab has tas – ‘they say that – ’ (Xiongs).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **hav** ‘burnt, tanned’ (Xiongs):

zab tshaav kom hav ‘to get tanned under the sun’ (Xiongs).

- **hav** ‘too’ (see also *hab*):

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav

‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, then the stake will lean over too”]

- **haa** ‘pertaining to the perfume of new rice’ (Xiongs).

- **haam** ‘to plumb, to stop (a tooth); to solder, to weld, to join’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *hàn*.

- **haam** ‘(no classifier) alley’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *xiàng*.

- **Haam** ‘one Hmong last name’ (Xiongs), the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Taag** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Xiàng*.

- **haav** ‘(no classifier or classifier *lub*) valley, vale, dale’ (Xiongs):

nraag haav zog ‘a little lower’ (Xiongs).

peg haav haav ‘upstream, source’ (Xiongs).

- **haav dlej** ‘river, stream’ (Xiongs):

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej, nwg moog ntxuav hab hloov piskag khaubdluag ua tuab nam yawm hluas zoo nraug quas si lug tsev.

‘So the Spirit then flew to the river, he went to bathe and he changed his clothes so that he became a very handsome young man and came back to the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **haav dlej** ‘gutter’ (Xiongs).

- **Haav Txiv Dlaw** ‘Walnut Valley’, a Green Mong village in Anning County in Yunnan Province in China:

Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Dlaw ‘Memoire of Walnut Valley’ (*Cim Xeeb*, title).

- **haav zoov** ‘(classifier *lub*) jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **haav zoov nuj quas txeeg** ‘wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs):

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **haav zoov nuj quas xab** ‘(classifier *lub*) wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **haav zoov nuj txeeg** ‘(classifier *lub*) a wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **hai** ‘to pull’ (Xiongs):

hai qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to pull continuously].

hai rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to pull firmly].

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for *taub*] *hai lug*.

‘The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **hais** ‘slantingly’ (Xiongs).

- **haiv** ‘(no classifier) kind, sort, type (people)’ (Xiongs):

cov tswv yim kws txawm muaj nyob rua huv haiv tuabneeg Moob.

‘the ideas which exist among the Mong people’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws ua neej nyob raws xeem hab raws paab pawg.

‘The Mong are are ethnic group who live their lives in accordance with clan and subgroup divisions’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

luas lwm haiv tuabneeg le lug

‘the languages of other ethnic groups’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

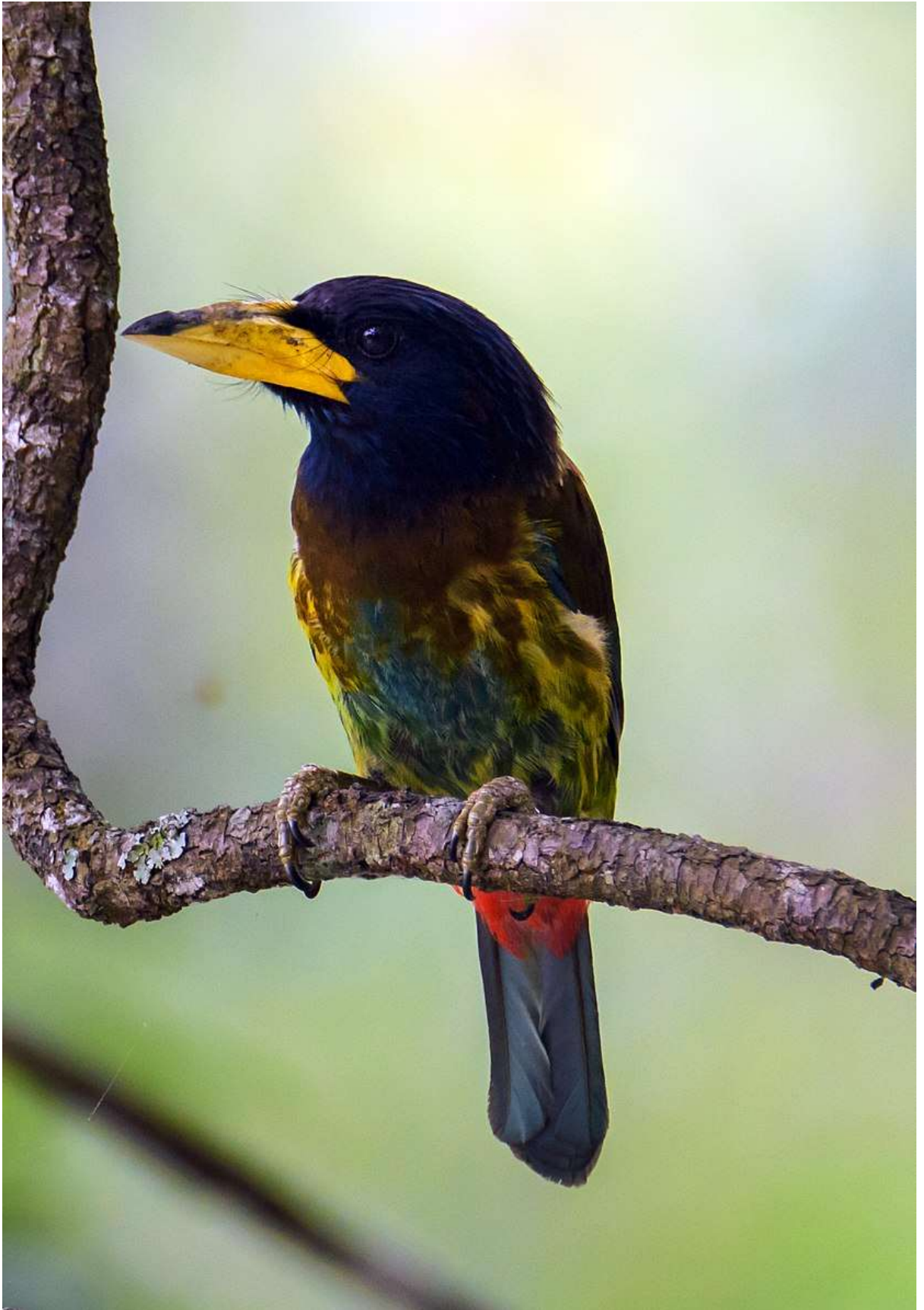
Yog le noobneej kws muaj nyob hu ua haiv Moob tes tu Sub ha le hu puj Sub xwb.
 ‘Where there are human beings who are called Mong, cutting off the Sub refers only to Mrs. Sub’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 34).

Ntuj tsim muaj ib haiv tuabneeg MOOB.
 ‘Heaven created a Mong people’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **haiv** ‘to soften, to smooth the field soil’ (Xiongs).
- **haiv neeg suav** ‘Chinese’ (Xiongs).
- **hau** ‘to cook in water, to boil’ (Xiongs).
- **hau** ‘(classifier *tug*) chief, superior, supervisor, leader; important, chief’ (Xiongs):
ntaus hau ‘leading’ (Xiongs).
ua hau has ‘to be the head speaker’ (*Kwvhuam* pp. 32).
- **hau** ‘(classifier *lub*) lid, cover, top, summit’ (Xiongs) (see also *hauv*).
- **hau**: *abhau* ‘(classifier *tug*) great barbet bird, *Megalaima virens virens*’ (Lyman p. 69):

taujaab abhau nim quaj ntshoo quas qeeg tes nim khua khua nwg sab.
 ‘the blue-throated barbets and great barbets sang continuously, and so he became became very melancholy’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

Below is a photograph of the great barbet, *Megalaima virens*, kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **hau:** *plaub hau* ‘hair’ (Xiongs):

tshib plaub hau ‘to thin the hair’ (Xiongs).

- **hau:** *plaub hau ua lauj vaub* ‘badly knotted hair’ (Xiongs).

- **hau:** *qhau hlo hau* ‘to humble oneself’ (Kwvhuam p. 31).

- **hau:** *taub hau* ‘(classifier *lub*) head’ (Xiongs):

plhw taub hau ‘touch gently on the head’ (Xiongs).

tsam taub hau ‘to bump by the head’ (Xiongs).

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for *teb*] ‘turn the head to the north’ (Xiongs).

tsaa taubhau kuv muab lub tog nuav rau koj ncoo os!

‘lift your head and I will give you this stool as a pillow’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Ntxawm muab lub nam tog lug tso xab taubhau taag

‘Ntxawm put the stool under his head’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

nwg aub tuab lub nam taubhau zaaj ua qaug dlaab qaug dle

‘he staggered along carrying on his back the dragon-head’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

Nwg dlha dlha moog aub hlo lub nam taubhau zaaj, hab muab raab taus ntsa kag, cais kwv loog moog. ‘He ran along carrying on his back the dragon-head. He stuck his axe into it so that he could carry it on his shoulder’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 31; the illustration on page 32 shows that he carries the axe handle on his shoulder, and the dragon’s head is attached to the blade of the axe).

Koj muab tug nam laug luj luj lab ploog ntoo sau koj taubhau nawb.

‘Take a great big, bright red band of cross-stitch embroidery and wrap it around your head’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Nam Sib Tuam ob fuas ob fuas tsi tau taubhau lug txawb txuas rua le

‘Sub Tuam snatched about and snatched about but could not find his head to join it back on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

tshuav nam txhaa taubhau dlawb paug, khuav nceev tid e!

‘all that’s left is the gleaming white skull, wedged in over there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **hau:** *taub hau* ‘(classifier *thooj*) a piece of boiled squash’ (Xiongs).

- **hau:** *txhaa taub hau* ‘skull’ (Xiongs).

- **hau:** *yig hau* ‘(classifier *lub*) the center of hair forming on the head’ (Xiongs) [hair whorl].

- **hau quas toog**, intensifier:

Los Xaab txawm maub hau quas toog rovqaab rua nraag qub qaab

‘So Los Xaab groped his way in the dark down to the place where he had been’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **hau tsev** ‘by family, by household’ (Xiongs).

- **haub** ‘to persuade’ (Xiongs).

- **Haub yaub!** ‘Good grief!’, ‘Oh yes!’ (see also *Aub yaub!*):

In a folktale, a female spirit fights with two young men, hoping to kill them and bring their meat home in a back-basket for herself and her daughter to eat, but the young men are too much for her and she flees, her basket empty, back to her cave. When she arrives, her daughter says:

Awb! moog saib nam ris nraug nqaj lug oj!
‘Hello! Let’s go see the backload of young-man meat!’

and she replies:

Haub-yaub! nam ris nraug nqaj, nam ris nraug nqaj!
Good grief! Backload of young-man meat, backload of young-man meat!

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

In another story in the same collection, a man starts to unplug a gourd that, unbeknownst to him, is filled with dangerous spirits, and immediately hears voices from inside the gourd saying:

“Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!”
“Oh yes! Open us, [we’ll] try killing and eating [you]!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **haus** ‘to drink’ (Xiongs):

tau kua qhav haus ‘to be scolded’ (Xiongs) [“to get ginger juice to drink”].

- **haus** ‘to smoke’:

haus luam yeeb ‘to smoke cigarettes, tobacco’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob haus luam yeeb ‘do not smoke’ (Xiongs).

haus yaj yeeb ‘to smoke opium’ (Xiongs).

- **haus cawv xeeb** ‘to drink liquor in honor of someone’s birthday’:

Muaj ib xyoos, Nuj Yob namtxiv txawm moog nrug Yawm Xeev haus cawv xeeb, cais puab txhaj muab ob tug txhaus cawv tuag taagnrho lawm lauj!
‘One year, Nuj Yob’s parents went to a wine drinking ceremony in honor of the ruler’s birthday, and he forced liquor upon them until they died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

- **haus dlej** ‘to drink water’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv** (classifier *lub*) sharp point (knife).

- **hauv** ‘source (river)’ (Xiongs):

peg hauv haav ‘upstream, source’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv** (see also *hau*): *toj roob hauv peg* ‘lands and mountains’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv**: *tom hauv ntej* ‘in front’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv caug** ‘knee’ (Xiongs):

plov tub hauv caug ‘(classifier *lub*) kneecap’ (Xiongs).

- **hauvcub** ‘fireplace’:

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

- **hauv mum** ‘gable’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15) (see also *maum kaum*).

- **hauv mum tsev** ‘gable’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv muag ntxaa ... hauv muag hleb** ‘upon the end of the grave-mound ... upon the end of the coffin’:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your chicken crows and their chicken joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the coffin.

Koj qab teb luas qab xaa txha yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

But if your chicken replies and their chicken joins in, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb, txha le yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the coffin’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **hauv nrob** ‘chest, breast’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv paug** ‘stump, base, origin, basis, root’ (Xiongs):

Huas nwg muab ob ntsuj teb kaav le kws tub has ntawm hauvpaug.

‘But they ruled two regions as was said at the beginning [of the story]’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **hauv plaj** ‘forehead’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv roob** ‘mountain top’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv rooj** ‘the VIP’s seats’ (Xiongs).

- **hauv sab** ‘chest’ (Xiongs):

ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab

‘the two ntxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **hauv taag** ‘(classifier *lub*) the main area of a traditional Mong house where most of the

ceremonies or ancestor worship were conducted' (Xiongs):

chaav tsev hauv taag 'main room' (Tswv Yim p. 15).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

'When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors' garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors' house.

Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev tshab.

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors' new home.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors' garden!' (Dlaab Qhuas p. 18.)

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

'Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room' (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 36).

- **hauv txhuam** 'match' (Xiongs). From Chinese *huǒ* 'fire' + *cā* 'to rub'.

- **hauv xaws** 'the fontanelle on the head of a child' (Xiongs).

- **haw** '(no classifier) cast, throw, jet' (Xiongs).

- **haw quav** 'to have diarrhea' (Xiongs).

- **hawb** 'to wheeze, to purr' (Xiongs). From dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *hōu* (*bāo*).

- **hawb zawg** or **hawb quas zawg** 'typical intensifier, wheezingly' (Xiongs p. 554):

Nwg nkaag hawb zawg tuaj txug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he arrived creeping wheezingly].

Dlha tuab tug hawb zawg le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he ran alone, wheezing].

- **Hawj** 'a Hmong last name' (Xiongs), a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Dluag** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Hóu*.

- **hawm** 'to salute, to greet, to bow to, to take off one's hat to, to touch one's hat to' (Xiongs), from Chinese *hòu* 'to wait, await; to inquire after':

Kawg kag txug chaw hawm!

'Let us hasten to make obeisance!' (Ceebpov p. 13).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog

lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **hawm**: *sibhawm* or *sij hawm* ‘time’, from Chinese *shíhou*:

sij hawm ‘(classifier *lub*) time, period of time, occasion’ (Xiongs).

Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntsooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le.

‘At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

- **hawv** ‘to shout, to yell, to cry out, to threaten’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *hǒu*.

- **hawv**, intensifier:

aav ndlwg quas hawv ‘the earth flowed’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **hawv**: *Txhuahawv*, part of the name of a dragon in a story:

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **hem** ‘to frighten, to scare, to intimidate’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *hè*.

- **hem tshaav** ‘clearing’:

Ob tug nim tu hlo nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj dlaav tuag

‘The two of them were taking care of a place where their servants had prepared an exceedingly broad clearing’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

- **hee** ‘to neigh’ (Xiongs).

- **heev** ‘hard, much, very’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *hěn* (see also *hwv*):

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev ‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

cov mov muav [typo for nuav?] zas heev ‘this rice is very soft’ (Xiongs).

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

lub txiv nuav muaj kua heev ‘this fruit is very juicy’ (Xiongs).

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

muag [typo for *muaj*?] *yees luj heev* ‘to have a very strong habitual desire’ (Xiongs).

Nyuj ob txhim kub zuag heev ‘The bull’s two horns are very sharp or pointed’ (Xiongs).

qeeb heev ‘very slow’ (Xiongs).

raab hlau nuav xeb heev lawm ‘this hoe is very rusty’ (Xiongs).

rau sab heev zog ntxiv ‘work a little harder’ (Xiongs).

seej heev ‘very docile’ (Xiongs).

tug dlev zuv tsev zoo heev ‘the dog watches the house very well’ (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev
‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

txi txiv zoo heev ‘very fruitful’ (Xiongs).

txhoj pob heev ‘very bothersome, mischievous’ (Xiongs).

zoo nkauj heev ‘very beautiful’ (Xiongs).

zoo nraug heev ‘very handsome’ (Xiongs).

Luas yog ntxhais fuabtais hab luas txawj ntse heev.

‘Someone was a princess and someone was pretty smart’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **heev** ‘male’ (Xiongs).

- **hiv hiv** ‘Hee hee!’ (the sound of laughter):

Ntuj aw! Hiv hiv! zoo sab tsi zoo!

‘By heaven! Hee hee! How happy we are!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua tshaav ntuj quas lug lawm cais, kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb lug lawm tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky has cleared, for my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is truly coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua ntuj kaaj quas lug lawm cais kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tuaj yuav txug tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky is bright and so my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is really coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 31-33).

Hiv! Hiv! Ob yawm yij yawm dlaab nua ua caag yuav txawj sis thaam ua luaj le ntawd!

‘Hee hee! These two brothers-in-law, how they can talk!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84; spoken in response to ribald wordplay).

- **ho** ‘then’ (Xiongs):

moog ho tuaj ‘come again’ (Xiongs).

koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

Zaaj nuav mas yog ho yuav has txug peb Moob (Moob leeg los puas Hmoob ntsuab) txuj nam hlaab-nyas

‘This article tells about our Mong (Mong Leng or Green Hmong) baby-carrier’
(*Grandmother’s Path* p. 129).

- **hob**, intensifier:

quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob
‘gleaming with silk and satin’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

- **hom** ‘to mark out, to identify with a mark, mark for ownership, to seal, to mark for identification’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *hào* ‘mark, sign, signal’.

- **hom** ‘to make threatening motions’ (Xiongs).

- **hom** ‘to boast’:

Ob tug nim tas; “Hwj! zag nuav wb tau nam quaspuj zoo zoo nkauj lawm. Yawd! ib ntsiv wb noj mov taag wb moog nrug pw tes ib leeg ua ib teg tag.” Ob tug nim hom hom le hov.

They said, “Well, now we’ve gotten a beautiful wife. Wow! As soon as we finish eating, we will take turns sleeping with her.” The two of them boasted in that fashion (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **hom ca** ‘to reserve’ (Xiongs).

- **hov** ‘there’ (Xiongs):

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb ‘s/he can only do up to there’ (Xiongs).

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm
‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

- **hov** ‘that’:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.
‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **hov: le hov** ‘like that’:

Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab

‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **hov**: *rua hov* ‘there’:

Tes nim muab hlo ib lub zimtxwv nyaj coj lug txawb nkaus rua hov
 ‘Then she brought a silver chair and set it down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

wb muab nwg tsaa ua ib tug tuam yij rua hov ntawd saib cov nam txwm zeej.
 ‘we must elevate him to the position of tuam yij who watches over the criminals’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **hov ntau** ‘how much’ (Xiongs). First syllable possibly from Chinese *hǎo* as in *hǎoduō* ‘how many, how much’.

- **hov ntawd** ‘that’:

Ab! quas tsuv tum dlev hov ntawd
 ‘Damn that dog!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 66.)

- **hov twg** ‘where’ (Xiongs) (also written *qhov twg*).

- **hov txob** ‘pepper’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *hǎijiāo* ‘chili pepper’:

hov txob ntsim ‘hot pepper’ (Xiongs).

hov txob lab ‘red pepper’ (Xiongs).

ob tug yuav muab tuav hovtxob noj
 ‘the two of them were about to pound pepper for their meal’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

kuv tas wb muab nam noog hov tua tuav hovtxob noj pebcaug
 ‘I said that we would kill this bird and pound some pepper and eat the New Year feast’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“*Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;*
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
 these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
 these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
 these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **hov txob**: *qws hovtxob* or *qws tuav hovtxob* ‘pepper-pestle, pestle for pounding pepper’:

In a story explaining the origin of making offerings to one’s ancestors, two brothers are frightened when the animals in their house begin to speak, because they believe it to be a

bad omen. When the cat speaks, they hit it with a pepper-pestle:

Tes khaws nkaus nam qws tuav hovtxob tuab qws miv, miv quaj miv-auv! nua.
 ‘Then they whacked the cat with a pestle for pounding pepper, the cat went meow!’
 (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67).

When a rat speaks, thanking the brothers for hitting the cat with the pepper-pestle, the brothers try to hit the rat with the pepper-pestle as well but miss. Then even the pepper-pestle speaks:

Txha xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag. Nam tsuag tsiv quas loo rua peg qhov tsev lawm. Nam qws hovtxob tseem has tas; “Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le”.
 ‘Then they tried to give the rat a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat. The rat ran up into a crack in the wall. The pepper-pestle even spoke, saying: “Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot.”’
 (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67.)

- **hov txob**: *taig hov txob* ‘mortar’ (Xiongs) [bowl for pounding pepper].

- **hov txhua chaw** ‘things, goods, articles (including food)’ (Lyman p. 119):

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.
 ‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth, and ran home’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 32).

- **hoom**: *nyooj hoom* ‘(classifier *lub*) airplane’ (Xiongs). From Lao *nyónhǒng* ‘powered aeronautical balloon’.

- **Hoos**: *Phuaj Hoos* ‘Phou Hong’, a mountain in Sayaboury Province in Laos, near the village where Jacques Lemoine did his fieldwork (*Initiation* p. 131).

- **hu** ‘to call at, to name’ (Xiongs):

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:
 – MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –
Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug
 The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:
 – MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –
 Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects
 (Kawm Ntawv 2 p. 6.)

- **hu** (see also *huv*): *zeb hu* ‘(classifier *lub*) sharpening stone’ (Xiongs).

- **hu plig** ‘to call in a human spirit or soul so that the living person can be in good health’ (Xiongs).

- **hu ua** ‘to be called, to be named’ (Xiongs).

- **hub** ‘menthol’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *he* in *bòhechún*, *bòhejīng*, or *bòhènào* ‘menthol’.

- **hub** ‘(classifier *lub*) jar’ (Xiongs):

kuv nam txum ib hub cawv ‘my mother ferments a jar (a barrel) of alcohol’ (Xiongs).

- **hum** ‘to fit’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *hé* ‘to suit, to agree’.

- **hum**: *koom hum* (classifier *lub*) ‘association’ (Xiongs).

- **hum nkaus** ‘just right, fitting, exactly fine, fit well’ (Xiongs).

- **hum sab** ‘to comply with what one likes, good, acceptable’ (Xiongs).

- **huv** ‘in’ (Xiongs):

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub

‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs) [“I prefer to go and speak immediately in the courthouse”].

Naag xaw lug huv tsev ‘The rain (water) leaks into the house’ (Xiongs).

peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (Txooj Moob No. 2, p. 1).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua, muab nrum nroog rua huv nam dlej.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd, and flung it into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.

‘The Chinese man shut [the ntshaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **huv**, not followed by a noun: ‘inside’:

saab huv ‘in, inside’ (Xiongs).

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntshaug the huv tuaj tas;

‘He opened it and, why, the ntshaug spirits *the* from inside saying:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **huv** ‘clean, clear, tidy’ (Xiongs):

Koj zawv tsi huv ‘You don’t wash it well’ (Xiongs) [“wash but not be clean”].

- **huv** ‘to sharpen’ (Xiongs). See also *hu*.

- **huv**: *moog rua huv* ‘to participate’:

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau

‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

- **huv**: *nkaag lug huv* ‘to enter, to go into’:

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*
 ‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs) [“they don’t go into our village”].

- **huv**: *nyob huv* ‘in’:

Muaj pis tsawg yim nyob huv koj lub zog?
 ‘How many families are there in your village?’ (Xiongs.)

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub?*] *zaig zig*
 ‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

- **huv**: *nyob huv rua* ‘within’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:
 – MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –
Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,
 The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:
 – MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –
 Within these two groups, we make further divisions
 (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **huv**: *rua huv* ‘in, into’:

cov kua qaub thaws taag rua huv lawm ‘the vinegar soaks in all’ (Xiongs).

nkaag rua huv ‘to get into’ (Xiongs).

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
 ‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm
 ‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.
 ‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’
 (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua, muab nrum nroog rua huv nam dlej.
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd, and flung it into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **huv**: *rua huv* ‘onto’:

poob rua huv peg teb ‘to fall to the ground’ (Xiongs).

- **huv**: *zaam xob huv* ‘beautifully dressed’:

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!

‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **huv nruab nrog** ‘inside, in’ (Xiongs).
- **huv nruab yeeb** ‘the unborn state’ (Xiongs) [“in the spirit world”].
- **huv peg**: *poob rua huv peg teb* ‘to fall to the ground’ (Xiongs).
- **huv plawv** ‘in the center, in the middle’ (Xiongs).
- **huv qaab** ‘under, underneath; bottom, base’ (Xiongs):

nyob huv qaab ‘to be under’ (Xiongs).

- **huv qaab ntuj** ‘in the world’ (Xiongs).
- **huv tuabsi** ‘all’:

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **huab**, final particle:

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **huam**: *kvw huam* ‘stories, tales, traditions, ancient time’ (Xiongs; *Kwvhuam*, title).
- **huam cheej** ‘to writhe in death throes’ (also written *fuam cheej*):

Cais zaaj lub nam cev nti huam cheej lauj!

‘The dragon’s body began to writhe in its death throes’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Tug nam zaaj huam cheej cais nwg lug tsoo ua nwg, nwg lub nam tsev pob taag.

‘The dragon in its death throes smashed into things, so that the house was completely demolished’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

This is a fun loan from 划拳 huáquán “to calculate fist” = “to play a game in which the participant guesses the figures the opponent will express with fingers, often as a drinking game”. This game is a bit like rock-paper-scissors. When drinking the men will play the game, with a lot of loud enthusiasm, the loser must down another cup of raw liquor. The wild gesticulations of throwing out one’s hand with the finger-figures (various configurations of the fingers) look a bit like the death throes of a chicken or animal as it frantically tries to flap its wings/run off at speed. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **huas** ‘but’:

Mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj le cais pegkig peb tso koj moog. Huas yog koj quaj, cais koj yuav tsum nrug peb nyob, ua peb qhev ntawm nuav.

‘Tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out, tomorrow we will let you

go. But if you cry out, then you must remain with us, and become our slave' (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Miv ntxhais, mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj cais peb tso koj moog. Huas yog koj quaj cais koj yuav tau nyob nuav ua peb qhev, hab lug yuav peb tug qhev ntawd.

'Little girl, tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out we will let you go. But if you cry out, then you will have to remain here as our slave, and marry that slave of ours over there' (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Mo nuav yog kuv pw ib mos ais kuv quaj cais kuv nrug mej nyob hab ua mej qhev moog. Huas yog kuv tsi quaj le cais kuv yuav yuav mej tug qhev nuav hab mej paab qhev ntawm nuav taagnrho nrug kuv moog.

'Tonight, if during the night I cry out, I will remain with you and become your slave. But if I do not cry out, then I will get this slave of yours here, as well as all your other slaves, to take with me' (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

'The Maiden Ntsum's mother and father, HIS MAJESTY, reigned in heaven, but the Maiden Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth' (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Yog koj caam yeej, le pub koj coj moog. Huas yog koj caam tsi yeej, cais tsi pub hlo le!
'If you win the argument, I will let you take him. But if you do not win the argument, I will not' (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

'Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **huas**, final particle:

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

'Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

koj tsi yoom qheb qhovrooj tug dlev dlob thawj dlev cis nkeeg hov lug tsev le huas.

'I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur' (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

Wb! tau hab huas!

'Yes, indeed!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

"Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?" "Aub, raab rag nuav coj tuaj tua nraug huas".

"Why have you brought that knife?" "Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

In a folktale, a man's wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspui ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!
 ‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **huas saab ntsej** ‘to struggle to hear clearly’:

Ab! Ob yawm hov, ntshai meb huas saab ntsej kaj.
 ‘Ah! Gentlemen, perhaps you couldn’t hear clearly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **huav**, intensifier:

Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj
 ‘Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **hwv** ‘very’ (see also *heev*):

cov txiv nuav xwm hwv lawm ‘these fruits are too small’ (*Xiongs*).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
 ‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (*Xiongs*).

Ub! Maaj kev hwv naj! ‘Oh, but we’re in a big hurry!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.
 ‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

“*Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?*” “*Ub! tsiv os. Tsiv! kuv tsi qha le ntshai hwv!*”
 ‘Sir, why are you fleeing?’ “Oo! Fleeing. Fleeing! I can’t tell you, I’m too frightened!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

- **hwv**: *ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv* ‘to take too much’:

ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv yuav nplaam tuab si
 ‘don’t try to take too much one will lose all’ (*Xiongs*).

HL

- **hla**, intensifier (*Heimbach* p. 63 *hlias*):

Tuab plag ntsig xwb, nwg ca le tsaug zug hla lawm.
 ‘In only a moment, he was fast asleep’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

- **hlav** ‘to sharpen; sharp, cutting’ (*Xiongs*):

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.
 ‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **hlaa** ‘to cross over, to pass, to exceed, to go beyond, to go across’ (*Xiongs*):

Ob tug muagnug taug kev lug txug nraag haav, txawm muaj ib tug twm laag tuam hlaa ib lub nyuas haav tub tub moog rau tim u.

‘The sister and brother followed the road and came down to a valley, then there was a single rail crossing a deep ravine to go to the other side’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 8-9).

- **hlaab** ‘to be burnt or scalded in hot water’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaab** ‘(classifier *txuj*) belt’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaab**: *khaub hlaab* ‘poor, old clothes’ (Xiongs):

Muab quas nyaj noj taag haus taag lug tug nam khaubhlaab quas nyo, dlaajntseg quas ntsuv.

‘He used up all his money and he is ragged, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **hlaab ntshaa** ‘nerve, blood vessel’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaab-nyas** ‘baby-carrier’ (description in Mong Leng and English translation, illustration, and notes in *Grandmother’s Path* pp. 129-133):

Has Txug Dlaam Hlaab-Nyas: Zaaj nuav mas yog ho yuav has txug peb Moob (Moob leeg los puas Hmoob ntsuab) txuj nam hlaab-nyas, kws nwg kuj ua muaj kaab muaj ke hab.

‘About the Baby-Carrier: This article tells about our Mong (Mong Leng or Green Hmong) baby-carrier and the traditions and customs that go with it’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 129).

- **hlaab tauv cawm sa** ‘(classifier *txuj*) safety belt’:

sa txuj hlaab tauv cawm sa ‘put on the safety belt’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaav** ‘to grow up, to bud, to expand, to enlarge, to branch out’ (Xiongs):

caij nplooj hlaav ‘(classifier *lub*) spring’ (Xiongs).

- **hlais** ‘to cut’ (Xiongs).

- **hlais nplej** ‘to harvest’ (Xiongs).

- **hlau** ‘(no classifier) metal, iron’ (Xiongs):

cov txo yog hlau ‘the remainder is metal or iron’ (Xiongs).

hlau zooj ‘pliable metal’ (Xiongs).

- **hlau** ‘hoe, mattock, pick axe’ (Xiongs):

raab hlau nuav xeb heev lawm ‘this hoe is very rusty’ (Xiongs).

Moog saib tuag twg tes muab hlau faus saib!

‘Go and see, and wherever he died, take a mattock and bury him’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **hlau**: *dlaav hlau* ‘(classifier *lub*) airplane’ (Xiongs).

- **hlau**: *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog

Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs).

- **hlau**: *muv tshau hlau* ‘(classifier *tug*) drill’ (Xiongs).

- **hlau**: *xuv hlau* ‘(classifier *txuj*) wire’:

ib txuj xuv hlau ‘a wire’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaub**: *txhaa plaab hlaub* ‘fibula’ (Xiongs).

- **hlauv** ‘to drop out, to stretch oneself out, to hang, to fall through, to extend’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaws** ‘(classifier *lub*) pearl’ (Xiongs).

- **hlaws** ‘big, full grown, round’ (Xiongs):

nim poob tej quas nam lub kuamuag hlaws quas hlo
‘big round tears kept falling from his eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

- **hlawv** ‘to burn, to set a fire’ (Xiongs).

- **hle** ‘to take off, to give up, to stop doing, to cease’ (Xiongs).

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quasnyaab
‘So the sister then took off her straw sandals’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 9).

Auj! Yog nyob ntawm nwg hauv sab tseem tshuav ib dlaim tawv tsi tau hle nawj!
‘Oh! It is that there still is left on his chest a piece of skin that has not been removed!’
(*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **hle le**, typo for **hlo le** ‘at all’?:

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*
‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

- **hle teg hle taw** ‘to thrust out one’s hands and feet, to make boastful, arrogant gestures’:

Cuav Tshoj Tim nim khaav ua hle teg hle taw tas yog nwg nqeg moog paab Ntxawm
‘Cuav Tshoj Tim boasted, thrusting out his hands and feet, that it was he who had gone down to help Ntxawm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 34).

- **hleeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) coffin’ (Xiongs):

hauv muag ntxaa ... hauv muag hleeb
‘upon the end of the grave-mound ... upon the end of the coffin’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **hli** (classifier *lub*) ‘moon, month’ (Xiongs) (see also *hlis*):

qag hli ‘moonlight’ (Xiongs).

Peb Moob suav caijnyoog yog siv tsaj lub npe ua cov cim ntaus caij ntaus nyoog.
We Mong count time by using the names of animals to remember the seasons and the times.

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.

A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months.

Moob siv moog zoo le nuav:

The Mong use them as follows:

HLI – TSAJ HLI

Month – Animal of the Month

1 hlis – luav hli

1st month – month of the rabbit

2 hlis – zaaj hli

2nd month – month of the dragon

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month

4 hlis – neeg hli

4th month – month of the horse

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month

[Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.]

6 hlis – dlev hli

6th month – month of the dog

7 hlis – qab hli

7th month – month of the chicken

8 hlis – lab hli

8th month – month of the monkey

9 hlis – npua hli

9th month – month of the pig

*10 hlis – naag hli****

10th month – month of the rat***

*** *xub sau naag rua lub 10 hli, naag taag huv ib lub xyoos.*

*** if one begins to catch rats in the tenth month, the rats will be gone for a year.

*11 hlis – nyuj hli*****

11th month – month of the ox****

**** *nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag* [typo for *tsaug?*] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

**** in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain, the harvest is in this month.

*12 hlis – tsuv hli******

12th month – month of the tiger*****

***** *noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

***** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

- **hli** ‘(classifier *lub*) the white of an egg’ (Xiongs).

- **hlib** ‘to sort out something from ashes of a fire, to bring out (subject)’ (Xiongs).

- **hlis** ‘(no classifier) month’ (Xiongs) (see also *hli*):

ib hlis ‘January’ (Xiongs).

ob hlis ‘February’ (Xiongs).

nyob nruab hlis ‘during the first month after giving birth to a baby (woman)’ (Xiongs).

- **hliv** ‘to pour, to dump’ (Xiongs):

hliv nthawv (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to pour, to dump].

In a story, a man who has been transformed into a tiger and then transformed back into a human being, still has a bit of tiger skin on his chest which is causing him to have memories of being a tiger:

“Auj! Yog nyob ntawm nwg hauv sab tseem tshuav ib dlaim tawv tsi tau hle nawj! Koj moog cais tsi txhob muab mivnyuas rua nwg puag. Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab, nwg khawb ua hle hlo lug cais zoo taag lawm lauj!”

“Oh! It is that there still is left on his chest a piece of skin that has not been removed! Go and don’t give him the child to hold in his arms. When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest, he will scratch it off and get well!” (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 44.)

- **hlo** ‘entirely, totally (to intensify the completeness of action of a verb)’ (Xiongs):

tug hlub hlo ‘the oldest’ (Xiongs).

tug ntshab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le ‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs).

tug tij laug hlub hlo ‘the oldest brother’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yog tug kwv yau hlo ‘He is the youngest brother’ (Xiongs).

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quasnyaab

‘So the sister then took off her straw sandals’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab pp. 9).

moog khaws nkaus tau ib txuj suavceeb tawm plawg moog nraag roojtsuas, muab txuj suavceeb khi hlo ua ob lub cos

‘went and grabbed a headband from the cave and tied two knots in it’ (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 62).

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.
‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting him off the ground’ (Nuj Sis Loob p. 10).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’

(Ceebpov p. 29).

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntxaug the huv tuaj tas;

‘He opened it and, why, the ntxaug spirits *the* from inside saying:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **hlo le** ‘at all’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, used to complete the negation TSI for NOT AT ALL’ (Xiongs p. 554):

peb tsi xaav yuav hlo le lawm ‘we don’t want it anymore’ (Xiongs).

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*

‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm

‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

Ua tsi taug hlo le. ‘Cannot do at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Tsi luj hlo le. ‘Not big at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le

‘It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

‘the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **hlob** ‘to press and push down to get something out’ (Xiongs).

- **hloo** ‘to hibernate’ (Xiongs).

- **hloob** ‘nonconversant, uninclined to speak’ (Xiongs).

- **hloob lawg** ‘perplexed’ (Xiongs).

- **hloov** ‘to change, to differentiate, to exchange, to replace’ (Xiongs).

- **hlu** ‘to exhale for relaxation’ (Xiongs).

- **hlub** ‘to love’ (Xiongs):

sib hlub ‘to love each other’ (Xiongs).

Oo, kuv hlub koj ‘Ong, I love you’ (Xiongs).

Oo, tug ntxim hlub. ‘Ong, my sweetheart’ (Xiongs).

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj

‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

Txig tub nyaab hlub pw chaav nuav

‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **hlub** ‘being older than; (classifier *tug*) high rank people’ (Xiongs):

tug hlub hlo ‘the oldest’ (Xiongs).

tug tij laug hlub hlo ‘the oldest brother’ (Xiongs).

pub rau Yawm Fuabtais, Pug Fuabtais Hlub, hab Pug Fuabtais Yau puab noog [typo for *moog?*] *taagnrho*.

‘they allowed the King, the Senior Queen [senior wife of the king], and the Junior Queen all to go’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **hlub**: *sib hlub* ‘to love each other’:

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **hlub**: *luj hlub* ‘to grow up’:

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg. Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model. My hope is that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **hlub**: *txaus hlub* ‘lovely’ (Xiongs).

- **hlua** (classifier *txuj*) ‘rope, string, cord’ (Xiongs) (also written *hluas*):

muab ob txuj hlua sib txuas ‘connect the two ropes’ (Xiongs).

xuab hlua ‘to twist rope or cord’ (Xiongs).

- **hluas** ‘young; (classifier *tug*) youth, young people’ (Xiongs):

hluas ntxhas (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [young].

tais hluas ‘sister’ (Xiongs), ‘mother’s younger sister, wife’s younger sister, younger sister (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

txwv hluas ‘wife’s younger sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 175).

yawm hluas ‘mother’s younger sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 174).

Txaaj chaw rua tub ntxhais hluas ‘The bed for the younger sons and daughters’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **hluas** ‘rope; tether of a horse’ (also written *hlua*):

muab tug neeg cev nkaus hluas rua dlaab Ntxawg

‘brought the horse and handed its tether over to Uncle Ntxawg’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*

p. 17).

- **hluas nkauj** ‘date, lover (girl)’ (Xiongs):

Koj tug hluas nkauj puas txij koj? ‘Is your girlfriend as tall as you?’ (Xiongs.)

- **hluas nraug** ‘young man, unmarried man, lover, date (male)’ (Xiongs).

- **hluav** ‘ash’ (Xiongs).

- **hlw** ‘to suck’ (Xiongs).

- **hlwb** ‘(classifier *cov*) brain, marrow’ (Xiongs).

- **hlwb txhaa** ‘marrow, spinal cord’ (Xiongs).

- **hlws** ‘crotch’ (Xiongs).

- **hlwv** ‘(classifier *lub*) blister’ (Xiongs):

sawv hlwv ‘to have a blister’ (Xiongs).

tawm hlwv ‘to cause blister’ (Xiongs).

I

- **i** ‘oh’:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

- **ib** ‘one, the number 1’ (Xiongs):

dlha ib saas ‘a short run’ (Xiongs).

ib tug phaws twm luj ‘a big male buffalo’ (Xiongs).

ib thaaj teb nplej ‘a rice field’ (Xiongs).

ib xyoos ‘one year’ (Xiongs).

pe ib pes ‘to kneel down one time’ (Xiongs).

puv ib tsug kaum peb nub ‘for a complete period of thirteen days’ (Xiongs).

The cycle comprises twelve days named for the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) – Day of the Rabbit, Day of the Dragon, and so forth – but the Mong reckon it as thirteen days because they count the day on which one returns to the animal with which one started.

qe ib saab qhov muag ‘to close one eye’ (Xiongs).

sau ib dlaim ntawv ‘write a letter’ (Xiongs).

sau ib phoo ntawv ‘write a book’ (Xiongs).

sau ib phoo ntawv ‘write a book’ (Xiongs).

ua ib sob ‘all together, jointly’ (Xiongs).

ua ib thaj npaws ‘to have a fever’ (Xiongs).

- **ib** ‘(classifier *lub*) comb (of chicken)’ (Xiongs).

- **ib**: *nam txiv ib txhis raug* ‘naturally fit together as a pair or couple’ (Xiongs).

- **ib**: *rooj taaj ib* ‘(classifier *lub*) chair’ (Xiongs). From Lao *tāng ìi*.

- **ib hub cawv** ‘a jar of alcohol’:

kuv nam txum ib hub cawv ‘my mother ferments a jar (a barrel) of alcohol’ (Xiongs).

- **ib kaab tojpob** ‘a landslide’ (Xiongs).

- **ib ke ... ib ke** ‘simultaneously’:

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam nteg ib nam pujqab dlawb rua koj nqaa. Koj ib ke moog ib ke dlob plaub nua nawb!

‘If you want to return home, ask your sister to catch a white hen for you to carry with you. As you walk, pull out its feathers!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16.)

- **ib kom taw teg** ‘one episode of fighting’:

taamsiv nuav ib kom taw teg! ‘let’s fight right now!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 28-29).

- **ibkuag** ‘some’ (Xiongs).

- **ib lom** ‘of the same fodder, closely associated’, from Chinese *liào*:

Wb ua kwvnpawg ib lom, zagnua yog zag kws wb yuav tau sis paab quas tag.

‘We are cousins of the same fodder and now is the time when we will be able to help one another truly’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 13).

- **ib nqaag** ‘all together, at the same time’ (Xiongs).

- **ib nraab ke** ‘halfway’:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke

‘The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **ib ntaa** ‘half height, hanging’ (Xiongs).

- **ib ntsiv** ‘in a little while’:

“Mej moog nua tes ib ntsiv mej ntu ib phawb quavncaug rua huv txuj kev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua huv txuj kev, mej le lug ov”.

“When you go, in a little while, spit a glob of saliva in the road and break off a fern frond and leave in the road before you come back.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29.)

- **ib ntsiv**: *txeeb ib ntsiv* ‘almost’ (Xiongs).

- **ib ntsiv**: *ua muaj txhaa ib ntsiv* ‘to handle well, to do it carefully or with necessary attention and force’ (Xiongs).

- **ib ntxais** ‘all together, next to each other’ (Xiongs).

- **ib ntsee ntuj** ‘the other side of the world’ (also written *ib ntsees ntuj*):

nam neeg yaa quas laag rua ib ntsee ntuj

‘the horse flew lightly to the other side of the world’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **ib ntsees ntuj** ‘the other side of the world’ (Xiongs) (also written *ib ntsee ntuj*).

- **ib ntXuam txiv tsawb** ‘a pack of bananas’ (Xiongs).

- **ib nyaam** ‘once’ (Xiongs).

- **ib pawg**:

ib pawg ntawv ‘a pile of papers’ (Xiongs).

ib pawg tuab neeg ‘a group of people’ (Xiongs).

- **ib puas** ‘one hundred’ (Xiongs).

- **ib phaav** ‘one thousand’ (Xiongs). From Lao *phéen*.

- **ib phaum** ‘same generation, same happening’ (Xiongs). From Chinese dialectal use of *pō* ‘sprinkle, splash, spill’ as in *yī pō rén* ‘a person’, *yī pō yǔ* ‘a rainfall’.

- **ib plag**:

ib plag ntshis ‘only a short while’ (Xiongs).

tog ib plag ‘wait for a while, a moment’ (Xiongs).

yuav tau pw ib plag tsaiv ‘to have to sleep for a short while before all’ (Xiongs).

mej yuav tau moog theem tom puab tsev ib plag

‘you will have to stop at their house for a while’ (Xiongs, entry for theem).

thov koj paab kuv tuav ib plag

‘help me hold it for a while please’ (Xiongs, entry for tuav).

- **ib pluag mov** ‘a meal’ (Xiongs).

- **ib saab cejdlaab** ‘one side of the neck’:

Nwg raab taus yaa moog ntsa nkaus tug nam zaaj ib saab cejdlaab

‘The axe flew through the air and impaled the dragon on one side of his neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

- **ib saab qa ntsej** ‘behind one ear’:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej
 ‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* page 14).

- **ib saas:** *dlha ib saas* ‘a short run’ (Xiongs).

- **ib sij:** *if sij* ‘repeatedly, continually, often’ (Xiongs). Typo for *ib sij*? Second syllable from Chinese *shí* ‘time’.

- **ib sob:** *ua ib sob* ‘all together, jointly’ (Xiongs).

- **ib tog kev** ‘halfway, somewhere along the line’ (Xiongs).

- **ib tsaam** ‘later, later on’ (Xiongs):

Aub nyob ib tsaam tes cov nam dlaab ua zoj ua zig moog lug txug tes dlaab ua zoj ua zig lug tsev lawm.

‘Well, in a little while the spirits had been running round and round long enough so the spirits ran round and round and came home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **ib tsaam** ‘as soon as’:

ib tsaam peb caiv dlhau meb le mam lug tsev.

‘as soon as we’re past the period of prohibition you can come into the house’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

Tes ib tsaam tsausntuj cov nyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj.

‘Then as soon as it was dark, the spirit children, running round and round, came’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

“Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os”.

“When you go, as soon as you’re ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

- **ib tsaam:** *ca ib tsaam* ‘in a moment’, ‘later’:

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam.

‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj
 [typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **ib tsaug** ‘all together at once’ (Xiongs).

- **ib tsuag** ‘one step’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab ib tsuag tim u, ua cav tau kag nwg txiv lug.

‘So the Male Spirit one step way over there, why he [the Spirit] had brought his [the young man’s] father’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **ib txaag**: *pw ib txaag* ‘to sleep in the same bed’ (Xiongs).

- **ib txwm txheej ntawg** ‘a pair of divinatory rods’:

TUG CUABTSAAV: Yog tug muab dlejcawv nqajmov lug ntawg rua tug tuag tau nqaa moog noj taugkev. Nwg siv ib txwm txheej ntawg lug ntawg.

‘The cuabtsaav is the one who brings water and liquor, meat and rice, to the divination ceremony for the dead person to eat on the way. He uses a pair of divinatory rods to divine’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14).

- **ib txum cawv** ‘a batch of liquor’:

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus hab tua ob tug lauv qab saam coj moog tso rua peg.

‘Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full, and kill a capon and bring it and leave it up there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **ib txha** ‘some people, some’:

Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **ib txhab ib txhis** ‘everlasting, whole life long, since the existence of the world’ (Xiongs).

- **ib txhis** ‘everlasting, forever, since the existence of the world’ (Xiongs):

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

- **ib txhis**: *nam txiv ib txhis raug* ‘naturally fit together as a pair or couple’ (Xiongs).

- **ib txhij**: *ua ib txhij* ‘together, at the same time’ (Xiongs).

- **ib uas** ‘a large quantity’:

Puab moog dle tau ib uas zaub

‘So they picked a great deal of fodder’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 65, 68),

ntim ib uas mov ib uas nqaj rua dlaab Ntxawg

‘they packed a whole load of rice and some meat for Uncle Ntxawg’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **ib vaag**: *tu ib vaag* ‘cut out a small portion’ (Xiongs).

- **ib yaam** ‘something’:

Puab nyav ua tau ib yaam txawv txawv

‘They have just made something very strange’ (Xiongs).

- **ib yaam dlaab tsi** ‘something’ (Xiongs).

- **ib yaam nkaus** ‘either’:

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests ‘in the same manner’ as an alternative translation for *ib yaam nkaus*.

- **ib yig tuab neeg** ‘a family’:

ua tsheej ib yig tuab neeg ‘to be able to manage the family, to become a family’ (Xiongs).

- **im**, final particle, ‘O!’:

Saub ai im! Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoo

‘O Saub! The sky has grown dark’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

J

The letter J is used only as a tone marker.

K

- **kab** ‘well-behaved, well-mannered’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *guāi*.

- **kab** ‘(no classifier) market, marketplace, shopping center’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiē* ‘street, thoroughfare’:

moog kaav kab ‘go shopping’ (Xiongs).

tsev kab ‘store, shopping center’ (Xiongs).

Rua cuaj ceg kab es muaj ntawv moog thawj thab

‘Where the street branches into nine were documents of reincarnation’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **kab**: *yeeb yaaj kab* ‘the abode of the dead’ (Xiongs):

I have not seen this expression in texts and I am uncertain of its exact significance. One possible interpretation might be ‘yin-yang market’ or ‘yin-yang street’ (Chinese *yīn-yáng jiē*), but in the texts that I have looked at, the spirit world is called *yeebceeb* ‘the yin world’ (Chinese *yīnjiān*) and *yaaj* ‘yang’ refers not to the abode of the dead but rather to the world of living human beings. One possibility might be that *yeeb yaaj kab* refers to a meeting place between the two realms where the dead (yin) are separated from the living (yang). Again, I have no direct evidence for such an idea, but Michael Johnson lends his support to the hypothesis: “I feel that this is probably correct – the market at the borders of yang and yin realms.”

- **kab**: *yub kab* ‘rice seedling’ (Xiongs).

- **Kabyeeb**, from Chinese *Guānyīn*, the Goddess of Mercy:

The band is also dotted with several divinities from the pantheon of Chinese folk religion, such as as *Ka Yèng* (the Kouan Yin, goddess of mercy of the Chinese). For Tchou Yao for example, *Ka Yèng* is found in the Sky. “When one is suffering, one calls upon this young lady, who will come to our aid. She is a very learned and very intelligent young woman. She comes to see what evil spirit is involved ... Since she is very wise and very knowledgeable, if she concludes that the sick person is not going to recover, she takes a part of her own body and exchanges it for the soul of the sick person. Then the wild spirit who is holding the soul will let it return to us.” (*Entre* pp. 36-37.)

Some Hmong believe that the god [sic] Gaying is responsible for giving a woman a child. If a married woman has difficulty becoming pregnant, performs a ceremony for Gaying, and then becomes pregnant, the baby is usually called Gaying in gratitude to the god. (Chindarsi 1976:29.)

In an oral history of the Mong rebellion against the French in Indochina from 1919-1921, Kabyeeb is the name of one of the Mong fighters:

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”

‘When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!”’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

Yang (2006) richly documents Hmong beliefs about Lady Kab Yeeb and their relationship to Chinese beliefs about *Guānyīn*, the Goddess of Mercy.

- **Kabyeeb**: *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas*, name of a male celestial being who is one of the major characters in the story “Lying on the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth” (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 35-52).

Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas appears initially as someone whom three woman call upon to help them become pregnant. Later in the story, the son of one of the women marries *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas*’s daughter, and *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas* comes to the young man’s aid when he is in peril. Because *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas* helps the three woman become pregnant, he is perhaps to be identified with Kabyeeb (Chinese *Guānyīn*), the Goddess of Mercy, one of whose principal functions in Hmong belief is to help woman become pregnant. This may be a plausible identification despite the fact that Kabyeeb is female and *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas* is male. Bertais (1978:507) translates *Txoov Kab Yeeb* (without *Los Muas*) as ‘name of a spirit’ and says that *Txoov Kab Yeeb* brings children to women.

- **kag** ‘to hurry’ (Xiongs):

Kawg kag txug chaw hawm! ‘Let us hasten to make obeisance!’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

- **kag** ‘completely, entirely’ (Xiongs):

Cais Txheeb Tshoj Theeb txhaj dlha lug muab nwg raab taus moog leem tshauv pig kag ‘Then Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ran to fetch his axe and coated it with ashes’ (*Txheeb Tshoj*

Theeb pages 18-19).

Cov nam kua aav kuj ca le yeeg pis zog lug npoog kag Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

‘The mud completely covered Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm posts’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

Tes Ceeb Pov txawm nkaag kag rua huv naab thoobpuab lawm hab lauj.

‘So Ceeb Pov went inside the shoulder-bag as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Consider the following sentences from a folktale involving the intensifier *kag*, which the Xionsg translate as ‘completely, entirely’, and the intensifier *ndlo*, which the Xionsg translate as ‘bodily’ and which Lyman (p. 253) translates as ‘extremely; surely, definitely; completely; to the uttermost end’. The ruler puts a drop of poison in a cow’s mouth

cais ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘so then she died *kag*.’

But the ruler’s daughter Ntxawm makes the cow appear to be alive. Then the ruler puts a drop of poison in a sow’s mouth

cais ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘so then she died *kag*.’

But Ntxawm makes the sow appear to be alive. Then the ruler puts a drop of poison in the mouth of Ntxawm’s husband Yob

hab ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘and then he died *kag*.’

But Ntxawm makes Yob appear to be alive. Then the ruler, wondering why his poison isn’t working, puts a drop in his own mouth

ca le tuag ndlo lawm lauj!

‘then he died *ndlo*!’

Now it is final. When the ruler’s wife and his sons and his son’s wives see that he is dead they weep continuously. And the ruler’s daughter Ntxawm mourns Yob as well. And all of the villagers run to look, and see that Yob is dead as well (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* pp. 21-25).

- **kag** ‘immediately’:

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub

‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xionsg) [‘I prefer to go and speak immediately in the courthouse’].

Lug txug ncua nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag

‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd’ (*Lug*

Nruag Dlaab p. 38).

- **kag**: *ua kag* ‘actually’:

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo
‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs).

- **kag le** ‘at all’:

tsi muaj kag le ‘not at all’ (Xiongs).
tsixob txhawj kag le ‘don’t worry at all’ (Xiongs).

- **kaj**, final particle:

Ab! Ob yawm hov, ntshai meb huas saab ntsej kaj.
‘Ah! Gentlemen, perhaps you couldn’t hear clearly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **kaj**: *roj naab maas kaj* ‘kerosene, petroleum, from Lao *nànm mán kâat*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **kam** ‘to accuse, to blame, to make trouble with someone’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *guài*:

vim yog peb noob neej txawj mob txawj tuag kam rua Ntxwj Nyoog.
‘because our human race knows illness and death, we blame Ntxwj Nyoog’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81).

- **kas**: *Asmesleskas* ‘America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **kas ntaas** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) board, wooden plank, from Lao *kadaan*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **kav** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) crust, scale’ (Xiongs):

tuav kav ‘to inlay, to become crusted’ (Xiongs).

- **kav theej** ‘(classifier *txuj* or *tsob*) rattan’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *téng*.

- **kav xeem** ‘to change one’s clan name or last name to accept another one’ (Xiongs):

Could be either from Chinese 改性 *gǎixìng* or from Chinese 解性 *jiěxìng* (pronounced *gǎixìng* in Southwestern Mandarin).

- **kaa** ‘clear, no cloud’ (Xiongs), also written *kaaj*.

- **kaa**:

na cav ca le pum kem qhov ci kaa quas lug rua tom u lawm.
‘he suddenly saw from afar something gleaming in the distance’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **kaab** ‘(no classifier) steel’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gāng*.

- **kaab** ‘(classifier *txuj*) line, passage, or trace of wild animals’ (Xiongs):

txhaus kaab txhaus kev ‘proper’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

- **kaab** ‘(classifier *tug*) insect’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats,
 bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **kaab** ‘to watch, to be on the watch’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *guān*.

- **kaab**: *ib kaab tojpob* ‘a landslide’ (Xiongs).

- **kaab**: *thaaj xim kaab* ‘the xim kaab altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door (*Tswv Yim* p. 15). Also written *xwmkaab*.

- **kaab**: *tshuaj tua kaab* ‘insecticide’:

txuam tshuaj tua kaab ‘to spray insecticide’ (Xiongs).

- **kaab**: *tshwb kaab* ‘silk’ (Xiongs).

- **kaab**: *tshwjkaab* ‘the man in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables for the feast at a funeral’ (Heimbach p. 327 tuag), from Chinese 厨 *chú* ‘kitchen’ + 官 *guān* ‘official’:

Nwg yawm yij nuav raug hu moog ua tshwjkaab kaavxwm.

‘His sister’s husband had been called to be the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

“*Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?*”

“How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **kaab**: *txhaus kaab txhaus kev* ‘to perform a rite or ceremony properly’:

muab paam paam txhaus kaab txhaus kev taag es muab kwv coj moog log.

‘they performed a proper funeral for her and buried her’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

From Chinese *cuò* ‘to arrange, to manage, to handle’ + *kaab kev* ‘rite, ceremony’.

- **kaab**: *txheeb kaab* ‘(classifier *tug*) rowing pole, pole to advance a boat (by hand)’ (Xiongs).

- **kaab**: *xwmkaab* or *xim kaab*, a sheet ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house opposite the main door.

The chapter titled *Ntawv Xwmkaab* ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 53-56) describes the origin of the xwmkaab paper and includes a drawing showing a sheet of

decorated paper, with three chicken feathers glued to it in the shape of an inverted triangle, and hung on the wall, next to the shaman's altar.

The xwmkaab or xim kaab is referred to both as 'the xwmkaab paper' (*ntawv xwmkaab*) and 'the xim kaab altar' (*thaaj xim kaab*). It is hung on the wall of the main room of the house (*chaav tsev hauv taag*), opposite the main door (*ghov rooj taag*), and next to the shaman's altar (*thaaj neeb*) and the altar of the medicine king (*thaaj yum vaaj*). Three chicken feathers, arranged in an inverted triangle, are glued to the xwmkaab paper. Each year, at the New Year, the xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced. (*Tswv Yim* p. 15, *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56; Chindarsi 1976:61-62.)

The xwmkaab spirit (*txivdlaab xwmkaab* or *Xwm Kaab los yej*) is one of the household spirits who try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house.

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

'The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

'Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove, All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way' (*Initiation* p. 130).

Different people give different explanations for the name xwmkaab. Num Tswb Xyooj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj in Joliet, Illinois in 1982, says that xwmkaab is a deformation of Vaajkaav, the name of a Mong king who gave his subjects copies of his portrait to put up in their houses as a sign of his protection when the kingdom was invaded by the Chinese. Each year, at the New Year, the king instructed his subjects to burn his portrait and he would give them a new one. The xwmkaab paper is Vaajkaav's portrait and shows that even though Vaajkaav was killed and the kingdom destroyed centuries ago the Mong of the household installing the xwmkaab paper are still under his protection. The xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced each year at the New Year in commemoration of Vaajkaav's instruction regarding his portrait. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56.)

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwmkaab mas lub ntsab yog has tas, puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca ntawm dlaim ntawv hov nua nawb.

'The essential meaning of the three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper is that they bring to mind Vaajkaav's mouth and two eyes, there on the paper' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Num Tswb Xyooj provides the following explanation of the Chinese honorific title Los Yej (*Lǎo Yé*) 'Old Father' or 'Old Gentleman' used with the name Xwmkaab. When the Chinese invaded Vaajkaav's kingdom, they could not at first defeat him in battle. Impressed by his prowess, the Chinese called him Tuam Yej (*Dà Yé*) 'Great Father' or 'Great Man'. The Mong wished to retain something of this Chinese honorific, but did not

want to lose the name Vaajkaav.

Yog le nuav tes puab yuav hu ua Txiv Tuam Yej los yuav tau Suav lu xwb, Moob lu poob lawm. Yog puab hu Vaajkaav los Suav lu Txiv Tuam Yej yuav poob lawm. Tes puab txha le muab txav lug kuas tuablu. Yog le, puab txhua tug kws txiv xwmkaab txha le has tas, “Txiv Xwmkaab Los Yej.”

‘If, then, they were to call him Father *Dà Yé*, using Chinese words only, the Mong words would be lost. If they called him Vaajkaav, the Chinese words Father *Dà Yé* would be lost. Therefore they abbreviated it and made one word. Thus, each xwmkaab specialist says, “Xwmkaab *Lǎo Yé*”.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56.)

Nusit Chindarsi describes a very different explanation. He says that one of his informants, Yaitong Tang, told him that Sierglung [Xwmkaab] comes from Laosier [Los Xwm, from Chinese *Lǎo Sì*] ‘Fourth-Born Son’. The Sierglung is put up to appease the spirit of Laosier, for whom people did not hold a funeral because he was a lazy good-for-nothing (Chindarsi 1976:24).

Finally, Jacques Lemoine derives Xwmkaab from the name of a Chinese deity, *Sì Guān* ‘the Fourth Mandarin’, whom Lemoine describes as the spirit of wealth (*Entre* pp. 37, 55; *Initiation* p. 29).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that Lemoine may be referring to the *sì guān*, four generals of the Warring States period, whose idols are kept in the *Sì Guān* Temple in Zhenyuan in eastern Guizhou province in China. However, even though the current name of the xim kaab altar may be derived from the Chinese four generals, the altar itself may have existed prior to the introduction of the Chinese name and the practice of gluing three, not four, chicken feathers to the xwmkaab paper may predate the introduction of the Chinese name.

- **kaabcuam** ‘a steel frame’, from Chinese *gāngjià*:

hab aub ib nam kaabcuam pheej moog hlais Suav zaub nyuj zaub neeg najnub.
‘and, carrying a steel frame on his back, he would go every day to cut cattle fodder and horse fodder for the Chinese’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 104).

- **kaab kev** ‘(classifier *txuj*) rite, ceremony’ (Xiongs).

- **kaab ... kev**: *txhaus kaab txhaus kev* ‘to perform a rite or ceremony properly’:

muab paam paam txhaus kaab txhaus kev taag es muab kwv coj moog log.
‘they performed a proper funeral for her and buried her’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

From Chinese *cuò* ‘to arrange, to manage, to handle’ + *kaab kev* ‘rite, ceremony’.

- **kaab laug saab** ‘(classifier *tug*) spider’ (Xiongs):

Dlej txag ca sis zim, luas tsuj kaab laugsaab caab saab zim rua luas neev.
‘Cold water has washed into his tracks. Spiders have strung their threads inside his footprints’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

- **kaab laug tshooj** ‘(classifier *tug*) centipede’ (Xiongs). Third syllable from Chinese *chóng* ‘insect, worm’.

- **kaab leeg** ‘seam’ (Xiongs).

- **kaab no**, unidentified insect:

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **kaab nqog vaag** ‘(classifier *tug*) locust’ (Xiongs).

- **kaabntsig** or **kaabntswg** ‘hairy caterpillar which stings on contact’ (Heimbach 1979:73 kab), ‘a kind of caterpillar whose hairs go into the flesh of one who touches it’ (Bertrais 1978:264 ntsig):

“In Thailand my mother-in-law was very wary of stinging hairy caterpillars (kab ntsig), they can appear en masse at certain times of the year and might be in trees etc. She said that when the hair stings you it goes into your skin and can makes its way through your flesh over many years before coming out again. Not sure if that is true, but certainly they are worth being wary of.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication; kab ntsig is the White Hmong spelling of kaabntsig.)

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

‘Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttle, to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of hemp cloth but tied with hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way

to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

'Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They're big as young ewes. Don't forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They're big as young sows. Don't forget your hempen shoes!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no caterpillars are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors' (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **kaab ntsuab**, a kind of spiny bright green caterpillar, called *bājiǎodīng* in Chinese (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 104 gangb nzhuad; Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab

'You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Michael Johnson sent me this photograph of a *bājiǎodīng*:



- **kaabntswg** or **kaabntsig** ‘hairy caterpillar which stings on contact’ (Heimbach 1979:73):

“In Thailand my mother-in-law was very wary of stinging hairy caterpillars (*kab ntsig*), they can appear en masse at certain times of the year and might be in trees etc. She said that when the hair stings you it goes into your skin and can makes its way through your flesh over many years before coming out again. Not sure if that is true, but certainly they are worth being wary of.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication; *kab ntsig* is the White Hmong spelling of *kaabntsig*.)

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

‘Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttle, to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of hemp cloth but tied with hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of *kaab ntsuab*. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person's arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

'Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They're big as young ewes. Don't forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They're big as young sows. Don't forget your hempen shoes!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no caterpillars are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors' (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **kaab pleb** 'a crack' (Xiongs).

- **kaab txaij** 'strip' (Xiongs).

- **kaab zag** 'cricket' (Xiongs). See also *zag*.

- **kaab zag roj** '(classifier *tug*) cricket' (Xiongs), 'giant cricket' (Michael Johnson, personal communication). See also *zagroj*.

- **kaag** 'to agree, to approve' (also written *kaam*):

Yog tas koj tsi kaag nrug kuv sau yim cais

'If you are not willing to marry me' (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **kaaj** ‘clear, no cloud, bright’ (Xiongs) (also written *kaa*):

kaaj sab ‘happily, with no trouble’ (Xiongs).

Nub taagkig tomqaab, ntuj kaaj quas lug

‘The following morning, the sky was perfectly clear’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua ntuj kaaj quas lug lawm cais kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tuaj yuav txug tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky is bright and so my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is really coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 31-33).

- **kaaj ntug** ‘daylight’ (Heimbach p. 15 kaj ntug):

kaaj ntug plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [daybreak].

The Xiongs do not translate *kaaj ntuj plawg*. The translation ‘daybreak’ is from Heimbach (p. 15 kaj ntug plaws).

- **kaam** ‘to pour water in’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *guàn*.

- **kaam** ‘to agree, to approve’ (Xiongs) (also written *kaag*). Probably from a Southwestern Mandarin variant of Chinese *gǎn*.

- **kaam** (classifier *txuj*) ‘work’ (Xiongs):

ua kaam ‘to work, use to do’ (Xiongs). Perhaps a conflation of Chinese *gàn* ‘work’ and Chinese *guàn* ‘used to doing something’.

- **kaam lawm** ‘agreed, approved’ (Xiongs).

- **kaam plooj** ‘covering’ (Xiongs).

- **kaas** ‘(classifier *tug*) larva of flies’ (Xiongs).

- **kaav** ‘to govern, to administrate, to manage, to rule, to keep, to cover’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *guǎn*:

tsi kaav ‘even if’ (Xiongs).

- **kaav** ‘(classifier *tug*) stem, body, or trunk of a tree’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gǎn*.

- **kaav**: *Vaajkaav*, name of a Mong king (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 54-56): See **Xwmkaab**.

- **kaavxwm** ‘the man in charge of ceremonies at a funeral’ (Heimbach p. 327 tuag), from Chinese 管事 *guǎnshì* ‘to be in charge’:

Nwg yawm yij nuav raug hu moog ua tshwjkaab kaavxwm.

‘His sister’s husband had been called to be the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

“*Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?*”

“How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **kaig** ‘multicolor (chicken)’ (Xiongs).

- **kaig** ‘(classifier *tug*) pipe, spout’ (Xiongs).

- **kaim muag quas zoj** ‘to have long beautiful eyelashes’:

Nim zoo zoo nkauj kaim muag quas zoj, dlej muag teev quas mag.
‘She had long beautiful eyelashes and her eyes were moist’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

nim lug ob tug nam kaim muag quas zoj zoo le ob tug namtxiv zaaj lug.
‘They had long beautiful eyelashes like a dragon couple’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **kau:** *cuam kau* ‘gibbon’s song’ (Xiongs).

- **kaub**, the sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.
there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **kaub:** *lauj kaub* ‘(classifier *lub*) pot (cooking)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *luóguō*.

- **Kaub:** *Yob Kaub Yob Mais* ‘Little Kaub and Little Mais’, name of a boy and girl in an account of the origin of clans:

A female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate whether she will live or die. Then she dies.

Then the female spirit’s daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is repeated. The female spirit’s daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

“Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj”.

“If you are to live, Little Kaub [man’s name] and Little Mais [woman’s name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live.”

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **kaug** ‘(classifier *tug*) shoot, sprout’ (Xiongs):

tuaj kaug ‘to bud, to grow young sprout’ (Xiongs).

- **kaug** ‘tooth, tusk, beak’:

kaug nav ‘(classifier *tug*) tooth’ (Xiongs).

kaug ntshi ‘(classifier *tug*) the tusk of an elephant’ (Xiongs).

kaug ncauj ‘(classifier *tug*) beak (of a bird)’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug ua tau tuab lub nam tsev cuaj cegkub yim cegkaug lug ua tsev fuabtais pub rua ob tug, hab ob tug nam txiv, Yawm Xeev Tswjlaug hab Nkauj Nubqub, puab tau nyob.

‘The two of them built a building with nine “horns” and eight “fangs” to be a royal palace for the two of them and for Nuj Sis Loob’s parents, His Majesty the Ruler and Nkauj Nubqub, to live in’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **kaug sab** ‘sternum’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **kauj** ‘(classifier *lub*) ring; (no classifier) roll, turn, bundle’ (Xiongs).

- **kauj ntseg** ‘(classifier *lub*) earring’ (Xiongs).

- **kauj nyuv** ‘intestine, bowels’ (Xiongs).

- **kauj tsaig** ‘(classifier *lub*) chin’ (Xiongs).

- **kauj tsuam** ‘foot step, pace, walk’ (Xiongs).

- **kaum** ‘ten (10)’ (Xiongs):

kaum zag ‘ten times’ (Xiongs).

- **kaum** ‘(classifier *lub*) corner’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiǎo*:

ceg kaum ‘(classifier *lub*) corner’ (Xiongs).

maum kaum ‘gable’ (*Tswvyim* p. 15) (see also *hauv mum*).

nim naj mo zuv zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev

‘Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67; the speaker is a rat, referring to a cat).

- **kaum-ob tug tsaj** ‘the twelve animals’, used to reckon time:

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 77-86), Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) describes how the twelve animals are used to name months and days:

Peb Moob suav caijnyoog yog siv tsaj lub npe ua cov cim ntaus caij ntaus nyoo.

We Mong count time by using the names of animals to remember the seasons and the times.

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.

A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months.

Moob siv moog zoo le nuav:

The Mong use them as follows:

HLI – TSAJ HLI

Month – Animal of the Month

1 hlis – luav hli

1st month – month of the rabbit

2 hlis – zaaj hli

2nd month – month of the dragon

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month

4 hlis – neeg hli

4th month – month of the horse

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month

[Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.]

6 hlis – dlev hli

6th month – month of the dog

7 hlis – qab hli

7th month – month of the chicken

8 hlis – lab hli

8th month – month of the monkey

9 *hlis* – *npua hli*

9th month – month of the pig

10 *hlis* – *naag hli****

10th month – month of the rat***

*** *xub sau naag rua lub 10 hli, naag taag huv ib lub xyoos.*

*** if one begins to catch rats in the tenth month, the rats will be gone for a year.

11 *hlis* – *nyuj hli*****

11th month – month of the ox****

**** *nyuj hli lub quav qoob. Qoob tsuag* [typo for *tsaug?*] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

**** in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain, the harvest is in this month.

12 *hlis* – *tsuv hli******

12th month – month of the tiger*****

***** *noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

***** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated.

They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). The list begins:

luav hli – *naab xab 1* ‘month of the rabbit – snake day 1’

luav hli – *neeg xab 2* ‘month of the rabbit – horse day 2’

luav hli – *yaaj xab 3* ‘month of the rabbit – sheep day 3’

luav hli – *dlev xab 4* ‘month of the rabbit – dog day 4’

luav hli – *qab xab 5* ‘month of the rabbit – chicken day 5’

luav hli – *lab xab 6* ‘month of the rabbit – monkey day 6’

luav hli – *npua xab 7* ‘month of the rabbit – pig day 7’

luav hli – *naag xab 8* ‘month of the rabbit – rat day 8’

luav hli – *nyuj xab 9* ‘month of the rabbit – ox day 9’

luav hli – *tsuv xab 10* ‘month of the rabbit – tiger day 10’

luav hli – *luav xab 11* ‘month of the rabbit – rabbit day 11’

luav hli – *zaaj xab 12* ‘month of the rabbit – dragon day 12’

The list then continues through the remaining days of the month of the rabbit (the first month of the year) and then on through the thirty days of the month of the dragon (the second month of the year) and ends with

zaaj hli – zaaj xab 30 ‘month of the dragon – dragon day 30’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 81-83.)

Later in the chapter, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj speaks of auspicious days on which to marry:

1. Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd. Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

1. Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day. For younger brothers, good for the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

Then Xauv Yeeb Xyooj speaks of auspicious and inauspicious days on which to be born:

2. Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.

2. Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person’s horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

- kaumpaam ‘patched’:

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- kaum peb ‘thirteen’:

puv ib tsug kaum peb nub ‘for a complete period of thirteen days’ (Xiongs).

The cycle comprises twelve days named for the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) – Day of the Rabbit, Day of the Dragon, and so forth – but the Mong reckon it as thirteen days because they count the day on which one returns to the animal with which one started.

- kaum xyaa ‘seventeen’ (Xiongs).

- kaus ‘umbrella; parasol; parachute’:

plhaw kaus ‘to jump with a parachute, to sky dive’ (Xiongs).

An umbrella is used in marriage negotiations. In an origin story for marriage customs, when the young woman’s parents send her off to find a husband, they give her an

umbrella to take with her:

yawm fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug hab nam fuabtais ob tug txhaj tu tau ib pob choj, ib lub kaus hab muab ib tug mivnyuas dlev labmuag rua Muam Nkauj Ntsum.

‘His Majesty the king and the queen prepared a bedroll and an umbrella and gave a red-eyed puppy to Muam Nkauj Ntsum’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

A small paper parasol is placed near the head of the deceased during the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony to protect them from the sun while they are climbing the stairway to heaven:

Nam maab tis qam suav tsua yuav muab nyog kaus dlub kaus li ncab nqeg nrug roog nyog koj le tshaav kws.

‘The Yi and the Chinese will offer to sell you their pitch black parasols to protect you from the sun.

Koj has tas peb tub Moob neej tsaa qas cev rhais tsis nyog txaj kws, qas teg rhais tsis nyog nyaj kws.

Say to them that on the bodies of our Mong kindred one does not put money, in their hands one not put silver.

Koj tub koj li kiv le muab tau koj kaus xyoob kaus li ntawv roog koj le tshaav

Your children have given you a parasol of bamboo and of paper to protect you from the sun’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

- Kauslim ‘Korean’, from Lao Kawlīi:

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. ... Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thooj: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg

‘We Mong have many Clans. ... Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

- kaus roog ‘(classifier *lub*) umbrella’ (Xiongs).

- kaus roog tshaav ntuj ‘(classifier *lub*) parasol’ (Xiongs).

- kauv ‘(classifier *tug*) buck, roe’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- kauv ‘to cover, to roll up, to wind around, to entwine’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *guǒ*.

- **kauv** ‘grime adhering to the skin’:

koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej es wb noj peg hauv dlej tsaam ntsiv qas qas wb.

‘You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream, and we’ll eat upstream, in a moment you’re going to disgust us’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69).

- **kauv**: *xuav kauv* ‘to whistle’ (Xiongs).

- **kaw** ‘(classifier *raab*) saw’ (Xiongs).

- **kaw** ‘to imprison, to put in jail, to keep in a cage’ (Xiongs):

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs).

kaw nreeg (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [locked up firmly].

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Yuaj! yog kuv tej nyuas qab os. Ca es kuv muab kaw.

‘Gracious! It is my chicks. Let me lock them up.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntxaug the huv tuaj tas;

He opened [the gourd] and, why, the ntxaug spirits “the” from inside saying:

“Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!”

“Oh yes! Open us, [we’ll] try killing and eating [you]!”

“Ab! thov lau! Thov ca kuv muab rov kaw rua”.

“Oh, please! Please let me shut [you] up again.” [p. 38]

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.

The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **kawb** ‘narrow’ (Xiongs). Probably from a dialectal sense of Chinese *gōu* ‘ditch, narrow waterway’.

- **kawb** or **kawj**, the sound of a rat gnawing:

Nam tsuag tho qaab mejloos; “Kawb! kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam nim tas: “Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj

‘The rat gnawed a hole in the bottom of the storage basket: “Kawb! Kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam said, “Los Lwm! Hey! There’s a ‘Kawj! Kawj! Kawj!’ sound coming from the bedroom.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **kawg** ‘dead end; (no classifier) end; to stop, to cease’ (Xiongs).

- **kawg** ‘extremely’:

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua

tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’
(*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **kawg**: *tsawg kawg nkaus* ‘at least’:

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (*Xiongs*).

- **kawj** or **kawb**, the sound of a rat gnawing:

Nam tsuag tho qaab mejloos; “Kawb! kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam nim tas: “Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj
‘The rat gnawed a hole in the bottom of the storage basket: “Kawb! Kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam said, “Los Lwm! Hey! There’s a ‘Kawj! Kawj! Kawj!’ sound coming from the bedroom.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **kawm** ‘to learn, to study’ (*Xiongs*):

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo
‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (*Xiongs*).

hab kawm laajlim tegtaw thaus yau lug tav hluas taagnrho.
‘and studied magic and martial arts from the time they were small till the time they came of age’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

- **kawm** ‘(classifier *lub*) container made with bamboo’ (*Xiongs*):

Nam puj dlaab txawm ris ib lub kawm
‘The female spirit then was carrying on her back a basket’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **kawm**: *tug kawm tau qeeb* ‘slow learner’ (*Xiongs*).

- **kawm ntawv** ‘to study’:

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv
‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (*Xiongs*).

- **kawm ntawv**: *tsev kawm ntawv* ‘school’ (*Xiongs*).

- **kawm txuj kawm ci** ‘to study’:

cais koj nrug kuv ua dlej ua num hab kawm txuj kawm ci peb lub hlis kuas tav
‘so you work with me and study for three months so that you are ready’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Yog tas, koj xaav kuas kuv nyob kawm txuj kawm ci, cais kuv yuav tau nyob ua le koj has.
‘If it is that you want me to stay and study, then I will stay as you said’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Thaus kawg, Yog Nraug Ntsuag txhaj zoo sab nrug nwg tijlaug nyob kawm txuj kawm ci.
‘Finally, Yob the Orphan was happy to stay to study with his older brother’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntxhais kawm txuj kawm ci

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

- **kaws** ‘(classifier *tug*) toad’ (Xiongs):

qaav kaws ‘(classifier *tug*) toad’ (Xiongs).

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam. Yog koj caam yeej, le pub koj coj moog. Huas yog koj caam tsi yeej, cais tsi pub hlo le!

‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you. If you win the argument, I will let you take him. If you do not win the argument, I will not’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

- **kaws** ‘to sharpen with one’s teeth, to eat little by little’ (Xiongs).

- **ke** ‘way’ (see also *kev*):

ncauj ke ‘(classifier *lub*) the way leading to somewhere’ (Xiongs).

Ncauj ke tawm ‘The way out’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **ke**: *caab ke quas zig* ‘slowly, in a long line’ (Djoua Xiong, personal communication):

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb

‘The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **ke**: *ib ke ... ib ke* ‘simultaneously’:

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **ke**: *ib nraab ke* ‘halfway’:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke

‘The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **ke**: *pum ke* ‘to have enough light to see’:

ua tau suavtawg rovqaab cig pum ke tuaj.

‘to make a fire so that there was once again enough light to see’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

The spelling *pum ke* is unusual. On the basis of other Hmong dialects one would expect *pum kev*.

- **ke**: *Qhuab Ke* ‘Showing the Way’ or *Taw Kev* ‘Pointing Out the Way’, the first performed of the funeral ceremonies, the initial words spoken to the dead person to give them instructions for their journey to retrieve their documents of reincarnation or to meet their ancestors.

Published Mong Leng or Mong Njua versions of the Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev include the Mong texts in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 1-18) and *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 75-81), the Mong text and a French translation, along with analysis and discussion, in *Initiation* (Mong text pp. 119-139, French translation pp. 17-39), and an English translation in Chindarsi (1976:145-148).

The names Qhuab Ke and Taw Kev appear to be synonymous, some sources using one name, some the other:

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The Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev is one of the great foundational texts of Mong culture. It tells how the dead person must thank the spirits of the different parts of the house, the spirits of the granaries and animal pens, and the tutelary deities (*xeeb*) of the land and the place, all of whom have protected the dead person during his or her life. It tells how the dead person must retrace all the places where they lived, returning to the house where they were born to retrieve their placenta which was buried in the floor of the house. It tells how the dead person must avoid traps and pitfalls during their journey to heaven. They must refuse to let the Chinese sell them a parasol as they climb the steps to the sky. They must tie red thread around their fingers so that when the spirits who peel garlic and onions try to capture them, they can say, “My fingers are bleeding. I cannot peel garlic and onions with you.” They must carry balls of hemp to “stop up the mouths of dragons and tigers” in order to pass safely through a region of sharp rocks and crevices, and they must wear hemp shoes to walk safely on the backs of stinging hairy caterpillars.

There are many different versions of the Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev. Taken together synoptically they are one of our best sources for Mong beliefs about the cosmos and about death.

Woven into the Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev are myths: the origin of death, which the dead person may recite to the household spirits in explaining to them that he or she has died and must leave the house, the origin of humanity, the origin of the sacrificial rooster that serves as the dead person’s guide on his or her journey, and the origin of the bamboo and trees used to make the dead person’s bier and coffin.

- **kem** ‘far, remote, distant, not from the same family’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gé*.

- **kem** ‘crevice’:

lig hlaav suavtawg ib kem dlhau ib kem

‘He stuck a burning brand in crevice after crevice’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

nwg twb nteg tau Yawm Xub tub Ntxawg lug kaw tseg ca rua tom ib kem pobzeb lawm.

‘he had captured Grandfather Thunder’s youngest son and had imprisoned him in a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb txhaj nrhav moog txug kem pobzeb kws zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb kaw Yawm Xub tug tub ntxawg.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb then came upon the crevice in the rock in which the dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had imprisoned Grandfather Thunder’s youngest son’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

cais nwg txhaj muab taus tsoo kem nam pobzeb.

‘So then he took his axe- and he struck the crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tsaav zog rua tom kem pobzeb lawm

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moved away into a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **kem plaab** ‘indigestion’ (Xiongs).

- **kem zeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) a crevice in the rock’:

Nwg txhaj taug kem zeb ntawm moog rua tod.

‘He then followed a crevice in the rock to there’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

tej nyuas kem zeb kem aav

‘the crevices in the rocks and the earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Nuj Yob tig hlo moog saib saib tim lub nyuas kem zeb na cav muaj ib choj nyaj dlaab

‘Nuj Yob turned to look at a small crevice in the stone and lo and behold, there was an ingot of spirit-money’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 85).

- **kes** ‘(no classifier) scratch; to scratch’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **kev** ‘(classifier *txuj*) way, route’ (Xiongs) (see also *ke*):

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **kev** ‘opportunity’ (Xiongs).

- **kev** ‘used before a word to indicate that it is a noun’ (Xiongs).

- **kev**: *ib tog kev* ‘halfway, somewhere along the line’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *kaab kev* ‘(classifier *txuj*) rite, ceremony’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *maaj kev* ‘to be in a hurry’:

Ub! Maaj kev hwv naj! ‘Oh, but we’re in a big hurry!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

- **kev:** *ntaus kev* ‘to look for a way’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *rhawv kev* ‘to open a way, to give away’ (Xiongs). Also written *tshawv kev*.

- **kev:** *sawv kev* ‘to start, to depart’ (Xiongs):

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab
 ‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **kev:** *taug kev* ‘to continue on one’s way’:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke
 ‘The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **kev:** *taw kev* ‘to lead, to show the way’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *Taw Kev* ‘Pointing Out the Way’ or *Qhuab Ke* ‘Showing the Way’, the first performed of the funeral ceremonies, the initial words spoken to the dead person to give them instructions for their journey to retrieve their documents of reincarnation or to meet their ancestors.

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- **kev:** *to kev lug ua* ‘legally right, legitimate lawfully’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *twg kev* ‘to have nowhere to go, to come to an end’ (Xiongs):

kev twg ‘dead end (street, way)’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *tshawv kev* ‘to open a way, to create the way’ (also written *rhawv kev*):

Puab ua cov tshawv kev ‘They are the ones who create the way’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *txais kev* ‘to take a short cut’:

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*
‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *txhaus kaab txhaus kev* ‘to perform a rite or ceremony properly’:

muab paam paam txhaus kaab txhaus kev taag es muab kwv coj moog log.
‘they performed a proper funeral for her and buried her’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

From Chinese *cuò* ‘to arrange, to manage, to handle’ + *kaab kev* ‘rite, ceremony’.

- **kev:** *xu kev* ‘off road, out of convenient reach’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *yuamkev* ‘to go astray’:

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag
‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the dead person is instructed to tell the spirits not to try to follow the chanter as he returns to the world of living. In one version, the dead person is instructed to say:

Tes kuv rau khau maaj kuv tsuj tau ncaaj. / Yawm txiv yawm quas tsi rau khau cev tsuj taw yuamkev.
‘I am wearing shoes made of hemp. My steps are straight. / The old man is wearing shoes made from the bark of the cev-tree. His footsteps wander from the path’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

- **kev:** *zaam kev* ‘to give way, to yield’:

zaam, kev ca puab ua ntej

‘give them the way to go first’ (Xiongs) [since *zaam kev* ‘to yield the way’ is a constituent, the comma separating *zaam* and *kev* may be a typographical error].

- **kev:** *zos kev* ‘to take another route’:

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*

‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

- **kev:** *zuv kev* ‘to lie in ambush’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2):

Cov tuabneeg kws muaj phom lawd txha moog zuv kev tua Faabkis

‘The people who had guns already went to lie in ambush to shoot the French’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **kev cai** ‘(classifier *txuj*) custom, law, practice’ (Xiongs):

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai Dlaab Qhuas.

‘There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **kev cais** ‘separation, sending away, branching’ (Xiongs).

- **kev caiv** ‘prohibition in a taboo’ (Xiongs).

- **kev cheb** ‘sweeping’ (Xiongs).

- **kev cheem** ‘hindrance, impediment, objection’ (Xiongs).

- **kev cog lug** ‘a promise, an agreement’ (Xiongs).

- **kev cu** ‘shaking, agitation’ (Xiongs).

- **kev khaav** ‘pride, boasting’ (Xiongs). From a Southwestern Mandarin term related to *kuāng*.

- **kev lis kev cai** ‘customs, traditions’ (*Tswv Yim*, table of contents):

Kev lis kev cai yog ib yaam kws tseem ceeb heev

‘Tradition is something which is very important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **kev lom zem** ‘fun’:

muaj kev lom zem ‘to have fun’ (Xiongs).

- **kev luam** ‘business’ (Xiongs).

- **kev muaj zug** ‘strength’ (Xiongs).

- **kev nca** ‘sobbing’ (Xiongs).

- **kev ntseeg** ‘belief’ (Xiongs).

- **kev ntshaab** ‘steep way’ (Xiongs).

- **kev nqu** ‘coughing’ (Xiongs).

- **kev paamtug** ‘funeral rites’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14, chapter title).
- **kev pwv** ‘training’ (Xiongs).
- **kev plooj** ‘covering’ (Xiongs).
- **kev sib ntsib** ‘meeting’ (Xiongs).
- **kev sib qhau** ‘wrestling’ (Xiongs).
- **kev sib pev** ‘comparison’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bǐ*.
- **kev sib tshuam** or **kev tshuam** ‘merge, merging ways’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chà* ‘branch off, fork’ as in *sān chà lù kǒu* ‘a junction of three roads’.
- **kev siv** ‘the use of’ (Xiongs).
- **kev tau zoo nyob** ‘health’ (Xiongs).
- **kev tuag** ‘death’ (Xiongs):

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs).

- **kev twg** ‘dead end (street, way)’ (Xiongs).
- **kev thua j khu** ‘constructive criticism’ (Xiongs).
- **kev tsuv rog** ‘war’ (Xiongs).
- **kev tshau** ‘drilling’ (Xiongs).
- **kev tshuam**: *kev sib tshuam* or *kev tshuam* ‘merge, merging ways’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chà* ‘branch off, fork’ as in *sān chà lù kǒu* ‘a junction of three roads’.
- **kev txwj laug** ‘elders’:

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj moog hu kev txwj quas laug lug nrug ua povthawj zoo zoo tseg.

‘So the Maiden Ntsum called upon the elders to be witnesses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **kev ua neeb ua yaig** or **neeb yaig** ‘shamanism’:

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nge hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.

‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntsooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **kev ua tshoob ua kug** ‘marriage’:

Xaav Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) speaks of auspicious days on which to get married:

Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd. Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

‘Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day. For younger brothers, good for the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

- **kev yeej** ‘victory, glory, success’ (Xiongs).

- **kev yog tag** ‘the truth’ (Xiongs).

- **kee** ‘(no classifier) opportunity, chance’ (Xiongs):

taag kee ‘no more chance or opportunity’ (Xiongs).

- **keeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) origin, root, basis, foundation’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gēn*.

- **keeg hlo** ‘vividly, lively, in good health’ (Xiongs).

- **keej** ‘great (can do thing fast and well)’ (Xiongs). From Lao *kēng*.

- **keev** ‘whole, total; to use the whole thing, to use as it is’ (Xiongs).

- **ki** ‘to open a tube with a knife’ (Xiongs).

- **ki**: *tub ki* or *tub ... kiv* ‘children, descendants’:

tub ki ‘children, descendants’ (Xiongs).

tu tub tu kiv ‘to give birth, to raise children’ (Xiongs).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **kib** ‘to toast, to grill, to cook’ (Xiongs).

- **kib**: *vaub kib* ‘(classifier *tug*) turtle’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 乌龟 *wūguī*.

- **kig**: *pig kig* ‘tomorrow’ (Xiongs).

- **kig**: *taag kis* ‘morning’:

naag mo taag kig ‘yesterday morning’ (Xiongs).

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- **kim** ‘expensive’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *gui*:

Aub yaub! kim kim le tsi yuav.

‘Good grief! That’s too expensive’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **Kim**: *Xauv Kim* ‘Xao Kee’, man’s name:

Xauv Kim yog kuv txiv ‘Xao Kee is my father’ (Xiongs).

- **kis** ‘to contaminate, to infect’ (Xiongs).

- **kis** ‘(no classifier) corner, alley, in between’ (Xiongs).

- **kis**: *Faab Kis* ‘French’:

haiv neeg Faab Kis ‘the French people’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg Faab Kis ‘a French person’ (Xiongs).

Kuv maam txhais ua Faab kis ‘I will translate it into French’ (Xiongs).

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb, puab txawm tua phom phiv phoov moog rua Faabkis.

‘The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market, and they [the Mong partisans] fired their guns *phiv phoov* at the French’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **kis**: *Faab kis teb* ‘France’:

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”].

- **kis**: *zawb* [typo for *zaub*?] *kis* ‘nettles, stinging vegetation’ (Xiongs).

- **kiv** ‘to weigh’ (Xiongs).

- **kiv**, Chinese *jīn* ‘jin, catty’, a Chinese measure of weight equal to half a kilogram:

Ib xyoos xyoos twb yuav muag raug 400 txug 500 kiv qhauv noj. Ib kiv ntsab twb nto ib dlaim txaj lawm.

‘Each year we buy 400 to 500 jin [200 to 250 kilos] of food. One jin [half a kilo] of rice

costs one yuan' (Xyooj Me Choj, *Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 20).

- **kiv** 'to turn around, to turn to set a circular motion' (Xiongs).

- **kiv**: *Aakiv* or *Aas Kiv* 'English', from Lao *angkít*:

Phoo Txhais Lug Aakiv – Moob – Aakiv
'English – Mong – English Dictionary' (Xiongs, title).

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? 'Do they speak English?' (Xiongs, entry for txawj.)

- **kiv**: *tub ki* or *tub ... kiv* 'children, descendants':

tub ki 'children, descendants' (Xiongs).

tu tub tu kiv 'to give birth, to raise children' (Xiongs).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* 'Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth' in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.
'I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **ko** 'that' (see also *kod*):

"Dlaab ntawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?" ... "Yawm yij, tug ko yog kuv txiv, tua tsi nyog ho!"

"Wife's younger brother, this one is it appropriate to kill or not appropriate?" ... "Sister's husband, that one is my father, to kill him is not appropriate!" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10.)

"Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?" "Aub, raab rag nuav coj tuaj tua nraug huas".

"Why have you brought that knife?" "Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **kob** '(classifier *lub*) thread (of a screw)' (Xiongs).

- **kob**, classifier:

naag '(classifier *kob*) rain' (Xiongs).

npaws '(classifier *kob* or *tug*) fever, chills, malaria' (Xiongs).

- **kod** 'that' (see also *ko*):

tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb 'not only that' (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm 'leave as it is, don't touch it any more' (Xiongs).

Aub mes-es txawm yuav txawj has le kod!

‘Oh, so that’s what the goats learned to sing!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 36.)

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.
 ‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

Used when addressing someone in anger:

Tamtseeb aj! Koj nyuas Siv Yig Muas kod koj txawm siv muab kuv tub Tuam tua tuag lawm tag.

‘Damn it! You little Siv Yig Muas you, you really *have* killed my son Tuam’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

Ab! tug quas tsuag kod, ntshai koj ua npug tag, koj yuav rawm tuag!

‘Hey, rat! Your speaking is really a bad omen. You’re sure in a hurry to die!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

Ab! ab! ab! Ob tug dlev kod yuav rawm tuag. Kawg kag moog nrhav nam, tsi moog nrhav mas muab tua taamsim nuav kag.

‘Alas, alas, alas! You good-for-nothings must be in a hurry to die. If you don’t find your mistress, I will kill you immediately’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **koj** ‘you (singular)’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas nyam lub tsho lab? ‘Do you like the red shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? ‘Can you find my new shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

koj pw sau txaaaj ‘you sleep on the bed’ (Xiongs).

Koj tug hluas nkauj puas txij koj? ‘Is your girlfriend as tall as you?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*

‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

Koj yog tug kuv tshua ‘you are the one I think of’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau

‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

Oo, kuv hlub koj ‘Ong, I love you’ (Xiongs).

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2.)

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag coj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14; ‘shirt of silk and satin’ is the placenta, which is buried in the floor of the house when a person is born).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj

yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for yaugncauj?] yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **koj le** ‘your, yours (singular)’ (Xiongs).

- **koj los sav!** ‘hello!’:

Siv Yig Muas tes moog saablaaj ib tug ntoo rua ib tug ntoo. Saib ib lub qaab zeb rua ib lub qaab zeb. Moog moog tes pum nam dlaav. Dlaav nyob sau ceg ntoo qhuav. Dlaav has tas; “Siv Yig Muas, koj los sav! Koj tuaj dlaabtsi?”

Siv Yig Muas then went to consult with one tree after another. He looked at one cliff after another. He walked and walked and then he saw the eagle. Eagle was sitting on a dry tree branch. Eagle said: “Siv Yig Muas, hello! What brings you here?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 22.)

- **koj tuaj lov?** or **koj tuaj los** (speaking to one person) or **mej tuaj lov?** or **mej tuaj los** (speaking to more than one person), “Have you come?”, customary expression in greeting someone who arrives at one’s house:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35, speaking to a man and his son)

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

‘Ho ho! Welcome!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, speaking to three people.)

- **kom** ‘to try, to accuse’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *gào*:

pem kom ‘(classifier *tug*) defendant’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pèigào*.

yeej kom ‘(classifier *tug*) accuser’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yuángào*.

- **kom** ‘so that’, causative marker (see also *kuas*):

khaws khoom ca kom tau noj ntev ‘to store things in order to be able to eat them for a long time’ (Xiongs).

nwg ua tawv tawv yuav kom koj moog xwb

‘s/he toughly ordered that you must go’ (Xiongs).

Nwg xaaj kom kuv ua ‘s/he orders me to do it’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau

‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

thov kom ‘to wish that’ (Xiongs).

thov paab txheem kom tsi xob poob ‘Help me hold it from falling, please’ (Xiongs).

tshoom kom sab zog ‘push a little higher’ (Xiongs).

txu lug kom sib txig ‘to level off’ (Xiongs).

ua kom qhuav ‘to dry, to make dry’ (Xiongs).

zab tshaav kom hav ‘to get tanned under the sun’ (Xiongs).

ntuj le pub kom nwg txawj ua neeb.

‘heaven will allow him to know how to be a shaman’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

- **kom** ‘an episode of fighting’:

taamsiv nuav ib kom taw teg! ‘let’s fight right now!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 28-29).

- **kom**: *faib kom txhua* ‘distribute to everyone’ (Xiongs).

- **kom**: *xaav kom* ‘to wish that, to wish’ (Xiongs):

Kuv xaav kom koj paab ua qhov nuav rua kuv

‘I wish you can do this for me’ (Xiongs).

- **kov** ‘to touch, to handle’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *gǎo*:

tsi xob kov ‘don’t touch’ (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it any more’ (Xiongs).

Txiv! Tsi xob kov dlaim nyuas ko! Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.
‘Father! Don’t bother with that! It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’
(*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

Tua tua nam puj dlaab tes nam puj dlaab kov tsi yeej tes tsiv tsiv rov qaab lawm.

‘They fought the female spirit and the female spirit could not touch them and she fled back to where she had come from’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **Koo**, the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Xoom** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). Some sources on Hmong dialects other than Mong Leng list *Koo* as a Hmong clan name.

- **koob** ‘(classifier *raab*) needle, pin, quill’ (Xiongs).

- **koob** ‘(classifier *lub*) reputation, life’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gōng*.

- **koob**, the sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlb-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.
there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlb-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”
Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.
And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (Ceebpov pp. 12-13.)

- **koob**, probably from Chinese *gōng* ‘grandfather’, but in Mong Leng used for *great* grandparents of both sexes:

puj koob ‘great grandmother’ (Xiongs), ‘paternal great grandmother’ (*Village* p. 174).

yawg koob ‘paternal great grandfather’ (*Village* p. 174).

yawm koob ‘great grandfather’ (Xiongs).

- **koob**: *yeeb koob* ‘reputation, honor, glory’ (Xiongs):

Almost certainly a loan from Chinese but the exact Chinese source has not been identified.

- **kooj** ‘(classifier *tug*) grasshopper’ (Xiongs).

- **kooj**: *taws kooj* (classifier *tug*) trigger’ (Xiongs).

- **koj tis** ‘wing’ (Xiongs).

- **koog** ‘(no classifier) group, crowd’ (Xiongs).

- **koom** ‘to share with’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *gòng*:

Kuv vaam tas koj yuav tuaj koom peb rooj qav hab

‘I hope that you will participate in the feast with us’ (Xiongs).

nyob koom zog ‘to live in the same village, from the same village’ (Xiongs).

sib koom teg ‘together’ (Xiongs).

- **koom hum** ‘(classifier *lub*) association’ (Xiongs).

- **koom roj ntshaa** ‘thoroughbred’ (Xiongs).

- **koov** ‘to bend; bent’ (Xiongs):

koov nkoog (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [a little bent].

- **ku** ‘(classifier *tug*) handle’ (Xiongs).

- **ku**, a syllable of uncertain meaning, in the following example:

A man is bemoaning his fate. His parent’s have been killed, he is unmarried, and he lives with his older brother and his older brother’s wife, a hard-hearted woman who makes him work very hard and gives him inferior food:

Num ku quas vuag noj nplooj quas ab haus dlej dlhau sab

‘Toil is harsh, leaves are bitter to eat, water is too much for one’s heart’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **ku lug** ‘main idea, important idea’ (Xiongs).

- **kuntoo** ‘tree’:

txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo.

‘and there was a little minivet on a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **ku peev** ‘ability’:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75),

- **kutaw** ‘foot’ (also written *kua taw*):

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.

‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting his feet off the ground’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

Huas Muam Paajlig, Yawm Fuabtais tug nam hlub, kuj ua plhu nphob quas zug, hab xuab kutaw rhuj rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But Muam Paajlig, His Majesty’s senior wife grew more and more pale and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **ku txuj** ‘skill’:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75).

- **ku zoov** ‘forest’:

In a folktale, a woman recounts how her husband speaks of the time when he was transformed into a tiger:

“Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is

holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, 'Child oh child, when your mother wasn't there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child', why is that?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **kub** 'hot; to burn' (Xiongs):

caij ntuj kub 'summer' (Xiongs).

cov thee tsi tau kub txaus 'the charcoal is not hot enough' (Xiongs).

- **kub** '(classifier *thooj* or *cov*) gold' (Xiongs):

saw kub '(classifier *tug*) a gold chain' (Xiongs).

Silver and gold in the spirit world represent tears on earth. In a folktale, a dragon, grateful to a man for conveying a message, takes the man to his home at the bottom of the lake, where the man meets and falls in love with the dragon's daughter, who tells him that when her father offers to reward him for conveying the message, he must refuse whatever her father offers and say that he wants only the fish with yellow skin. Therefore, when the dragon offers the man silver and gold and livestock, he replies,

Ub! nyaj le tom peb nplajteb nyaj kuamuag, tsaj le yog peb nplajteb tsaj rau ncoo, kuv tsi yuav.

'As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them' (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96).

- **kub** '(classifier *txhim*) horn' (Xiongs):

ob txhim kub 'two horns' (Xiongs).

Nyuj ob txhim kub zuag heev 'The bull's two horns are very sharp or pointed' (Xiongs).

Ob tug ua tau tuab lub nam tsev cuaj cegkub yim cegkaug lug ua tsev fuabtais pub rua ob tug, hab ob tug nam txiv, Yawm Xeev Tswjlaug hab Nkauj Nubqub, puab tau nyob.

'The two of them built a building with nine "horns" and eight "fangs" to be a royal palace for the two of them and for Nuj Sis Loob's parents, His Majesty the Ruler and Nkauj Nubqub, to live in' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **kub** 'wart', from Chinese *gē*:

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam.

'in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you' (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

- **kub**: *naab raajkubsai* 'cobra' (Lyman p. 197):

"Es koj ntshai naab raajkubsai tsi ntshai?"

"Then are you afraid of cobras?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **kub**: *ntaus nyuj kub tsaab* 'to jump and turn up and down' (Xiongs).

- **kub**: *ntim nyaj ntim kub* 'silver bowls and gold bowls', used to determine if someone will live

or die:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls:

Kawg kag rhu ntim nyaj ntim kub lug taw.

Quick, pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate.

Tes puj dlaab nam ntshais moog rhu hlo ntim nyaj ntim kub lug tes;

So the female spirit's daughter pulled out silver bowls and gold bowls:

"Caj luas mas nam! tes caj".

"Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag".

"Caj luas mas nam! tes caj"

"If you are to live, mother, you will live."

"If you are to die, mother, you will die."

"If you are to live, mother, you will live."

Plawg moog tes;

Plawg went then:

"Kuv paab, kuv paab koj!"

"Caj luas mas nam! tes caj".

"Tuag luas mas nam! Tuag le lauj nam lauj!"

"If I can help, I will help you!"

"If you are to live, mother, you will live."

"If you are to die, mother, you will die."

Tes nam puj dlaab tuag le lauj.

Then the female spirit died.

(Lug Nruag Dlaab pp. 21-22.)

Then the female spirit's daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is repeated. The female spirit's daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold

bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

“Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj”.

“If you are to live, Little Kaub [man’s name] and Little Mais [woman’s name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live.”

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **kub**: *Rhawm Nyaj Rhawm Kub* ‘the Jar of Silver and of Gold’, which holds the tears of the relatives of a sick person who may die (*Entre* pp. 161-162):

Lemoine’s spelling of the word for ‘jar’ as *rhawm* is unusual. Normally the word for ‘jar’ is spelled *rhawv*.

- **kub**: *tshoom kub lub ntuj* ‘to go straight up into the sky’ (Xiongs).

- **kub ndlaug loj quas kho** ‘bright golden’:

ib lub nam eeb kub ndlaug loj quas kho
‘a bright golden saddle’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **kub nyab** ‘to burn’ (Xiongs):

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

- **kug** ‘finished, died down (fire), ended; to end, to finish, to die down (fire)’ (Xiongs).

- **kug**: *tshoob kug* or *tshoob ... kug*:

tshoob kug ‘marriage or wedding’ (Xiongs).

Kaab tshoob kev kug ‘marriage of wedding traditions’ (Xiongs).

Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug ‘Tales of Marriage Customs’ (*Kwvhuam*, title).

them tshoob them kug ‘to pay a brideprice’ (topic of the story in *Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32).

- **kuj** ‘then, consequently’, from Lao ຄວ້:

Cais Yawm Dlaab kuj muab tso rovqaab lawm.
‘So the spirit then sent [the man’s father] back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

Kuv ua txhua zag kuj leej kawgnkaus nas!
‘Each time I make it, it is completely effective!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **kum** ‘to pair’ (Xiongs).

- **kum**: *pej kum teb* ‘abroad’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *biégè*.

- **kum**: *twmkum* ‘rhinoceros’, from Chinese *dú jiǎo* ‘single horn’:

Tug nam txiv twmkum nyav moog dlhau plhawv xwb

‘A male rhinoceros came galloping up’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 18).

- **kus** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of bird’ (Xiongs), ‘generic term for birds of a certain type, e.g. crimson-backed woodpecker, *Chrysocolaptes lucidus guttacrastatus*’ (Lyman p. 141).

- **kus** ‘to scratch’ (Xiongs).

- **kus**: *naag kus* ‘bamboo rat’:

Nwg pheej naj nub tuaj khawb peb tsoom naag kus.

‘Every day he comes and digs up us bamboo rats’ (*Kwvhuam* pp. 11-12).

- **kuv** ‘I, me’ (Xiongs):

As subject, ‘I’:

Koj yog tug kuv tshua ‘you are the one I think of’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tau ib lub tsho tshab ‘I got a new shirt’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi tau noj tshais ‘I have had breakfast’ [typo for ‘I have not had breakfast’] (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi txawj ua ‘I don’t know how to do it’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi xaav moog ‘I don’t want to go’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txas [typo for *txais*] *nyaj yuav tsheb*

‘I borrow money to buy a car, I get a loan to buy a car’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug tswv phoo ntawv nuav ‘I am the owner of this book’ (Xiongs).

Oo, kuv hlub koj ‘Ong, I love you’ (Xiongs).

Txaws lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntxiv lawm ‘enough! I don’t need anymore’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj

‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg. Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book like this to serve as a model. I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv
‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

As object, ‘me’:

qug kuv ‘repeat after me’ (Xiongs).

cais kuv le maam coj koj moog tu, hab ca koj nyob nuav nrug kuv ua kwvluag!
‘so I’ll take you to care for, and let you live here with me as a friend and companion!’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 8.)

nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!
‘he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

huas Suav muab kuv caab moog ua qhev lawm.
‘but the Chinese led me away to be a slave’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

Possessive, ‘my’:

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? ‘Can you find my new shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

kuv nam txum ib hub cawv ‘my mother ferments a jar (a barrel) of alcohol’ (Xiongs).

kuv txiv txawj txua neev ‘my father knows how to make a crossbow’ (Xiongs).

tshaws kuv qhov muag lawm ‘there is something in my eyes’ (Xiongs).

Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog

‘You say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Suav tuaj Suav muab kuv txiv tua lawm
‘When the Chinese came, the Chinese killed my husband’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

hab tub yuav txug kuv nam kuv txiv tsev
‘and we are about to arrive at my parents’ house’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

- **kuv le** ‘my, mine’ (Xiongs).

- **kua** ‘(no classifier) water, juice, liquid’ (Xiongs):

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev ‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

muaj kua ‘watery, juicy’ (Xiongs).

tau kua qhav haus ‘to be scolded’ (Xiongs) [“to get ginger juice to drink”]

zaub ua kua ‘watery soup’ (Xiongs).

- **kua lwj** ‘slime from a rotting dead body’:

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

- **kua mem** ‘ink’ (Xiongs).

- **kua mig** ‘milk’ (Xiongs).

- **kua muag** ‘tears’ (Xiongs):

noj mov ntxuag kua muag ‘to have extreme sorrow or trouble’ (Xiongs).

tauv kua muag ‘to hold back tears’ (Xiongs).

Silver and gold in the spirit world represent tears on earth. In a folktale, a dragon, grateful to a man for conveying a message, takes the man to his home at the bottom of the lake, where the man meets and falls in love with the dragon’s daughter, who tells him that when her father offers to reward him for conveying the message, he must refuse whatever her father offers and say that he wants only the fish with yellow skin. Therefore, when the dragon offers the man silver and gold and livestock, he replies,

Ub! nyaj le tom peb nplajteb nyaj kuamuag, tsaj le yog peb nplajteb tsaj rau ncoo, kuv tsi yuav.

‘As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96).

- **kua ncauj** ‘saliva’ (Xiongs).

- **kua nqaj** ‘meat juice’ (Xiongs).

- **kua ntxhai** ‘rice juice’ (Xiongs).

- **kua paug** ‘thick secretion from an abcess, pus’ (Xiongs).

- **kua qaub** ‘vinegar’:

cov kua qaub thaws taag rua huv lawm
‘the vinegar soaks in all’ (Xiongs).

- **kua taw** ‘(classifier *txhais*) foot, bottom part’ (Xiongs) (also written *kutaw*):

plaub txhais kua taw ‘four legs’ (Xiongs).

moog kua taw ‘by foot’ (Xiongs).

nplaam kua taw ‘to slip’ (Xiongs).

xuab kua taw ‘to drag the feet’ (Xiongs).

- **kua tw** or **kua twv** ‘tail’ (Xiongs):

kua tw neeg ‘(classifier *tug*) horse tail’ (Xiongs).

- **kua tsib** ‘bile’ (Xiongs).

- **kua yig** ‘thin secretion (from an abcess)’ (Xiongs).

- **kua zaub** ‘vegetable juice, soup’ (Xiongs).

- **kuab** ‘(no classifier) meaning, importance’ (Xiongs):

muaj kuab ‘meaningful, important’ (Xiongs).

- **kuab**: *txiv maum kuab* ‘papaya’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *mùguā*.

- **kuab muajtsuag**, a medicinal plant, *Ranunculus sceleratus*, administered orally to treat arthritis-like ailments of the elderly and to treat impotence and problems urinating in men (Pake 1986, p. 109, Nos. 79, 80).

In shamanic belief and in folklore, kuab muajtsuag has the power to restore broken objects and to revive the dead:

I have given here only one story [about Shi Yi, the first shaman]. In fact, there exists in the oral tradition of the Hmong a whole cycle of the legend of Shi Yi and of his heroic combats against the demons and the monsters ... One sees him discover the properties of the magical remedy *koua moua tchoua* [kuab muaj tsuag], one day when he broke the eggs of a female dragon. She used the plant to put her eggs back together. Then Shi Yi stole the plant to use it in the exercise of his art (*Entre* p. 121).

A folktale describes vividly how kuab muajtsuag is used to bring a dead man back to life:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag namtij txhaj moog rhu pis hlo kuab muajtsuag lug tsuag quas lawg Yob Nraug Ntsuag lub cev. Cais puab rovqaab muab dlaim txivtxag lug npug nkaus le qub, hab has kuas suavdlawg tuaj paab zuv. ... Puab txawm nov khob khob huv lub hleb tuaj, cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug moog cem hlo dlaim nam txivtxag saib, Yob Nraug Ntsuag pw ua ib ce ntxig fws quas zaum. Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug txha cev loo teg moog tsa hlo Yob Nraug Ntsuag sawv lug.

‘Yob the Orphan’s older brother’s wife then pulled out muajtsuag medicine and sprayed it on Yob the Orphan’s body. Then they covered him again with the lid of the coffin as before, and had everyone help keep watch. ... They then heard knocking from inside the coffin, and Yob the Orphan’s older brother lifted the lid of the coffin to look, and, why, Yob the Orphan was lying there his whole body perspiring slightly. Yob the Orphan’s older brother then stretched out his hand and lifted Yob the Orphan to his feet’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

Kuab means ‘medicine’ and is the first element in the names of many medicinal plants but *kuab muajtsuag* is the only one I have seen in my Mong Leng materials. Below is a photograph of *muajtsuag* kindly provided by Michael Johnson.



- **kuag**: *ibkuag* ‘some’ (Xiongs).

- **kuag**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov kuag [to make the sound kuag] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **kuam** ‘to scratch’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *guà*.

- **kuam** (Mong Leng spelling inferred; Lemoine writes the word in French spelling) ‘divinatory rods’ (*Entre* pp. 54-55), from Chinese *guà* ‘to divine; divinatory symbols’:

Rods made from short lengths of bamboo split lengthwise into two halves, used in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony and by shamans. The rods are cast to ascertain whether communication has been established between the human world and the spirit world. A rod falling with the flat side up signifies the spirit world. A rod falling with the rounded side up signifies the human world. If one rod falls flat side up and one rod falls rounded side up, this means that communication between the two worlds has been established. Divinatory rods are one of the shaman’s implements. Unlike the chanters in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, who use the expression *txheej ntawg*, shamans refer to divinatory rods as *kuam*, but it is the same implement used in the same way to ascertain whether communication has been established between the human world and the spirit world. Mong *kuam* comes from Chinese *guà* ‘to divine, a divination’, ‘divinatory symbols’, ‘the eight primeval trigrams forming the basis of the *Yi*

Jing and used for divination’, but there has been a shift in meaning. The Chinese word refers to divination by means of the Eight Trigrams, whereas the Mong word refers to rods made from split lengths of bamboo.

- **kuam**: *moov kuam* ‘grits’:

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam muab ib naab moov cej hab ib naab moov kuam rua koj nqaab moog tsev.

If you want to go home, tell your sister to give you a bag of buckwheat flour and a bag of grits to carry home. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13.)

The exact meaning of *kuam* is not completely clear. Heimbach (p. 90 *kuam*) translates it as ‘cornmeal’. Bertrais (p. 109 *kuam*) translates it as ‘maize husked and cooked in steam’. *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* (p. 126 *guaf*) translates it as ‘rice (made by grinding the husks of grains to powder and steam-cooking them to produce a grain-like appearance)’ and then refers to *guafjex* [*kuam cej*] ‘buckwheat *kuam*’ and *guafnblex* [*kuam nplej*] ‘rice *kuam*’. Michael Johnson (personal communication) says:

moov kuam is most probably corn grits – coarsely ground dried maize. *kuam* is not any particular cereal grain or pseudo-cereal – it is any such grain that is ground to grits. So buckwheat itself can be ground in this way and the “rice” cooked from it is *mov kuam cej*. *mov kuam* typically refers to cooked maize grits, but this too can be made unambiguous by the term *mov kuam pobkws*. The best way of cooking grits is to steam them. Some people do not know any better and just boil it – resulting in a gooey mess. Steamed maize grits are fairly tasteless, and dry, they stick in your throat unless you have juicy dishes to go with them. It is still a staple food for A-Hmao and Gha-Mu [Hmong subgroups in Guizhou and Yunnan]. Many Hmong who have year round access to rice also like to have some maize grits now and again for a change – and there is an ongoing nostalgia as it is acknowledged as the staple one's grandparents would have been raised on.

In the story in *Lug Nruag Dlaab*, the bags of *moov cej* and *moov kuam* are actually bags of silver and gold, so we do not learn anything from the story about how *moov cej* and *moov kuam* might be cooked and eaten.

- **kuas** ‘to say that, to give order’ (Xiongs) (see also *kom*):

Suav nim hawv los hawv, hu los hu kuas Muam Nkauj Ntsum saib luas laiij nyug txwg
‘The Chinese called out to the Maiden Ntsum and kept trying to get her to look at their plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg.
‘the two sides wrote up a contract and had everyone witness it’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Tsob nplej cais nwg ib nru kuas tu nrho
‘The stalks of rice she flung so that they broke apart’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

Lob Lw moog khwv kuas tau cuaj laag peev yim laag xwm.
‘Lob Lw should work hard so that he gets nine taels of capital and eight taels of funds’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 28).

Ob tug nim tu hlo ib lub nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj dlaav tuag

‘The two of them had decided on a place where they told their servants to prepare an exceedingly broad clearing’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mej yuav kuas mej dlim

‘If you want to escape’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- kuas ‘but’:

Ntxawd, koj koj koj vauv tuaj saib peb kuas, peb nyav ua npua rooj taag. Peb tsi tau caiv dlhau.

‘Dear, you’ve brought your husband to see us, but we’ve just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit. We’re not yet past the period of prohibition’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

- kuav ‘to wash away, to blow away, to carry away, to take away’ (Xiongs).

- kuav: *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum*, a kind of male spirit with a predilection for human women.

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are polyandrous, two or more of them marrying a single human woman. Two *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* are among the main characters in the story “*Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries *Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub*’s wife *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa* away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa* is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place:

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

Two *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of *Muam Paajtaag*, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum*, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” *Muam Paajtaag* thinks it over and finally she replies,

“Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die. (*Lug Nruag Tsv* pp. 99-111.)

The name Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum appears in both Mong Leng and White Hmong texts with quite a bit of variation in form, making it difficult to come up with an etymology or a literal translation. In White Hmong stories these beings are sometimes described as pockmarked or pimply, and are depicted in the illustrations as pockmarked and in general as looking rather unsavory and uncouth, sometimes with facial hair. *Mojtxiv* conceivably could be from Chinese *máozi* ‘hairy fellow’ (sometimes used in China to refer to Westerners) but in other texts the element *mojtxiv* is written quite differently or is missing altogether. *Nrauj ntsaum* conceivably could be from *nceb nrauj ntsaum* ‘toadstool’ since in this story the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum change into toadstools after they die, but, again, in other texts the element *nrauj ntsaum* is written

quite differently or is missing altogether.

- **kwg** ‘to have free time, to have time’ (Xiongs).
- **kwj** ‘(classifier *tug*) valley, ditch, moat, hole’ (Xiongs).
- **kwj**: *txwv kwj* ‘father’s sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 175):

Charles Johnson (personal communication) suggests that *txwv kwj* is from *txwv* ‘father’ + *kwj*, contraction of a hypothetical **kwb yij*, from Chinese 姑爷 *gūyē* ‘father’s sister’s husband’.

- **kwm** ‘to walk in’ (Xiongs).
- **Kwm**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Nkws** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 2). From Chinese *Gù*.
- **Kwm**: *Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos*, name of a boy whom Siv Yig Muas rescues from Sub Tuam, the tyrant who, after death, becomes the spirit that causes bloody accidents (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-22).
- **kws** ‘that’ (Xiongs):

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog
Concorde
 ‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

cov tswv yim kws txawm muaj nyob rua huv haiv tuabneeg Moob.
 ‘the ideas which exist among the Mong people’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws ua neej nyob raws xeem hab raws paab pawg.
 ‘The Mong are are ethnic group who live their lives in accordance with clan and subgroup divisions’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

thaum kws nyob Muam Nkauj Lis
 ‘the time when they lived in Mongolia’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Lug Moob yog ib hom kws txawv
 ‘The Mong language is one which is distinctive’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Kev lis kev cai yog ib yaam kws tseem ceeb heev
 ‘Tradition is something which is very important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob txuj kaab tshoob kev kug yog ib txuj kws muaj zaaj muaj haiv
 ‘The Mong marriage ceremony is one which has songs and chants’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai
Dlaab Qhuas.

‘There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Qhov kws tseem ceeb tshaaj plawg

‘The thing that was most important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws tau txais txuj kev tsiv teb chaws

‘The Mong are an ethnic group who have experienced migration’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

ib yaam taw teg khu mob nkeeg kws Moob muaj

‘a skill for healing illness which the Mong have’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

muaj ib nqais lug Suav nyob rua huv zaaj tshoob qheb kaus kws has rua nam txiv tog tom nua.

‘there is a verse in Chinese in the wedding song of opening the umbrella which is addressed to the bride’s parents’ side’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 3).

FaabKis yog tug kws kaav saab tebchaws Xov Tshoj.

‘the French were the ones who were in control of Indochina’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 7).

Nplog yog cov kws xub-xub nyob lub tebchaws Los Tsuas

‘the Lao were the ones who lived in Laos first’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 8).

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws muaj ob txuj kev ntseeg

‘The Mong are an ethnic group who have two religions’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 79).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

Cov tuabneeg kws muaj phom lawd

‘The people who had guns already’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

cov Faabkis kws tuag lawm

‘the French soldiers who had died’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

cov nam ntaub maag kws tsi tau ntshua dlej

‘hemp cloth which had not been washed’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hluab yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **kws** ‘(classifier *tug*) professional, skilled person’ (Xiongs):

tug kws ua noj ‘the cook’ (Xiongs).

tug kws qha ntawv ‘teacher’ (Xiongs).

- **kws**: *cov kws* ‘those who, the one’s who’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm
‘Those who were timid fled first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **kws**: *le kws*:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **kws**: *pob kws* ‘ear of corn’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bāogú*:

moov pob kws ‘corn-flour’ (Xiongs).

tug neeg thauj pob kws ‘the horse transports corn’ (Xiongs).

plhaub kws ‘corn husks’ (Xiongs).

tw yaaj pob kws ‘corn tassels’ (Xiongs).

txhaa pob kws ‘corn cob’ (Xiongs).

yub pob kws ‘corn seedling’ (Xiongs).

- **kwv** ‘to take something over the shoulder, to carry, to support’ (Xiongs):

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nwg dlha dlha moog aub hlo lub nam taubhau zaaj, hab muab raab taus ntsa kag, cais kwv loog moog.

‘He ran along carrying on his back the dragon-head. He stuck his axe into it so that he could carry it on his shoulder’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 31; the illustration on page 32 shows that he carries the axe handle on his shoulder, and the dragon’s head is attached to the blade of the axe).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **kwv** ‘to refuse doing something or following any order’ (Xiongs).

- **kwv** ‘(classifier *tug*) younger brother’ (Xiongs), ‘younger brother’ (*Village* p. 175):

Nwg yog tug kwv yau hlo ‘He is the youngest brother’ (Xiongs).

- **kwv**: *phooj ywg kwv luag* ‘friend, accompanying friend’ (Xiongs).

- **kwv huam** ‘stories, tales, traditions, ancient time’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *gǔhuà* ‘old saying’:

Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug
‘Tales of Marriage Customs’ (*Kwvhuam*, title).

- **kwv laam** ‘maybe, approximately, perhaps’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gǔliàng*.

- **kwvluag** ‘(classifier *tug*) companion’ (Xiongs):

Zagnua, koj poob lug txug ntawm kuv lawm, cais kuv le maam coj koj moog tu, hab ca koj nyob nuav nrug kuv ua kwvluag!

‘Now, you’ve fallen and come to me, so I’ll take you to care for, and let you live here with me as a friend and companion!’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 8.)

- **kwv npawg** ‘bilateral male cross cousin [i.e. mother’s brother’s son or father’s sister’s son], matrilinear male parallel cousin [i.e. mother’s sister’s son] (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **kwv nraab** ‘middle younger brother’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **kwv ntawg** ‘youngest brother’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **kwv tij** ‘relatives’ (Xiongs):

The expression *kwvtij*, literally ‘younger brother and older brother’, refers both to brothers and to cousins who are the sons of brothers and other male relatives of one’s own patrilineal clan.

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog.

‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

Noob caaj thaus u av ... Muaj ob tug txivtub tes moog saib kwvtij.

‘In ancient times, long long ago ... There was a father and son who went to see their kinsmen’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **kwv yees** ‘to guess’ (Xiongs):

Almost certainly a loan from Chinese but the exact Chinese source has not been identified.

KH

- **khab** ‘to attach for support, to bend’ (Xiongs).

- **khab** ‘(classifier *txuj*) bandage, band’ (Xiongs).

- **Khaab**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Plua** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2, lesson 2). From Chinese *Kāng*.

- **Khaab**: *Naaj Khaab*, the Nam Khan, a tributary of the Mekong from Lao *Nàm Kháan*:

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab

‘The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **khaab seeb** ‘uncluttered, roomy’ (Xiongs). Probably from a Chinese expression no longer used in Chinese but still used in Mong Leng.

- **khaav** ‘to boast, to swagger, to show oneself’ (Xiongs), from a Southwestern Mandarin term related to *kuāng*:

kev khaav ‘pride, boasting’ (Xiongs).

- **khaav**: *qaab yem khaav* ‘porch’:

Qaab yem khaav hab chaw nyob ‘Porch and place to sit’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **khais** ‘(classifier *raab*) ‘plow’ (Xiongs).

- **khaiv** ‘to have ... done, to have ... made’ (Xiongs). Probably from Lao *kháay*.

- **khaiv**: *tub khaiv* ‘servant, messenger’ (Xiongs).

- **khou** ‘(classifier *txhais* or *nkawm*) shoe(s)’ (Xiongs):

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of cloth but tied with hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab

ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person's footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person's arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

'Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncw ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncw ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They're big as young ewes. Don't forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They're big as young sows. Don't forget your hempen shoes!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors' (*Initiation* p. 135).

In one story, it appears to be straw shoes rather than shoes of hemp that are needed to walk in the spirit world. At the beginning of the story, a young woman is scolded and beaten by her older brother, so

leej muam txhaj kuas tug nug ntxawg hab ib nkawm khau quavnyaab rua nwg. Leej muam tau nkawm khau quavnyaab cais nwg txawm tawm moog lawm.

'the sister then had the younger brother weave a pair of straw shoes for her. The sister got the pair of straw shoes so she then went out.' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

The sister does not return and it is eventually learned that

Yog moog yuav ib Yawm Dlaab lawm.

‘It was that she married a Male Spirit.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

The younger brother goes in search of her and finds her footprints:

Nwg taug moog na, nwg tug muam txawm nkaag rua huv ib lub qhov aav.

‘He followed them and, why, his sister had gone into a hole in the ground.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

Finally, he finds his sister, they have a tearful reunion, and then she takes him to her house. On the way, however, they must cross a deep ravine, spanned by only a single plank, impossible for the younger brother to negotiate.

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quavnyaab rua nwg rau. Ob tug txawm taug lawg moog rua saab tim u.

‘So the sister then took off the pair of straw shoes for him to put on. The two of them then proceeded to the other side.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9.)

- **khau cev**, shoes made from the bark of the cev tree, a kind of tree, called *gòupí shù* ‘gou-bark tree’ in Chinese, the fibers of whose bark are used to make a kind of strong paper and to weave cloth (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 159 jed; Ma and Jin 1983:297-298).

In one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, the chanter, having brought the dead person to the wall at the bottom of the stairway to heaven, tells the dead person to instruct the spirits not to try to follow the chanter as he returns to the world of the living. The dead person must say:

Tes kuv rau khau maaj kuv tsuj tau ncaaj. / Yawm txiv yawm quas tsi rau khau cev tsuj taw yuamkev.

‘I am wearing shoes made of hemp. My steps are straight. / The old man is wearing shoes made from the bark of the cev tree. His footsteps wander from the path’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

- **khaub** ‘dirty, old’ (Xiongs).

- **khaub** ‘(classifier *tug* or *cov*) ‘branch(es)’ (Xiongs).

- **khaub dluag** ‘clothes’ (Xiongs):

xaws khaub dluag ‘to sew clothing’ (Xiongs).

tshuab xaws khaub dluag ‘sewing machine’ (Xiongs).

zab khaub dluag ‘to dry clothes’ (Xiongs).

- **khaub hlaab** ‘poor, old clothes’ (Xiongs):

Muab quas nyaj noj taag haus taag lug tug nam khaubhlaab quas nyo, dlaajntseg quas ntsuv.

‘He used up all his money and he is ragged, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **khaub lig cua** ‘tornado’:

khaub lig cua muab tshoob lawm ‘the tornado blows away’ (Xiongs).

- **khaub naab** ‘bag’ (Xiongs).

- **khaub nplawg** ‘switch, stick for beating someone’:

Ca ib ntsiv quav lug kuv sim rhu khaub nplawg tshaav ua nwg tau kev tsiv saib!
 ‘In a moment, I will pull out my switch and thrash him and drive him away’ (Ceebpov p. 19).

- **khaub rig khaub tsho** ‘clothes’:

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for ntshauv?]. Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **khaub thuas** ‘to catch a cold, to get a light general sickness; common cold, small sickness’ (Xiongs).

- **khaub tsav** ‘knuckle, to hit with the knuckle’ (Xiongs).

- **khaum** ‘to hang, to place’ (Xiongs). Probably from a dialectal sense of Chinese *kuò*.

- **khauxwm** ‘too bad!’, from Chinese *kěxi*:

Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug yuav tso tug twg moog los khauxwm.
 ‘Whoever His Majesty the Ruler would send [to be eaten by the Spirit], too bad for them!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 32.)

- **khawb** ‘to scratch’ (Xiongs):

In a story, a man who has been transformed into a tiger and then transformed back into a human being, still has a bit of tiger skin on his chest which is causing him to have memories of being a tiger:

“Auj! Yog nyob ntawm nwg hauv sab tseem tshuav ib dlaim tawv tsi tau hle nawj! Koj moog cais tsi txhob muab mivnyuas rua nwg puag. Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab, nwg khawb ua hle hlo lug cais zoo taag lawm lauj!”

“Oh! It is that there still is left on his chest a piece of skin that has not been removed! Go and don’t give him the child to hold in his arms. When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest, he will scratch it off and get well!” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **khawb** ‘to dig’ (Xiongs):

puab khawb tshaab, saab tod laum [typo for lawm?]

‘they dig through the other side already’ (Xiongs).

- **khawm txiv** ‘(classifier *lub*) button’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kòuzi*.

- **khaws** ‘to pick up’ (Lyman p. 147):

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **khaws ca** ‘to keep’ (Xiongs).

- **khaws khoom ca kom tau noj ntev** ‘to store things in order to be able to eat them for a long time’ (Xiongs).

- **khaws nkaus** ‘to grab’:

Nuj Nplhaib tuab plhaw moog khaws nkaus tau ib txuj suavceeb tawm plawg moog nraag roojtsuas

‘Nuj Nplhaib with one jump went and grabbed a headband from the cave’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62).

- **khaws ntse-tab** ‘to gather the pleats of a skirt’; the pleats are anchored in the top section with special stitches; the pleats are held in place with long threads, that are pulled out each time the skirt is worn (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).

- **khaws tau** ‘to pick up’:

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **khaws tseg ca** ‘to put aside’ (Xiongs).

- **khaws qub** ‘to take the used ones’ (Xiongs).

- **khawv**, Chinese *kǒu* ‘mouth’:

tim khawv ‘to witness’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *duì kǒu* ‘with regard to the mouth’.

tug tim khawv ‘the witness’ (Xiongs).

thaam povkhawv ‘to talk to one’s heart’s content’. From Chinese *bǎo kǒu* ‘to fill the mouth’.

Ob tug sis thaam sis thaam povkhawv

‘The two of them talked and talked to their hearts’ content’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

thov khawv ‘to beg’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tǎo* ‘to beg’ + *kǒu* ‘mouth’.

- **kheb** ‘crocodile, alligator’ (Xiongs). From Lao *khêe*.

- **khee** ‘to finish, to end’ (Xiongs).

- **kheej** ‘round, total, whole, entire, circular, cylindrical’ (Xiongs), from a Southwestern

Mandarin pronunciation of Chinese *quān*:

Yog ua le caag koj yuav tsi kaam has kuas koj tug kheej moog hab?

‘Why are you not willing to tell all of your [subjects] to go?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 33.)

- **kheem** ‘to complete’ (Xiongs).

- **kheev** ‘to agree, to be willing to, to consent; if, whether’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *kěn*:

Ab yog tas koj tsi kheev los thov txav cov plaubhau rua kuv lauj!

‘Very well, if you won’t [give me the head], then please cut off the hair for me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31.)

- **kheev** ‘(no classifier) assembly, package, a joint’ (Xiongs).

- **khi** ‘to fasten, to tie, to bind’ (Xiongs):

khi rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to tie tightly].

tes moog txug sau nyaj vaab tuam teem muab plaub txuj saw hlau khi plaub txhais teg taw ua ruam quas rug

‘and when they arrived on high, Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem took four iron chains and bound their four limbs rendering them immobile’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

Nuj Nplhaib tuab plhaw moog khaws nkaus tau ib txuj suavceeb tawm plawg moog nraag roojtsuas, muab txuj suavceeb khi hlo ua ob lub cos nrum nroog rua nraag kuntoo.

‘Nuj Nplhaib with one jump went and grabbed a headband from the cave and tied two knots in it and flung it down onto a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62).

Ob tug moog txug tom na cav lug tug nam khi saw hlau quas nreeg has tas, yog vim le caag es yuav lug tug le hov nua.

‘When they arrived, why, there came [Little Yob], firmly bound in iron chains, asking why he had come.’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **khib** ‘jealous’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kuī*.

- **khib**, thirty-day months which begin with the Day of the Snake and end with the Day of the Monkey. They alternate with **khub**, thirty-day months which begin with the Day of the Pig and end with the Day of the Dragon. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 80-83.)

- **khib**, the sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.

there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (Ceebpov pp. 12-13.)

- **khis** ‘a little bit broken’ (Xiongs).

- **khiv**, intensifier:

Tabsis Nuj Sis Loob cais, tsuas yog quaj ua qhovmuag lab quas khiv tim tojntxaas xwb.

‘But all Nuj Sis Looj was doing doing was weeping until his eyes were red by the grave’ (Nuj Sis Loob p. 9).

cav yog nwg tug nug yau tuaj txug hov hab quaj quaj ua labmuag quas khiv.

‘why, it was her little brother who had come and she wept until her eyes were red’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 8).

- **Kho**: *Naaj Kho*, the Kho River, a tributary of the Mekong:

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab

‘The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 14).

- **kho**, intensifier:

ib lub nam eeb kub ndlaug loj quas kho

‘a bright golden saddle’ (Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 17).

- **khob** ‘(classifier *lub*) cup’ (Xiongs). See also *nkhob*.

- **khob** ‘to knock, to strike, to stamp’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *qiāo*:

Puab txawm nov khob khob huv lub hleb tuaj

‘They then heard knocking from inside the coffin’ (Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg p. 28).

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 31.)

- **khob tswb** ‘to ring the bell’ (Xiongs).

- **khom** ‘to sleep for a short while, to relax, to lie on’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kào*.

- **khov** ‘tight, firm, steady, congealed, frozen; firmly, hard’ (Xiongs).

- **khoo** ‘(classifier *lub*) lamp’ (Xiongs):

teeb khoob ‘lamp, from Lao *khóom*’ (Tswv Yim p. 4).

- **khoob** ‘empty, vacant, void, hollow, clear, feeble, hoarse, rough (voice)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kōng*.

- **khoob**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov khoob [to make the sound khoob] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **khoom** ‘(classifier *pob* or *cov*) things, luggage, package’ (Xiongs), from Lao *khǒng*:

khaws khoom ca kom tau noj ntev ‘to store things in order to be able to eat them for a long time’ (Xiongs).

ib pob khoom sib ‘a light package’ (Xiongs).

thaab muag khoom ‘to introduce to sell a product’ (Xiongs).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (Nuj Sis Loob p. 48).

- **khoom** ‘free (have free time)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kòng*.

- **Khoom**: *Naaj Khoom* ‘the Mekong’, from Lao *Nàm Khǒng*:

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab

‘The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 14).

- **khoom**: *thaab muag khoom* ‘to introduce to sell a product’ (Xiongs):

The first syllable, *thaab*, is from Chinese 攤 *tān* ‘to spread something out, to lay out; stand, stall or table where goods are exhibited and sold’.

- **khoom noj** ‘meal’ (Xiongs).

- **khoom plig** ‘a gift, donation’ (Xiongs), a translation of Lao *khǒng khwǎn* ‘gift’, literally “soul thing”:

qhwv pob khoom plig ‘to wrap the gift’ (Xiongs).

- **khoom xwm** ‘little or small things, seasoning plants’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese 空 *kòng* ‘spare time, free time, leisure’ + 食 *shí* ‘to eat’, “things that can be eaten in one’s leisure time”, i.e. ‘a snack’.

- **khu** ‘to arrange, to set in order, to repair, to mend, to reconcile’ (Xiongs):

kev thuaj khu ‘constructive criticism’ (Xiongs).

khu mob ‘to hospitalize, to visit a doctor’ (Xiongs).

tsev khu mob ‘hospital, clinic’ (Xiongs).

tsim teb khu chaw ‘to found a nation’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

tsev khu tsheb ‘garage’ (Xiongs).

- **khub** ‘dirty’ (Xiongs).

- **khub** ‘to intend to’ (Xiongs).

- **khub**, thirty-day months which begin with the Day of the Pig and end with the Day of the Dragon. They alternate with **khib**, thirty-day months which begin with the Day of the Snake and end with the Day of the Monkey. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 80-83.)

- **khuj**:

Nwg najnub moog ua si khuj quas khuav nraagqaab tojntxaas ib qho dlhau ib qho xwb.
‘Every day, he would aimlessly wander about from one gravesite to another’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 8).

- **khum** ‘shell, carapace’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kè*.

- **khum**: *cuam khum* ‘selfish’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese.

- **khum**: *txhaab khum phom* ‘(classifier *lub*) gunstock’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese *qiāngké*, a wooden holster or case for a revolver or pistol used during the Qing dynasty, shaped like a gunstock. The revolver could be attached to the end of it. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **khumsaab** ‘traveling salesman, traveling businessman’, from Chinese *kèshāng*:

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

The kind [of bell] that traveling salesmen hang from the mules which they bring went “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* p. 13.)

- **khus**: *nais khus* ‘teacher, from Lao *náay khúu*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **khua sab** ‘to feel melancholy, wistful, gloomy, mournful, lamentable, deplorable; to be constable because of too much thinking about boyfriend, girlfriend or life in general’ (Xiongs).

- **khuab** ‘to hang up, to hook, to grasp, to cling’ (Xiongs). From Chinese dialect *kā* ‘to get stuck’:

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“*Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;*

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
 these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
 these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
 these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **khuab rig tsho** ‘(classifier *tug*) hanger’ (Xiongs).

- **khuaj** ‘cangue, pillory’, from Lao *kháa*:

luas tub muab paab nam hluasnkauj kws lug has nwg ntawd khi taag, hab kaw ua tuab khuaj puv nkaus.

‘the young women who had spoken to him had been tied up, and imprisoned, completely filling the pillory’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 15).

- **khuam** ‘to hang, to hook’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *kuà*:

Tes Los Xaab tsua nqeg tes ob tug muab lawv kag rua naab thoobpuab tes pluj plag hab Los Xaab khuam lauj.

‘So Los Xaab dismounted, and the two of them quickly put [their horses] in the shoulder-bag so that they vanished from sight and then Los Xaab hung it on his shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 13-14).

Kuv yuav moog nyob huv hab es, koj khuam lub naab thoobpuab xwb.

‘I am going to go inside as well, and you will just hang the shoulder-bag on your shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Nwg lug txug hov nwg khuam quas nyo nam naab thoobpuab txug hov.

‘Then Los Xaab hung the shoulder-bag on his shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **khuam** ‘to stop’ (Xiongs).

- **Khuam**: *Xeev Khuam* ‘Xieng Khouang [a city and province in northern Laos], from Lao *Síang Khwǎang*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **khuav**, intensifier:

Nwg najnub moog ua si khuj quas khuav nraagqaab tojntxaas ib qho dlhau ib qho xwb.

‘Every day, he would aimlessly wander about from one gravesite to another’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 8).

- **khuav**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov khuav [to make the sound *khuav*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **khw** ‘(no classifier) market, shopping center’ (Xiongs) (also written *khws*):

tsev khw ‘store, shopping center’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug txha nyob tsev tshab tsev khw, tsev vuag luaj vuag av, cuaj tshooj teb yim tshooj ntug.

‘They lived in a new house, a house like that of a merchant, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass, nine stories of earth and eight stories of heaven’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **khwb** ‘to cover, to close, to put the cover on, to enclose’ (Xiongs).

- **khwb** ‘to catch in a net’:

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for *taub*] *hai lug.*

‘The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **khwm**: *thom khwm* ‘(classifier *txhais*) sock’ (Xiongs) (from Chinese *tào kù* ‘a pair of leggings held up by string, worn over trousers as an extra protection against rain, wind, or cold’):

txhais thom khwm ‘one sock’ (Xiongs).

nkawm thom khwm ‘a pair of socks’ (Xiongs).

- **khws** ‘market’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4). Also written *khw*.

- **khws** ‘similar to, like, as, from Lao *khii*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4; Xiongs).

- **khvw** ‘to have a hard time, have a hard, difficult life; to work hard, to think’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kǔ*.

L

- **la** (or **laj**?), syllable of unknown function in the following couplet from the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laj*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- **lab** ‘(classifier *tug*) monkey’ (Xiongs):

tug txiv thai lab ‘a big male monkey’ (Xiongs).

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The eighth month of the year is the month of the monkey.

8 hlis – lab hli
 8th month – month of the monkey (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:
 ‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the sixth day of the first month is

luav hli – lab xab 6 ‘month of the rabbit – monkey day 6’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that the type of monkey most commonly referred to as *lab* is the macaque. Below is a photograph of a macaque that Michael sent me:



- **lab** ‘red’ (Xiongs):

hov txob lab ‘red pepper’ (Xiongs).

miv nyuas mog lab ‘baby’ (Xiongs).

noob-ncoos-lab, needlework square with a plain red center (*Grandmother's Path* p. 140).

phau ntawv lab 'red book' (Xiongs).

qos lab 'sweet potato' (Xiongs).

suav lab 'Chinese communist' (Xiongs).

tooj lab 'copper' (Xiongs).

Koj puas nyam lub tsho lab? 'Do you like the red shirt?' (Xiongs.)

muab lub thoob lab lug theej thoob dlob 'replace the red pail with the black one' (Xiongs).

lab pliv or *lab quas pliv* 'very light red as weak batteries for portable light' (Xiongs p. 557).

lab tseb or *lab quas tseb* 'light red' (Xiongs p. 557).

lab ploog or *lab quas ploog* 'pure red' (Xiongs p. 557).

Luas tej mas nim ua zaam lab quas vog, hab nojnqaj hauscauv ntshu quas fwv rua tom u tom nua.

'Everyone else was dressed up in speckled red clothing, feasting and celebrating all over the place' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

Tab sis Nuj Sis Loob cais, tsuas yog quaj ua qhovmuag lab quas khiv tim tojntxaas xwb.
'But all Nuj Sis Loob was doing doing was weeping until his eyes were red by the grave' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

Nwg nim muaj nyuj muaj twm, muaj neeg muaj zaag, muaj dlev muaj npua, muaj qab muaj us, hab muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw noj zaub puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

'It had cattle and it had buffaloes, it had horses and it had mules, it had dogs and it had pigs, it had chickens and it had ducks, and it had ntshuav and it had elephants grazing and filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon' (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

Nwg ob tig cev ua nwg tsag lig xub yaa lab pis vog rua huv aav cais dlej ca le npau pis dlaam tawm lug, hab ndlwg quas tsag moog rua ntxawm Txheeb Tshoj Theeb.

'He turned himself round twice so that he emitted red flashes of lightning flying into the soil and then water boiled out and then flowed to Txheeb Tshoj Theeb' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

Nwg ... tsag lig xub yaa lab vog cais cov nam pobzeb txawm yaa tawg pis txua

'He [Grandfather Thunder's Youngest Son] ... sent red bolts of lightning flying everywhere and the stones then flew and cracked into pieces' (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

Yawm Dlaab, nwg leej muam tug quasyawg, txawm yaa plawg tim qaab lug tsaws nkaus sau qhovmuag tsev ua qhovncauj lab pistsuag.

'the Male Spirit, his sister's husband, then came flying in from the horizon [or 'from the

west'] and perched on the gable, with his mouth all red' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **lab**: *dlev labmuag* 'red-eyed dog', animal used as a guide and helper in folklore:

In one story, a young woman's parents give her a puppy with red eyes (*ib tug mivnyuas dlev labmuag*) and instruct her that wherever the red-eyed dog stops, she is to marry the man who lives there and settle there (*Kwvhuam* p. 9). In a second story in the same volume, a young woman's husband tells her that every day when she goes to work in the fields, *coj dlev labmuag nrug koj ua ke tuaj!* 'bring the red-eyed dog with you' (*Kwvhuam* p. 24).

In a quite different story, a red-eyed dog is really a tiger. When someone pierces a female spirit's house with arrows, she instructs a group of spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog by the side of the road:

"Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os".

"When you go, as soon as you're ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

When the person who pierced the spirit's house with arrows comes to the road, what he finds is a tiger and snake. The tiger kills him, and the tiger and the snake eat him.

- **lab sab** 'to have a strong desire for' (Xiongs).

- **lag** '(classifier *raab*) sickle' (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a father and his son spend the night in the home of ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the father to sleep on and says that the boy can sleep in the bed with the spirit's two daughters. In the middle of the night, the boy begins to groan:

Leejtxiv taws teeb hlo sawv tseeg moog saib na ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab tes nyua [typo for nyuas?] tub tuag lawm lauj. 'The father lit a lamp and got up to look and, why, the two ntxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the boy's chest and the boy was dead.' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **lag** 'color intensifier' (Xiongs pp. 556-557):

dlawb lag or *dlawb quas lag (laj)* 'not quite white, something white passes by once' (Xiongs p. 556).

- **lag**, intensifier:

Ceeb Pov lawv pis lag nkaag plawg rua huv.

'Ceeb Pov went inside following close behind them' (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Nuj Sis Loob nyob tsawg ntawm lub nam tojntxaas tog ib nub yuavlaug tsausntuj txug lub nub taj quas lag

'Nuj Sis Loob remained sitting on the grave all day until nightfall, when the sun was just level with the horizon' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **laj** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) rice swamp’ (Xiongs):

paav laj ‘rice swamp’ (Xiongs).

- **laj** ‘(classifier *tug*) hawk’ (Xiongs).

- **laj** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 557):

ntsuab ‘green or blue in general’:

ntsuab laj or *ntsuab quas laj* ‘blue, pure blue’

ntsuab xab or *ntsuab quas xab* ‘green, pure green’

(Xiongs p. 557).

- **laj**, variant pronunciation of *lag* ‘color intensifier’:

dlawb lag or *dlawb quas lag (laj)* ‘not quite white, something white passes by once’

(Xiongs p. 556).

- **laj** (or **la?**), syllable of unknown function in the following couplet from the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laj*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- **laj**: *ntxeev laj* ‘face up’:

Nwg poob lug nyob ntxeev laj ‘It had fallen face up’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 14).

- **laj**: *taj laj* ‘market, from Lao *talàat*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **lajfaab** ‘south’, from Chinese *nánfāng*:

Ib tug tsiv rua lajfaab ib tug tsiv rua toobfaab.

‘One fled to the south, one fled to the east’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64).

- **lajmej pejxeem** ‘the populace, the common people’:

Hab kuas tsoom lajmej pejxeem moog tsua kag ib lub nyuas hleb cab lug ntim Yob Nraug Ntsuag.

‘And she had the people build a pine coffin to put Yob the Orphan in’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

- **lam** ‘to oblige, to accuse’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *lài*:

chiv chawj puam lam ‘all in disorder’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qī qiú bā lài* ‘seven strivings and eight accusations’.

ua lwj ua lam ‘by wrack and by ruin’, ‘at all costs’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag hab Ntxawm ob tug sis lam moog moog lug lug ntev loo.

‘Yob the Orphan and Ntxawm flung accusations back and forth at one another for a long time’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 13).

- **lam sim** ‘destroyed, abolished’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Chinese *lài* 赖, with colloquial sense ‘bad’, or from Chinese *lài* 癩 ‘sloppy’.

- **laag** ‘to salt’ (Xiongs).

- **laag** ‘to lock’ (Xiongs).

- **laag** ‘(classifier *tug*) long piece of wood’ (Xiongs):

muaj ib tug twm laag tuam hlaa ib lub nyuas haav tub tub moog rua tim ua.

‘there was a single rail spanning a deep ravine to go to the other side’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 8-9).

- **laag** ‘tael, Chinese ounce’, from Chinese *liǎng*:

Yog Lob Lw xaav tau Muam Nkauj Ntsum cais, Lob Lw moog khwv kuas tau cuaj laag peev yim laag xwm.

‘If Lob Lw wants to get Muam Nkauj Ntsum, Lob Lw should work hard so that he gets nine taels of capital and eight taels of funds’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 28).

Ob namtub khwv khwv lug tau peb naag peb xyoos txhaj tau cuaj laag peev yim laag xwm, cuaj laag nyaj yim laag kub, cuaj poj nyug yim poj neeg.

‘The two, mother and son, toiled three days and three years and got nine taels of capital and eight taels of funds, nine taels of silver and eight taels of gold, nine hills full of cattle and eight eight hills full of horses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

- **laag**: *cej laag* ‘wall’, ‘walled city’, the walls or walled cities that a dead person encounters on the journey to heaven (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 14, 16-18).

- **laag**: *taum laag* ‘green bean; long beans’ (Xiongs).

- **laag**: *tub laag tub luam* ‘merchant, prospect, trader’ (Xiongs).

- **laag npua** ‘pig’ (Xiongs).

- **laag ntseg** ‘deaf’ (Xiongs).

- **laaj** ‘cool’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *liáng*.

- **laaj** ‘to attach an animal to keep it from escaping’ (Xiongs).

- **laaj** ‘have a hard time’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *nán* ‘difficult’:

Yog koj moog tuab tuav nkaus nwg xwb tes yuav laaj laaj txhvw txujsa kuas xeev rov lug le hab.

‘If you were to take hold of him, he would have difficulty in being reborn’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **laaj**: *chim laaj xeeb* ‘to be displeased’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *qì* ‘to get angry’ + *nán* ‘difficult’ + *xīn* ‘heart’:

Ces yuav chim laaj xeeb om. ‘We’re so unhappy, such pain in our hearts’, ending formula for certain Lug Txaj (traditional songs) (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 107).

- **laaj**: *Nyab Laaj* or *Nyaablaaj* ‘Vietnamese’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8; *Tswv Yim*, preface). From Chinese *Ānnán*.

- **laaj**: *saab laaj* ‘to discuss, to exchange ideas, to talk over with’ (Xiongs, *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25). From Chinese *shāngliáng*.

- **laaj txhvw** ‘to have difficulty doing something’. From Chinese *nánchǔ*.

- **laajlim** ‘magic’, from Chinese *nán lì* ‘difficult power’:

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntshais kawm txuj kawm ci, hab kawm laajlim tegtaw thaus yau lug tav hluas taagnrho.

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm and studied magic and martial arts from the time they were small till the time they came of age’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Later in the story, Nuj Sis Loob does battle with a spirit who has been terrorizing the country. Nuj Sis Loob uses his powers to transform himself into different animals and to transform his leather belt into sword (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 40).

At the end of the story, Nuj Sis Loob and his wife Nkauj Fuab become king and queen and restore and rebuild the country:

Ob tug tau siv ob tug tej laajlim tswvyim thaus ob tug moog kawm ntawd lug paab lub teb lub chaw.

‘The two of them used their magic and ideas from the time when they been in school to help the country’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **laam** ‘to hang to get dry’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *liàng*.

- **laam** ‘to try to do something without great care’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *luàn*:

Nwg laam txais cua le xwb ‘s/he just guesses’ (Xiongs).

hab laam lam Txheeb Tshoj Theeb yaam u yaam nua le.

‘and he wantonly accused Txheeb Txhoj Theeb of all sorts of things’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 34).

Kuv laam moog muab nam ncej puj dlaab no no

‘I just went ahead and pierced the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **laam** ‘bright, transparent’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *liàng*.

- **laam**: Intensifier:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej cais nwg ca le lug mob pw ntsum quas laam lawm.

‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear, so he was in pain, and was lying sprawled out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **laam**: *kwv laam* ‘maybe, approximately, perhaps’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *gǔliàng*.

- **laam has** ‘to pull someone’s leg’:

Ab yawd! yog meb pum Suav Los Paav ua luam dlua kev meb qhovmuag txaij meb laam has le.

‘Oh, my! When you saw the Chinese merchant going by on business, you must have had a hallucination. You’re pulling my leg’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **laam fwj** ‘(classifier *lub*) bottle’ (Xiongs):

ib lub laam fwv qhuav ‘an empty bottle’ (Xiongs).

- **laav** ‘to promise, to agree, to be responsible for, to take on one’s self’ (Xiongs):

laav ntchas (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to guarantee].

The Xiongs do not translate *laav ntchas*. The translation ‘to guarantee’ comes from Heimbach (p. 216 *ntxhias*).

- **laav** ‘(classifier *lub*) bed’ (Xiongs):

koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

‘If you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and seek knowledge (?) on Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them’ (*Initiation* p. 122).

- **laig** ‘to sacrifice, to offer food to spirits or ancestors’ (Xiongs):

The chapter titled Laig Dlaab in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 63-75) explains the origin of offering food to the ancestors.

- **laig**: *laublaig* ‘minivet (kind of bird)’ (Bertrais 1978:143 *lob laig*):

In a folktale, Nuj Yob is disconsolate because he thinks he is about to die and his brother-in-law (sister’s husband) is trying to cheer him up:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke, txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo. Nuj Yob txhaj has rua nwg yawm yij tas: “Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?”

The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there, and there

was a little minivet on a tree. Nuj Yob then said to his brother-in-law: “Brother-in-law, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 80-81.)

Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law shoots the minivet for him:

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground. (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81)

Nuj Yob carries the dead bird in his brother-in-law’s bag

hab muab tug nyuas laublaig plhw quas zog

and kept stroking the little minivet (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81)

Then Nuj Yob sighs and says

Nyuas laublaig nis laublaig! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo nkauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

Little minivet oh minivet! You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear and yet you are dead! (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Below is a photograph of the small minivet, kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **laij** ‘to plow’ (Xiongs).

- **laij nyug txwg** ‘plow-ox’:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
 ‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

suav laij nyug txwg zoo zoo saib le ho!
 ‘See how beautiful the plow-oxen of the Chinese are!’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16.)

Yob Nraug Ntsuag tau moog ua nyuj laij nyug txwg
 ‘Yob the Orphan had become a plow-ox’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Suav nim hawv los hawv, hu los hu kuas Muam Nkauj Ntsum saib luas laij nyug txwg
 ‘The Chinese called out to the Maiden Ntsum and kept trying to get her to look at their plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg
 ‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

The creatures that accompany the plow-oxen are referred to both as *dlaav dlub yug yaav* (black eagles?) and *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’.

- **laim** ‘to throw away, to cast away’ (Xiongs):

laim nta (tseg) (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to throw away].

- **laim** ‘to sparkle, to twitch, to flutter’ (Xiongs).

- **laim ca** ‘to leave’ (Xiongs).

- **lau** ‘to go down (level of liquid)’ (Xiongs).

- **lau**, final particle:

Moog moog tau rua nruab dlaabntxaug teb lau.
 ‘The travelled until they came into the midst of the country of the ntxaug spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

“Ob tug nyuj nuav kub zuag hwy lawm, yuav ua le caag txha dlim lau”.
 “The horns of those two oxen are very sharp, how can we escape?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37.)

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob nqeg taug lawm lau.
 ‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **lau**, final particle when addressing someone:

“Puj lau! qaug cawv hwy, koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg kuv le moog”.
 “Grandmother! I am very drunk, you go cut a cane for me to lean on and then I will go.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33; man speaking to female spirit.)

- **lau puj**, emphatic final particle (see also *los puj*):

“Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?” “Awv, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov”. Nyob nyob ib ntsiv. “Tuaj peb sis ntaus lau puj lauj!”
 “Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, but I’m out a breath, let me rest a bit first.”
 They waited for a moment. “Now let’s fight!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21.)

- **laub** ‘to push’ (Xiongs).

- **laub** ‘to pour, to dump’ (Xiongs).

- **laub**, sound made by a bird, sound of bells:

Huas tej nam taujvaub los nim quaj: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!” ntshu quas au rua tim tej haavzoov
 But the blue-throated barbets cried: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!”, making a great noise in the forest (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.
 there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **laublaig** ‘minivet (kind of bird)’ (Bertrais 1978:143 lob laig):

In a folktale, Nuj Yob is disconsolate because he thinks he is about to die and his brother-in-law (sister’s husband) is trying to cheer him up:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke, txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo. Nuj Yob txhaj has rua nwg yawm yij tas: “Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?”

The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there, and there was a little minivet on a tree. Nuj Yob then said to his brother-in-law: “Brother-in-law, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 80-81.)

Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law shoots the minivet for him:

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground. (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81)

Nuj Yob carries the dead bird in his brother-in-law’s bag

hab muab tug nyuas laublaig plhw quas zog

and kept stroking the little minivet (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81)

Then Nuj Yob sighs and says

*Nyuas laublaig nis laublaig! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo
nkauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!*

Little minivet oh minivet! You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear and and yet you are dead! (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Below is a photograph of the small minivet, kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **laug** ‘old’ (Xiongs):

laug nkoog (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [old and bent].

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebhaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (Tswv Yim p. 141).

- **laug** ‘rough (voice)’ (Xiongs).

- **laug** ‘(classifier *lub*) embroidery’ (Xiongs):

In a story about the origin of the ritual of Cutting Off the Sub, the eagle is instructing Siv Yig Muas to kill Sub Tuam by challenging Sub Tuam to a contest of swallowing each other’s lives; Siv Yig Muas will substitute a cross-stitch embroidered headband upon which Sub Tuam will choke:

Koj tug yog nam laug, nwg chua nta ngog, ngog tsi tau.

‘Yours is the band of cross-stitch embroidery, and when he snatches it to swallow, he will not be able to swallow it’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

In a folktale, one of the indications of the main character’s prosperity is his beautiful clothing:

Nim naav lub nam tsho Suav laug suab quas zaws

‘He was wearing a Chinese jacket, embroidered all over with a fern-leaf pattern’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23)

- **laug** ‘dust pan’ (Xiongs).

- **laug**, sound made by a bird:

Huas tej nam taujvaub los nim quaj: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!” ntshu quas au rua tim tej haavzoov

‘But the blue-throated barbets cried: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!”, making a great noise in the forest’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

- **laug** ‘to drag on in length’ (Bertrais laug), ‘to pull, to drag, to haul’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* lous):

Ob tug nyob nyob yuav laug tsaus ntuj

‘The two of them were there for a while and it was going to drag on to nightfall’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Nwg lug yuav laug nto sau npoo qhov aav, nwg txawm tsaug zug heev le lawm.

‘As he was dragging on toward above the edge of the hole in the ground, he became very sleepy’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

- **laug**: *kaab laug tshooj* ‘(classifier *tug*) centipede’ (Xiongs). Third syllable from Chinese *chóng* ‘insect, worm’.

- **laug**: *kaab laug saab* ‘(classifier *tug*) spider’ (Xiongs).

- **laug**: *kev txwj laug* ‘elders’:

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj moog hu kev txwj quas laug lug nrug ua povthawj zoo zoo tseg.

‘So the Maiden Ntsum called upon the elders to be witnesses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **laug**: *nam laug* ‘sister’ (Xiongs) [elder sister].

- **laug**: *nyav yuavlaug taavsu* ‘just before noon’:

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntshuav cov ntshw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntshuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **laug**: *Nyooglaug* ‘the ruler of heaven’ (see also *Ntxwj Nyoog*):

Hmong call one class of supernatural beings Kao Eh Tu ... I shall call these beings gods, because they are more powerful than other spirits, they live in the sky and each has a personal name. ... *Yonglao* is usually mentioned in the Hmong stories and is often referred to as the head of all the gods. Some people said that he gives Yorso the job of sending rain and also of judging the Hmong people. He also delegates some functions to Yawang. During the Hmong New Year festival, *Yonglao* is invited to join the celebration. He does not come himself, but sends one of his sons or daughters to join the festival (Chindarsi 1976:18).

Yawm Nyooglaug Ntxhais Ntxawm ‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s Youngest Daughter’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb*, title and throughout story).

- **laug**: *nyuv laug* ‘large intestine, colon’ (Xiongs).

- **laug**: *puj laug* ‘father’s older brother’s wife’ (*Village* p. 174).

- **laug**: *tais laug* ‘mother’s older sister, wife’s older sister, older sister (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **laug**: *tij laug* ‘(classifier *tug*) older brother’ (Xiongs), ‘elder brother’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **laug**: *tij laug hlob hlo* ‘(classifier *tug*) oldest brother’ (Xiongs).

- **laug**: *txwv laug* ‘wife’s older sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **laug**: *Xeev* or *Xeev txwjlaug* ‘the Ruler’, a major character in many stories, for example “Nuj Yob hab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug” (Nuj Yob and the Xeev Txwjlaug) (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 73-97), and the stories told in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, *Kwvhuam*, and *Nuj Sis Loob*.

Nub caaj thaus u, Nuj Yob nam Nuj Yob txiv pheej naj xyoo raug Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hu moog ua Yawm Xeev qhev txav tawg pub rua puab tau hau [typo for haus?] cawv xeeb.

‘Long ago, Nuj Yob’s mother and Nuj Yob’s father each year would be called upon by the Ruler to be the Ruler’s servants cutting firewood to give them for his birthday celebration’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

Huas nyob lub nam nroog nuav, muaj ib yim tuabneeg muajtxag npluanuj, hab zoo neej heev. Yim tuabneeg nuav yog Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug.

‘But in this town, there was a family that was wealthy, and had a very good life. This family was that of the Ruler’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

Yaav thaus u, yawm Xeev txwjlaug qawm [typo for qaum] ntuj muaj ib tug ntxhais npe hu ua MUAM NKAUJ NTSUM.

‘Long ago, the Ruler of heaven had a daughter named Muam Nkauj Ntsum’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 7).

Nkauj Mim See yog Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug tug ntxhais nraab kws dlua lwm leej lwm tug huv tuabsi.

‘Nkauj Mim See was the Ruler’s middle daughter who was more beautiful than anyone else’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 7).

The Xeev Txwjlaug in the story in *Lug Nruag Tsuv* is a brutal villain. At the end of the story he is, quite deservedly, torn limb from limb and devoured by a tiger. It is not clear in the story what the source is of his wealth and power or what sort of territory he has.

At the opposite extreme, the Xeev Txwjlaug in *Kwvhuam* is the ruler of heaven, who sends his daughter to earth to find a husband and institutes the rites of marriage.

The Xeev Txwjlaug in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and *Nuj Sis Loob* are earthly, and appear to have territories much smaller than all of heaven. Each is the father of the woman that the protagonist marries. In *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* the Xeev Txwjlaug is initially hostile to the protagonist because he is poor and places various obstacles in his way but in the end the protagonist wins out, gains the trust of his father-in-law, and himself becomes a Xeev Txwjlaug.

In the story “Taub Qaub” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 113-129), *Xeev* means ‘Village Headman’. Taub Qaub’s mother dies in childbirth and Taub Qaub’s father dies shortly thereafter. Taub Qaub’s father returns to him in the form of a tiger and takes care of him. When Taub Qaub is grown, his father says it is time to get Taub Qaub a wife. Because he is a tiger, Taub Qaub’s father can not go through proper marriage negotiations. He has to find a suitable woman and carry her off on his back. First, Taub Qaub’s father proposes the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village:

Yog koj xaav yuav nua, kuv moog koj Yawm Xeev Hauvzog tug ntxhais lug rua koj.

‘If you want to marry, I will bring you the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 117).

Unfortunately, when Taub Qaub’s father brings the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village, she is too terrified to eat, so Taub Qaub’s father kills and eats her and proposes bringing the daughter of the Headman of the Lower Village:

Taub Qaub, Yawm Xeev Hauvzog tug lug txug, nwg tsi kaam noj mov, hab nwg kuj tsi zoo nkauj npaum caag! Ca kuv moog koj Yawm Xeev Qaabzog tug ntxhais Ntxawm lug rua

koj.

‘Taub Qaub, when the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village got here, she wasn’t willing to eat, and also she wasn’t all that pretty! Let me bring you the Headman of the Lower Village’s daughter Ntxawm’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 118).

This time things work out and Taub Qaub and the daughter of the Headman of the Lower Village become husband and wife.

It is possible that *Xeev* is originally from Chinese *shěng* ‘province’ as in ‘provincial official’ but in the stories there is no indication of any connection with the Chinese hierarchy of officials.

- **laug**: *yawg laug* ‘father’s elder brother’ (*Village* p. 174):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) points out that in White Hmong the corresponding form, *yawg laus*, means ‘father’s sister’s husband’ (*not* ‘father’s elder brother’) and suggests that Lemoine may have been confused about the meaning of the Mong Leng word. However, on pages 177-179 of *Village*, Lemoine has a long discussion of differences between the kinship terms of Mong Leng and White Hmong, which makes me believe that we are dealing with a real difference between the two dialects, not some sort of confusion or misunderstanding on Lemoine’s part.

We have good descriptions of the kinship systems of several Hmong dialects. The need now is for someone to come up with a theory to explain the differences in pattern and meaning from one dialect to another.

- **laug**: *yawm laug* ‘mother’s older sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 174).

- **laug caam** ‘(classifier *lub*) chopping block’ (Xiongs).

- **lauj** ‘to destroy, to take to pieces, to disassemble’ (Xiongs):

lauj qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to destroy continuously?]

- **lauj** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) leafy cover of a corn ear’ (Xiongs).

- **lauj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov lauj [to make the sound lauj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **lauj**, emphatic final particle:

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!

‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Tes tuav cug, zum zeb, kes yag, cuab npua ntshu quas lawg tes nam puj dlaab txawm tuaj lauj.

‘Then they worked a treadmill, ground millstones, scratched a wok, called pigs loudly so the female spirit then came’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

“Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?” “Aww, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov”. Nyob nyob ib ntsiv. “Tuaj peb sis ntaus lau puj lauj!”

“Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, but I’m out a breath, let me rest a bit first.” They waited for a moment. “Now let’s fight!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21.)

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **Lauj**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) for which there is no corresponding *qhua* (Mong clan name) (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9), from Chinese *Luó*:

The term *qhua* can also mean clan in general, as in the following examples from a folktales in which the Chinese clan names Lauj and Yaaj and the Mong clan names Dluag and Mob are all referred to a *qhua*. Two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;

these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;

these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;

these got caught on the top of a reed (tau), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **lauj**: *nqai lauj* (classifier *tug*) ‘hook’ (Xiongs).

- **lauj kaub** ‘(classifier *lub*) pot (cooking)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *luóguō*.

- **lauj taw** ‘(classifier *lub*) heel; to kick with the heel’ (Xiongs). Also written *laujtaws*.

- **laujtaws** ‘heels’ (also written *lauj taw*):

plaubhau nim dlub dlub suaj quas nyo suaj quas zaws nraag laujtaws

‘with black hair falling and tumbling to her heels’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8)

- **lauj tshib** ‘(classifier *lub*) elbow, bend, angle’ (Xiongs).

- **lauj vaub**: *plaub hau ua lauj vaub* ‘badly knotted hair’ (Xiongs).

- **laum** ‘(classifier *tug*) cockroach’ (Xiongs).

- **laum** ‘to make a hole, to break through, to pierce, to bore, to run through, to tickle’ (Xiongs).

- **lauv** ‘(classifier *tug*) male (bird)’ (Xiongs).

- **lauv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov lauv [to make the sound lauv] (Xiongs p. 553):

Nwg maaj maam xuas tsaus ntuj nti lawv tug nyuas dlej kws ndlwg nrov quas lauv nqegtaug.

‘He carefully groped his way through the pitch darkness following a small stream which was flowing noisily downhill’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **lauv qab** ‘cock, rooster’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a man sweeps out the home of a female spirit. To reward him, the female spirit asks a group of spirit children to spit a glob of saliva on the road, and also to place a fern leaf there. When the man comes to the road, the saliva has been transformed into a pile of silver and the fern leaf has been transformed into a rooster:

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **law** (see also *lawv*): *sib txoj sib law* ‘to follow each other and help each other’ (Xiongs).

- **lawd** (see also *lawm*):

Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv

‘When they [White Hmong and Mong Leng] are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **lawg** ‘(classifier *lub*) hail, hailstone’ (Xiongs).

- **lawg** ‘to hit hard, to collide’ (Xiongs).

- **lawg**, sound of groaning, muttering, chattering, sizzling:

Tug nam zaaj raug mob lawm es lug pw ntsaaj quas lawg tom nwg chaav chaw pw xwb.

‘The dragon was suffering from his wound and was lying and groaning quas lawg in his bedroom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

Tug nam zaaj nim quaj nyooj quas lawg tas: “Ntxawd! Maaj maam maj! Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!”

‘The dragon growled: “Ntxawm! Gently! Why are you going at my wound with such force?”’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm hab Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ob tug pheej sis thaam ua luj quas lawg

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb kept chattering away’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

dlog quas lawg ‘sizzling onions’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

Tes tug nyaab nim tsaws pis hlo quas nqaj qab, qai nthee tsw qej tsw dlog quas lawg rua leejnam noj ib pluag tuab quas tsau.

‘Then the daughter-in-law quickly served some chicken and fragrant fried eggs, fragrant garlic, and sizzling onions to her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law ate her fill’ (Ceebpov p. 24).

Nwg muab muab ib taagkig tsi tau nqaj lug tso huv yag hlo le, cais cov nam ua zaub ua mov tshev ntsu quas lawg has tas:

‘He fetched and fetched all morning but did not get meat to send into the wok at all, so the women making vegetables and rice scolded and muttered, saying:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11).

Pw pw ib chim nyuas tub ntsaaj quas lawg.

‘After sleeping for a little while, the boy began to groan’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **lawg**: *hloob lawg* ‘perplexed’ (Xiongs).

- **lawg**: *lig lawg*, phonetic intensifier:

nrov lig lawg [to make the sound *lig lawg*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **lawg**: *ntshu quas lawg* ‘loudly’:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **lawg**: *taug lawg* ‘to proceed’:

Ob tug txawm taug lawg moog rua saab tim u.

‘The two of them then proceeded to the other side’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **lawj** ‘sexy’ (Xiongs).

- **lawj** ‘(classifier *lub*) balcony, platform’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *lóu* ‘storied building’.

- **lawm** ‘to go’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm** ‘already’ (Xiongs) (see also *lawd*):

cev xeeb tub tau ob hli lug lawm ‘being pregnant for two months already’ (Xiongs).

Cov tub saab qhwv tau puab lawm. ‘The thieves encircled them already’ (Xiongs).

nwg tsem rua saab xis lawm ‘s/he turned to the right already’ (Xiongs).

puab khawb tshaab, saab tod laum [typo for *lawm*]

‘they dig through the other side already’ (Xiongs).

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tshab nqaaj lawm
 ‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm ‘they already sorted out the quality meat’ (Xiongs).

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

Puab txauv chaw lawm ‘They already changed place’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
 ‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’
 (Xiongs).

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm
 ‘This cow has given birth to three calves already’ (Xiongs).

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm
 ‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm** ‘anymore’:

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm
 ‘S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore’, ‘S/he, perplexed, remains in silence’
 (Xiongs).

peb tsi xaav yuav hlo le lawm ‘we don’t want it anymore’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm** ‘away’:

khaub lig cua muab tshoob lawm ‘the tornado blows away’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm** ‘completely’:

kuv paub thoob lawm ‘I know it completely, I know it all’ (Xiongs).

Puab nyob txum chaw taag lawm ‘They completely resettle’ (Xiongs).

Luas yeej paub txug suav txuj kev limham ntawd taag lawm
 ‘She knew all about the cruelty of the Chinese’ (Kwvhuam p. 19).

- **lawm** ‘up to’:

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb ‘s/he can only do up to there’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm**, used at the end of a clause referring to something being in a certain state or condition:

cev rig tsho nuav xoob lawm ‘this suit is big’ (Xiongs).

raab hlau nuav xeb heev lawm ‘this hoe is very rusty’ (Xiongs).

cov txiv nuav xwm hwv lawm ‘these fruits are too small’ (Xiongs).

tshaws kuv qhov muag lawm ‘there is something in my eyes’ (Xiongs).

sib xyaw taag le lawm ‘all mixed up’ (Xiongs).

tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **lawm** ‘sign of completed action or past tense’ (Heimbach):

cov ntsev zeem lawm ‘the salt melts’ (Xiongs).

Koj muab kuv lub nplhaib zais lawm puas yog? ‘You hide my ring, isn’t it?’ (Xiongs.)

lub zaig tawg lawm ‘the balloon broke’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*

‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

xib xub moog zig lawm ‘the arrow deviates from the goal’ (Xiongs).

koj ntshai dlaab Ntxawg tau zoo neej ua lawm luas puaj?

‘Is it not so that you sense that Uncle Ntxawg has become prosperous?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

Zagnua, koj poob lug txug ntawm kuv lawm, cais kuv le maam coj koj moog tu, hab ca koj nyob nuav nrug kuv ua kwvluag!

‘Now, you’ve fallen and come to me, so I’ll take you to care for, and let you live here with me as a friend and companion!’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 8.)

Zagnua, Yob Nraug Ntsuag hab txiv ob tug ib txhij tuag le nuav lawm, cais ca kuv moog cuag Saub saib Saub has le caag, peb ua li ntawd xwb!”

‘Now, Yob the Orphan and father are both dead, so let me go to see Saub and see what Saub says and we will do it!’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 25.)

Naagmo, kuv moog cuag Saub taag lug lawm.

‘Yesterday I went to see Saub’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Kuv xaav tas Saub qha rua kuv le hov taag lawm, cais peb ua tau ua le ntawd.

‘I want us to do everything that Saub told me’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, p. 26).

Peb lam hastas yog Ntxwj Nyooog coj peb txuj sa lawm, muab kev tuag, kev phem hab kev tsi zoo lug rau peb.

‘We make the accusation that it is Ntxwj Nyooog who takes away our lives, who brings death, and evil, and all that is not good to us’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81).

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob nqeg taug lawm lau.

‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **lawm**: *muaj taag lawm* ‘it is finished’, used at the end of a story (see also *taag lawm*):

Tes sis xuas sis xuas rov lug tsev tes tsuas muaj taag lawm.

‘They groped their way back to the house, and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag*

Dlaab p. 29).

- **lawm**: *muaj txiv lawm* ‘married (said of a lady)’ (Xiongs):

Literally “has a husband already” as opposed to

muaj quas puj ‘married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs)

literally “has a wife”, without *lawm*.

- **lawm**: *taag lawm* ‘it is finished’, used at the end of a story (see also *muaj taag*):

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev tes taag lawm lauj.

‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **lawm**: *tub ... lug lawm* ‘already’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm**: *tub ... lug nuav lawm* ‘already’:

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm**: *them taag lawm* ‘to pay off’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm**: *tsi ... hlo le lawm* ‘not ... at all’:

Kuv ua txhua zag kuj leej kawgnkaus nas! Yog ua caag zagnua, kuv yuav ua tsi leej hlo le lawm?

‘Each time I make it, it is completely effective! Why, now, would I make it not effective at all?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **lawm**: *tsi ... lawm* ‘not ... anymore’, ‘not ... any more’:

tiv tsi taug lawm ‘cannot resist anymore’ (Xiongs).

yuav thev tsi taug lawm ‘cannot endure any more’ (Xiongs).

Txau lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntxiv lawm ‘enough! I don’t need any more’ (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it anymore’ (Xiongs).

- **lawm hav** ‘too’:

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, then the stake will lean over too”]

- **lawm los tsi tau?** ‘... yet or not?’:

Siv Yig Muas, av! koj txawmpeeb tog lawm los tsi tau?

‘Hey, Siv Yig Muas, are you ready to fight?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

- **laws** ‘to bark, to peel, to unpaste, to take off, to unglue’ (Xiongs):

xuas tau tug nyuas cev tes laws tau dlaim nyuas tawv cev

‘she touched a small body and peeled off a small piece of skin’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

- **lawv** ‘to try to catch up with, to want to go with’ (Xiongs):

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **lawv** ‘along, along with’ (Xiongs) (see also *law*):

ua lawv le xaaj ‘follow the order’ (Xiongs).

yoog lawv luas ‘adapt yourself to them’ (Xiongs).

lawv nraim (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to follow frequently, to follow exactly].

Cav muaj ib yawm Suav ntaus ntaus ntseg lawv dlej.

‘Why, there was a Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **lawv** ‘to drive away’ (Xiongs):

Hu quas lawg tes cov qhev lawv kag cov nyuj cov neeg lug txug. Tug dlha quas loo lug txug ncuat thooobpuab, quas plhaw pluj plag rua huv lawm

‘She called loud and long and the servants quickly herded the cattle and horses. Each ran right to the shoulder-bag and disappeared inside’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **lawv**: *ua lawv qaab* ‘to follow’:

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

- **lawv cev** ‘to fit well’ (Xiongs).

- **lawv le** ‘according to’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

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(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **lawv pis lag** ‘to follow close behind’:

Los Xaab nqeg hab Ceeb Pov nqeg tes ob tug lujtxwv dlha quas loo rua thoobpuab nkaag plawg rua huv pluj plag lawm hab. Ceeb Pov lawv pis lag nkaag plawg rua huv.
‘Los Xaab dismounted and Ceeb Pov dismounted and their mules ran into the shoulder-bag and disappeared as well. Then Ceeb Pov went in close behind them’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

- **lawv qaab** ‘following, to follow’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.
‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **le** ‘showing the possession’ (Xiongs):

kuv le ‘my, mine’ (Xiongs).

koj le ‘your, yours’ (Xiongs).

nwg le ‘his, her, hers, its’ (Xiongs).

peb le ‘our, ours’ (Xiongs).

puab le ‘their, theirs’ (Xiongs).

Nwg xeeb nwg le ‘It exists by itself’ (Xiongs).

luas lwm haiv tuabneeg le lug
‘the languages of other ethnic groups’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob le quas puj naav tab
‘Mong woman wear skirts’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Suav ... tsi pub Moob muaj ntaub ntawv. ... yuav tsum siv Suav le taag nrho.
‘The Chinese ... did not allow the Mong to have a writing system. ... they had to use that of the Chinese’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 1).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700
‘During the 1700’s’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

Ces peb kuj muag tsi taug kag, tsuas siv tseemfwv le xwb.
‘We cannot afford to buy [a TV]; we have to use the one provided by the government’
(*Seev Yom Too, Txooj Moob* No. 5 p. 23).

- **le** ‘typical intensifier, like that, such’ (Xiongs p. 554):

puab pheej ua le ‘they are still doing’ (Xiongs).

txawm ua le los ‘even though, though’ (Xiongs).

Nwg laam txais cua le xwb ‘s/he just guesses’ (Xiongs).

ua le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to do it like that].

xaav le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to want it to be like that].

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

‘So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Ab! ua le los ua le!

‘Okay, go ahead’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 29).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug.

‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- *le* ‘like’:

nwg tsi thoog le peb ‘s/he is not like us’ (Xiongs).

npaum le caag ‘how many, how much’ (Xiongs).

raws le ‘according to, following’ (Xiongs).

tawv le pob zeb ‘hard like a stone, rock’ (Xiongs).

twb nkaus le ntaag ‘to really touch it’ (Xiongs).

ua lawv le xaaj ‘follow the order’ (Xiongs).

tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb ‘not only that’ (Xiongs).

zoo le qub ‘the same as before, similar to the previous one, identically’ (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it any more’ (Xiongs).

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj

‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

Puab lug dlha le caag los muaj; Tej tug nqaa tau phom, nqaa tsi tau tshuaj; tej tug nqaa tau tshuaj, nqaa tsi tau phom.

‘They ran with whatever they had. Those who were able to bring guns were not able to

bring gunpowder. Those who were able to bring gunpowder were not able to bring guns' (Rog Vwm p. 3).

Tabsis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub, puab leeg raws le puab txuj kev xaav hab kwv yees xwb.

'But the truth is that there is no one who knows. Everyone just follows what they think and suppose' (Tswv Yim p. 80).

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

'Oh, those bellows. What's wrong with them?' (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 17).

- **le** 'at all':

Koj puas koj zuag nrug kojle? 'Do you bring a comb with you at all?' (Xiongs.)

kub [typo for *kuv*] *tsi tau pum dlua lug le* 'I have never seen it before' (Xiongs.)

Puab tsi tseev le 'They don't accept or agree at all' (Xiongs.)

Puas muaj zaub mov seem le? 'Is there any food left at all?' (Xiongs.)

tsi paub tuag le 'everlasting, to live forever' (Xiongs) ["not know how to die at all"]

ua yaam tsi ntshai le 'fearlessly, courageously' (Xiongs) ["not be afraid at all"]

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le

'It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all' (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 39).

Tabsis tsi pum tuaj tshwm ua le caag le. 'But they didn't see anyone whatsoever come out at all' (Rog Vwm p. 3).

- **le**, final particle:

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

'the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm' (Xiongs).

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

'her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced' (Xiongs).

Nwg tsi yib le 's/he doesn't allow' (Xiongs).

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm

'S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore', 'S/he, perplexed, remains in silence' (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

'They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people' (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau txais dldaim ntawv le 'They did not receive the letter yet' (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm 'leave as it is, don't touch it any more' (Xiongs).

sib xyaw taag le lawm 'all mixed up' (Xiongs).

tug ntshab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le ‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs).

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm
 ‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

ywj noj le ‘one can eat as much as possible’ (Xiongs).

ywj puab le ‘up to them, as they like’ (Xiongs).

Dlha tuab tug hawb zawg le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he ran alone, wheezing].

- **le:** *hlo le* ‘at all’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, used to complete the negation TSI for NOT AT ALL’ (Xiongs p. 554):

peb tsi xaav yuav hlo le lawm ‘we don’t want it anymore’ (Xiongs).

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*
 ‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
 ‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

Ua tsi taug hlo le. ‘Cannot do at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Tsi luj hlo le. ‘Not big at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le
 ‘It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!
 ‘the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **le:** *kag le* ‘at all’:

tsi muaj kag le ‘not at all’ (Xiongs).

tsixob txhawj kag le ‘don’t worry at all’ (Xiongs).

- **le:** *lawv le* ‘according to’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

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(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **le:** *xam le* ‘so as, in order to’ (Xiongs):

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj
 ‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

- **le:** *ua le ntawd* ‘thus, like that’:

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!
 ‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

Kuv xaav tas Saub qha rua kuv le hov taag lawm, cais peb ua tau ua le ntawd.
 ‘I want us to do everything that Saub told me’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, p. 26).

Huas cov kws tu tes yog ntsuj teb kws Siv Yig Muas kaav. Txha le tu rua lub cuaj hli hab xyaa hli. Txhua paab pawg tuabneeg txha le ua le ntawd.
 ‘But those who cut are of the region that Siv Yig Muas ruled. Therefore they cut in the ninth month and the seventh month. Every lineage therefore does it like that’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 33-34).

- **le:** *xws le* ‘as, like, for example, for instance’ (Xiongs):

tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘Mong people have two kinds of clothing: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug; xws le:

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(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **le caag:** *npaum le caag* ‘how many, how much’ (Xiongs):

luj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how big].

muaj nyaj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how much money is there].

xaav txawj neeb npaum le caag los yog nwg moov tsi txug hab luj loog tsi hum mas yeej tsi txawj ua neeb ib zag

‘however much he wants to know how to [perform] shamanic ceremonies, if his destiny/merit does not reach and the faint voice does not fit then he will never know how to perform shamanic ceremonies’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **le caag:** *ua le caag* ‘how, how you do it’ (Xiongs):

Ua rua Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm tsi paub ua le caag zoo

‘It made it that Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm did not know what would be good to do’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44).

- **le caag**: *ua le caag le* ‘at all, whatsoever’:

Tab sis tsi pum tuaj tshwm ua le caag le.

‘But they didn’t see anyone whatsoever come out at all’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **le caag**: *ua le caag* ‘why?’:

Yog ua le caag koj yuav tsi kaam has kuas koj tug kheej moog hab?

‘Why are you not willing to tell all of your [subjects] to go?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 33.)

Koj yuav moog qhov twg? Hab yog ua le caag koj yuav chim ua luaj?

‘Where are you going? And why are you so angry?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

- **le has** ‘as notified’:

Koj yuav tsum muab txheeb saib puab muaj le has.

‘You will have to verify to see if it is as notified’ (Xiongs).

- **le hov** ‘like that’:

Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab

‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44).

- **le kws**:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **le kod** ‘like that’:

Aub mes-es txawm yuav txawj has le kod!

‘Oh, so that’s what the goats learned to sing!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 36.)

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.

‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

- **le nuav** ‘like this’:

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”

“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **le ntaag** ‘really’, ‘at all’:

twb nkaus le ntaag ‘to really touch it’ (Xiongs).

Koj xuas tsi raug le ntaag lov? ‘Can’t you get it at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **le ntawd** ‘like that’:

Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

‘Oh, those bellows, why are they worthless like that?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **leb** ‘(classifier *tug*) number’ (Xiongs). From Lao *lèk*.

- **leg** ‘to take the responsibility for, to help’ (Xiongs).

- **lej** ‘long time ago’ (Xiongs).

- **lej-lwg rhwv-mim**, names evoked in marriage songs (*Tswv Yim* pp. 75-76):

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **les**: *Asmesleskas* ‘America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface and page 193).

- **les**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov les [to make the sound les] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **les**, final particle:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **lem** ‘to warp, to turn backward, to take another way, to deviate’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *lè* ‘to

force, to coerce’.

- **lev** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) carpet, rug, tapestry, bamboo plaited mat’ (Xiongs).

- **leeg** ‘to acknowledge, to receive, to grant, to accept, to agree, to consent’ (Xiongs).

- **leeg** ‘(classifier *txuj*) tendon, blood vessel’ (Xiongs):

kaab leeg ‘seam’ (Xiongs).

- **leeg** ‘(no classifier) people, person’ (Xiongs) (see also *leej*):

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

faib rua puab ib leeg ib taus [nplooj].

‘apportioned to each of them one leaf-ful’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 17).

wb moog nrug pw tes ib leeg ua ib teg tag.

‘we will take turns sleeping with her’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

puab leeg raws le puab txuj kev xaav hab kwv yees xwb.

‘Everyone just follows what they think and suppose’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 80).

wb ib leeg has ib zaaj lug txaj

‘we will each sing a Lug Txaj’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij

‘two or three people will die at the same time’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

- **leeg**, intensifier:

lub nyuas ceebpov ndlaug quas leeg

‘the gleaming gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

tuab nam naab xyaab quas leeg ntawm txuj kev.

‘a snake was stretched out in the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **Leeg**: *Moob Leeg* ‘Mong Leng’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG* *hab HMOOB DAWB* –

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– *MONG LENG* and *WHITE HMONG* –

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

Tsi taag le ntawd, Moob muaj ob hom lug: lug Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg. Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

‘Moreover, there are two dialects of Mong: White Hmong and Mong Leng. When they are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different, but the kernel of the language and the letters of the alphabet are the same’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hlub, hab nyob ua npoj ua luag lug lawm ntev.

‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love, and lived as friends and companions for a long time’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

Kuv yog Moob Leeg kuas kuv has tau lug Hmoob Dawb.

‘I am Mong Leng but I can speak White Hmong’ (Seev Yom Too, *Txooj Moob* No. 5 page 23).

- **leeg**: *tsaug leeg* ‘weak, tired’ (Xiongs).

- **leej** ‘secret, right, effective’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *líng*:

Kuv ua txhua zag kuj leej kawgnkaus nas! Yog ua caag zagnua, kuv yuav ua tsi leej hlo le lawm?

‘Each time I make it, it is completely effective! Why, now, would I make it not effective at all?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **leej** ‘(no classifier) person, people’ (Xiongs) (see also *leeg*):

nam ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) mother’ (Xiongs).

nug ‘(classifier *tug* or *leej*) brother’ (Xiongs).

puj ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) grandmother’ (Xiongs).

tub ‘(classifier *tug* or *leej*) ‘son’ (Xiongs).

txiv ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) father, daddy, husband’ (Xiongs).

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **leej** ‘(no classifier) line’ (Xiongs).

- **leej**: *txhua leej* ‘everybody, everyone’ (Xiongs).

- **Leej muam!** ‘Miss!’:

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **Leejtob**, part of the name of a dragon in a story:

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.

‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog [?] to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm

Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog [?!] I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **leej twg** ‘who (singular)’ (Xiongs):

leej twg los tau ‘anybody’ (Xiongs).

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs, entry for *tuag*).

Tab sis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub

‘But the truth is that there is no one who knows’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 80).

Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **leejtxiv** ‘the father’:

In a folktale, a father and son spend the night in the home of ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the father to sleep on and says that the son can sleep in the bed with the spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night, the son begins to groan:

Leejtxiv taws teeb hlo sawv tseeg moog saib na ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab tes nyua [typo for *nyuas*?] *tub tuag lawm lauj.*

‘The father lit a lamp and got up to look and, why, the two ntxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the son’s chest and the son was dead.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **leem** ‘to put a solid coating on something’:

yog koj yuav tua kuas tuag nua cais koj muab tshauv lug leem hab puab koj raab taus
‘If you want to kill him, you must mould a coating of ashes on your axe’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18).

Cais Txheeb Tshoj Theeb txhaj dlha lug muab nwg raab taus moog leem tshauv pig kag
‘Then Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ran to fetch his axe and coated it with ashes’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

- **leev** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of small fish’ (Xiongs).

- **li**, linker syllable with intensifiers (see also *lis*):

Lug naag tshauv cuaj li nree txhaa caaj qheb.

‘In the light rain it stiffens and becomes as rigid as the core of the branches of a chestnut-tree’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **lig** ‘late, tardy’ (Xiongs).

- **lig** ‘to take the responsibility for, to do’ (Xiongs).

- **lig** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 556):

dlaaj lig or dlaaj quas lig ‘light yellow’ (Xiongs p. 556).

- **lig** ‘to stick something somewhere’:

lig hlaav suavtawg ib kem dlhau ib kem

‘He stuck a burning brand in crevice after crevice’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **lig**: *khaub lig cua* ‘tornado’:

khaub lig cua muab tshoob lawm ‘the tornado blows away’ (Xiongs).

- **Lig**: *Muam Nkauj Lig*, ancient homeland of the Mong, identified by some with Mongolia (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **lig lawg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov lig lawg [to make the sound lig lawg] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **lig loog**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov lig loog [to make the sound lig loog] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **lij** ‘to push in forcibly, to enlarge a hole, to try to get in’ (Xiongs).

- **lim** ‘to distill, to filter’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *lǚ*.

- **lim**: *Kauslim* ‘Korean’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8). From Lao *Kawlǐ*.

- **lim**:

laajlim ‘magic’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 34, 49). From Chinese *nán lì* ‘difficult power’.

tim lim ‘effective, goodworking’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *duì lì* ‘having to do with power’.

- **limham** ‘cruel, fierce’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *lìhài*:

Luas yeej paub txug suav txuj kev limham ntawd taag lawm, hab luas muaj tej cuab yeej zoo zoo kws yuav coj lug tua tau suav tej kev phem ntawd.

‘She knew all about the cruelty of the Chinese, and she had good tools to put an end to their wickedness’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **lis**, linker syllable with intensifiers and rhythmic syllable in poetry (see also *li*):

Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoog, tsaus tau quas tsi cev lug txoog? / Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?

‘When the sky was dark, who was able to come? / When the earth was plunged in darkness, who was capable of coming?’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws teb lis nqhawv qaab cim zeb tuaj

‘Nplooj Lwg the Toad replied at once from under the stone’ (*Initiation* p. 123).

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,
 ‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,
Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.
 Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle
 your way’ (*Initiation* pp. 129).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus
 ‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.
 All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle
 your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

plaub qab nrug yaa lis tshaws ‘chicken feathers are flying about all over’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps,
 were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots
 of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain
 whether communication has been established between humans and spirits:

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,

Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.

‘Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,

To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path’ (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **lis**, Chinese *lǐ* ‘ceremony, rite; courtesy, etiquette, manners’:

kev lis kev cai ‘customs, traditions’ (*Tswv Yim*, table of contents and preface).

- **Lis**, the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Cai** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p.9). From Chinese *Lǐ*.

- **Liees**: *teb chaws Fis Liees* ‘the country of Finland’, *tuab neeg Fis Liees* ‘a Finn’ (Xiongs).

- **lo**, intensifier:

Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoog, tsaus tau quas tsi cev lug txoog? / Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?

‘When the sky was dark, who was able to come? / When the earth was plunged in
 darkness, who was capable of coming?’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

- **Lob Lw**, name of a young man who is one of the main characters in the second story in *Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug* ‘Tales of Marriage Customs’ (*Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32). The story is about the custom of paying a brideprice (*them tshoob them kug*). Lob Lw and his wife are not getting along. Finally, they learn that it is because Lob Lw did not pay a brideprice. When the brideprice is paid, the marriage goes well.

- **loj** ‘to imprison, to put in jail’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *láo* ‘prison, jail’:

tsev loj faaj ‘(classifier *lub*) jail, prison’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *láo fáng* ‘jail house’.

- **loj** ‘to roll up, to curl up, to tuck up’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *liáo*.

- **loj**:

ib lub nam eeb kub ndlaug loj quas kho
‘a bright golden saddle’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **log** ‘to bury, to put underground’ (Xiongs).

- **lom** ‘to poison; pertaining to poison, poisonous’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *nào*.

- **lom** ‘feed for animals, fodder’, from Chinese *liào*:

Wb ua kwvnpawg ib lom, zagnua yog zag kws wb yuav tau sis paab quas tag.
‘We are cousins of the same fodder and now is the time when we will be able to help one another truly’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 13).

- **lom zem** ‘fun’ (Xiongs):

muaj kev lom zem ‘to have fun’ (Xiongs).

Lug Nruag Lom Zem ‘Fun Stories’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem*, title).

From Chinese 热闹 *rènao* ‘lively, bustling with noise noise and excitement’, literally “hot and noisy”, but with the order of the elements reversed: *nàorè* “noisy and hot” > *lom zem*. The order had probably already been reversed in the Chinese dialect from which Mong borrowed the word.

- **los** ‘then’:

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*
‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, then the stake will lean over too”]

leej twg los tau ‘anybody’ (Xiongs) [“whoever, then it can be”]

“*Awb! kuv faib lawm nawb?*” “*Faib los faib mas.*”

“So! Shall I divide it?” “As for dividing it, then divide it.” (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 53).

Ab! ua le los ua le!

‘Okay! As for doing that, then do that!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 29).

Awj! ua le los tau os!

‘Yes! As for doing that, then it is possible!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69.)

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau.

‘As for me, I am strong and as for flying from east to west and from north to south, then it is possible’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **los** ‘and’, linking a reduplicated verb:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag txhaj quaj los quaj, qw los qw

‘Yob the Orphan yelled and yelled, screamed and screamed’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Ua rua nwg nim quaj los quaj qw los qw ib mos

‘They kept him yelling and yelling, screaming and screaming all night’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

- **los** ‘or’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– *MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG* –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **los**: *dlaab tsi los tau* ‘anything’ (Xiongs).

- **los**: *koj los sav!* ‘hello!’:

Siv Yig Muas tes moog saablaaj ib tug ntoo rua ib tug ntoo. Saib ib lub qaab zeb rua ib lub qaab zeb. Moog moog tes pum nam dlaav. Dlaav nyob sau ceg ntoo qhuav. Dlaav has tas; “Siv Yig Muas, koj los sav! Koj tuaj dlaabtsi?”

Siv Yig Muas then went to consult with one tree after another. He looked at one cliff after another. He walked and walked and then he saw the eagle. Eagle was sitting on a dry tree branch. Eagle said: “Siv Yig Muas, hello! What brings you here?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 22.)

- **los**: *koj tuaj lov?* or *koj tuaj los* (speaking to one person) or *mej tuaj lov?* or *mej tuaj los* (speaking to more than one person), “Have you come?”, customary expression in greeting someone who arrives at one’s house:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35, speaking to a man and his son)

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

‘Ho ho! Welcome!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, speaking to three people.)

- **los**: *txawm ua le los* ‘even though, though’ (Xiongs).

- **los**: *yim los* ‘wherever ... then’:

Ob nam quaspuj moog xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv, xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv.

‘Wherever the two wives looked then there was a married couple, wherever they looked then there was a married couple’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

- **los loov** ‘all together’ (Xiongs).

- **Los Lwm**, name for the second-born son, from Chinese *Lǎo Èr*. One of the main characters in *Ceebpov*:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Cav Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug txawm muab lub nyuas ceebpov nyag tuag kab lawm lauj. Los Xaab pw pw Los Xaab tsim lug na cav nyuas ceebpov dlu dlav

‘At once, Los Tuam and Los Lwm stole the gold amulet. Los Xaab was sleeping, and when he awoke, there was no trace of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 25-26).

Nam tsuag tho qaab mejloos; “Kawb! kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam nim tas: “Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj

‘The rat gnawed a hole in the bottom of the storage basket: “Kawb! Kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam said, “Los Lwm! Hey! There’s a ‘Kawj! Kawj! Kawj!’ sound coming from the bedroom.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Ua le le ntawd tes Los Lwm nim dlha quas loo moog tas; “Los Tuam av! mi-aub sas! yog nam miv mi-aub os”.

‘So Los Lwm ran back and said, “Oh, Los Tuam, it’s just a pussycat, a little bitty pussycat!”’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **los mas**, final particle:

yog los mas ‘it is right, it is OK, it is correct’ (*Xiongs*).

Koj tog ca nwg tuaj txug ncua tsaiv, koj ntaag ua nwg tuag kag tes koj yeej los mas.

‘Wait for her to arrive, and then kill her with a blow of your sword and you will have won!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

- **los puj?**, used at the end of a sentence to form a yes-no question (see also *lau puj*):

“Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?” “Awv, tuaj los tuaj lau!”

“Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, come!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **Los Muas**: *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas*, name of a male celestial being who is one of the major characters in the story “Lying on the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth” (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 35-52).

Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas appears initially as someone whom three woman call upon to help them become pregnant. Later in the story, the son of one of the women marries *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas*’s daughter, and *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas* comes to the young man’s aid when he is in peril. Because *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas* helps the three woman become pregnant, he is perhaps to be identified with *Kabyeeb* (Chinese *Guānyīn*), the Goddess of Mercy, one of whose principal functions in Hmong belief is to help woman become pregnant. This may be a plausible identification despite the fact that *Kabyeeb* is female and *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas* is male. Bertais (1978:507) translates *Txoov Kab Yeeb* (without *Los Muas*) as ‘name of a spirit’ and says that *Txoov Kab Yeeb* brings children to women.

- **los paav** ‘Chinese merchant’, from Chinese *lǎobǎn*:

Lug lug txug ib lub nam nraag taj, lug ntsib ib tug nam Suav Tuam Los Paav lawv ib paab nam lujtxwv ndlaag quas naj, thauj nyaj thauj kub lug.

‘He travelled down to a plain, and met a Big Chinese Merchant who was driving a huge herd of mules transporting silver and gold’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Ab yawd! yog meb pum Suav Los Paav ua luam dlua kev meb qhovmuag txaij meb laam has le.

‘Oh, my! When the two of you saw the Chinese merchant going by on business, you must have had a hallucination. You’re pulling my leg’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **los sis** ‘though, even though’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *lǎoshì* ‘always, very’, with change of meaning in Mong Leng.

- **los tau** ‘as for ... then it is possible’:

leej twg los tau ‘anybody’ (Xiongs) [“whoever, then it can be”]

Awj! ua le los tau os!

‘Yes! As for doing that, then it is possible!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69.)

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau.

‘As for me, I am strong and as for flying from east to west and from north to south, then it is possible’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **los tuam** ‘the eldest son’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *lǎo dà*. *Los Tuam*, the eldest of three brothers, is one of the main characters in *Ceebpov*:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Cav Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug txawm muab lub nyuas ceebpov nyag tuag kab lawm lauj. Los Xaab pw pw Los Xaab tsim lug na cav nyuas ceebpov dlu dlav

‘At once, Los Tuam and Los Lwm stole the gold amulet. Los Xaab was sleeping, and when he awoke, there was no trace of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 25-26).

Nam tsuag tho qaab mejloos; “Kawb! kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam nim tas: “Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj

‘The rat gnawed a hole in the bottom of the storage basket: “Kawb! Kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam said, “Los Lwm! Hey! There’s a ‘Kawj! Kawj! Kawj!’ sound coming from the bedroom.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Ua le le ntawd tes Los Lwm nim dlha quas loo moog tas; “Los Tuam av! mi-aub sas! yog nam miv mi-aub os”.

‘So Los Lwm ran back and said, “Oh, Los Tuam, it’s just a pussycat, a little bitty pussycat!”’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **Los Tsuas** ‘Laos’, from Chinese *Lǎozhuā*:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws.
 ‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **Los Xaab**, name for the third-born son, from Chinese *Lǎo Sān*. Name of the protagonist of *Ceebpov*:

Tshev quas tawg le hov, tshev tshev Los Xaab quaj quaj kuamuag poob dlawb quas vog nrau zoov
 ‘He berated him in this fashion until the tears rained from Los Xaab’s eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

Ob tug nim xauj xauj tes Los Xaab quaspuj ib nyuas tig saib; Ci nplaag!
 ‘They kept peeking at them and then Los Xaab’s wife turned to look and she was gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

Cav Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug txawm muab lub nyuas ceebpov nyag tuag kab lawm lauj. Los Xaab pw pw Los Xaab tsim lug na cav nyuas ceebpov dlu dlaw
 ‘At once, Los Tuam and Los Lwm stole the gold amulet. Los Xaab was sleeping, and when he awoke, there was no trace of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 25-26).

- **los yej**, Chinese *Lǎo Yé* ‘Old Gentleman’, title used for the spirit of the ritual xwmkaab paper pasted to the wall of the main room of a house opposite the main door:

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus
 ‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.
 All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130; the household spirits are doing this to try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house).

According the one account, the word *xwmkaab* is derived from *Vaajkaab*, the name of an ancient Mong king, whom the Chinese, at first, could not defeat in battle, and whom, therefore, they called *Tuam Yej* (*Dà Yé*) ‘Great Man’, a title which the Mong wished to preserve:

Yog le nuav tes puab yuav hu ua Txiv Tuam Yej los yuav tau Suav lu xwb, Moob lu poob lawm. Yog puab hu Vaajkaav los Suav lu Txiv Tuam Yej yuav poob lawm. Tes puab txha le muab txav lug kuas tuablu. Yog le, puab txhua tug kws txiv xwmkaab txha le has tas, “Txiv Xwmkaab Los Yej.”

If, then, they were to call him Father *Dà Yé* [Great Man], using Chinese words only, the Mong words would be lost. If they called him *Vaajkaav*, the Chinese words Father *Dà Yé* would be lost. Therefore they abbreviated and made one word. Thus, each xwmkaab specialist says, “*Xwmkaab Lǎo Yé*” [Old Gentleman] (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

- **losyog** ‘or’:

tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘Mong people have two kinds of clothing: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) and White Hmong clothing’ (Tswv Yim p. 10).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (Tswv Yim p. 141).

- **lov** ‘used to end a question’ (Xiongs):

Koj tseem yuav yig hab lov? ‘Will you try to refuse?’ (Xiongs).

Koj xuas tsi raug le ntaag lov? ‘Can’t you get it at all?’ (Xiongs.)

Aub! ua le lov. ‘Oh! Is that what happened?’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 19.)

- **lov**: *koj tuaj lov?* or *koj tuaj los* (speaking to one person) or *mej tuaj lov?* or *mej tuaj los* (speaking to more than one person), ‘Have you come?’, customary expression in greeting someone who arrives at one’s house:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 35, speaking to a man and his son)

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

‘Ho ho! Welcome!’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 36, speaking to three people.)

- **loo**, intensifier:

Muam Paajqawm dlha loo moog saib na cav yog nwg raab nam ncaas.

‘Muam Paajqawm ran to look, and, why, it was her jew’s harp’ (Lug Nruag Lom Zem p. 16).

Cais Ntxawm txhaj dlha loo moog nqaa hlo ib lub nam tog lug xab nam zaaj lub cejdlaab.

‘Then Ntxawm ran and fetched a stool and put it under the dragon’s neck’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 19).

- **loo**: *ntev loo* ‘a pretty long time’ (Xiongs).

- **loo**: *qoob loo* ‘crops’ (Xiongs).

- **loob**, sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.
there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **loog** ‘numb, insensitive, asleep, unconscious’ (Xiongs).

- **loog** or **vaab loog**, a very large woven bamboo or rattan tray with reinforcements at the bottom, used primarily for drying foodstuffs in the sun (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Nam puj Suav txawm khaws nkaus lub nam loog lug khwb nkaus tug kwv ntxawg rua tim kaum tsev

‘The Chinese woman then grabbed a loog to cover the younger brother in the corner of the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8).

Leej muam moog cem hlo lub nam loog na, cav yog nwg tug nug yau tuaj txug hov

‘The sister went to lift the loog and, why, it was her little brother, who had come there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8).

Michael Johnson sent me this photograph of a vaab loog:



- **loog**, intensifier:

Nwg dlha dlha moog aub hlo lub nam taubhau zaaj, hab muab raab taus ntsa kag, cais kwv loog moog. 'He ran along carrying on his back the dragon-head. He stuck his axe into it so that he could carry it on his shoulder' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 31; the illustration on page 32 shows that he carries the axe handle on his shoulder, and the dragon's head is attached to the blade of the axe).

- **loog**: *luj loog* 'faint voice':

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

'Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to

overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him' (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **loog**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov lig loog [to make the sound lig loog] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **looj** 'to put on, to cover' (Xiongs).

- **looj**: *zaub looj pwm* 'radish' (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *luóbo*. I do not know why the first syllable of *looj pwm* has a nasal vowel in Mong. Michael Johnson points out that there is the same random rime variation in the first syllable of 'elbow': *luj tshib* ~ *lauj tshib* ~ *looj tshib*.

- **Looj Ceeb** 'Long Cheng [a town in northern Laos], from Lao *Lòong Cèeng*' (*Tswv Yim* p. 4):

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
'The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975' (Xiongs).

- **loos** '(classifier *rooj*) trap, pitfall for bird' (Xiongs).

- **loos** 'to get completely well' (Xiongs).

- **loos** 'completely joined together' (Xiongs).

- **loos** 'to give another shot to kill' (Xiongs).

- **loos**: *mejloos* 'storage basket':

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.
'Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.
'In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho qaab mejloos; "Kawb! kawb! Kawb!" Los Tuam nim tas: "Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj
'The rat gnawed a hole in the bottom of the storage basket: "Kawb! Kawb! Kawb!" Los Tuam said, "Los Lwm! Hey! There's a 'Kawj! Kawj! Kawj!' sound coming from the bedroom.' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Mejloos ... are the finest quality baskets made from rattan not bamboo. They have lids. In Thailand the older Hmong had these in their bedrooms. Some might have already been antiques which were brought from Laos even. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **loov**: *los loov* 'all together' (Xiongs).

- **lu** 'to stick, to paste, to glue, to adhere, to join, to become a member of' (Xiongs):

lu nreeg (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to stick firmly].

- **lu** ‘(no classifier) word’ (Xiongs) (see also *lus*):

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **lu** ‘mouth’ (see also *lus*):

Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj

‘Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **lu**: *ntawv lu* ‘contract’:

Luas tub sau ntawv lu ntawm lub eeb neeg tuabsi tas

‘The contract for the saddle has already been signed’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **lu**: *yaugncauj yauglu* ‘to provide for one’s needs’:

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!

‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

The expression *yaugncauj yauglu* appears to mean literally ‘to rinse the mouth and the orifice’, but Michael Johnson (personal communication) points out that in some Hmong dialects the corresponding expression is *yug ncauj yug lu* ‘to feed the mouth and the orifice’, which makes more sense semantically. It is possible, therefore, that *yaug* here is not ‘to rinse’ but rather a variant form of *yug* ‘to feed’.

- **lu**: *zaaj tsu lu* “dragon and tiger mouths”, situation of great peril:

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two *Mojtxiv* *kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the *Mojtxiv* *kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* protest:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuij ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **lu aav** ‘covered with dirt’:

Tsi xob zwb koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav

‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

Tes ob tug nim tsiv ob tug nam lu aav nywb quas nyo rovqaab lug.

‘They ran away and returned home all covered with dirt’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

tug nyaab ib nyuas xauj tes leejtxiv tau ib plhaw, leejtxiv qaug tuab nam rawg qaab sawv tseeg ua nam taubqaab lu aav quas nyo

‘When he got a glimpse of the daughter-in-law, he felt his heart jump and fell down on his behind and stood up covered with dirt from head to toe’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **lu lug** ‘word, conversation’ (Xiongs).

- **lub** ‘article used in front of a noun’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas nyam lub tsho lab? ‘Do you like the red shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

lub caij qub ‘the same time’ (Xiongs).

lub txiv dluaj ‘peach’ (Xiongs) [fruit].

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*
‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

Cais Ntxawm txhaj dlha loo moog nqaa hlo ib lub nam tog lug xab nam zaaj lub cejdlaab.

‘Then Ntxawm ran and fetched a stool and put it under the dragon’s neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

tsaa taubhau kuv muab lub tog nuav rau koj ncoo os!
‘lift your head and I will give you this stool as a pillow’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Teeb* p. 19).

puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca
‘they bring to mind Vaajkaav’s mouth and two eyes’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.
‘A year has twelve animals represent the twelve months’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Ib tug nyuas tub, tug nyuas ntxhai, kuas ob tug nam dlo cwj quas cuas le ob lub toob.
‘A little boy and a little girl, but they were smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

Lub may serve to nominalize a verb phrase:

tsom av ‘to look at oneself in the mirror’ (Xiongs).

lub tsom av ‘the mirror’ (Xiongs).

- **lub** ‘uncomfortable’ (Xiongs).

- **lug** (classifier *lub*) ‘wheel’ (Xiongs).

- **lug** (classifier *lu*) ‘word, conversation’ (Xiongs).

- **lug** ‘language’:

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? ‘Do they speak English?’ (Xiongs.)

luas lwm haiv tuabneeg le lug
‘the languages of other ethnic groups’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Lug Moob ‘The Mong Language’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 1, chapter title).

Tsi taag le ntawd, Moob muaj ob hom lug: lug Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg. Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

‘Moreover, there are two dialects of Mong: White Hmong and Mong Leng. When they are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different, but the kernel of the language and the letters of the alphabet are the same’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **lug** ‘to come’ (Xiongs):

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **lug**, following another verb:

aub ... lug tsev ‘carry home’:

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev

‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

coj ... lug ‘brought’:

Txiv meb moog koj tau txiv meb quaspuij ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

has ... lug ‘say, tell’:

has koj zaaj lug tuaj ‘give your idea or your point of view’ (Xiongs).

hai ... lug ‘pulled out’:

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for *taub*] *hai lug.*

‘The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

tau ... lug ‘for (such and such a period of time)’:

cev xeeb tub tau ob hli lug lawm

‘being pregnant for two months already’ (Xiongs).

tua ... lug ‘killed’:

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

tsi taug lug ‘cannot’:

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm

‘S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore’, ‘S/he, perplexed, remains in silence’ (Xiongs).

xaw lug ‘leaks (into)’:

Naag xaw lug huv tsev

‘The rain (water) leaks into the house’ (Xiongs).

xeev xwm lug ‘was aware’, *nyob hov lug* ‘was there’:

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm

‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

xyaab ... lug ‘extend (toward)’:

xyaab koj txhais npaab xis lug ‘extend your right arm to me’ (Xiongs).

- **lug**, connecting two verb phrases:

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag koj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14; the ‘shirt of silk and satin’ is the placenta, which is buried in the floor of the house when a person is born).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **lug** or **quas lug** ‘typical intensifier, all’ (Xiongs p. 554):

dlu lug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [all bare].

qheb quas lug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [all opened].

na cav ca le pum kem qhov ci kaa quas lug rua tom u lawm.

‘he suddenly saw from afar something gleaming in the distance’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua ntuj kaaj quas lug lawm cais kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tuaj yuav txug tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky is bright and so my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is really coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 31-33).

Nub taagkig tomqaab, ntuj kaaj quas lug

‘The following morning, the sky was perfectly clear’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb nyaag nyaag lug txug qhov kaaj quas lug, nwg saib mas yog ib lub nam tsev luj heev.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb crept up to the bright place and saw that it was a very large house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **lug** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 557):

txaamxem lug ‘purple’ (Xiongs p. 557).

xav lug or *xav quas lug* (Xiongs p. 557, not translated) [purple or blue].

- **lug**: *cog lug* ‘to promise, to swear, to agree; to promise, to agree upon’ (Xiongs):

kev cog lug ‘a promise, an agreement’ (Xiongs).

- **lug**: *cov lug* ‘one’s words, a speech’:

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “Peb yuav tsum sib hlub”

s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

- **lug**: *chaw txuas lug* ‘place of communication’, the bamboo divinatory rods used used to establish communication between humans and spirits:

Txib leej tub tij khaiv leej tub kwv ntsuag zog cej yaag peb nti, ntsuag zog sau yaag plaub nti coj lug ua neej dlaab lub chaw txuas lug.

‘We sent your older son and told your younger son to measure three finger-lengths below the joint, and four finger-lengths above the joint, and bring it to serve as the place of communication between humans and spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11).

- **lug**: *has lug thob quav* ‘to speak with repetition (said of someone having speech problems)’ (Xiongs).

- **lug**: *has lug yaa* ‘to lie, to tell something that is not true’ (Xiongs).

- **lug**: *ku lug* ‘main idea, important idea’ (Xiongs).

- **lug**: *nkaag lug huv* ‘to enter, to go into’:

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*

‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs) [“they don’t go into our village”].

- **lug**: *pav lug* ‘illustration, figurative language’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *paaj lug* ‘proverb, flowery speech’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *phau ntawv txhais lug* ‘dictionary’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *phom lug thoob* ‘rifle’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *phoo txhais lug* ‘dictionary’:

Phoo Txhais Lug Aakiv – Moob – Aakiv

‘English – Mong – English Dictionary’ (Xiongs, title).

- **lug:** *sib txuas lug* ‘to converse, to talk with, to exchange words’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *to kev lug ua* ‘legally right, legitimate lawfully’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *tub ... lug lawm* ‘already’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *tub ... lug nuav lawm* ‘already’:

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *txu lug kom sib txig* ‘to level off’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *txhais lug* ‘interpret, translate’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *xyaa lug* ‘to wrongly add words to the original idea’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *yaav taag lug* ‘in the past’ (Xiongs).

- **lug:** *zaaj lug* ‘sentence’:

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “*Peb yuav tsum sib hlub*”

s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

xaus koj zaaj lug ‘end your sentence’ (Xiongs).

- **lug dlaag** ‘lies, lying’ (Xiongs).

- **lug dlev** ‘cursing, filthy language’ (Xiongs).

- **lug naag** ‘to rain’:

Lug naag tshawv cuaj li nree txhaa caaj qheb.

‘In the light rain it stiffens and becomes as rigid as the core of the branches of a chestnut-tree’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **lug nruag** ‘(classifier *zaaj*) story’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv*, *Lug Nruag Dlaab*, *Lug Nruag Txa*, and *Lug Nruag Lom Zem*, titles; *Cim Xeeb* p. 21, chapter title) (also written *lug ntsuag*):

Lug nruag ntuj tsim teb raug Moob

‘The Mong story of the sky being formed and the earth coming into being’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 22).

Lug nruag Moob Sib Ntxhais Ntxawm

‘The story of Mong Sib Ntxhais Ntxawm’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 24).

Zaaj lug nruag Nkauj Ntsuab Nraug Naab

‘The story of Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 30).

Cais tug nam npuateb (Los Tuam) txawm cuab has nwg zaaj lug nruag

‘Then the wild pig (First-Born Son) began to tell his story’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 132).

- **lug ntsuag** ‘story, tale’ (Xiongs). Also written *lug nruag*.

- **lug ntshaav** ‘to bleed’ (Xiongs):

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.

‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

- **lug quas luag**:

Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab nwg tug dlev taug kev lug txug ntawd ib ntog kev, ua cav txawm muaj ib twv fuab dlawb yaa lug quas luag.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum and her dog followed the road to that place partway along the road, and, why, there was a white cloud flying lug quas luag’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

- **lug taum** ‘old folk songs, ballads’ (Xiongs).

- **lug teb**: *lu lug teb* ‘the answer’ (Xiongs).

- **lug tuaj quas tsug** ‘joke, funny words’ (Xiongs).

- **lug thawj** ‘to come close to, to incarnate’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tóu (tāi)* ‘to be reincarnated’.

- **lug txaj** ‘Mong traditional song’ (Xiongs).

Types of Lug Txaj include:

• **lug txaj hluas nkauj yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws** ‘song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 15-17).

• **lug txaj moov tsis saws, hluas nkauj txha moog yuav quas yawg** ‘song about how, not being acclimatized to her fate, a young woman married a husband’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 17-18).

• **lug txaj ntsuag** ‘song about being orphaned’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 12-13).

• **lug txaj puj cav nyaab** ‘song of a woman ill-treating a daughter-in-law’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 13-15).

• **lug txaj pleeg** ‘love song’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 18, 19).

• **lug txaj sib tau** ‘song about getting to be together with one another’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 34).

• **lug txaj sib tog kawm txuj** ‘song about waiting for one another while one has gone away to go to school’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 35).

• **lug txaj sib ua neej** ‘song about getting married and starting a family’ (*Tswv Yim* pp.

34-37).

- **lug txaj tuag** ‘song about death’, ‘song sung by an unmarried person when his or her loved one dies, song sung when a loved one dies (either man or woman may sing it, but not married people)’ (Lyman p. 101).

- **lug-txaj tsiv-teb tsaws chaw** ‘song about fleeing from your homeland’ (*Grandmother’s Path* pp. 106-107).

- **lug txaj ua noj** ‘song about preparing food’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 20).

- **Moob le lug txaj sib ncaim** ‘Mong song of separation’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 19).

Lug Txaj consist of couplets based on rhyme and parallelism. The paired words within a strophe rhyme and the paired words across strophes are parallel, for example,

Muam Nkauj Ntsum tau Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum nrug Lob Lw luaj teb ntuv ntoo, cog qoob cog loo, ua vaaj dlog vaaj tsawb. Lob Lw tua lauv nraaj dlawb, Lob Lw tsi pub Muam Nkauj Ntsum noj, Muam Nkauj Ntsum rhu nplej txawb.

Muam Nkauj Ntsum tau Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum nrug Loob Lw luaj teb ntuv ntoo, cog qoob cog loo, ua vaaj tsawb vaaj dlog. Lob Lw tua lauv nraaj rog, Lob Lw tsi pub Muam Nkauj Ntsum noj, Muam Nkauj Ntsum rhu nplej cog.

When Muam Nkauj Ntsum got Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Lob Lw cleared fields and cut down trees, planted grains and planted crops, made gardens of onions and of bananas [*tsawb*]. Lob Lw killed a cock pheasant that was white [*dlawb*], but Lob Lw did not give any to Muam Nkauj Ntsum to eat. Muam Nkauj Ntsum pulled out the rice and threw it away [*txawb*].

When Muam Nkauj Ntsum got Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Lob Lw cleared fields and cut down trees, planted grains and planted crops, made gardens of bananas and of onions [*dlog*]. Lob Lw killed a cock pheasant that was fat [*rog*], but Lob Lw did not give any to Muam Nkauj Ntsum to eat, and Muam Nkauj Ntsum pulled out the rice and planted it [*cog*]. (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

Example of the expression *lug txaj* used in sentences:

has koj zaaj lug txaj ‘sing your song’ (Xiongs).

Lob Lw, koj tub xaa kuv lug txug nuav, hab tub yuav txug kuv nam kuv txiv tsev cais wb ib leeg has ib zaaj lug txaj ais wb le mam ncaim moog.

‘Lob Lw, you’ve escorted me this far and we are about to arrive at my parents’ house so we will each sing a Lug Txaj and then we will separate’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

- **lug xaus** ‘conclusion’ (Xiongs).

- **luj** ‘great, big, large’ (Xiongs):

ib tug phaws twm luj ‘a big male buffalo’ (Xiongs).

muag [typo for *muaj*?] *yees luj heev* ‘to have a very strong habitual desire’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm

‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

luj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how big].

Tsi luj hlo le. ‘Not big at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **luj** ‘to weigh, to measure’ (Xiongs).

- **luj** ‘(classifier *tug*) mangouste’ (Xiongs), ‘(type of) mongoose, approximately equivalent to Thai *phangphoon*’ (Lyman p. 172).

- **luj**, intensifier:

Yawm Nyooglaug ntshais Ntxawm hab Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ob tug pheej sis thaam ua luj quas lawg
 ‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb kept chattering away’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **luj dlua** ‘bigger than, greater than’ (Xiongs).

- **luj hlub** ‘to grow up’:

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg. Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model. My hope is that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **luj loog** ‘faint voice’:

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntsooj nwg.
 ‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven

gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him' (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **luj laam**: *ntlog* [= *ndlog*] *luj laam* 'rolling about':

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj
Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones' (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **luj tshaaj plawg** 'the biggest, the greatest' (Xiongs).

- **luj txaus** 'fully grown' (Xiongs).

- **lujtxwv** 'mule', from Chinese *luózi*:

Lug lug txug ib lub nam nraag taj, lug ntsib ib tug nam Suav Tuam Los Paav lawv ib
paab nam lujtxwv ndlaag quas naj, thauj nyaj thauj kub lug.

'He travelled down to a plain, and met a Big Chinese Merchant who was driving a huge herd of mules transporting silver and gold' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **lus** '(no classifier) word' (Xiongs) (see also *lu*).

- **lus** 'mouth' (see also *lu*):

qaab lus 'to have appetite' (Xiongs).

- **luv** 'to break, to crack' (Xiongs):

taav luv 'broken rib' (Xiongs).

txhaa luv 'broken bone' (Xiongs).

Quas nyuj, quas neeg, quas yaaj quas tshis mas nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ua quas
tauj quas tsuag luv quas ntho.

'Cattle, horses, sheep and goats filled the hills and highlands and cropped the weeds and shrubs to a stubble' (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

huas cov nam qhev mas nim lawv paab nam yaaj, nam tshis, lujtxwv, nyuj neeg mas muaj
peevxwm lug ua quas tauj quas tsuag faab quas fo; tsua nov luv ua nqaaj ua nqug lug.

'and servants were herding a flock of sheep and goats and mules and cattle and horses. They had the ability to trample up the grass and brush to a complete mess, all one could hear was a great commotion of snapping stems and branches' (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv
txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

'then you all spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

'Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down' (*Lug*

Nruag Dlaab p. 27).

- **luv** ‘(classifier *tug*) swallow’ [bird] (Xiongs).
- **luv** ‘vehicle, from Lao *lōt*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **luv fais** ‘railroad train, from Lao *lōt fáy*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **luv ntho** ‘completely broken’ (Xiongs, entry for *ntho* and p. 555).
- **luv taav** ‘to break a rib’ (Xiongs).
- **luv tau** ‘to break off’:

Moog ua zoj ua zig rov lug tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv tau ib rev nplooj suab tso huv txuj kev.

‘They came running round and round and spat a glob of saliva in the road, and broke off a fern frond and left it in the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **luv tees** ‘(classifier *lub*) bicycle’ (Xiongs), from Lao *lōt thíp*.
- **lua**, intensifier:

Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

‘Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **luag** ‘to laugh, to joke’ (Xiongs):
- tso luag* ‘to joke, to have fun, to tease’ (Xiongs).
- txaus luag* ‘funny’ (Xiongs).

- **luag**, intensifier:

Txhua naj txhua nub kuv pum luas nkuam nyuj twg quas luag tuaj nruab ke
 ‘Day in and day out, I see people driving cattle and buffaloes down the middle of the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab nwg tug dlev taug kev lug txug ntawd ib ntog kev, ua cav txawm muaj ib twv fuab dlawb yaa lug quas luag.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum and her dog followed the road to that place partway along the road, and, why, there was a white cloud flying lug quas luag’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

Luas nyob ua tsev npwg quas luag.

‘The people lived in beautiful houses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

- **luag** ‘companion’:

Mej yaum saib puas tau luag

‘You try to get others to join’ (Xiongs) [“You-plural persuade to see whether get companions”].

- **luag**: *kwvluag* ‘(classifier *tug*) companion’ (Xiongs):

Zagnua, koj poob lug txug ntawm kuv lawm, cais kuv le maam koj koj moog tu, hab ca koj nyob nuav nrug kuv ua kwvluag!

‘Now, you’ve fallen and come to me, so I’ll take you to care for, and let you live here with me as a friend and companion!’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 8.)

- **luag**: *npoj luag* ‘companion’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **luag**: *pob luag* ‘(classifier *lub*) anthill’ (Xiongs).

- **luag**: *phooj ywg kwv luag* ‘friend, accompanying friend’ (Xiongs).

- **luag**: *sib luag* ‘as big as, equal to, similar to’ (Xiongs). See also *luaj*.

- **luag**: *ua ... luag* ‘to accompany, to be a companion to, to keep someone company, to be with someone’:

Kuv yuav tau rovqaab moog ua Nkauj See luag, hab koj nwg lug nrug peb nyob ua nuav!
‘I’ve got to go back to be with Nkauj See and bring her to stay with us’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42).

- **luag num** ‘(classifier *lub*) work’ (Xiongs).

- **luagteb** ‘the upper part of the swidden field’ (Bertrais):

Nwg nrhav moog rua qhov u los tsi pum,

He searched far but did not see her,

nrhav lug rua qhov nua los tsi pum hlo le.

he searched near but did not see her at all.

Nwg txawm taug kev moog rua peg luagteb,

He then followed the road up to the upper part of the swidden field,

na txawm pum nwg tug muam tug neevtaug tuaj moog lawm.

why, then he saw his sister’s footprints coming and going. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

- **luaj** ‘to be as big as’ (Xiongs) (see also *luag*):

caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagnuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj

‘when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels

and rats come and cut down so much of my crop?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **luaj** ‘earth, soil’:

Le nyob cuaj tshooj vaag yim tshooj tsev es tsev vuag luaj vuag av ci nraa quas ab rua qaaj [typo for *nqaaj*?] *tog tej ntug txaj*.

‘They dwelt in nine stories of gardens and eight stories of houses, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass gleaming brightly from the coins at the edges of the end beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **luaj** ‘to cut down vegetation with a bush-knife or axe; to clear ground (by using a bush-knife)’ (*Lyman* p. 175):

In the following example the verbs *peg* ‘to hit, to beat, to strike’, *luaj* ‘to cut down vegetation with a bush-knife’, *tsuav* ‘to cut, to chop, to cut in very small pieces’, and *ntxug* ‘to chop up’ are used together to convey the motions of two young men fighting with a spirit; ‘with hands and with feet’ is an idiom referring to martial arts skill:

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntxug nrov pis ntxhas rua.

‘Striking and slashing with hands and with feet, the two of them cut and chopped with a great clamor at her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **luaj teb** ‘to cut down tree to make a rice or corn field’ (Xiongs).

- **luam** ‘to swim’ (Xiongs).

- **luam** ‘to copy, to print out’ (Xiongs):

tshuab luam ntawv ‘copying machine’ (Xiongs).

- **luam** ‘to mill’:

In *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, swallows give Yob magic seeds that grew into plants that produce nuggets of silver and gold instead of grain. Yob treats the nuggets of silver and gold as one would treat grain, feeding them to the chickens and milling them:

Tab sis nyob huv tsev, Yob Nraug Ntsuag hab Ntxawm muab nyaj muab kub lug luam ua ci ntsaag quas ab le.

‘But inside the house Yob the Orphan and Ntxawm were milling silver and gold so that it glittered brightly’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **luam** ‘trade, business’:

kev luam ‘business’ (Xiongs).

tub laag tub luam ‘merchant, prospect, trader’ (Xiongs).

- **luam yeeb** ‘tobacco’ (Xiongs):

haus luam yeeb ‘to smoke cigarettes, tobacco’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob haus luam yeeb ‘do not smoke’ (Xiongs).

nplooj luam yeeb ‘tobacco’ (Xiongs).

- **luas** ‘(no classifier) other, others’ (Xiongs):

One meaning of *luas* is people or creatures other than oneself or other than one’s own group:

Poob luas ntuj yoog luas txuj (Mong proverb)

‘Being among them, follow or accept what they have’ (Xiongs) [“Fall into their region / Follow their customs”].

poob luas teg ‘to fall under their control, to be in their hands’ (Xiongs).

yoog lawv luas ‘adapt yourself to them’ (Xiongs).

Luas nyob ua tsev npwg quas luag.

‘The people lived in beautiful houses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

Kuv pum luas koj tau mej muam Ntxawm lug lawm quas tag.

‘I did see the creature bring your sister Ntxawm here’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 12).

Luas koj nwg nkaag rua nraag lub nam qhovntuj ntawd lawm!

‘That creature then carried her into the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 12).

Ua caag luas nim xaav tas luas sab zoo nua es, caag kuv lug na nim yuav tsi ntim ib pob mov

‘They thought that they were good-hearted, but when I set out for home they did not pack me a ball of rice’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

Nwg ua rog txug tsaav neeg dlaabtsi los kov tsi yeej le.

‘Whatever nation he waged war upon, they could not touch him.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54.)

Tes hu ua tsaav tuabneeg twg tsi pum Vaajkaav tug dluab nua tes luas yuav tsum caab moog ua tauj ua qhev. Luas yuav tsum muab tshoob muaj tsimtxom le.

‘So if people of any nation did not see Vaajkaav’s picture, they were certain to come and carry you into slavery. They were certain to carry you off to a life of oppression and suffering.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54.)

luas tuaj txug tsi pum koj tes luas ua phem rua peb le. Tug twg, tsev twg tas yog koj nua tes luas txha ntshai.

‘if they arrive and do not see you, then they do harm to us. Any person, any household that is yours, they fear.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54.)

Luas pum dlheev tes luas paub has tas, mej yog kuv cov laj mej pejxeem tes luas txha tsi kov mej!

‘As soon as they see it, they will know you are my subjects, and they will not touch you!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 55.)

Ntshab hab Ntshaus ob tug le tawm lug ua luas dlaag luas zug, tawm lug ua luas qhev.

‘Ntshab and Ntshaus came out to work for the invaders, came out to be their servants.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64.)

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj

ntshau [typo for *ntshauv*?]. *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.*

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

In a folktale, a man asks Saub (the being to whom people go for advice) why it is that animals are destroying his crops and Saub replies:

“Awb! kuv qha koj es koj moog zuv. Koj zuv es koj lawv qaab moog tes koj tau luas mas”.

“Yes! I will tell you what to do, you go and keep watch. You keep watch and you follow and then you will get them”, i.e. whatever being is responsible for the man’s difficulties (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Another meaning of *luas* is ‘one, they, people in general’:

Thau u, luas tsi yog ua “Dlaab”. Nwg yog ua “Qhua” xwb.

Long ago, it was not that a person did “Dlaab”. It was that he or she did “Qhua” only. (*Dlaab Qhuas*, preface, explaining that Dlaab Qhuas, traditional Mong animist religion, original involved only Qhua).

Dlaim ntawv nuav yog Vaajkaav lub ntsejmuag. Luas teev vaajkaav lub ntsejmuag xwb.

‘This sheet of paper is Vaajkaav’s face. People are just worshipping Vaajkaav’s face.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56, referring to the Mong custom of making offerings to the xwmkaab paper glued to the wall of the main room of the house.)

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with khib months and khub months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

In the following example, *luas* might mean either ‘people in general’ or it might mean spirits as opposed to human beings. A young man is visiting his sister, who has married a spirit and lives in the spirit world, and she is instructing him how to behave when he is offered food:

luas has tas, ‘koj puas noj nqaj nyug?’ los koj has tas, ‘koj tsi noj’, luas has tas, ‘koj puas noj nqaj npuas?’ los koj has tas, ‘koj tsi noj’. Luas has tas, ‘koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?’ nua cais koj teb has tas, ‘yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb’ nua nawb!

when they say, ‘do you eat beef?’ you must say that you do not eat it, when they say ‘do you eat pork?’ you must say that you do not eat it’. When they say, ‘what do you want to eat?’ then you must reply that if there is a dried up wall, then you will eat just a bit of dried up wall together with rice mixed with cold water, so! (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 9-10.)

- **luas puaj?** ‘is it not so that?’:

koj ntshai dlaab Ntxawg tau zoo neej ua lawm luas puaj?

‘Is it not so that you sense that Uncle Ntxawg has become prosperous?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **luas muas**, final particle:

tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

‘the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **luas puas** ‘will you?’:

In the first story in *Kwvhuam*, a young woman has been instructed by her parents to find a husband and the first creature she meets is a cloud:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

- **luav** ‘rabbit’ (Xiongs):

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The first month of the year is the month of the rabbit.

l hlis – luav hli

1st month – month of the rabbit (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khlib* months (*hli khlib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khlib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

For example, the eleventh day of the first month is

luav hli – luav xab 10 ‘month of the rabbit – rabbit day 10’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that the day of the rabbit is an auspicious day on which to be born:

Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua

tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.

Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person's horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

- **lw** '(classifier *txuj*) footstep, footprint, track, trace' (Xiongs).

- **Lw**: *Lob Lw*, name of a young man who is one of the main characters in the second story in *Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug* 'Tales of Marriage Customs' (*Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32). The story is about the custom of paying a brideprice (*them tshoob them kug*). *Lob Lw* and his wife are not getting along. Finally, they learn that it is because *Lob Lw* did not pay a brideprice. When the brideprice is paid, the marriage goes well.

- **lwb** 'stubborn, wrong headed, obstinate, wilful' (Xiongs).

- **lwb** 'to persevere' (Xiongs).

- **lwg** '(classifier *lub*) dew' (Xiongs).

- **lwg** 'to strip off (leaves, branches)' (Xiongs).

- **lwg**: *lej-lwg rhwv-mim*, names evoked in marriage songs (*Tswv Yim* pp. 75-76):

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

'My mother my father that side [the bridegroom's parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring *Lej Lwg* and *Rhwv Mim*'s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring *Lej Lwj* and *Rhwv Mim*'s roots of oratory faculty.' (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **Lwg**: *Nplooj Lwg*, the toad who brought death into the world (*Initiation* pp. 123-126, *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 7-9). When she claimed to be able to measure the size of the sky and the earth but in reality could hop no further than a cow's or a horse's hoofprint, she was killed for her deceit and arrogance. As she was dying, she proclaimed that, since she had died, henceforth human beings would die as well.

- **lwg**: *txiv lwg* 'eggplant' (Xiongs).

- **lwj** 'rotten, decayed, perished; to rot, to perish' (Xiongs).

- **lwj** '(classifier *lub*) blacksmith bellows' (Xiongs) (from Chinese *lú* 'stove, furnace' with shift of meaning from the forge to the bellows?):

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

'Oh, those bellows. What's wrong with them?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **lwj**: *kua lwj* ‘slime from a rotting dead body’:

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsv* pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

- **lwj**: *mos lwj* or *muaslwj*, a kind of deer, from Chinese *mǎlù*:

mos lwj ‘(classifier *tug*) deer’ (Xiongs).

txhaub dle caum mos lwj ‘urge dogs to follow a deer’ (Xiongs).

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **lwj**: *ua lwj ... nrov* ‘to resound’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **lwj**: *ua lwj ua lam* “by wrack and by ruin”, ‘at all costs’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **lwm** (no classifier) ‘time, round, turn’ (Xiongs) (from Chinese *lù* ‘road, way’):

ob lwm ‘twice’ (Xiongs).

xyaa lwm ‘seven times’ (Xiongs).

- **lwm** ‘two’, from Chinese *èr*: *Los Lwm* ‘Second-Born Son’ (Chinese *Lǎo Èr*), one of the main characters in *Ceebpov*.

- **lwm** ‘next’, from Chinese *èr*:

“Ab, kuv muaj qhua nyob huv tsev nuav lawm tes mej moog es lwm mo peb le tsua moog”.

‘No, I have a guest in the house, so go by yourselves, and the next evening we will go.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **lwm** ‘other’:

lwm tug ‘other’ (Xiongs) [other e.g. person, animal, tree, river]

lwm yaam ‘other’ (Xiongs) [other kind]

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug; xws le:

Moob Sib,

Moob Dlub,

Moob Yobtshuab,

Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),

Moob Ncuavpas,

*Moob Suavfaaj,
hab lwm lub npe*

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects, such as:

Moob Sib,
Moob Dlub,
Moob Yobtshuab,
Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),
Moob Ncuavpas,
Moob Suavfaaj,
and other names

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **lwm sim** ‘next life’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *èr* ‘two; next’ + *shì* ‘lifetime, life’.

- **lwm sub** ‘waving away the sub’, a ceremony performed at the New Year to get rid of malevolent influences that cause bloody accidents:

At a time when the Mong did not have a king, Lis Sub Tuam ruled one region and Siv Yig Muas ruled another. Lis Sub Tuam was a cruel tyrant who terrorized his subjects. When he terrorized one of Siv Yig Muas’s subjects, Siv Yig Muas fought him and killed both Lis Sub Tuam and his son. Then, Lis Sub Tuam’s widow, Puj Sub, after her death, came down from the sky to avenge her husband and her son. This is the origin of the *sub*, the spirits that cause bloody accidents. The ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub (*Tu Sub*) is performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar to get rid of Puj Sub. The ceremony of Waving Away the Sub (*Lwm Sub*) is performed at the New Year to get rid of the the malign influence (*nywj*) of Lis Sub Tuam and his son. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-34.)

Nwgnuav peb txooj Moob, xyaa hli twg txha yuav tu Sub; Cuaj hli twg txha yuav tu Sub.
Nowadays, we Mong in the seventh month will cut off the Sub and in the ninth month will cut off the Sub.

Huas nwg muab ob ntsuj teb kaav le kws tub has ntawm hauvpaug.

But they [Lis Sub Tuam and Siv Yig Muas] ruled two regions as was said at the beginning [of the story].

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb. Puab lwm xwb.

Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month do not cut. They only wave.

Lub caij hov yog lub caij Siv Yig Muas ob tug sis tua tes Sub Tuam tuag. Puab txha le lwm xwm. Yog muaj tug nywj xwb.

This time of year is the time of year when Siv Yig Muas [and Sub Tuam] fought and Sub Tuam died. They therefore only wave. There is only the *nywj* [malign influence that hovers where someone has died].

Huas cov kws tu tes yog ntsuj teb kws Siv Yig Muas kaav. Txha le tu rua lub cuaj hli hab xyaa hli. Txhua paab pawg tuabneeg txha le ua le ntawd.

But those who cut are of the region that Siv Yig Muas ruled. Therefore they cut in the ninth month and the seventh month. Every lineage therefore does it like that.

Txhua tug tu Sub, paub tsi has Sub txiv Sub tub raug muab tua tuag taag lawm tshuav puj Sub xwb. Yog le noobneej kws muaj nyob hu ua haiv Moob tes tu Sub ha le hu puj Sub xwb.

Everyone cuts off the Sub, regardless of the fact that Sub the father and Sub the son were killed and only Mrs. Sub remained. Where there are human beings who are called Mong, cutting off the Sub refers only to Mrs. Sub. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 33-34.)

- **lwm zag** ‘next time’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Chinese *èr* ‘two; next’.

- **lww** ‘to compete, to concur’ (Xiongs).

M

- **Mab**: *Phab Mab* ‘Burmese’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface). From Lao *Phā Māa*.

- **mag**, consoling word (Xiongs).

- **mag**, intensifier:

Nim zoo zoo nkauj kaim muag quas zoj, dlej muag teev quas mag.
‘She had long beautiful eyelashes and her eyes were moist’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- **maj** ‘full, complete’ (Xiongs).

- **maj**, final particle:

“Moog maj”.
“Go ahead.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

- **maj qhaam** ‘tamarind, from Lao *māak khāam*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **mam** ‘to avoid, to escape, to save, to spare’ (Xiongs):

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs).

- **mas** ‘then, at that time’ (Xiongs):

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebhaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

“Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd tes mej dlim naw”.
“If you want to escape, flee into that gourd and then you’ll escape.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev

‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **mas**: *los mas*, final particle:

yog los mas ‘it is right, it is OK, it is correct’ (Xiongs).

Koj tog ca nwg tuaj txug ncuat saiv, koj ntaag ua nwg tuag kag tes koj yeej los mas.
‘Wait for her to arrive, and then kill her with a blow of your sword and you will have won!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

- **mas**: *tag tag mas* ‘in reality, actually’ (Xiongs).

- **Mas Ub!** ‘See here now!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27.)

- **mav**, final particle:

Nam dlej ndlwg quas tsaws ndlwg tug quas vaws es wb moog pw nraag mav.
‘The river flows calmly and evenly so let us go to sleep down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **maa** ‘wolf’ (Xiongs), ‘wild dog, jackal, *Cuon rutilans* or *Canis aureus*’ (Lyman p. 178), ‘wolf, jackal, wild dog-like animal’ (Heimbach 1979:67 hma), ‘wolf’ (Bertrais 1978:76 hma), ‘wolf (dialect word)’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 144 hmangt), ‘jackal’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 63 hmangt):

Mong Volunteer Literacy’s bidialectal Mong Leng / White Hmong primer uses *maa* (White Hmong *hma*) as an example of a word which has *m* in Mong Leng but *hm* in White Hmong, and the illustration shows what is clearly either a wolf or a jackal (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 27), but the animal may be rare in folklore. I don’t recall ever seeing an example in either Mong Leng or White Hmong stories.

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that likely referents for the original meaning of *maa* include the wolf (*Canis lupus*) and the golden jackal (*Canis aureus*): “Their present range is seriously eroded but it is reasonable to assume that it covered the Guizhou region during proto-Hmongic times.”

Here is a photograph of the Indian wolf, *Canis lupus*, that Michael sent:



And here is a photograph of the golden jackal, *Canis aureus*, that Michael sent:



- **maab** '(classifier *tug*) kind of animal' (Xiongs), '(a type of) civet cat' (Lyman p. 178).
- **maab** '(classifier *txuj*) creeper' (Xiongs).

- **Maab**, name of various ethnic groups.

In China, *Maab* refers to the Yi nationality (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 206 Mangb):

Nam maab tis qam suav tsua yuav muab nyog kaus dlub kaus li ncab nqeg nrug roog nyog koj le tshaav kws. Koj has tas peb tub Moob neej tsaa qas cev rhais tsis nyog txaj kws, qas teg rhais tsis nyog nyaj kws. Koj tub koj li kiv le muab tau koj kaus xyoob kaus li ntawv roog koj le tshaav

‘The Yi and the Chinese will offer to sell you their pitch black parasols to protect you from the sun. Say to them that on the bodies of our Mong kindred one does not put money, in their hands one not put silver. Your children have given you a parasol of bamboo and of paper to protect you from the sun’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

In Thailand and Laos, *Maab* refers to various non-Mong ethnic groups:

The Mong left China and meeting other peoples, called them *Maab*. This term included the Lao, Yon (Lanna), Khamuk, T’in, etc.; the peoples that the Mong had already known in China (e.g. the Yao) were not called *Maab* (Lyman p. 178).

- **maab**: *nyuv roj maab* ‘plastic tube’ (Xiongs).

- **maab**: *tubmaab tubqhe* ‘servants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **maag** ‘to be caught or trapped (passive form)’ (Xiongs).

- **maag** ‘hemp’ (see also *maaj*):

plhaub maag ‘hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125). See also *plhaub maaj*.

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

‘The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **maaj** ‘to be in a hurry, to hasten, to precipitate, to rush; hurriedly’ (Xiongs).

- **maaj** ‘hemp’ (see also *maag*):

plhaub maaj ‘hemp stalks’ (Xiongs). See also *plhaub maag*.

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of cloth but tied with hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

'Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They're big as young ewes. Don't forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They're big as young sows. Don't forget your hempen shoes!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors' (*Initiation* p. 135).

In one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, the chanter, having brought the dead person to the wall at the bottom of the stairway to heaven, tells the dead person to instruct the spirits not to try to follow the chanter as he returns to the world of the living. The dead person must say:

Tes kuv rau khau maaj kuv tsuj tau ncaaj. / Yawm txiv yawm quas tsi rau khau cev tsuj taw yuamkev.

'I am wearing shoes made of hemp. My steps are straight. / The old man is wearing shoes made from the bark of the cev tree. His footsteps wander from the path' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

The *Qhuas Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant also speaks of the origin of hemp:

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless.

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

Note the variant spellings *noob maag* and *noob maaj* in the second line versus the third line.

- **maaj** ‘maple tree’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* pp. 207 mangx, 240 ndongt mangx). The bark is applied topically to treat heat rash (Pake 1986, p. 115, No. 127).

Koj moog txug paag dlej ab. Paag dlej ab tes ua ab! Koj haus tsi tau, koj fuas hawv peb tug caag maaj peb tug caag dlaab [typo for dlaaj?]. Fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab haus, fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab hlv koj txha moog cuag taug koj pug koj yawg.

‘Go until you reach the lake of bitter water. The lake of bitter water is bitter indeed! If you cannot drink it, snatch up three maple roots and three dlaab [typo for dlaaj?] roots. Snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to drink, snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to suck on, and then you will be able to to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

- **maaj kev** ‘to be in a hurry’:

Ub! Maaj kev hww naj! ‘Oh, but we’re in a big hurry!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

- **maam** ‘slowly, nicely, gradually’ (Xiongs). See also *maav*.

- **maam** ‘will; later’ (Xiongs), see also *maav*:

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for yaugncauj?] yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **maas**: *roj naab maas kaj* ‘kerosene, petroleum, from Lao *nàm mán kâat*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **maav** ‘slowly, nicely’ (Xiongs). See also *maam*.

- **maav** ‘later’ (Xiongs). See also *maav*.

- **mais** ‘back’ (Xiongs).

- **Mais**: *Yob Kaub Yob Mais* ‘Little Kaub and Little Mais’, name of a boy and girl in an account of the origin of clans:

A female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate whether she will live or die. Then she dies.

Then the female spirit's daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is repeated. The female spirit's daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

“Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj”.

“If you are to live, Little Kaub [man's name] and Little Mais [woman's name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live.”

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **maiv** ‘word precedes a girl's name’ (Xiongs).

- **maub** ‘to walk in darkness’ (Xiongs):

Los Xaab txawm maub hau quas toog rovqaab rua nraag qub qaab, nraag lub nam taj ua lawm.

‘So Los Xaab groped his way in the dark down to the place where he had been, down to that field’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **maum** ‘word that precedes a girl's name or a female in general’ (Xiongs).

- **maum kaum** ‘gable’ (*Tswvyim* p. 15) (see also written *hauv mum*).

- **Maum Xeej Xeeb**, name of a dragon in a story:

Tug nam zaaj, Zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb, nyob huv lub nam qhov dlej twb yeej npaaj tas

yuav moog yuav Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm nuav

‘A dragon, Dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb, who lived in that water hole, was already preparing to marry Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **maum kuab** ‘papaya’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *mùguā*.

- **maum nyuj** ‘cow’ (Xiongs):

ib tug maum nyuj qhuav ‘a cow with no calf’ (Xiongs).

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm

‘This cow has given birth to three calves already’ (Xiongs).

- **maum tsuv** ‘tigress’ (Xiongs).

- **meb** ‘both of you, you two’ (Xiongs):

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, the two of you go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **meb**: *txiv meb* ‘we two, the two of us’, male speakers:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuij ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **mej** ‘you (plural)’ (Xiongs):

tsuav mej ua tau ‘if you can do it’ (Xiongs).

Mej txhaj peb txhais ‘You propound the riddles and we explain them’ (Xiongs).

Mej yaum saib puas tau luag

‘You try to get others to join’ (Xiongs) [“You-plural persuade to see whether get companions”].

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **mej** ‘you’, speaking to a single individual:

In the following example, *mej*, although described in dictionaries and grammars as second person plural, is used in speaking to a single individual:

“Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?”

“How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **mej**, suffix with kinship terms:

Kuv tub mej sawv rovqaab lug lawm los caag naws! Koj tug npawg Cuav Tshoj Tim twb dlha lug has rua peb paub taag lawm tas pobzeb ndlog moog txhub kuv tub mej tuag rua huv qhovntuj lawm es

‘My son has risen again. Your cousin False One Who Faces Earth ran here and told us that stones had rolled and entombed my son so that he died in the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 30).

Kuv tub mej has tas yuav moog saib kuv tub nyaab nua kuas

‘My son says that he is going to see my daughter-in-law’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 30-31).

- **mej**: *koj tuaj lov?* or *koj tuaj los* (speaking to one person) or *mej tuaj lov?* or *mej tuaj los* (speaking to more than one person), “Have you come?”, customary expression in greeting someone who arrives at one’s house:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35, speaking to a man and his son)

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

‘Ho ho! Welcome!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, speaking to three people.)

- **mej**: *lajmej pejxeem* ‘the populace, the common people’:

Hab kuas tsoom lajmej pejxeem moog tsua kag ib lub nyuas hleb cab lug ntim Yob Nraug Ntsuag.

‘And she had the people build a pine coffin to put Yob the Orphan in’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

- **mej**: *txiv mej* ‘I, me’, male speaker:

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **mej**: *txiv mej* ‘we, us’:

In a folktale a man starts to unplug a gourd that, unbeknownst to him, is filled with dangerous spirits, and immediately hears voices from inside the gourd saying:

“Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!”

“Oh yes! Open us, [we’ll] try killing and eating [you]!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **mejloos** ‘storage basket’:

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho qaab mejloos; “Kawb! kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam nim tas: “Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj

‘The rat gnawed a hole in the bottom of the storage basket: “Kawb! Kawb! Kawb!” Los Tuam said, “Los Lwm! Hey! There’s a ‘Kawj! Kawj! Kawj!’ sound coming from the bedroom.’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

Mejloos ... are the finest quality baskets made from rattan not bamboo. They have lids. In Thailand the older Hmong had these in their bedrooms. Some might have already been antiques which were brought from Laos even. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **Mej Xees**, the dog who fetches the cyclones and the whirlwinds to scatter the seeds of humanity (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

- **mem** ‘ink’, from Chinese *mò*:

cwj mem ‘(classifier *tug*) pen’ (Xiongs).

cwj mem qhuav ‘(classifier *tug*) pencil’ (Xiongs).

kua mem ‘ink’ (Xiongs).

- **mem**, Chinese *mài* ‘arteries and veins, pulse’:

mem teg ‘pulse’ (Xiongs).

seev mem teg ‘to feel the pulse’ (Xiongs).

- **mem toj** ‘natural underground bloodstream (in the Hmong belief)’ (Xiongs).

- **mes**: *Asmesleskas* ‘America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface and page 193).

- **mes es** ‘goat’ (Xiongs).

- **mev**, interjection: *ua mev!* ‘Go ahead’ (Xiongs).

- **meej** ‘clear’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *míng*:

plov meej ‘to clarify the conversation or the meaning’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *biǎomíng*.

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlob yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **meej**: *fij meej*, from Chinese *huí mén*, ‘to return to the door’, to pay the customary visit to the

wife's parents shortly after a couple has been married (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 119-120).

- **meej mom** 'vestige' (Xiongs). (Possibly from Chinese *miànmào* 'appearance'.)

- **meej pem** 'conscious' (Xiongs). From Chinese *míngbái*.

- **meem**: *thwsxas hammeem* 'to behave wickedly':

Tej kws moog thwsxas hammeem es tua tua tuabneeg
'Those who behave wickedly and commit murder' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **meem**: *xwm faab xwm meem* 'square' (Xiongs). From Chinese *sìfāng* 'four sides, square' + *sìmiàn* 'four sides'.

- **meem**: *yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le* 'continue, and don't worry about it' (Xiongs).

- **meem txom** 'irritated, irritating, provoking, provoked anger' (Xiongs).

- **mi-aub** 'meow', 'pussycat':

Awv! nim naj mo zuv zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev, ua tsaug tej! Txiv tuab qws ua nwg mi-aub nua!

'Hurrah! Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner. Thank you, father! You got him good with that pestle, making him go meow!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

huas tshuav tuab nam dlev pw caws ceeg ntawm ntug qhovcub huas tshwsmlov pw caws ceeg peg qhovtsus quaj: "mi-aub! mi-aub!"

'All that remained was a dog curled up by the fire and a cat curled up on top of the stove crying, "Miau! Miau!"' (*Ceebpov* p. 26.)

Los Xaab tsim dlheev, sawv tseeg: "Mi-aub! Koj nam nib?"

'Los Xaab awoke suddenly and got to his feet: "Pussycat, what happened to your mistress?"' (*Ceebpov* p. 26.)

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwmllob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj pawg, quaj mi-aub. Ua le le ntawd tes Los Lwm nim dlha quas loo moog tas; "Los Tuam av! mi-aub sas! yog nam miv mi-aub os".

'But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried "Miau". So Los Lwm ran back and said, "Oh, Los Tuam, it's just a pussycat, a little bitty pussycat!"' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **mi-auv** 'meow':

Tes khaws nkaus nam qws tuav hovtxob tuab qws miv, miv quaj miv-auv! nua.

'Then they whacked the cat with a pepper-pestle, the cat went meow!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **mib**: *qaab mib* 'sugar' (Xiongs).

- **mig** '(classifier *lub*) breast, bosom' (Xiongs):

kua mig 'milk' (Xiongs).

ntxais mig 'to suck the bottle or the breast' (Xiongs).

txiv mig ‘nipple’ (Xiongs).

- **Mim** (woman’s name):

Pa [typo for *Paaj?*] *yau dlua min* [typo for *Mim?*]
 ‘Pang is smaller than Mae [typo for *Mee?*]’ (Xiongs).

- **mim**: *lej-lwg rhwv-mim*, names evoked in marriage songs (*Tswv Yim* pp. 75-76):

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **miv** ‘small, little, tiny’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv

‘When they [White Hmong and Mong Leng] are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **miv**: *tshws miv* ‘cat’ (Xiongs).

- **miv aib** ‘darling’:

Ntuj nis kuv miv aib Ntxawm, kuv neu neu koj kuv tsi tuaj dlaabndlub le lauj.

‘By heaven, my darling Ntxawm, I’ve missed you so much that I haven’t slept’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

Ntuj nis miv aib, zag nua tes kuv noog noog koj has es kuv tsi haus cawv lawm lauj.

Caag kuv yuav neu neu kuv tug miv aib zoo nkauj ua luag nuav dlag. ‘By heaven, darling, from now on I will listen to you and will not drink liquor any more. Oh, how I missed

my beautiful darling' (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **mivntsiv** 'a little':

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!

'we'll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **miv nyuv** 'small intestine' (Xiongs).

- **miv nyuas** '(classifier *tug*) child' (Xiongs):

cov miv nyuas 'children' (Xiongs).

ib tug miv nyuas tsaub 'an illegitimate child' (Xiongs).

nchuav miv nyuas 'to miscarry, to abort' (Xiongs).

tu miv nyuas 'to give birth, to raise children' (Xiongs).

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv; tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

'A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents; an animal refuses to obey its master' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm

'This cow has given birth to three calves already' (Xiongs).

Tes nam ncej puj dlaab cov mivnyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj

'Then the spirit children of the female-spirit post came running round and round' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **miv nyuas mog lab** 'baby' (Xiongs).

- **miv nyuas ntsuag** '(classifier *tug*) orphan' (Xiongs).

- **miv nyuas ntxaib** 'twin' (Xiongs).

- **miv nyuas qab** 'chick' (Xiongs).

- **mo** '(no classifier) night' (Xiongs) (see also *mos*):

naj mo 'every night' (Xiongs).

naag mo 'last night; yesterday' (Xiongs).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

'Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat' (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

naag mo taag kig 'yesterday morning' (Xiongs).

naag mo tsaus ntuj ‘yesterday night or last night’ (Xiongs).

- **mo nua** or **mo nuav** ‘tonight’:

mo nuav ‘tonight’ (Xiongs).

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

Mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj le cais pegkig peb tso koj moog.

‘Tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out, tomorrow we will let you go’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Miv ntxhais, mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj cais peb tso koj moog.

‘Little girl, tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out we will let you go’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Mo nuav yog kuv pw ib mos ais kuv quaj cais kuv nrug mej nyob hab ua mej qhev moog.

‘Tonight, if during the night I cry out, I will remain with you and become your slave’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **mo ntuj** ‘night time’ (Xiongs).

- **mob** ‘(no classifier) pain, sickness; to have pain; to be sick, to be ill’ (Xiongs):

khu mob ‘to hospitalize, to visit a doctor’ (Xiongs).

tsev khu mob ‘hospital, clinic’ (Xiongs).

- **Mob**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Xyooj** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9):

The term *qhua* can also mean clan in general, as in the following example from a folktale in which both the Mong clan names Mob and Dluag and the Chinese clan names Yaaj and Lauj are referred to as *qhua*. Two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;

these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **mob**: *aab mob* ‘small parasite’ (Xiongs).

- **mob**: *nyaj mob* ‘to suffer a pain’:

Kuv xum noj tshuaj ab tsi xum nyaj mob
‘I prefer taking bitter medicine over suffering a pain’ (Xiongs).

- **mob nkeeg** ‘illness’:

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nqe hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.
‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

ib yaam taw teg khu mob nkeeg kws Moob muaj
‘a skill for healing illness which the Mong have’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Nchaiv Tuam hastas “Yog ntuj pum tas leej twg sab zoo, sab ncaaj, muaj pluaj sab yuav lug paab khu noob neej txuj kev mob nkeeg, hab moov txug mas ntuj le pub kom nwg txawj ua neeb”.

Nchaiv Tuam says, “If heaven sees that someone has a good heart, a straight heart, has the heart to want to heal humankind’s illnesses, and destiny/merit that reaches, then heaven will allow him to know how to be a shaman.” (*Tswv Yim* pp. 93-94.)

- **mob nkeeg**: *muaj mob nkeeg* ‘to be sick’:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.
‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person to be sick’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **mob plaab** ‘stomach ache, stomach pain’ (Xiongs).

- **mob qaa** ‘to have a sore throat’ (Xiongs).

- **mob qhov ntsej** ‘ear-ache’ (Xiongs).

- **mob qhua taum** ‘to have smallpox’ (Xiongs).

- **mob rua** ‘(no classifier) leprosy’ (Xiongs).

- **mob sab** ‘to share a strong concern about’ (Xiongs):

mob sab ib zaaj ‘one time of grief’ (Xiongs).

Koj pheej nthe nthe le hov tes ib ntsiv puj Sub mob sab tes puj Sub yeej tuaj xwb los maj!
‘Keep on shouting like that and pretty soon Grandma Sub is going to get annoyed and come’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32).

- **mob teb** ‘to have pains from giving birth’ (Xiongs).
- **mob tswj** ‘to have an abcess’ (Xiongs).
- **mob txav** ‘pancreas disease’ (Xiongs).
- **mob txhaws qaa** ‘to have diphtheria’ (Xiongs).
- **mob yeeg** ‘a kind of disease causing blood to clot’ (Xiongs).
- **mog** ‘young, small, tender, fine, soft’ (Xiongs):
 - miv nyuas mog lab* ‘baby’ (Xiongs).
 - nyuv mog* ‘small intestine’ (Xiongs).
- **mog: taum mog** ‘peas’ (Xiongs).
- **Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum**, a kind of male spirit with a predilection for human women:

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are polyandrous, two or more of them marrying a single human woman. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are among the main characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place:

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close

relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die. (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111.)

The name Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum appears in both Mong Leng and White Hmong texts with quite a bit of variation in form, making it difficult to come up with an etymology or a literal translation. In White Hmong stories these beings are sometimes described as pockmarked or pimply, and are depicted in the illustrations as pockmarked and in general as looking rather unsavory and uncouth, sometimes with facial hair. *Mojtxiv* conceivably could be from Chinese *máozi* ‘hairy fellow’ (sometimes used in China to refer to Westerners) but in other texts the element *mojtxiv* is written quite differently or is missing altogether. *Nraug ntsaum* conceivably could be from *nceb nraug ntsaum* ‘toadstool’ since in this story the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum change into toadstools after they die, but, again, in other texts the element *nraug ntsaum* is written quite differently or is missing altogether.

- **moj**, final particle:

nam dlej hov luj dlag tsaam ntsiv kuv nplaam kuataw tes nam poob dleg hab saib yuav ua caag moj.

‘the river is wide, and my paws will slip and in a moment our mistress will fall in the water, and then what will we do?’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 28-29).

- **moj**: *plhom moj* ‘foolish, unrestrained, rash, to speak worthlessly’ (Xiongs). Probably from an as yet unidentified Southwestern Mandarin expression pronounced *piàomáo*.

- **moj**: *tsuag moj ntxeb* ‘mouse’ (Xiongs).

- **mom** ‘(classifier *lub*) hat, cap’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *mào*:

lub mom nuav tsi yoj kuv ‘this hat doesn’t fit me’ (Xiongs).

- **mom** ‘to laugh at, to criticize’ (Xiongs).

- **mom**: *meej mom* ‘vestige’ (Xiongs).

- **mos** ‘to kidnap by force’ (Xiongs):

“Aub! ob tug nyuj nuav kub zuag heev lau. Txhij tuabneeg tuaj lauj. Txhij tuabneeg tuaj es mos yuav lau!”

“Well! The horns of these two oxen are very sharp. Everyone come. Everyone come and capture them!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 36-37.)

The speaker is a *ntxaug* spirit (*dlaab ntxaug*). The “oxen” are Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm, who have just cut his daughters in half.

- **mos** ‘(no classifier) night’ (Xiongs) (see also *mo*):

ib mos ‘one night’

ob mos ‘two nights’

- **mos**, final particle:

In a story, a woman who has been transformed into a cow helps her young daughter splice hemp (the girl is speaking to her step-mother, whom she addresses as *nad* ‘mother’):

Kuv moog ces kuv muab ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj taub hau, ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj teg nam nyuj taw, tes nam nyuj nrug kuv saws thab. Txhaj le tau ntuag npaum le los mos nad!

‘When I go, I hang a hank on the cow’s head, a hank on the cow’s front hoof and rear hoof, and the cow splices with me. So I get so much hemp fiber, mother!’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 32.)

- **mos lwj** ‘(classifier *tug*) deer’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *mǎlù* (also spelled *muaslwj*):

txhaub dle caum mos lwj ‘urge dogs to follow a deer’ (Xiongs).

- **mov** ‘(classifier *lub*) rice’ (Xiongs):

mov zooj ‘soft rice’ (Xiongs).

noj ntxuag mov ‘to eat along with rice’ (Xiongs).

noj mov ntxuag kua muag ‘to have extreme sorrow or trouble’ (Xiongs) [“eat rice mixed with tears”].

- **mov** ‘to think about someone’ (Xiongs):

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog

lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **mov**: *noj mov* ‘to eat’:

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).

As in other East Asian languages, ‘to eat’ is literally “to eat rice”.

- **mov**: *pluag mov* ‘meal’ (Xiongs).

- **mov**: *rau mov* ‘to put food on the table’ (Xiongs).

- **mov**: *zaub mov* ‘food (in general)’ (Xiongs):

Puas muaj zaub mov seem le? ‘Is there any food left at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **mov nplej** ‘rice’:

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **moo** ‘news, information’ (Xiongs).

- **moo** ‘reputation’ (Xiongs).

- **moo** ‘chance, occasion’ (Xiongs) (see also *moov*).

- **moo**: *tu moo* ‘to make an end of, to stop seeing’ (Xiongs).

- **moo**: *xyaav moo* ‘to stereotype, to say badly about someone’ (Xiongs).

- **Moob** ‘Mong’ (Xiongs):

Tswv Yim Moob ‘Mong Ideas’ (*Tswv Yim*, title).

Lug Moob ‘The Mong Language’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 1, chapter title).

Txooj Moob ‘the Mong Community’ (*Txooj Moob*, title).

Phoo Txhais Lug Aaktiv-Moob-Aaktiv ‘English-Mong-English Dictionary’ (Xiongs, title).

Moob Tusub ‘The Mong Ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub’ (*Dlaab Qhuas*, table of contents, chapter title).

Moob Xaam Noobnyoog ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ (*Dlaab Qhuas*, table of contents and page 77, chapter title).

Ntuj tsim muaj ib haiv tuabneeg MOOB.

‘Heaven created a Mong people’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6)

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws. Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries. At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug; xws le:

Moob Sib,

Moob Dlub,

Moob Yobtshuab,

Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),

Moob Ncuavpas,

Moob Suavfaaj,

hab lwm lub npe

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects, such as:

Moob Sib,
Moob Dlub,
Moob Yobtshuab,
Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),
Moob Ncuavpas,
Moob Suavfaaj,
and other names

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **Moob** ‘person, human being’:

Nam aws! Muaj ib nam yawm Moob laug laug tuaj txug ntawd es dlev txhaj tsej os!
‘Mama! An old man has come; the dog is barking!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 76).

Moob nplajteb lug ntshai dlej ntub, ntshai aav lu.
‘The people on the face of the earth are afraid of getting wet, afraid of getting muddy’
(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **Moob**: *Rooj Ntawv Moob* ‘Mong Volunteer Literacy’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Mong Volunteer Literacy’s logo is a drawing of a clump of bamboo with three birds sitting on one of the branches, surrounded by the words Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc. – Rooj Ntawv Moob.

- **Moob Dlawb** ‘White Hmong’, also written *Hmoob Dawb*, the spelling used by the White Hmong themselves:

Tsi taag le ntawd, Moob muaj ob hom lug: lug Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg. Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

‘Moreover, there are two dialects of Mong: White Hmong and Mong Leng. When they are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different, but the kernel of the language and the letters of the alphabet are the same’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘Mong people have two kinds of clothing: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Moob Dlawb le, quas yawg naav tsig (losyog rig) taug huv (pov taub).

‘Among the White Mong, the men wear trousers – *tsig* (or *rig*) – with a short – *luv* (*pov taub*) – seat’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– *MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG* –

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

Phoo/Phau Kawm Koom Moob Leeg / Hmoob Dawb

‘A Shared Mong Leng / White Hmong Primer’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom*, title).

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hlub, hab nyob ua npoj ua luag lug lawm ntev.

‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love, and lived as friends and companions for a long time’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

Kuv yog Moob Leeg kuas kuv has tau lug Hmoob Dawb.

‘I am Mong Leng but I can speak White Hmong’ (*Seev Yom Too, Txooj Moob* No. 5 page 23).

- **Moob Dlub**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **Moob Leeg** ‘Mong Leng’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– *MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG* –

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

Tsi taag le ntawd, Moob muaj ob hom lug: lug Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg. Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

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‘I am Mong Leng but I can speak White Hmong’ (*Seev Yom Too, Txooj Moob* No. 5 page 23).

- **Moob Ncuavpas**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **Moob Ntsuab** ‘Green Mong’, an alternate name for Mong Leng:

Nyob rua huv tsev tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘In their homes Mong people have two kinds of clothing. Namely: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) clothing and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij)**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).
- **Moob Sib**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).
- **Moob Suavfaaj**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p.6).
- **Moob Txaij: Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij)**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).
- **Moob Yobtshuab**, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).
- **moog** ‘to go’ (Xiongs):

tuab moog ‘to make a sudden move, to suddenly go’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi xaav moog ‘I don’t want to go’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau
‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj
[typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **moog**, preceding another another verb, a bit like ‘goes and (does such-and-such)’ in English:

tug dlej nuav moog tshuam rua dlej Mississippi
‘this river merges with the Mississippi River’ (Xiongs).

raab xub moog xu dlaim phaj ‘the arrow misses the target’ (Xiongs).

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo ‘to be among good friends’ (Xiongs).

xib xub moog zig lawm ‘the arrow deviates from the goal’ (Xiongs).

koj kuas kuv moog hu nam puj Suav qhev laug
‘you sent me to call the old Chinese slave-woman’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug
‘I have brought Nug Xyu home’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub
‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs) [‘I prefer to go and speak immediately in the

courthouse”].

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’
(*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Nwg moog tsuj tau cov aav noo quas zaws

‘He trod and found that he was stepping on earth that was moist’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

Nwg moog lom moog tua tug muajtxag npuanuj [typo for *npluanuj*?]

‘He poisoned and killed a wealthy person’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv

‘I will give you real ones to take to use’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

Ntxawm moog nqaa hlo plaub choj nyaj lug xab ceg rooj.

‘Ntxawm brought four ingots of silver to put under the legs of the table’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

Yob moog sim tshuaj na, tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

‘Yob went to try the medicine, the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

Koj yuav Nkauj Mim See, cais koj yuav tau moog kwv kutaus kutxuas txhaj le tau noj.

Koj nrug peb moog!

‘If you marry Nkauj Mim See, you will have to bear an axe and a brush-knife to get your food. Come with us!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12.)

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

Puab moog dle tau ib uas zaub

‘So they picked a great deal of fodder’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 65).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam

pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so

battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat' (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag koj lug naav.

'You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14; 'shirt of silk and satin' is the placenta, which is buried in the floor of the house when a person is born).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

'During the 1700's, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand' (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

Txiv meb moog koj tau txiv meb quaspuj ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

'The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109; the speakers are two spirits who have jointly married the same human woman).

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm 'They already moved to 16th street' (Xiongs).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

'That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **moog**, following another verb, indicating a process going forward or a result:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **moog** 'town', from Lao *mīang* (also written *moos*):

cais suavdlawg txhaj nyob ua zog ua moog rua ntus ntawd.

'and everyone came to live in villages and towns at that time' (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **moog**, rhythmic syllable in poetry:

ndlwg quas ndlo rua Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab moog cej zeb. ... Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

'It flowed under Ntxwj Nyoog's stones. ... It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog's wellsprings' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

- **moog**: *txij nub nua moog* 'from today on':

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

'From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love

each other' (Xiongs).

- **moog**: *txij nuav moog* 'from now on':

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hluv koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
'From now on I will love you as my wife' (Xiongs).

- **moog kua taw** 'by foot' (Xiongs).

- **moog plhob** 'to go hunting; to go to the bathroom' (Xiongs).

- **moog rua** 'to, toward':

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm 'They already moved to 16th street' (Xiongs).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub
'That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **moog rua huv** 'to participate':

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau
's/he will accept only if you participate' (Xiongs).

- **moog thawj thab** 'to reincarnate, to be born in another life' (Xiongs). From Chinese *tóu tāi*.

Rua cuaj ceg kab es muaj ntawv moog thawj thab, / lug rua ceg kws es muaj ntawv moog thawj thws.

'Where the street branches into nine were documents of reincarnation. / At the intersection were documents of rebirth' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv
'The two of them then went to prepare the documents for him to be reborn as a high official' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **moog txug** 'to arrive':

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm
'they already arrived at the train station' (Xiongs).

- **moog ua qhua** 'to be a guest, to go to another place to participate in a funeral' (Xiongs).

- **moog ua si khuj quas khuav** 'to wander about aimlessly':

Nwg najnub moog ua si khuj quas khuav nraagqaab tojntxaas ib qho dlhau ib qho xwb.
'Every day, he would aimlessly wander about from one gravesite to another' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 8).

- **moom** '(classifier *lub*) a basket for fish' (Xiongs).

- **moos** '(classifier *lub*) a watch' (Xiongs). From Lao *móong*.

- **moos** '(no classifier) town, city' (Xiongs), from Lao *míang*. Also written *moog*.

- **moos**: *pam moos* ‘a kind of fish with a thick mouth, from Lao *paa mōm*’ (Tswv Yim p. 4).

- **Moos**: *Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos*, name of a boy whom Siv Yig Muas rescues from Sub Tuam, the tyrant who, after death, becomes the spirit that causes bloody accidents (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-22).

- **moov** ‘(no classifier) luck’ (Xiongs) (see also *moo*):

Ob, yawm aw! meb tes meb moov zoo es Los Tuam tes Los Tuam moog tau tsib xyoos Los Tuam cav tau kaum-ob tug lujtxwv hab peb puas txaj rovqaab. Los Lwm tes Los Lwm cav moog tau tsib xyoos tau kaum-ib tug lujtxwv hab peb puas txaj rovqaab. Kuv tes kuv moov tsam zoo es kuv moog tes kuv moog mob mob hab kuv moog nrug Suav nyob nyob es kuv ha rov tug nam dlaaj ntseg quas ntsuv le nuav lug luas muaj!

‘Oh sirs, you have good luck. Los Tuam was gone for five years and acquired twelve mules plus a return of three hundred silver coins. Los Lwm was gone for five years and acquired eleven mules plus a return of three hundred silver coins. But my luck was such that I got sick and went to stay with a Chinese and came back pale and wan like this!’ (Ceebpov p. 15.)

Ab! ua le kuas, meb moov zoo es Los Tuam nis Los Tuam ... koj moov zoo es koj nim tau kaum-ob tug lujtxwv hab peb puas txaj dlawb hab nyuas tshwjtxom noj tej. Huas Los Lwm los Los Lwm moov zoo es Los Lwm nim tau kaum-ib tug lujtxwv huas nyuas tshwjtxom noj hab peb puas txaj dlawb rovqaab.

‘Ah! Well the thing is, you two had good luck. Los Tuam, oh, Los Tuam, your luck was good and you acquired twelve mules and three hundred silver coins and a stove of food. And as for Los Lwm, Los Lwm’s luck was good and Los Lwm acquired eleven mules and a stove of food and a return of three hundred silver coins’ (Ceebpov p. 16).

Ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le ca meb ua ntej, meb moov zoo es ca meb uantej. Kuv maav uaqaab, kuv ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le.

‘I’m afraid that Father will scold me, so you two go on ahead. Your luck was good, so you two go on ahead. I will follow slowly after, for I am very afraid that Father will scold me’ (Ceebpov pp. 18-19).

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntsooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (Tswv Yim p. 93).

Nchaiv Tuam hastas “Yog ntuj pum tas leej twg sab zoo, sab ncaaj, muaj pluaj sab yuav lug paab khu noob neej kev mob nkeeg, hab moov txug mas ntuj le pub kom nwg txawj ua neeb”.

‘Nchaiv Tuam says, “If heaven sees that someone has a good heart, a straight heart, has the heart to want to heal humankind’s illnesses, and destiny/merit that reaches, then heaven will allow him to know how to be a shaman.”’ (Tswv Yim pp. 93-94.)

- **moov** ‘(no classifier) powder’ (Xiongs).

- **moov** ‘to take in the mouth without chewing’ (Xiongs).

- **moov cej** ‘buckwheat flour’:

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam muab ib naab moov cej hab ib naab moov kuam rua koj nqaa moog tsev.

If you want to go home, tell your sister to give you a bag of buckwheat flour and a bag of grits to carry home. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13.)

- **moov kuam** ‘grits’:

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam muab ib naab moov cej hab ib naab moov kuam rua koj nqaa moog tsev.

If you want to go home, tell your sister to give you a bag of buckwheat flour and a bag of grits to carry home. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13.)

The exact meaning of *kuam* is not completely clear. Heimbach (p. 90 *kuam*) translates it as ‘cornmeal’. Bertrais (p. 109 *kuam*) translates it as ‘maize husked and cooked in steam’. *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* (p. 126 *guaf*) translates it as ‘rice (made by grinding the husks of grains to powder and steam-cooking them to produce a grain-like appearance)’ and then refers to *guaf jex* [*kuam cej*] ‘buckwheat *kuam*’ and *guaf nblex* [*kuam nplej*] ‘rice *kuam*’. Michael Johnson (personal communication) says:

moov *kuam* is most probably corn grits – coarsely ground dried maize. *kuam* is not any particular cereal grain or pseudo-cereal – it is any such grain that is ground to grits. So buckwheat itself can be ground in this way and the “rice” cooked from it is *mov kuam cej*. *mov kuam* typically refers to cooked maize grits, but this too can be made unambiguous by the term *mov kuam pobkws*. The best way of cooking grits is to steam them. Some people do not know any better and just boil it – resulting in a gooey mess. Steamed maize grits are fairly tasteless, and dry, they stick in your throat unless you have juicy dishes to go with them. It is still a staple food for A-Hmao and Gha-Mu [Hmong subgroups in Guizhou and Yunnan]. Many Hmong who have year round access to rice also like to have some maize grits now and again for a change – and there is an ongoing nostalgia as it is acknowledged as the staple one's grandparents would have been raised on.

In the story in *Lug Nruag Dlaab*, the bags of *moov cej* and *moov kuam* are actually bags of silver and gold, so we do not learn anything from the story about how *moov cej* and *moov kuam* might be cooked and eaten.

- **moov nplej** ‘flour’ (Xiongs) [rice flour].

- **moov ntsab** ‘flour’ (Xiongs) [rice flour].

- **moov pob kws** ‘corn-flour’ (Xiongs).

- **moov tshauv** ‘ashes, powder’ (Xiongs).

- **mu** ‘bee’ (Xiongs) (see also *muv*):

zib mu ‘honey’ (Xiongs). Also spelled *zib muv*.

- **mum:**

hauv mum ‘gable’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15). Also written *maum kaum*.

hauv mum tsev ‘gable’ (Xiongs).

- **muv** ‘(classifier *tug*) bee’ (Xiongs) (see also *mu*):

zib muv ‘honey’ (Xiongs). Also spelled *zib mu*.

ib paab nkawj muv ‘a swarm of wasps and bees’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

- **muv** ‘(classifier *tug*) arrow, spear’ (Xiongs):

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **muvqhev**, a kind of bee called máofēng [“hair bee”] in Chinese (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 95 mod khed):

In a story, a young woman wants to make it appear that a dead man is still alive. She puts a *muvqhev* inside a gourd and nails the gourd to a flute so that the sound made by the *muvqhev* will simulate the sound of a flute and make it appear that the man is alive and is playing the flute:

Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm dlha loo moog nteg kag tuab tug nam muvqhev tso plhuav rua huv lub nam taub, hab muab lub taub ntsa nkaus rua ntawm qaab raaj.

‘The Ruler’s youngest daughter than ran and caught a *muvqhev* and put it inside the gourd and nailed the gourd to a flute’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **muv tshau hlau** ‘(classifier *tug*) drill’ (Xiongs).

- **muab** ‘to get, to touch, to take’ (Xiongs):

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

‘So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **muab** ‘to give, to offer’ (Xiongs):

Muab raab txab dlub rua kuv sob ‘Give me the black scissors please’ (Xiongs).

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

- **muab + Noun + Verb:**

Koj muab kuv lub nplhaib zais lawm puas yog? ‘You hide my ring, isn’t it?’ (Xiongs.)

Kuv xaav muab koj zawm nkaus ‘I want to tightly embrace you’ (Xiongs).

muab cov phoo ntawv tum zoo zoo ca ‘pile the books well in order’ (Xiongs).

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for *teb*] ‘turn the head to the north’ (Xiongs).

muab lub thoob lab lug theej thoob dlub
‘replace the red pail with the black one’ (Xiongs).

Muab nwg zag rua ntawm ntoo ‘tie her, him or it to the tree’ (Xiongs).

muab ob txuj hlua sib txuas ‘connect the two ropes’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj;

muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘the human beings drove the spirits past the hills, sold the spirits’ sons to eat;
drove the spirits past the valleys, sold the spirits’ daughters to wear as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

nwg yuav muab kuv ntug povtseg!

‘he is going to chop me up’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21).

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag

‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

Suav muab kuv txiv tua lawm huas Suav muab kuv caab moog ua qhev lawm.

‘the Chinese killed my husband but the Chinese led me away to be a slave’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

Meb muab kuv Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws ntaus tuag taag.

‘The two of you have beaten me, Nplooj Lwg the Toad, to death’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug

‘The wind blows me from east to west’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum kuj muab nwg nkawm puav zais nkaus lawm hab.

‘Then the Maiden Ntsum quickly hid her pair of bats as well’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

cais nwg txhaj muab taus tsoo kem nam pobzeb.

‘So then he took his axe and he struck the crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj muab nwg lub tebchaws tu

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then divided his kingdom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

hab muab tug nyuas laublaig plhw quas zog

‘and kept stroking the little minivet’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug muab nam ncej puj dlaab cheb cheb dlu quas dlav
 ‘Yob the orphan swept out the female-spirit post thoroughly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.
 ‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

“Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os”.
 “When you go, as soon as you’re ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw
 ‘we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob ngeg taug lawm lau.
 ‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.
 ‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **muab + Noun + Verb** with the noun or pronoun not overtly present:

muab tshwj tseg ‘to sort away, to put away, to throw away’ (Xiongs).

khaub lig cua muab tshoob lawm ‘the tornado blows away’ (Xiongs).

muab txawb rua sau rooj ‘stand it on the table’ (Xiongs).

Muab txawb rua sau txee ‘put it on the shelf’ (Xiongs).

Lug txug ncuu nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag huas nam naab hab tsuv muab noj taag.

‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed [him] at once and the snake and the tiger ate [him] up’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

Yuaj! yog kuv tej nyuas qab os. Ca es kuv muab kaw.
 ‘Gracious! It is my chicks. Let me lock [them] up.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua, muab nrum nroog rua huv nam dlej.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd, and flung [it] into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntxaug the huv tuaj tas;

‘He opened [it] and, why, the ntxaug spirits *the* from inside saying:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej. Dlej muab tshoob lawm

‘The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river. The river carried [it] away’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **muab:** *ntxim yuav muab ncu rua sab ca* ‘memorable’ (Xiongs).

- **muab pov tseg** ‘to throw away’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav tsum [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hwv

‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

- **muab qoob** ‘to harvest’ (Xiongs).

- **muab rau txim** ‘to punish’ (Xiongs).

- **muab rua** ‘to give to’ (Xiongs).

- **muab sib pev** or **muab sis pev** ‘to compare’:

muab sib pev ‘to compare’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **muab tau** ‘to pick up, to take’:

Muab tau nam lauv qab tes coj nyaj hab nam lauv qab lug tsev lawm.

‘He picked up the rooster and brought the silver and the rooster home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **muab tseg ca** ‘to reserve, to set aside’ (Xiongs).

- **muab txi ua txij ua nkawm** ‘to unite as husband and wife’:

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **muab ... ua:**

Leej neeg twg ntiv teg lj muab leej twg ua Qaav Tuj

‘The one with big fingers was called Qaav Tuj’ (*Initiation* p. 122).

muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev

‘used her share of the wealth as capital’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **muab zwm xaab** ‘to put into the coffin (a dead body)’ (Xiongs).

- **muag** ‘to sell’ (Xiongs):

thaab muag khoom ‘to introduce to sell a product’ (Xiongs).

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj;

muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food.

They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **muag** ‘face’:

ceb muag ‘dirty face’ (Xiongs).

nwg nim chim chim nwg quaj quaj pus muag nti nraag qaab cub

‘he was very angry and was crying and sitting down by the fireplace covering his face with his hands’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14).

Dlaab Ntxawg nis dlaab Ntxawg, caag txhua nub koj yuav luag ntshuj quas ntshi huas, nub nua koj yuav quaj quaj pus muag ntuj quas nti nis dlaab Ntxawg.

‘Uncle Ntxawg, oh Uncle Ntxawg, why is it that each day you’ve been smiling, but today you are crying and covering your face with your hands, oh Uncle Ntxawg?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14).

- **muag**, typo for *muaj* ‘to have’?:

muag [typo for *muaj*?] *yees luj heev* ‘to have a very strong habitual desire’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *dlev labmuag* ‘red-eyed dog’, animal used as a guide and helper in folklore:

In one story, a young woman’s parents give her a puppy with red eyes (*ib tug mivnyuas dlev labmuag*) and instruct her that wherever the red-eyed dog stops, she is to marry the man who lives there and settle there (*Kwvhuam* p. 9). In a second story in the same volume, a young woman’s husband tells her that every day when she goes to work in the fields, *coj dlev labmuag nrug koj ua ke tuaj!* ‘bring the red-eyed dog with you’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 24).

In a quite different story, a red-eyed dog is really a tiger. When someone pierces a female spirit’s house with arrows, she instructs a group of spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog by the side of the road:

“Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os”.

“When you go, as soon as you’re ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

When the person who pierced the spirit's house with arrows comes to the road, what he finds is a tiger and snake. The tiger kills him, and the tiger and the snake eat him.

- **muag:** *dlig muag* 'blind' (Xiongs).

- **muag:** *hauv muag ntxaa ... hauv muag hleb* 'upon the end of the grave-mound ... upon the end of the coffin':

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

'When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your chicken crows and their chicken joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the coffin.

Koj qab teb luas qab xaa txha yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

But if your chicken replies and their chicken joins in, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb, txha le yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the coffin' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **muag:** *kaim muag quas zoj* 'to have long beautiful eyelashes':

Nim zoo zoo nkauj kaim muag quas zoj, dlej muag teev quas mag.

'She had long beautiful eyelashes and her eyes were moist' (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

nim lug ob tug nam kaim muag quas zoj zoo le ob tug namtxiv zaaj lug.

'They had long beautiful eyelashes like a dragon couple' (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **muag:** *kua muag* 'tears' (Xiongs):

noj mov ntxuag kua muag 'to have extreme sorrow or trouble' (Xiongs) ["eat rice mixed with tears"].

tauv kua muag 'to hold back tears' (Xiongs).

- **muag:** *nkauj muag paag* 'prostitute' (Xiongs).

- **muag:** *nruj muag* '(to argue) fiercely, (to be) fiercely (angry)':

Ob tug nim sis caav nruj muag quas nyee.

'The two of them argued fiercely' (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

Tes chim nruj muag quas nreeg lauj.

'He became fiercely angry' (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

- **muag:** *ntsais muag* 'to blink the eyes' (Xiongs):

Koj yuav tau qe-muag ib nyuas ntsais muag xwb, cais koj moog txug koj Nkauj Mim See lawm!

'If you will shut your eyes for just a moment, we will take you to Nkauj Mim See!' (*Nuj*

Sis Loob p. 10.)

- **muag**: *ntsej muag* ‘(classifier *lub*) face’ (Xiongs).

muaj ntsej muag ‘not shy, ability to face’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *plaub muag* ‘eyelashes, eyebrows’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *qauj muag* ‘to make eye signal (bad or good)’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *rua muag* ‘to open the eyes, try to be open minded, to see wider’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *qhov muag* ‘(classifier *lub*) eye’ (Xiongs):

av qhov muag ‘(classifier *lub*) eye glasses’ (Xiongs).

ntxi qhov muag ‘open the eyes’ (Xiongs).

qas qhov muag ‘bad looking’ (Xiongs).

qe ib saab qhov muag ‘to close one eye’ (Xiongs).

qhov muag xauj tsi pum ‘cannot see with the eyes’ (Xiongs).

tshaws kuv qhov muag lawm ‘there is something in my eyes’ (Xiongs).

tsi tshaws qhov muag ‘not important, not big’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *qhov muag teev* ‘the scale on the scale, the marks on the balance’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *qhov muag txaij* ‘to have illusion, unable to see clearly’ (Xiongs):

Ab yawd! yog meb pum Suav Los Paav ua luam dlua kev meb qhovmuag txaij meb laam has le.

‘Oh, my! When you saw the Chinese merchant going by on business, you must have had a hallucination. You’re pulling my leg’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **muag**: *thaab muag khoom* ‘to introduce to sell a product’ (Xiongs):

The first syllable, *thaab*, is from Chinese 攤 *tān* ‘to spread something out, to lay out; stand, stall or table where goods are exhibited and sold’.

- **muag**: *txav muag* ‘to blink the eyes’ (Xiongs).

- **muag**: *txaaj muag* ‘to be shy, ashamed’ (Xiongs).

- **muagnug** ‘brothers and sisters, siblings of both sexes’ (see also *muam*):

Nub caaj thaus, nam tuag nrauj txiv tuag tseg taag, tseg tau peb tug muagnug nyob xwb.

‘In ancient times long ago, the mother died and left [the children], the father died and left behind [the children] completely, left three siblings living alone’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

- **muag na** ‘vividly, vigorously, lively’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj** ‘to have, to get’ (Xiongs):

muaj kev lom zem ‘to have fun’ (Xiongs).

muag [typo for *muaj*?] *yees luj heev* ‘to have a very strong habitual desire’ (Xiongs).

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub*?] *zaig zig* ‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

Peb muaj ib puas tug yaaj ‘We have a hundred sheep’ (Xiongs).

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag ‘The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for *ntshauv*?]. *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.*

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **muaj** ‘there is, are, was, were, etc.’ (Xiongs):

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

Muaj pis tsawg tsaa? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muaj pis tsawg yaam? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muaj pis tsawg yim nyob huv koj lub zog?

‘How many families are there in your village?’ (Xiongs.)

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs).

puas muaj xwm dlaab tsi? ‘Is there something happening? Is there any news?’ (Xiongs.)

muaj nyaj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how much money is there].

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab,

Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai Dlaab Qhuas.

‘There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Tab sis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub

‘But the truth is that there is no one who knows’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 80).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thai b.

‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, muaj peb txuj kev.

‘Go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, where there are three roads’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

nam ntxaa dlu quas dlav dlaabtsi tsi muaj le

‘the grave was empty’ (*Yob Hlub has Yob Yau* p. 11).

Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nk hob ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov

‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest’ (*Lug Nruag Tsv* p. 44).

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

‘The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab

‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **muaj**: *kev muaj zug* ‘strength’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj**: *ua muaj txhaa ib ntsiv* ‘to handle well, to do it carefully or with necessary attention and force’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj ceem** ‘hard, forcefully’:

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj kua** ‘watery, juicy’ (Xiongs):

lub txiv nuav muaj kua heev ‘this fruit is very juicy’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj kuab** ‘meaningful, important’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj mob nkeeg** ‘to be sick’:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person to be sick’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **muaj nuj nqe** ‘valuable’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj nqaj** ‘fleshy, muscular’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj ntsej muag** ‘not shy, ability to face’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj nyaj** ‘rich’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj nyuas** ‘to be pregnant’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj pua npaug** ‘hundredfold’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj plhus** ‘to speak carelessly, to act carelessly’ (Xiongs):

tsi muaj plhus ‘to lose respect, to be afraid facing some situation’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj quas puj** ‘married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs):

Literally “has a wife”, as opposed to

muaj txiv lawm ‘married (said of a lady)’ (Xiongs)

literally “has a husband *already*”.

- **muaj sa** ‘living, strong, to gain strength, to come to life’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj taag lawm** ‘it is finished’, used at the end of a story (see also *taag lawm*):

Tes sis xuas sis xuas rov lug tsev tes tsuas muaj taag lawm.

‘They groped their way back to the house, and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **muaj tseeb** ‘it is true’ (Xiongs).

- **muajtsuag**: *kuab muajtsuag*, a medicinal plant, *Ranunculus sceleratus*, administered orally to treat arthritis-like ailments of the elderly and to treat impotence and problems urinating in men (Pake 1986, p. 109, Nos. 79, 80).

In shamanic belief and in folklore, *kuab muajtsuag* has the power to restore broken objects and to revive the dead:

I have given here only one story [about Shi Yi, the first shaman]. In fact, there exists in

the oral tradition of the Hmong a whole cycle of the legend of Shi Yi and of his heroic combats against the demons and the monsters ... One sees him discover the properties of the magical remedy *koua moua tchoua* [kuab muaj tsuag], one day when he broke the eggs of a female dragon. She used the plant to put her eggs back together. Then Shi Yi stole the plant to use it in the exercise of his art (*Entre* p. 121).

A folktale describes vividly how kuab muajtsuag is used to bring a dead man back to life:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag namtij txhaj moog rhu pis hlo kuab muajtsuag lug tsuag quas lawg Yob Nraug Ntsuag lub cev. Cais puab rovqaab muab dlaim txivtxag lug npug nkaus le qub, hab has kuas suavdlawg tuaj paab zuv. ... Puab txawm nov khob khob huv lub hleb tuaj, cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug moog cem hlo dlaim nam txivtxag saib, Yob Nraug Ntsuag pw ua ib ce ntxig fws quas zaum. Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug txha cev loo teg moog tsaa hlo Yob Nraug Ntsuag sawv lug.

‘Yob the Orphan’s older brother’s wife then pulled out muajtsuag medicine and sprayed it on Yob the Orphan’s body. Then they covered him again with the lid of the coffin as before, and had everyone help keep watch. ... They then heard knocking from inside the coffin, and Yob the Orphan’s older brother lifted the lid of the coffin to look, and, why, Yob the Orphan was lying there his whole body perspiring slightly. Yob the Orphan’s older brother then stretched out his hand and lifted Yob the Orphan to his feet’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

Kuab means ‘medicine’ and is the first element in the names of many medicinal plants but *kuab muajtsuag* is the only one I have seen in my Mong Leng materials. Below is a photograph of *muajtsuag* kindly provided by Michael Johnson.



- **muaj tsw** ‘owned, having an owner’ (Xiongs).
- **muaj tshaav ntuj** ‘shiny’ (Xiongs).
- **muaj txag** ‘rich, wealthy’ (Xiongs).
- **muaj txim** ‘to be ... in full amount’:

Muaj txim \$100 ‘it is \$100 in full amount’ (Xiongs).

- **muaj txiv lawm** ‘married (said of a lady)’ (Xiongs):

Literally “has a husband already” as opposed to

muaj quas puj ‘married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs)

literally “has a wife”, without *lawm*.

- **muaj txo** ‘not clear (liquid), not limpid’ (Xiongs).
- **muaj zaaj** ‘meaningful, have a lot of ideas’ (Xiongs).
- **muaj zaaj muaj zeg** ‘inebriated’:

Haus cawv tes Lis Sub Tuam muaj muaj zaaj muaj zeg pav ov!

‘They drank until Lis Sub Tuam became quite inebriated!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

- **muam** ‘(classifier *tug*) sister’ (Xiongs), ‘sister (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175) (see also *muagnug*):

Tug nug hlub pheej tshev tshev hab ntaus ntaus tug muam

‘The elder brother kept scolding and beating the sister’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

- **muam**: *Leej muam!* ‘Miss!’:

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **Muam Nkauj Lig**, ancient homeland of the Mong, identified by some with Mongolia:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebhaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebhaws Suav, tsiv tebhaws Suav rua tebhaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebhaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebhaws Los Tsuas rua tebhaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebhaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebhaws.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries.’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **Muam Nkauj Ntsum**, name of a young woman who is one of the main characters in both stories in *Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug* (Tales of Marriage Customs). The first story (*Kwvhuam* pp. 7-21) tells how Muam Nkauj Ntsum found her husband Yob Nraug Ntsuag (Yob the Orphan). The second story (*Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32) introduces the custom of paying a brideprice (*them tshoob them kug*). Muam Nkauj Ntsum is married to a man named Lob Lw and they are not getting along. Finally, they learn that it is because Lob Lw did not pay a brideprice. When the brideprice is paid, the marriage goes well.

- **Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa**, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe

player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **muam npawg** ‘bilateral female cross cousin [i.e. mother’s brother’s daughter or father’s sister’s daughter], matrilinear female parallel cousin [i.e. mother’s sister’s daughter] (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **muas** ‘soft, tender, fine’ (Xiongs).

- **muas**: *saam muas txhov*, pile of leaves covering the remains of a dead person, from Chinese 上 马草 *shàng mǎcǎo* ‘to put 马草 *mǎcǎo* (a type of grass) on the pile’:

On the roads that link villages to one another, or on the paths that lead villagers to their fields, one often finds large piles of leaves that they call, in Sino-Hmong, *Chang Moua Ts’or* (saam muas txhov). This is the site of human remains that are covered up in this way in order that the poor dead man will have a house and have offerings of food. If not, he will fling himself upon the passer-by and devour the contents of his belly, leaving the passer-by wobbly and famished. Each traveler upon seeing the pile of leaves picks up a leaf to add to the pile, saying, “Here is meat, do not come to bother me! You are hungry, here is something to nourish you. Oh, *Chang Moua Ts’or*, let me be free to go and to come back safe and sound! Let me be able to pass without getting illness or fatigue, let

me keep my appetite and my health!” (*Entre* p. 103.)

Măcǎo means literally “horse grass”. Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “I imagine that the idea is (or was) that you are feeding his horse rather than the deceased himself – I don’t think Hmong would feed someone with grass. Horses have been buried with rulers in China since the Neolithic – some of this culture could have passed down in the idea that the deceased is not alone but is accompanied by his horse. Perhaps deep down in Guizhou/Yunnan this was influenced by the Qing dynasty soldiers (originally northern nomadic horsetribes) rather than being very early.”

Michael sent me this photograph of a person carrying a load of *măcǎo*:



- **Muas**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Zaag** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Mǎ*.

- **muas**: *luas muas*, final particle:

tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

‘the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **Muas**: *Txoov Kabyeab Los Muas*, name of a male celestial being who is one of the major characters in the story “Lying on the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth” (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 35-52).

Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas appears initially as someone whom three woman call upon to help them become pregnant. Later in the story, the son of one of the women marries Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas's daughter, and Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas comes to the young man's aid when he is in peril. Because Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas helps the three woman become pregnant, he is perhaps to be identified with Kabyeeb (Chinese Guānyīn), the Goddess of Mercy, one of whose principal functions in Hmong belief is to help woman become pregnant. This may be a plausible identification despite the fact that Kabyeeb is female and Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas is male. Bertais (1978:507) translates Txoov Kab Yeeb (without Los Muas) as 'name of a spirit' and says that Txoov Kab Yeeb brings children to women.

- **Muas:** *Siv Yig Muas (Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 19-34): See **Siv Yig**.

- **muaslwj** 'sambar deer', from Chinese *mǎlú*, also spelled *mos lwj*:

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 'Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **muav**, typo for for *nuav* 'this':

cov mov muav [typo for *nuav*?] *zas heev* 'this rice is very soft' (Xiongs).
lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*
 'this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well' (Xiongs).

ML

- **mlob** '(classifier *tug*) cat' (Xiongs) (see also *mlov*):

Tes nam mlob hab nam dlev ob tug quaj dlhuj quas dlhev tes ob tug ha moog lauj. Moog txham le moog txug. Nam dlev ha moog zuv plis, huas nam mlob moog zuv tsuag.
 'The cat and the dog cried out and off they went. When they had gone a little ways, the dog went to lie in wait for wildcats and the cat went to lie in wait for rats' (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.
 'The rat wriggled out of the cat's grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river' (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Frequently occurring in the compound *tshwsmlob* 'cat':

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwsmlob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj pawg, quaj mi-aub. Ua le le ntawd tes Los Lwm nim dlha quas loo moog tas; "Los Tuam

av! mi-aub sas! yog nam miv mi-aub os”.

But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried “Miau”. So Los Lwm ran back and said, “Oh, Los Tuam, it’s just a pussycat, a little bitty pussycat!” (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **mlom** ‘(classifier *tug*) statue’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *miào*.

- **mlos** ‘bent, distorted, dented, depressed’ (Xiongs).

- **mlov**: *tshwvmlov* ‘cat’ (see also *mlob*):

tshuav tuab nam dlev pw caws ceeg ntawm ntug qhovcub huas tshwsmlov pw caws ceeg peg qhovtxus quaj; “mi-aub! mi-aub!”

All that remained was a dog curled up by the fire and a cat curled up on top of the stove crying, “Miau! Miau!” (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

- **mluag** ‘sad, sorry, weak, tired’ (Xiongs).

N

- **na** ‘to smell’ (Xiongs):

na zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to smell for a short instant, take a quick sniff].

- **na** ‘why, ...’:

Nwg txawm taug kev moog rua peg luagteb, na txawm pum nwg tug muam tug neevtaw tuaj moog lawm.

‘He then followed the road up to the upper part of the swidden field, why, then he saw his sister’s footprints coming and going’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

Nwg taug moog na, nwg tug muam txawm nkaag rua huv ib lub qhov aav.

‘He followed and, why, his sister had gone into a hole in the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

Leej muam moog cem hlo lub nam loog na, cav yog nwg tug nug yau tuaj txug hov hab quaj quaj ua labmuag quas khiv.

‘The sister went to lift the loog, why, it was her little brother who had come and she wept until her eyes were red’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8).

Cais Yawm Dlaab ib tsuag tim u, ua cav tau kag nwg txiv lug.

‘So the Spirit [took] a step way over there, why, he [the Spirit] had brought his [the young man’s] father’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p.10).

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver there, why, there was a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Moog txug nraag kev na tuab nam txiv tsuv txawb paiv nraag kev
 ‘When he got down to the road, why, a male tiger was crouching down by the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntxaug the huv tuaj tas;
 ‘He opened it and, why, the ntxaug spirits *the* from inside saying:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **na:** *muag na* ‘vividly, vigorously, lively’ (Xiongs).

- **na:** *pob na* ‘gum’ (Xiongs).

- **na cav** ‘why, ...’:

tug nug hlob saib na cav yog ob tug tug muam tag
 ‘the older brother looked and, why, it was indeed their sister’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **nab**, intensifier:

Tes cov nyuj cov neeg dlha ndlaag quas nab lug rua huv lub nyuas ceebpov tes pluj taag rua huv.
 ‘The vast herds of cattle and horses all disappeared into the little gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Tes rauv suavtawg auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lus, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.
 ‘Fires were lit in all the banana leaf houses, smoke coming up in great clouds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

tej nyuj, tej neeg, tej qhev tawm ndlaag quas nab coob coob huv lub nyuas ceebpov lug.
 ‘a great crowd of cattle and horses and servants came out from the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **na**, final particle:

Yob moog sim tshuaj na, tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!
 ‘Yob went to try the medicine, the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **nad!** ‘mother!’, vocative form (see also *nam*):

In a story, a woman who has been transformed into a cow helps her young daughter splice hemp. The girl explains this to her step-mother, whom she addresses as *nad*.

Nam yuav nad! Kuv moog ces kuv muab ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj taub hau, ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj teg nam nyuj taw, tes nam nyuj nrug kuv saws thab. Txhaj le tau ntuag npaum le los mos nad!

‘Oh mother! When I go, I hang a hank on the cow’s head, a hank on the cow’s front hoof and rear hoof, and the cow splices with me. So I get so much hemp fiber, mother!’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 32.)

- **naj** ‘to cut meat by selection’ (Xiongs).

- **naj** ‘every, all’ (Xiongs).

- **naj** ‘(no classifier) time’ (Xiongs):

thaws naj ‘lifelong, all one’s life’ (Xiongs).

- **naj mo** ‘every night’ (Xiongs).

- **naj nub** ‘every day’ (Xiongs).

- **naj zag** ‘every time’ (Xiongs).

- **nam** ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) mother’ (Xiongs), ‘mother’ (*Village* p. 175) (see also *nad*):

kuv nam txum ib hub cawv ‘my mother ferments a jar (a barrel) of alcohol’ (Xiongs).

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dlub ‘My mother dyes her skirt in black’ (Xiongs).

- **nam** ‘big, huge’ (Xiongs).

- **nam** ‘to get close to, to approach’ (Xiongs).

- **nam**, syllable preceding nouns and words or phrases used as nouns:

Cais Ntxawm txhaj dlha loo moog nqaa hlo ib lub nam tog lug xab nam zaaj lub cejdlaab.

‘Then Ntxawm ran and fetched a stool and put it under the dragon’s neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Ntxawm muab lub nam tog lug tso xab taubhau taag

‘Ntxawm put the stool under his head’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Tug nam tsuv txawm has tas

‘The tiger then said’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 131).

Tug nam dlais teb has tas

‘The bear replied’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 132).

Cais tug nam npuateb (Los Tuam) txawm cuab has nwg zaaj lug nruag

‘Then the wild pig (First-Born Son) began to tell his story’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 132).

Ntaus peb txheej ntawg rua nam tuag. Ua ib txoj caw, muab nam qab tsuj tuag.

‘Cast the divinatory rods three times to communicate with the dead person. Pour out one serving of liquor and trample the chicken to death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

Ob tug dlha dlha xauj na has, ub! puj Los Xaab mas cav yog tug nam kws naag ob tug pum quas tag.

‘The two of them ran to take a peek and, why, oh my!, Mrs. Los Xaab was indeed the one

they had seen the previous day' (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

The syllable *nam* used in this way does *not* mean 'mother' or 'female'. It may refer to males, as in:

Nam txiv tsuv nov luas ywg ntshai le ntawd taag

'The male tiger thought that what he heard [the leopard] say might be so' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 142).

Tug nam txiv twmkum nyav moog dlhau plhawv xwb

'A male rhinoceros came galloping up' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 18).

Koj moog, nam txiv dlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'When you go, the male spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

In the following example, you get both *nam* meaning 'mother' and *nam* as a syllable placed before a noun, not referring to sex:

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,

Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.

'you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door, Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way' (*Initiation* pp. 129).

- **nam**, emphatic particle before a verb:

tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

'the medicine was not effective at all!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **nam**: *tuab nam qas*, emphatic particle (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **nam dlaab** 'mother's brother's wife' (*Village* p. 175).

- **nam laug** 'sister' (Xiongs).

- **nam ncej pujdlaab** 'female-spirit post':

The word *ncej* means 'post, pillar, stake, support'. Often it refers to houseposts. Some versions of the *Qhuab Ke* or Showing the Way funeral chant, when speaking of the spirits associated with different parts of the house, speak not of the spirit of the fireplace, the spirit of the main room, and so forth, but rather of the spirit of the *ncej* of the fireplace, and so on, i.e. of the housepost that is located in or near that part of the house.

In the story "Nam Ncej Pujdlaab" (The Female-Spirit Post) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 26-29), Yob the orphan (*Yob ntsuag ntsuag*) comes upon a *ncej* in which a female spirit (*pujdlaab*) lives.

Eb! nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog cuab cuab ntxab ib nub tsausntuj tes nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug txug ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab.

‘Well! Yob the orphan was setting traps all day until nightfall and so Yob the orphan arrived at the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

He goes inside, sweeps it out nicely, and sleeps there.

The female spirit then asks to a group of spirit children (*cov mivnyuas dlaab*) to spit a glob of saliva (*ib phawb quavncaug*) on the road and put a fern leaf (*ib rev nplooj suab*) there. The next morning, when Yob the orphan comes to the road, he finds a pile of silver (*ib pawg nyaj*) and a rooster (*ib nam lauv qab*).

A second person comes and asks permission to sleep in the female-spirit post but this person pierces the post with arrows.

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

This time, the female spirit instructs the spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog (*dlev lab muag*) in the road and to place a stick (*ib tug paas*) there. When the person who pierced the post with arrows comes to the road, he finds a tiger and a snake. The tiger kills him at once and the snake and the tiger eat him.

- nam ntxawm ‘father’s younger brother’s wife, younger brother’s wife’ (*Village* p. 175):

In a folktale, a man visiting his sister in the spirit world is invited by his sister’s spirit-husband to attend a funeral, where the spirit is in charge of preparing food for the funeral guests. The spirit goes off to fetch “meat” – i.e. human beings – and asks the young man whether it would be appropriate to kill the person he has fetched. At one point, the spirit brings the young man’s father’s younger brother’s wife:

Nwg rua ib tsuag tim u, ua cav kag nwg nam ntxawm lug. Yawm Dlaab tig lug nug has tas:

He [the spirit] took a step way over there, why he had brought his [the young man’s] father’s younger brother’s wife. The Male Spirit turned [to the young man] and asked:

“Dlaab ntxawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?”

“Wife’s younger brother, this one is she appropriate to kill or not appropriate?”

Tug nug ntxawg kuj teb tas:

The younger brother then replied:

“Yawm yij, tug ko yog tuv nam ntxawm, tua tsi nyog ho!”

“Sister’s husband, that one is my father’s younger brother’s wife, to kill her is not appropriate!”

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- nam tais ‘mother-in-law’ (Xiongs), ‘wife’s mother’ (*Village* p. 175):

Nub tomqaab, Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm moog cuag Saub taag, nwg le maam

rovqaab moog cuag nwg namtais

‘The following day, the Ruler’s youngest daughter went to meet Saub, she then went back to see her mother’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

Ob tug moog txug na, ob namtais yawmtxiv tseem nyav ua npua rooj taag.

‘When the two of them arrived, [Muam Paajqawm’s] parents had just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 18).

Taub Qaub, meb muab tug laagnpua nuav tu kuas zoo zoo es pegkig kuv xaa meb moog fij meej lawm meb namtais puab.

‘Taub Qaub, the two of prepare this pig well and tomorrow I will escort the two of you to pay the customary visit to your wife’s mother’ (*Lug Nraug Tsuv* p. 119).

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **nam tij** ‘older brother’s wife’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **nam tshab** ‘stepmother’ (*Xiongs*).

- **nam txiv** ‘mother and father, parents’:

Nam txiv losyog tug tswv tsev lub txaaj ‘The bed of the mother and father or of the head of the household’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv

‘A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **nam txiv** ‘a married couple’:

Ob nam quaspuy moog xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv, xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv.
 ‘Wherever the two wives looked there was a married couple, wherever they looked there was a married couple’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

- **nam txiv ib txhis raug** ‘naturally fit together as a pair or couple’ (Xiongs).

- **Nam yawd, ... or Nam yawm, ...** ‘Sir, ...’:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; spirit speaking to a man and his son when they arrive at the spirit’s house.)

Nam yawd, muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw, es koj tug nyuas tub moog nrug wb ob nyuas ntshais pw huv txaaj.

‘Sir, we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on, while your son can sleep in the bed with our two daughters.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; spirit speaking to a man who has come to the spirit’s house.)

“Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?”

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; two men speaking to a man after spirits have killed the man’s son and the man has fled.)

“Nam yawm, koj pw nuav es koj ob tug nyuas tub nrug wb ob tug nyuas ntshais pw huv txaaj!”

“Sir, you sleep here and your two sons can sleep with our two daughters in the bed!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, spirits speaking a man whose has come to the spirits’ house with two companions whom the spirits take to be the man’s sons.)

- **nas** ‘to push on, to press, to put a weight on’ (Xiongs), ‘to press down’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140):

tswv nas, in a needlework square (*noob-ncos*), applied bands of material sewn one on top of the other, so that the edges of the bottom piece are visible (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140), in a skirt, one band sewn on top of another, so the edges of the bottom piece are visible (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).

- **nav** (classifier *tug*) ‘tooth, teeth; blade’ (Xiongs):

kaug nav ‘tooth, teeth’ (Xiongs).

pob tsaig nav ‘denture’ (Xiongs).

rhu nav ‘to pull out a tooth (or teeth)’ (Xiongs).

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
 ‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

- **nav chais** ‘(classifier *tug*) blade’ (Xiongs).

- **naa**, intensifier:

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob

dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **naab** ‘(classifier *tug*) snake’ (Xiongs):

dlaim tawv naab ‘the snake skin’ (Xiongs).

tug dlaab yeeg ua ib tug naab ‘the ghost changes into a snake’ (Xiongs).

Lug txug ncua nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag huas nam naab hab tsuv muab noj taag.

‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once and the snake and the tiger ate him up’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The third month of the year is the month of the snake:

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the first day of the first month is

luav hli – naab xab 1 ‘month of the rabbit – snake day 1’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that the day of the snake is a less auspicious day on which to be born than the day of the rabbit:

Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.

Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the

month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person's horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

- **naab** '(classifier *lub*) bag, sack, luggage' (Xiongs).

- **naab** 'head of grain, ear of grain' (Lyman p. 197):

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

'Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **naab**: *khaub naab* 'bag' (Xiongs).

- **Naab**: *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab*, a widespread couple in the mythology and folklore of the Mong Leng and other Hmong groups:

In *Initiation* (pp. 50-59), *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are the primordial human couple who initiate agriculture and the clan system. *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are also among the *neeb* (helper-spirits) invoked by shamans (*Initiation* p. 173).

In *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 30-40), *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are the parents of a little girl named Nog. *Nkauj Ntsuab* is transformed into a cow and helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*) helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*), hanging the hanks of hemp on her head and hooves. *Nraug Naab* takes a second wife, who treats Nog cruelly and puts her in peril.

- **naab pluajce** 'ribbon-snake', 'a small, white, very poisonous snake' (*Grandmother's Path* p. 55), 'a kind of snake with a flat body' (Bertrais):

"Es koj puas ntshai naab pluajce?" "Aub! naab pluajce, tsi has oj. Kuv ntshai ntshai le oj".

"Then are you afraid of ribbon-snakes?" "Oh my! Don't talk about ribbon snakes. I'm very afraid of them." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 22-23.)

"Nuav yog dlaabtsi niv yuam?" "Koj tsi saib ntshai yog naab pluajce pob". Tes aub yaub! nam puj dlaab nam ntshais tuag pis tsag lawm lauj.

"What is this?" "You don't suppose it might be a ribbon snake." Then – oh my! – the female spirit's daughter died instantly. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23.)

- **naab raajkubsai** 'cobra' (Lyman p. 197):

"Es koj ntshai naab raajkubsai tsi ntshai?"

"Then are you afraid of cobras?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **naab thoobpuab** 'shoulder-bag':

Ib ntsiv quav tes Los Xaab dlhau plhawv tes nwg txa ntshis ua ib tug yoov yaa ceev ceev

moog tsaws nkaus rua ntawm Los Xaab lub naab thoobpuab.

‘The instant that Los Xaab was gone, the old Chinese man’s daughter transformed herself into a fly and flew at top speed and landed on Los Xaab’s shoulder-bag’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

ob tug muab lawv kag rua naab thoobpuab

‘the two of them quickly put their [horses] in the shoulder-bag’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Kuv yuav moog nyob huv hab es, koj khuam lub naab thoobpuab xwb.

‘I am going to go inside as well, and you will just hang the shoulder-bag on your shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Tes Ceeb Pov txawm nkaag kag rua huv naab thoobpuab lawm hab lauj.

‘So Ceeb Pov went inside the shoulder-bag as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Nwg lug txug hov nwg khuam quas nyo nam naab thoobpuab txug hov. ‘Then Los Xaab hung the shoulder-bag on his shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!

‘Los Xaab, all you’ve got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16.)

Nwg khuam lub naab thoobpuab lug txug ntawm qaab-tsi-taug ‘Los Xaab slung the shoulder-bag over his shoulder and reached the area just below the house on the downhill side’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo. ‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **naab**: *roj naab maas kaj* ‘kerosene, petroleum, from Lao *nà mán kâat*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **naab npawb** ‘number, from Lao *nà mbə̀ə̀*’ (*Tswv Yim*, page 4).

- **naag** (classifier *kob*) ‘rain’ (Xiongs):

caij ntuj naag ‘rainy season’ (Xiongs).

naag lug ib suam ‘it rains once’ (Xiongs).

tiv tshaav tiv naag ‘to work hard under sunlight (heat) and rain’ (Xiongs).

Cav lug ib nyuas suam naag tshaavntuj quas lug

‘Why, there was a rainshower on a sunny day’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

dlub lug cais txawm cuab tsaus fuab ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj

‘it began to get overcast and it began to drizzle’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyooj

‘it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **naag** ‘day’:

Ob namtub khwv khwv lug tau peb naag peb xyoos

‘The two, mother and son, toiled three days and three years’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

Ob tug dlha dlha xauj na has, ub! puj Los Xaab mas cav yog tug nam kws naag ob tug pum quas tag.

‘The two of them ran to take a peek and, why, oh my!, Mrs. Los Xaab was indeed the the one they had seen the previous day’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **naag** ‘rodent’:

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog.
 ‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The tenth month of the year is the month of the rat.

*10 hlis – naag hli****

10th month – month of the rat***

*** *xub sau naag rua lub 10 hli, naag taag huv ib lub xyoos.*

*** if one begins to catch rats in the tenth month, the rats will be gone for a year.

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that khib months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with khub months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with khib months and khub months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the eighth day of the first month is

luav hli – naag xab 8 ‘month of the rabbit – rat month 8’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) explains the referents of *naag*, *tsuag*, and *ntsooj* as follows:

naag – generic rodent – covers almost every genera of rodent but excludes the porcupines. Time will tell whether the New World giant members (beaver and capybara) will be included or excluded.

tsuag – vermin rodents – rats and mice around the house.

ntsooj – very large edible rats from several genera, live in the forest in underground tunnels, all edible and hunted.

- **naag kus** ‘bamboo rat’:

Nwg pheej naj nub tuaj khawb peb tsoom naag kus.

‘Every day he comes and digs up us bamboo rats’ (*Kwvhuam* pp. 11-12).

- **naag mo** ‘last night; yesterday’ (Xiongs):

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **naag mo taag kig** ‘yesterday morning’ (Xiongs).

- **naag mo tsaus ntuj** ‘yesterday night or last night’ (Xiongs).

- **naag noog** ‘all the small wild animals’ (Xiongs).

- **naag ncuav** ‘(classifier *tug*) squirrel’ (Xiongs):

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev

‘But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagncuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?”

‘“Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?”’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **naag tshauv** ‘drizzle, light rain’:

Lug naag tshauv cuaj li nree txhaa caaj qheb.

‘In the light rain it stiffens and becomes as rigid as the core of the branches of a chestnut-tree’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

dlub lug cais txawm cuab tsaus fuab ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj

‘it began to get overcast and it began to drizzle’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

ntuj tsaus fuab quas nti ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyoos
 ‘the sky had been completely overcast and it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Lug lug nto sau nam roob zoo tes naag tshauv naag sua nim zig quas zoj
 ‘He traveled until he came to the top of a forested mountain, whereupon it began to drizzle’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

- **naag xub** ‘thunderstorm’:

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub
 ‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

- **naag xub naag cua** ‘thunderstorm’:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.
 ‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **Naaj**, in names of rivers: **Naaj Khaab**, the Nam Khan, a tributary of the Mekong (Lao *Nàm Kháan*), **Naaj Kho**, the Kho River, a tributary of the Mekong, **Naaj Khoom**, the Mekong (Lao *Nàm Khǒng*):

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab
 ‘The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **Naaj Caas** ‘Nam Chan’, the name of a village:

kuv lub zog yug yog Naaj Caas ‘my village of birth was Nam Chan’ (Xiongs).

The name ‘Nam Chan’ appears to be Lao.

- **naas** ‘(classifier *lub*) wallet, safety box’ (Xiongs).

- **naav** ‘to put on, to wear’ (Xiongs):

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for ntshauv?]. Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are

not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don't have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo nkauj rua koj naav
'You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj;
muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.
'The human beings' hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits' sons as food.
They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits' daughters as clothing'
(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

When a person is born, their placenta, called their *tsho* 'upper garment, shirt', is buried in the floor of the house. When a person dies, they must return to the house where they were born and dig up their "shirt" to wear before they can continue on their journey to meet their ancestors:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag koj lug naav.
'You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **naav** 'skinny, small, tiny' (Xiongs).

- **nais khus** 'teacher, from Lao *náay khúu*' (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **naub**, final particle, possibly a typo for *nawb*:

Txaus lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntshiv lawm 'enough! I don't need anymore' (Xiongs).

- **naw**, final particle:

"Ab! mej lub nam zog tuabneeg nuav es coob taag npaum nuav es qab npua quaj zug quas zawg, dlev tum ntshu quas lawg, huas tsi pum ib nyuas tug tuabneeg nyob qhovtwg naw?"

"Ab! your village's people are so numerous and chickens and pigs are crying out here and there, dogs are barking noisily, but not one human being is seen to come out anywhere?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

"Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd tes mej dlim naw".
"If you want to escape, flee into that gourd and then you'll escape." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37.)

- **nawb**, final particle (see also *naub*):

Kuv tsi tau yuam koj ua nawb. 'I did not force you to do it' (Xiongs).

tsi xob tib peb nawb 'don't blame us' (Xiongs).

tsi xob ua twm kuv nawb ‘don’t challenge me’ (Xiongs).

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb
‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

Koj muab tug nam laug luj luj lab ploog ntoo sau koj taubhau nawb.
‘Take a great big, bright red band of cross-stitch embroidery and wrap it around your head’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Tes koj ntsab nkaus hlais hlo, nqog kag nawb.
‘Grab it and cut it off and swallow the whole thing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb.
‘Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month of the lunar calendar they do not perform the ceremony of cutting off the Sub’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwm kaab mas lub ntsab yog has tas, puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca ntawm dlaim ntawv hov nua nawb.
‘The essential meaning of the three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper is that they bring to mind Vaajkaav’s mouth and two eyes, there on the paper’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Luas has tas, ‘koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?’ nua cais koj teb has tas, ‘yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb’ nua nawb!
‘When he says, “What would you like to eat?”, then you answer that if he has some dry planks, then all you want is a bit of dry plank together with rice in cold water’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

“Awb! kuv faib lawm nawb?”
“So! Shall I divide it?” (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 53.)

- **ne**, final particle:

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”
“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **nej**, final particle:

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?
‘Son-in-law Yob came to try the medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **nee** ‘a crossbow shot’ (see also *neev*):

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

‘Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

- **neeb** ‘shamanic spirit’:

Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj koj ntawm cov qhua neeb) koj qhua neeb lug ntxooj tub tuabneeg ntawd. Yog hastas nwg luj loog hum hab txhaab [typo for txhaav] hum, Siv Yig le muab ib nkawd qhua neeb nrug nwg.

‘First, when a person is going to know how to perform shamanic ceremonies, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends Siv Yig (Siv Yig is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person. If his faint voice fits and his bones fit, Siv Yig will give him a pair of shamanic spirits’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

- **neeb**: *qhua neeb*, shamans’ ceremonies which are spoken in Mong (as opposed to *qhua suav*) (*Entre* pp. 171-181).

- **neeb**: *thaj neeb* ‘the shamanic altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door (*Tswv Yim* p.15).

- **neeb**: *txiv neeb* ‘(classifier *tug*) shaman’:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the world of living human beings], but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **neeb**: *ua neeb* ‘to perform shamanic ceremonies’:

Ub! Siv Yig Muas, koj nim txawj txawj ua neeb, tau tau nqaj noj.

‘Say, Siv Yig Muas, you know how to perform shamanic rites, so you get meat to eat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

cov tuabneeg kws paub ua neeb twb yog cov dlaab nuav ua cov cob hab qha puab. ‘the people who knew how to perform shamanic ceremonies, it was in fact these spirits who were the ones who trained and taught them’ (*Ua npausuav* p. 22).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug. Muaj ib txha kuj hastas, leej twg zwm txiv losyog qhua neeb tshoj lug txug tes nwg le txawj ua neeb. Nwg txawm xaav ua neeb hab xaav txawj neeb npaum le caag los yog nwg moov tsi txug hab luj loog tsi hum mas yeej tsi txawj ua neeb ib zag

‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble. There are some who say that anyone whose destined day or clan of shamanic spirits turns to him, will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies. He will then want to perform shamanic ceremonies but however much he wants to know how to [perform] shamanic ceremonies, if his destiny/merit does not reach and the faint voice does not fit then he will never know how to perform shamanic ceremonies’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **neeb yaig** or **kev ua neeb ua yaig** ‘shamanism’:

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nqe hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.

‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **neeg** ‘(classifier *tug*) horse’:

kua tw neeg ‘(classifier *tug*) horse tail’ (Xiongs).

Nkuaj nyuj hab nkuaj neeg ‘Cattle-pens and horse-stables’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

saam neeg ‘to castrate a horse’ (Xiongs).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The fourth month of the year is the month of the horse:

4 hlis – neeg hli

4th month – month of the horse (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that khib months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with khub months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dluu. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with khib months and khub months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the

dragon). For example, the second day of the first month is

luav hli – neeg xab 2 ‘month of the hare – horse day 2’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

Xaav Yeeb Xyooj says that the day of the horse is a very inauspicious day on which to be born:

Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.

Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person’s horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

- **neeg** ‘human being’ (see also *neej*):

haiv neeg suav ‘Chinese’ (Xiongs).

Koj yawm qas laug os, koj taub hau ntoo tsis nyog ntuj, koj nyob koj caj neeg. Koj tuag koj caj dlaab.

‘O elder, you did not have the protection of heaven. Once you were here. Once you were a human being. But now you are dead. Now you are a spirit’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 74).

- **neeg** ‘a person’s life’:

Koj yuav toum [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hwv

‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

- **neeg**: *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **neeg**: *tuab neeg* ‘human being, people, person’ (Xiongs):

cov tuab neeg pluag ‘poor people’ (Xiongs).

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem

‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg suav ‘Chinese’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg tawv ‘tough man’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg thov khawv ‘the beggar’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg txawj ntawv ‘literate people’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg txawj xwv pov ‘people that know how to save money’ (Xiongs).

ib pawg tuab neeg ‘a group of people’ (Xiongs).

tua tuab neeg ‘to murder, to kill people’ (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev
‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

tsev tuab neeg ‘family, household’ (Xiongs).

ua tsheej ib yig tuab neeg

‘to be able to manage the family, to become a family’ (Xiongs).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebhaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **neeg fuab neeg cua** ‘cloud and wind horses’, flying horses in folklore and shamans’ ceremonies:

yawm fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug hab nam fuabtais ob tug yuav tawm rooj caij neeg fuab neeg cua moog tshaam tebhaws

‘the king and queen [of heaven] would go out the door and mount their cloud and wind horses to go and inspect their domain’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 7).

- **neeg txaij** ‘(classifier *tug*) zebra’ (Xiongs).

- **neej** ‘life, living’ (Xiongs):

sim neej ‘lifetime’ (Xiongs).

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs).

taag sim neej ‘to die, to pass away’ (Xiongs).

zoo neej ua lawm luas puaj ‘prosperous’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **neej** ‘a living human being, as opposed to a spirit’ (see also *neeg*):

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj;

muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food.

They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **neej**: *nrhav neej* ‘to look for someone to marry’:

In the first story in *Kwvhuam*, a young woman has been instructed by her parents to find a husband and the first creature she meets is a cloud:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

- **neej**: *ua neej* ‘to live one’s life’:

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws ua neej nyob raws xeem hab raws paab pawg.

‘The Mong are are ethnic group who live their lives in accordance with clan and subgroup divisions’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **neej**: *ua neej* ‘to be a human being’:

Tshwm sim lug ua neej nyob rua lub nplaj teb nuav

‘Among those who emerge as human beings here on the face of the earth’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81).

- **neej**: *ua neej* ‘to get married and start a family’:

lug txaj sib ua neej ‘song about getting married and starting a family’ (*Tswv Yim* pp. 34-37).

- **neej**: *ua neej quas ntshas* ‘to be married’, used in reference to the primordial human couple:

Nkauj quas Ab ua neej quas ntshas tau xyaa naj tsis muaj tub.

The Mist Maiden had been married for seven long years but had no children.

Nraug Oo ua neej quas ntshas tau xyaa xyoo tsis muaj nyuas.

The Cloud Youth had been married for seven long years but had no little ones.

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6.)

- **neej**: *ua neej ua ntshas* or *ua neej quas ntshas*, formula at the end of folktales, similar to ‘lived happily ever after’ in English:

*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug ntshais Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv
pujyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaabteb hab ua fuabtais kaav tebhaws, hab nyob ua*

neej ua ntxhas lug lawm.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Nyooglaug daughter Ntxawm then took Ntxawm’s parents down to live in the southern part [of the country] and became king and queen ruling the country, and lived in peace and happiness’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **neej**: *zoo neej* ‘good life, good fortune, well off’ (Xiongs).

- **neej xai plaub ntug** ‘court, justice’ (Xiongs).

- **neej tsaa** or **neej ... tsaav** ‘relatives of wife’:

neej tsaa ‘relatives of wife’ (Xiongs).

kwv tij neej tsaa ‘all relatives and friends’ (Xiongs).

Mo hov tes Los Xaab, luas neej luas tsaav, luas nam luas txiv nim tuaj cuaj pwg neeg yim pwg nraa tuaj ua vaaj ua tsev rau Los Xaab hab Ceeb Pov ob tug nyob.

‘That night, Los Xaab’s wife’s family, her mother and her father, came with nine shoulder-loads on horses and eight shoulder-loads of bundles to make a house and garden for Los Xaab and Ceeb Pov to live in’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **Neej Tsu**, a man’s name, the name of the dead person for whom the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) ceremony described in *Initiation* is performed:

Neej Tsu as koj nyob Phuaj Hoos nua teb le chaw, sov koj haus luas pes tsawg dlej, tsaav luas pes tsawg le tawg, muab ib com nyaj nuav rua koj koj moog them luas nqe dlej nqe tawg koj le tau kev moog tov Neej Tsu!

‘O Neej Tsu ... when you lived here in the area of Phou Hong [a mountain in Laos], you drank I don’t know how much of someone else’s water, burned I don’t know how much of someone else’s firewood. Take this bundle of money with you to pay them for the cost of the water and the firewood and you will be able to go on your way, Neej Tsu!’ (*Initiation* p. 131).

- **neev** ‘(classifier *raab*) crossbow’ (Xiongs) (see also *nee*):

kuv txiv txawj txua neev ‘my father knows how to make a crossbow’ (Xiongs).

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

Nub tomqaab, yawm laug tuaj moog saib nwg dlaim teb na, ua cav ntshw lug muab nplej noj taag. Zagnua, nwg txawm chim heev. Cais nwg txhaj khawnskaus neev lawv paab nam ntshw qaab, hab moog nrhav tua.

‘The following day, the old man went to look at his field and saw that elephants had eaten all the rice. Then he became very angry. So he picked up his crossbow and set out in pursuit of the elephants in hopes of shooting them’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 43).

Luas tsuas caav koj yawm yij Nkaaj / teg ncaaj teg tuav ntaaj, / teg nceeg teg tuav neev.

‘People just spread the fame of your brother-in-law Nkaaj: / With a straight arm he wields a sword. / With a steady hand he wields a crossbow’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 75).

- **neev** ‘(classifier *tug*) trace, print’ (Xiongs):

Dlej txag ca sis zim, luas tsuj kaab laugsaab caab saab zim rua luas neev.

‘Cold water has washed into his tracks. Spiders have strung their threads inside his footprints’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

Nwg taug taug neev ntshw moog rua peg kaumhaav

‘He followed the trail of the elephants up to a corner of the valley’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 43).

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **nim**, particle indicating continuing or repeated activity, particle indicating stubbornness or insistence, particle indicating something contrary to expectation:

koj nim quaj los quaj, qw los qw ib mos

‘you yelled and screamed all night’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb! ndlib-ndleeb!”

‘the cow bells and the horse bells kept going “Ndlib-ndleeb! Ndlib-ndleeb!”’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Ua lwj toj quas tog lug mas quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov

‘The hills resounded with the sounds of cow bells and horse bells’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Nim yuav lawv lawv quaj quas nuj le hov.

‘They kept following it, weeping like that.’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

nim poob tej quas nam lub kuamuag hlaws quas hlo
 ‘big round tears kept falling from his eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

Nim quaj quaj, nim nti nti ua ntshaav nrug quas ntsuav le.
 ‘They began to weep and to scratch themselves so that their blood dripped’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

Pug Xeev Txwjlaug nim aub pob nam kub qaug ntaaj qaug ntawg lug nkaag plawg rua huv puab txaaj.
 The Ruler’s wife carried the bundle of gold on her back, stumbling with the weight of it, into their bedroom (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

Koj nim tsiv lug ua nkaufaa rua nuav lawm ais
 ‘You just ran off and deserted your family’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15).

Nyuas laublaig nis laublaig! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo nkauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!
 ‘Little minivet oh minivet! You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear and and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nrauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!
 ‘Little zebra squirrel, oh little zebra squirrel! You had mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

- **nis**, final particle common in songs:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.
Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.
 ‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.
 Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **nis**: *Ntuj nis* ‘Good heavens!’:

Ub! Ntuj nis nam Dlaav aw! ‘Good heavens, Eagle!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

- **no** ‘cold’ (Xiongs):

caij ntuj no ‘winter’ (Xiongs).

- **no** ‘to pierce, to penetrate, to bore’ (Xiongs):

Kuv laam moog muab nam ncej puj dlaab no no
 ‘I just went ahead and pierced the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes hlaw muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.
 ‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **no**: *kaab no*, unidentified insect:

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **nob** ‘here you are’ (Xiongs).

- **nog** ‘to insist on asking about something, to ask questions’ (Xiongs).

- **nog** ‘orphan’ (Xiongs), a character in Mong folklore often compared to Cinderella:

In “The story of Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab” (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 30-40), Nog is the young daughter of Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab. Nkauj Ntsuab is transformed into a cow and helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*), hanging the hanks of hemp on her head and hooves. Nraug Naab takes a second wife, who treats Nog cruelly and puts her in peril.

- **noj** ‘to eat, to take, to have (meal)’ (Xiongs):

noj qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to eat continuously].

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj;

muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food.

They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **noj** ‘livelihood’:

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj

‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

- **noj**: *khoom noj* ‘meal’ (Xiongs).

- **noj**: *ua noj* ‘to cook’ (Xiongs):

tug kws ua noj ‘the cook’ (Xiongs).

chaav tsev ua noj ‘kitchen’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **noj**: *ua noj* ‘to work on a farm, to plant crops’ (Xiongs).

- **noj mov** ‘to eat’:

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
 ‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).

As in other East Asian languages, ‘to eat’ is literally “to eat rice”.

- **noj mov ntxuag kua muag** ‘to have extreme sorrow or trouble’ (Xiongs).
- **noj ntxuag mov** ‘to eat along with rice’ (Xiongs).
- **noj sus** ‘to have lunch’ (Xiongs).
- **noj teb noj chaw** ‘to rule a country’:

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **nojtsab** ‘to celebrate the New Year’:

wb moog ncig saib luas nojtsab taag, wb yuav rovqaab lug coj moog saib nwg, hab le maam paab cuam has nwg rua koj!

‘After we have gone round and seen how people are celebrating the New Year, we will come back and take you to see her, and we will speak to her for you!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **nojtsab nojtxhu** ‘to celebrate the New Year’:

Nuj Sis Loob, ua caag koj yuav tsi moog nrug luas nojtsab nojtxhu?

‘Nuj Sis Loob, why are you not celebrating the New Year with the others?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **noj tshais** ‘to eat breakfast’:

Kuv tsi tau noj tshais ‘I have had breakfast’ [typo for ‘I have not had breakfast’] (Xiongs).

- **nom** ‘(classifier *tug*) leader, chief, important person, boss’ (Xiongs). See also *num ... tswv*.
- **nov** ‘to hear’ (Xiongs):

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **nov qaab** ‘to forget’:

Cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag txawm saib saib nov qaab moog le lawm.

‘So Yob the Orphan did look and forgot his journey’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16).

- **nov quas ntsoov** ‘to feel’:

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.

‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting him off the ground’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

- **noo quas zaws** ‘moist’:

Nwg moog tsuj tau cov aav noo quas zaws, nwg xaav tas ua caag los yuav muaj dlej nyob ze ntawd

‘He trod and found that he was stepping on earth that was moist and he thought that there must be water nearby’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

- **noob** ‘seed’:

tseem noob ‘thoroughbred’ (Xiongs).

ua noob ‘to seed’ (Xiongs).

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

‘The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Noob xyoob noob lis ntoo tsua yuav lug tau Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog qaab nrau lis caav kws. ... Noog caj qas xua ... ris tau nam peb le lub noob xyoob nrug noob le ntoos ... yuav ris tau nam noob xyoob noob le ntoo nam peb le teg.

‘The seeds of bamboo and trees came from behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade. ... The caj xua [kind of bird] ... carried away three seeds of bamboo and trees ... carried away the seeds of bamboos and trees in three handfuls’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

- **noob-ncoos** ‘needlework square’ (description in Mong Leng and English translation, illustrations, and notes in *Grandmother’s Path* pp. 136-140):

Has Txug Lub Noob-Ncoos: Zaaj nuav mas kuv yuav has txug peb Moob cov noob-ncoos.

‘About the Needlework Square: In this article, I am going to talk about our Mong needlework squares’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 134).

The *noob-ncoos* are placed under the body of the deceased in the casket. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140).

noob-ncoos-lab, square with plain red center (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140).

noob-ncoos-tsha, square with more pieces of applique; the square’s red center is covered with squares and bands of applique. The traditional colors used are red, bright pink, white, yellow, green, black. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140.)

plooj noob-ncoos, bands of material sewn one on top of another, forming a border around the central square. Traditional *noob-ncoos* are about 12 inches square. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140.)

- **noob nroj** ‘seed’ (Xiongs).

- **noobnyoog** ‘date’:

Moob Xaam Noobnyoog ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 77, chapter title).

- **noob txag noob txhu** ‘all kinds of animals’:

yuav txhua yaam noob txag noob txhu lug yug
‘bought all kinds of animals to raise’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 13).

- **noob qais** ‘(classifier *lub*) testicle’ (Xiongs). Also written *noov qais*.

- **noob qeb** or **qeb** ‘a kind of crop’ (Xiongs), ‘Job’s tears (*Coix lacryma-jobi*)’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **noob qoob** or **qoob** ‘crops, harvest, grain’ (Xiongs):

noobqoob ‘reserved grains for the next planting’ (Xiongs).

- **noob zaub** ‘seed’ (Xiongs).

- **noog** ‘(classifier *tug*) bird’ (Xiongs):

noog quaj ‘the bird sings’ (Xiongs).

plaub noog ‘feather’ (Xiongs).

naag noog ‘all the small wild animals’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

kuv tas wb muab nam noog hov tua tuav hovtxob noj pebcaug
‘I said that we would kill this bird and pound some hot pepper and eat the New Year feast’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam
monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,
rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog.

‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

- **noog** ‘to listen’ (Xiongs):

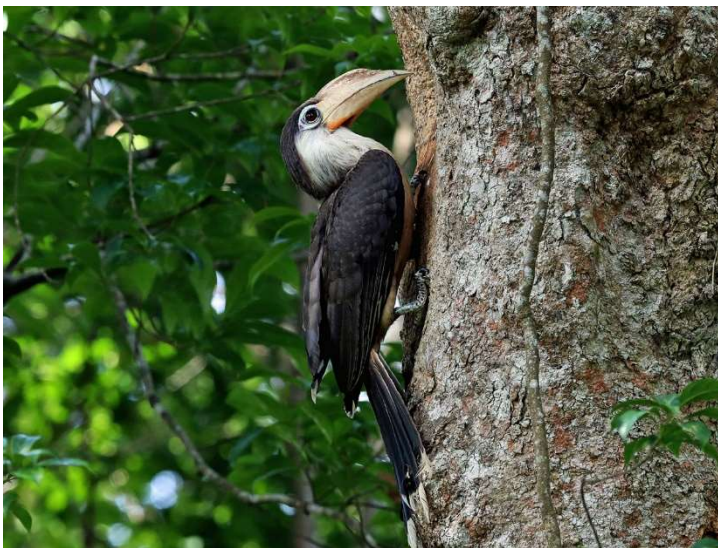
noog ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to listen].

tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev, hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog.

‘lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave, for I am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **noog roov** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of bird’ (Xiongs) , ‘hornbill’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

I have not come across hornbills in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s Mong Leng texts, but there is a White Hmong story in which a kindly fly magically shrinks the protagonist so that he can crawl into a hornbill’s crop and be flown to be reunited with his wife. Below is a photograph of Austen’s brown hornbill, *Anorrhinus austeni* (called *noog roov qaib* ‘chicken hornbill’ in White Hmong) that Michael Johnson sent me:



- **noov qais** ‘(classifier *lub*) testicle’ (Xiongs). Also written *noob qais*.

- **noog tseev** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of bird’ (Xiongs), ‘wren’ (Bertrais 1978:181).

- **nub** ‘(classifier *lub*) sun’ (Xiongs).

- **nub** ‘(no classifier) day’ (Xiongs):

naj nub ‘every day’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

puv ib tsug kaum peb nub ‘for a complete period of thirteen days’ (Xiongs) (the cycle comprises twelve days named for the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) – Day of the

Rabbit, Day of the Dragon, and so forth – but the Mong reckon it as thirteen days because they count the day on which one returns to the animal with which one started).

thaws nub ‘all day’ (Xiongs).

tshuav peb nub nkaus xwb ‘only three more days left’ (Xiongs).

Nuj Sis Loob nyob tsawg ntawm lub nam tojntxaas tog ib nub yuavlaug tsausntuj txug lub nub taj quas lag

‘Nuj Sis Loob remained sitting on the grave all day until nightfall, when the sun was just level with the horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 77-86), Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that khib months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with khub months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with khib months and khub months as follows.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). The list begins:

luav hli – naab xab 1 ‘month of the rabbit – snake day 1’
luav hli – neeg xab 2 ‘month of the rabbit – horse day 2’
luav hli – yaaj xab 3 ‘month of the rabbit – sheep day 3’
luav hli – dlev xab 4 ‘month of the rabbit – dog day 4’
luav hli – qab xab 5 ‘month of the rabbit – chicken day 5’
luav hli – lab xab 6 ‘month of the rabbit – monkey day 6’
luav hli – npua xab 7 ‘month of the rabbit – pig day 7’
luav hli – naag xab 8 ‘month of the rabbit – rat day 8’
luav hli – nyuj xab 9 ‘month of the rabbit – ox day 9’
luav hli – tsuv xab 10 ‘month of the rabbit – tiger day 10’
luav hli – luav xab 11 ‘month of the rabbit – rabbit day 11’
luav hli – zaaj xab 12 ‘month of the rabbit – dragon day 12’

The list then continues through the remaining days of the month of the rabbit (the first month of the year) and then on through the thirty days of the month of the dragon (the second month of the year) and ends with

zaaj hli – zaaj xab 30 ‘month of the dragon – dragon day 30’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 81-83.)

Later in the chapter, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj speaks of auspicious days on which to marry:

1. Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd. Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev

nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

1. Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day. For younger brothers, good for the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

Then Xauv Yeeb Xyooj speaks of auspicious and inauspicious days on which to be born:

2. *Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.*

2. Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person's horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

- **nub**: *nruab nub* 'daytime' (Xiongs).

- **nub**: *zaaj vij nub* 'rainbow around the sun' (Xiongs).

- **nub nua** 'today' (Xiongs).

- **nub nua**: *txij nub nua moog* 'from today on':

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
'From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other' (Xiongs).

- **nub ntseg ntsog** 'midday, the time when the sun is erect' (see also *nreg* 'to stand erect, to stand upright'):

"Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?"

"How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you've been doing?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **nub poob** 'west':

phaab nub poob 'west' (Xiongs).

suam nub poob 'west region' (Xiongs).

raab xub taw phaab nub poob 'the arrow points to the west' (Xiongs).

- **nub poob qho** ‘sunset’ (Xiongs).

- **nub qaij** ‘oblique sun’ (Xiongs):

yaav nub qaij ‘afternoon’ (Xiongs).

- **nub qhua txhig** ‘the day of preparation for the dead, the day before the burial, day when relatives bring rice, paper money, etc. as gifts for the deceased’ (Heimbach p. 272 *hnuv ua qhua txws*):

Nub ntawd yog nub qhua txhig.

‘That day was the day before the burial’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **nub tuag** ‘the death day, the end of life’ (Xiongs).

- **nub tuaj** ‘sunrise; east’ (Xiongs):

phaab nub tuaj ‘east’ (Xiongs).

saab nub tuaj ‘east side’ (Xiongs).

- **nub twg?** ‘what day?’:

Koj lub nub yug yog nub twg? ‘What is your birth date?’ (Xiongs.)

- **nub u** ‘the past couple of days’ (Xiongs).

- **nub yug** ‘(classifier *lub*) birth date’:

Koj lub nub yug yog nub twg? ‘What is your birth date?’ (Xiongs.)

- **nug** ‘to ask questions, to ask, to question’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **nug** ‘(classifier *tug* or *leej*) brother’ (Xiongs), ‘brother (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175):

Tug nug hlub pheej tshev tshev hab ntaus ntaus tug muam

‘The elder brother kept scolding and beating the sister’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

- **Nug**: *Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the

tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **nug**: *muagnug* ‘brothers and sisters, siblings of both sexes’ (see also *muam*):

Nub caaj thaus, nam tuag nrauj txiv tuag tseg taag, tseg tau peb tug muagnug nyob xwb.
 ‘In ancient times long ago, the mother died and left [the children], the father died and left behind [the children] completely, left three siblings living alone’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

- **nug npawg** ‘bilateral male cross cousin [i.e. mother’s brother’s son or father’s sister’s son], matrilinear male parallel cousin [i.e. mother’s sister’s son] (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **núj** ‘(no classifier) value, worth’ (Xiongs):

muaj nuj nqe ‘valuable’ (Xiongs).

nplua nuj ‘rich’ (Xiongs).

tsim nuj ‘worthy, important’ (Xiongs).

tshuav nuj nge ‘in debt, to be in debt’ (Xiongs).

- **nuj**, intensifier:

muab tug zagroj lawv quaj lawv quaj nyog quas nuj.

‘They followed the giant cricket, weeping unrestrainedly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

Nim yuav lawv lawv quaj quas nuj le hov.

‘They kept following it, weeping like that.’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

- **nuj**: *haav zoov nuj quas txeeg* ‘wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs):

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **nuj**: *haav zoov nuj quas xab* ‘(classifier *lub*) wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **nuj**: *haav zoov nuj txeeg* ‘(classifier *lub*) a wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **nuj**: *npluaj nuj* ‘wealthy’ (Xiongs):

Nwg moog lom moog tua tug muajtxag npuanuj [typo for *npluanuj*?], *hab yuam luas tej tuabneeg lug ua tauj ua qhev.*

‘He poisoned and killed a wealthy person and compelled their family to be slaves’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

- **num** ‘job’ (Xiongs):

luag num ‘(classifier *lub*) work’ (Xiongs).

In a story, a man is bemoaning his fate. His parent’s have been killed, he is unmarried, and he lives with his older brother and his older brother’s wife, a hard-hearted woman who makes him work very hard and gives him inferior food:

Num ku quas vuag noj nplooj quas ab haus dlej dlhau sab

‘Toil is harsh, leaves are bitter to eat, water is too much for one’s heart’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **num**: *ua num* ‘to work’ (Xiongs).

ua num faab fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to work intensely].

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj

‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

- **num qheb** ‘job open, work available’ (Xiongs).

- **num ... tswv** ‘lords and officials’ (see also *nom*):

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi? Nkauj Mim See yog nam nkauj qhe huas! Koj yuav Nkauj Mim See, cais koj yuav tau moog kwv kutaus kutxuas txhaj le tau noj. Koj nrug peb moog! Peb le, peb yog nkaujnum nkaujtswv, hab nkauj nyobnoj nyobhaus. Peb le peb tsi khwv los peb yeej muaj noj muaj haus tsi paub taag.

‘Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See? Nkauj Mim See is a servant-girl! If you marry Nkauj Mim See, you will have to bear an axe and a brush-knife to get your food. Come with us! We are the daughters of lords and officials. We live in the midst of plenty. Without toil we have an unending supply of food and drink’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

Puab has tas, puab yog nkaujnum nkaujtswv

‘They said that they were the daughters of lords and officials’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 14).

- **nuv** ‘to fish, to catch fish; (classifier *tug*) hook’ (Xiongs).

- **nuv** ‘confused, dazed, not knowing what to say; inadvertently, accidentally, haphazardly’:

Yawm Nyooglaug ob nam tub txawm saib moog rua nraag lub nam qhovntuj dlob hab xaam pis nuv

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two sons then looked into the black chasm and thought things over bewilderedly’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 12).

Ntxawm hab Yob ob tug pum Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nkaag plawg lug sawv xaam quas nuv
‘Ntxawm and Yob saw the Ruler come in and stand looking all around him in a daze’
(*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Tes Yob ntsuag ntsuag suav suav tuv, Yob nam qau tawm quav nuv.

‘So Yob the orphan searched for lice, and Yob’s penis flopped out’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 54).

- **nua** ‘here’ (Xiongs) (see also *nuav*):

nam txiv neeg uab dlob hee raag quas tshis ib yeeg tim u ib yeeg tim nua

‘the crow-black stallion whinnied and galloped one tier yon, one tier hither’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

‘filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 44).

- **nua** ‘this, these’ (Xiongs) (see also *nuav*):

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?

‘Son-in-law Yob came to try this medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **nua**: *mo nua* ‘tonight’ (also written *mo nuav*):

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

- **nua**: *nub nua* ‘today’ (Xiongs).

- **nua**: *nwg nua* ‘at this time’:

“Ab, mej moog es nwg nua kuv muaj qhua nyob huv tsev tes lwm mo peb tsua moog”.
 “No, you all go; at this time I have a guest in the house and the next evening we will go.”
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29.)

- **nua**: *tseb nua* ‘last year’:

Tuam tuag tseb nua ‘Toua died last year’ (Xiongs).

- **nua**: *txij nub nua moog* ‘from today on’:

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **nua**: *yaav tom ntej nua* ‘in the future, following’ (Xiongs).

- **nua**: *zagnua* ‘now’ (also written *zag nuav*):

Koj has tas koj xaiv tau koj chaw lawm nua es ... Zagnua zoo los nyob, tsi zoo los nyob xwb!

‘You said that you’ve chosen the one you really want. Now you’ve got to stay with him whether it’s good or not!’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

zagnua yog zag kws wb yuav tau sis paab quas tag.

‘now is the time when we will be able to help one another truly’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 13).

Kuv ua txhua zag kuj leej kawgnkaus nas! Yog ua caag zagnua, kuv yuav ua tsi leej hlo le lawm?

‘Each time I make it, it is completely effective! Why, now, would I make it not effective at all?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

Nub tomqaab, yawm laug tuaj moog saib nwg dlaim teb na, ua cav ntshw lug muab nplej noj taag. Zagnua, nwg txawm chim heev.

‘The following day, the old man went to look at his field and saw that elephants had eaten all the rice. Now he became very angry.’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 43).

zag nua tes kuv noog noog koj has es kuv tsi haus cawv lawm lauj.

‘now I will listen to you and will not drink liquor any more’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **nuam yaaj** ‘to bend the head backward, to look up’ (Xiongs):

The second syllable, *yaaj*, is probably from Chinese 仰 *yǎng* ‘to look up’. The tone of Chinese *yǎng* does not match the tone of Mong *yaaj* but there could be a Southwestern Mandarin dialect form *yáng* which would match the Mong form. Alternatively, *yaaj* could be from Chinese 阳 *yáng* ‘the yang world [i.e. the human world as opposed to the spirit world]’, so that *muam yaaj* would mean ‘to look out upon the yang world’, ‘to take in the view’. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **nuav** ‘here’ (Xiongs) (see also *nua*):

Nwg tuaj ib vuag nuav hab ‘s/he comes by here for a short period of time too’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsv* p. 101.)

- **nuav** ‘this, these’ (Xiongs) (see also *nua*):

cev rig tsho nuav xoob lawm ‘this suit is big’ (Xiongs).

cov mov muav [typo for *nuav*?] *zas heev* ‘this rice is very soft’ (Xiongs).

Kuv nyav yuav tau lub tsho nuav ‘I have just bought this shirt’ (Xiongs).

Kuv xaa dlaim dluab nuav tuaj rua koj ‘I send you this photo (or picture)’ (Xiongs).

Kuv xaav kom koj paab ua qhov nuav rua kuv
‘I wish you can do this for me’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug tswv phoo ntawv nuav ‘I am the owner of this book’ (Xiongs).

lub mom nuav tsi yoj kuv ‘this hat doesn’t fit me’ (Xiongs).

lub txiv nuav muaj kua heev ‘this fruit is very juicy’ (Xiongs).

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*
‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

lub zim txwv nuav ‘this time, this period’ (Xiongs).

raab hlau nuav xeb heev lawm ‘this hoe is very rusty’ (Xiongs).

tug dlej nuav moog tshuam rua dlej Mississippi
‘this river merges with the Mississippi River’ (Xiongs).

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm
‘This cow has given birth to three calves already’ (Xiongs).

tug ntshab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le ‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs).

Txig tub nyaab hlub pw chaav nuav
‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!
‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

“Dlaab ntawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?” ... “Yawm yij, tug ko yog kuv txiv, tua tsi nyog ho!”

“Wife’s younger brother, this one is it appropriate to kill or not appropriate?” ... “Sister’s husband, that one is my father, to kill him is not appropriate!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10.)

“Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?” “Aub, raab rag nuav koj tuaj tua nraug huas”.

“Why have you brought that knife?” “Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **nuav**: *le nuav* ‘like this’:

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”

“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **nuav**: *mo nuav* ‘tonight’ (Xiongs) (also written *mo nua*):

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

Mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj le cais pegkig peb tso koj moog.

‘Tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out, tomorrow we will let you go’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Miv ntshais, mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj cais peb tso koj moog.

‘Little girl, tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out we will let you go’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Mo nuav yog kuv pw ib mos ais kuv quaj cais kuv nrug mej nyob hab ua mej qhev moog.

‘Tonight, if during the night I cry out, I will remain with you and become your slave’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **nuav**: *nplajteb nuav* ‘on earth’, ‘here on earth’:

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **nuav**: *nraag qaab nuav* ‘below’:

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **nuav**: *ntawm nuaav* [typo for *nuav*] ‘here, over here’ (Xiongs):

muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw

‘we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **nuav**: *taam sim nuav* ‘now, at the present time, actually, today, these days’ (Xiongs).

- **nuav**: *tom nuav* ‘at present’:

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **nuav**: *tub ... lug nuav lawm* ‘already’:

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

- **nuav**: *tsaam nuav* ‘by now, by this time’ (Xiongs).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug.

‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **nuav**: *txij nuav moog* ‘from now on’:

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj

‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

- **nuav**: *zag nuav* ‘now’ (also written *zagnua*):

Hwj! zag nuav wb tau nam quaspuij zoo zoo nkauj lawm.

‘Well, now we’ve gotten a beautiful wife’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **nuaav**, typo for *nuav*: *ntawm nuaav* ‘here, over here’ (Xiongs).

- **nwg** ‘he, she, it’ (Xiongs):

cov kua txeer vim tas nwg puv heev ‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

Nwg laam txais cua le xwb ‘s/he just guesses’ (Xiongs).

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

‘Her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs).

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem

‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

nwg quaj vim nwg ntsib kev txom nyem

‘s/he cries because s/he is facing poverty or great problems’ (Xiongs).

nwg raug maum nyuj tuam ‘s/he was kicked by a cow’ (Xiongs).

nwg tsem rua saab xis lawm ‘s/he turned to the right already’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsi sawm tau zoo ‘s/he is not worthy of having a good time (life)’ (Xiongs).

nwg tsi thooj le peb ‘s/he is not like us’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsi yog tug tswv ‘S/he is not the owner’ (Xiongs).

Nwg txawm dlha ceev ceev tawm ‘s/he then quickly runs away’ (Xiongs).

nwg ua tawv tawv yuav kom koj moog xwb
‘s/he toughly ordered that you must go’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau
‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb ‘s/he can only do up to there’ (Xiongs).

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv
‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (Xiongs).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav
‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’
(*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog
rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub
‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug.
‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.
‘It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **nwg**: *ua nwg* ‘to cause someone or something to move violently’:

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.
‘Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

- **nwg le** ‘his, her, hers, its’ (Xiongs):

Nwg xeeb nwg le ‘It exists by itself’ (Xiongs).

- **nwg nua** ‘at this time’:

“Ab, mej moog es nwg nua kuv muaj qhua nyob huv tsev tes lwm mo peb tsua moog”.
‘No, you all go; at this time I have a guest in the house and the next evening we will go.’
(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29.)

- **nwj** ‘to kiss’ (Xiongs).

NC

- **nca** ‘to sob’ (Xiongs).

kev nca ‘sobbing’ (Xiongs).

suab nca ‘sobbing’ (Xiongs).

- **ncab** ‘used to intensify the color black’ (Xiongs), ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 556):

dlub ncab or *dlub quas ncab* ‘very black’ (Xiongs, entry for *ncab* and p. 556).

Mej nim noj noj txiv laujtauv toog nkaaj quas ncab es ab mej sab los tsi ab?
 ‘You eat and eat the lauj tauv fruit, as a dark as indigo, are your hearts bitter?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **ncaab** ‘bent, crooked, stooping’ (Xiongs).
- **ncaaj** ‘honest, just, fair, right, reasonable, good, straight’ (Xiongs):

ncaaj nceeg ‘honest, fair’ (Xiongs p. 554).

ncaaj quas nceeg ‘straight’ (Xiongs p. 554).

- **ncaas** ‘(classifier *raab*) a Mong talking instrument’ (Xiongs):

Muam Paajqawm dlha loo moog saib na cav yog nwg raab nam ncaas. Nwg txhaj chua nta lug ca lawm.

‘Muam Paajqawm ran to look, and, why, it was her jew’s harp. She snatched it down’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 16).

- **ncaav** ‘to reach, to extend the hand, to catch, to get to’ (Xiongs).

- **ncaig** ‘(classifier *lub*) ember, live coal’ (Xiongs):

Moog txav kag tau tuab tog nam fuabtxhib lug phua kag ua ob raab ntaaj. Muab ncaig tawg sau pis kag taagnrho rua.

‘They went and cut off a length of Chinese sumac and split it into two swords. They covered them with embers’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

- **ncaim** ‘to leave, to quit, to go away, to resign, to forsake’ (Xiongs).

- **ncau** ‘to divide, to separate, to branch’ (Xiongs):

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **ncau** ‘rope, string’ (Xiongs).
- **ncaug** ‘pertaining to the mouth’ (Xiongs) (see also *ncauj*).
- **ncaug**: *quav ncaug* ‘(classifier *tawb*) saliva’ (Xiongs):

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then you all spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, huv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

I can not find the word *phawb* in any dictionary and am therefore uncertain how much saliva *ib phawb quavncaug* refers to.

- **ncaug**: *viv ncaug npawg* ‘bilateral female cross cousin [i.e. mother’s brother’s daughter or father’s sister’s daughter], matrilinear female parallel cousin [i.e. mother’s sister’s daughter] (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **ncauj** ‘(classifier *lub*) mouth, source, opening’ (Xiongs) (see also *ncaug*):

kua ncauj ‘saliva’ (Xiongs).

ntxi ncauj ‘open the mouth’ (Xiongs).

qhov ncauj ‘mouth, source, opening’ (Xiongs).

rua ncauj ‘to open the mouth’ (Xiongs).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **ncauj**: *yaugncauj yauglu* ‘to provide for one’s needs’:

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

The expression *yaugncauj yauglu* appears to mean literally ‘to rinse the mouth and the orifice’, but Michael Johnson (personal communication) points out that in some Hmong dialects the corresponding expression is *yug ncauj yug lu* ‘to feed the mouth and the orifice’, which makes more sense semantically. It is possible, therefore, that *yaug* here is not ‘to rinse’ but rather a variant form of *yug* ‘to feed’.

- **ncauj**: *yoov ncauj nte* ‘mosquito’ (Xiongs).

- **ncauj ke** ‘(classifier *lub*) the way leading to somewhere’ (Xiongs):

Ncauj ke tawm ‘The way out’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **ncauj nyas**, the top section of the baby-carrier (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133):

plawv ncauj nyas, the center section of the *ncauj nyas* (top section of the baby carrier).

This part is usually covered with tiny appliqued squares, and sometimes yarn pom-poms. (*Grandmother's Path* p. 133.)

- **ncauj tawm** 'canker sores, thrush mouth' (Xiongs).
- **ncawg** 'to prefer staying with; to like' (Xiongs).
- **ncaws** 'to kick, to dig or to hoe the ground, to hit oneself against; to pick with the beak' (Xiongs):

ncaws faab quas fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to kick, dig, or peck intensely].

- **ncaws** 'half asleep' (Xiongs):

"Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, 'Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas' nua yog le caag tag?"

"Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, 'Child oh child, when your mother wasn't there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child', why is that?" (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 44.)

- **ncaws taw** 'to kick' (Xiongs).
- **ncc** 'to climb, to go up, to rise, to raise; steep, rising' (Xiongs).
- **ncc toj** 'to climb a hill, uphill, steep' (Xiongs).
- **nccb** '(classifier *lub*) mushroom, tree fungus' (Xiongs).
- **nccb nrauj ntsaum** 'toadstool':

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

'Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there' (Lug Nruag Tsuv pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

- **ncej** '(classifier *tug*) post, pillar, stake, support' (Xiongs):

Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog

'You say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear' (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 37).

- **ncej**: *nam ncej pujdlaab* 'female-spirit post':

The word *ncej* means 'post, pillar, stake, support'. Often it refers to houseposts. Some versions of the *Qhuab Ke* or Showing the Way funeral chant, when speaking of the spirits associated with different parts of the house, speak not of the spirit of the fireplace, the spirit of the main room, and so forth, but rather of the spirit of the *ncej* of the fireplace,

and so on, i.e. of the housepost that is located in or near that part of the house.

In the story “Nam Ncej Pujdlaab” (The Female-Spirit Post) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 26-29), Yob the orphan (*Yob ntsuag ntsuag*) comes upon a ncej in which a female spirit (*pujdlaab*) lives.

Eb! nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog cuab cuab ntxab ib nub tsausntuj tes nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug txug ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab.

‘Well! Yob the orphan was setting traps all day until nightfall and so Yob the orphan arrived at the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

He goes inside, sweeps it out nicely, and sleeps there.

The female spirit then asks to a group of spirit children (*cov mivnyuas dlaab*) to spit a glob of saliva (*ib phawb quavncaug*) on the road and put a fern leaf (*ib rev nplooj suab*) there. The next morning, when Yob the orphan comes to the road, he finds a pile of silver (*ib pawg nyaj*) and a rooster (*ib nam lauv qab*).

A second person comes and asks permission to sleep in the female-spirit post but this person pierces the post with arrows.

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

This time, the female spirit instructs the spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog (*dlev lab muag*) in the road and to place a stick (*ib tug paas*) there. When the person who pierced the post with arrows comes to the road, he finds a tiger and a snake. The tiger kills him at once and the snake and the tiger eat him.

- **ncej**: *txhaa ncej qaab* ‘femur’ (Xiongs).

- **ncej puab** ‘thigh’ (Xiongs).

- **ncej tse** ‘(classifier *tug*) housepost’ (Xiongs).

- **ncej zeb** ‘a stone pole’ (Xiongs):

I suspect that a more natural English translation might be ‘a stone pillar’. *Ncej* can mean a tall pole such as those used in connection with games and ceremonies at the New Year festival but *ncej* can also mean a housepost.

- **nceeg** ‘(no classifier) crowd, group (people)’ (Xiongs).

- **nceeg** ‘typical intensifier, straightness’ (Xiongs p. 554):

ncaaj nceeg ‘honest, fair’ (Xiongs p. 554).

ncaaj quas nceeg ‘straight’ (Xiongs p. 554).

- **nceev**, intensifier:

tshuav nam txhaa taubhau dlawb paug, khuav nceev tid e!

‘all that’s left is the gleaming white skull, wedged in tight over there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.

31).

- **ncig** ‘to travel around, to talk a walk, to go for a drive, to make a turn around, to encircle; (no classifier) turn, winding, spiral’ (Xiongs):

tig ib neig [typo for *ncig*?] *cob nkaus* ‘make a complete turn’ (Xiongs).

tug dlaav yuj ncig peb dlaim teb ‘the hawk is flying around our farm’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

- **ncog**, intensifier:

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **ncov**: *peg ncov roob* ‘upon the mountain top’ (Xiongs).

- **ncoos**: *noob-ncoos* ‘needlework square’ (description in Mong Leng and English translation, illustrations, and notes in *Grandmother’s Path* pp. 136-140).

- **ncu** ‘to think about, to remember, to recall, to bear in mind’ (Xiongs):

ntxim yuav muab ncu rua sab ca ‘memorable’ (Xiongs).

ncu ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to think about, to remember].

- **ncug** ‘very painful’ (Xiongs).

- **ncus**: *tuab ncus* ‘to give a sudden shake’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

- **ncua**, intensifier:

dlha quas loo lug txug ncua thoobpuab
‘ran right to the shoulder-bag’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Tes leejnam nim dlha dlha moog txug ncua lub nam tsev nruab av.
‘So the mother ran to the house in the middle of the marsh’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncua ntawm qhovrooj.
‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

Koj tog ca nwg tuaj txug ncua tsaiv, koj ntaag ua nwg tuag kag tes koj yeej los mas.
‘Wait for her to arrive, and then kill her with a blow of your sword and you will have won!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

Lug txug ncua nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag huas nam naab hab tsuv muab noj taag.
‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once and the snake and the tiger ate him up’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **ncua**: *tu ncua* ‘to stop having or receiving’ (Xiongs).
- **ncuab** ‘(classifier *tug*) partridge’ (Xiongs).
- **ncuab**: *yeeb ncuab* ‘communist’, from Chinese 冤家 *yuān jiā* ‘enemy house’:

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeev rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
 ‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

- **ncuas** ‘(no classifier) distance, time, a period of time’ (Xiongs).
- **ncuas** ‘to delay, to adjourn, to postpone’ (Xiongs).
- **ncuav** ‘(classifier *lub*) sticky rice cake’ (Xiongs).
- **ncuav**: *naag ncuav* ‘(classifier *tug*) squirrel’ (Xiongs):

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuqj txav heev txav heev
 ‘But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **Ncuavpas**: *Moob Ncuavpas*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).
- **ncw** ‘fruitful, abundant’ (Xiongs).

NCH

- **nchaa** ‘echoing, spreading (news, sound); to spread out; stereotyping’ (Xiongs).
- **nchaa ntwg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nchaa ntwg [to make the sound *nchaa ntwg*] (Xiongs p. 553).

Also listed under the typical intensifier *ntwg* ‘sound of expansion’:

nchaa ntwg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [the sound *nchaa ntwg*].

- **nchaas taw** ‘on tip toe’ (Xiongs):
- ua nchaas taw* ‘on tip toe’ (Xiongs).
- **nchaav** ‘vigorous, forceful, rude, hard’ (Xiongs).
 - **nchauv** ‘(no classifier) smoke, burning’ (Xiongs).
 - **nchu** ‘to produce smoke, to smoke; smoking’ (Xiongs).
 - **nchu auv quas nab** ‘to produce smoke in great clouds’:

Tes rauv suavtawg auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lus, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.
 ‘Fires were lit in all the banana leaf houses, smoke coming up in great clouds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **nchu paa** ‘smoking’ (Xiongs).
- **nchus** ‘to shake, to jiggle’ (Xiongs).

- **nchuav** ‘to pour, to dump, to knock down, to fall, to depart or leave in a big mass’ (Xiongs):

nchuav nthwv (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to pour].

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev, noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj teb.

‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the road. Let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring down to fill the earth’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **nchuav cev** ‘to miscarry, to abort’ (Xiongs).
- **nchuav miv nyuas** ‘to miscarry, to abort’ (Xiongs).

NDL

- **ndlag**: *xub ntlag* [sic] ‘front’ (Xiongs). *Ntl* is a rarely used alternative way of writing *ndl*.

- **ndlav** ‘shallow’ (Xiongs).

- **ndlav** ‘to pay to have something done, to rent, to grease the palm of somebody’ (Xiongs).

- **ndlaag**, intensifier:

tej nyuj, tej neeg, tej qhev tawm ndlaag quas nab coob coob huv lub nyuas ceebpov lug.
‘a great crowd of cattle and horses and servants came out from the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Quas tswb nyuj, tswb neeg, qhev mas tamtseeb nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab.

‘Cow bells, horse bells, servants in truth filled the hills and highlands.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Tes cov nyuj cov neeg dlha ndlaag quas nab lug rua huv lub nyuas ceebpov tes pluj taag rua huv.

‘The vast herds of cattle and horses all disappeared into the little gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

- **ndlaas** ‘to overflow by the edge, to make waves’ (Xiongs).

- **ndlais** ‘to break, to break out of the whole’ (Xiongs):

ndlais rhe (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to break off a piece].

taus ndlais ‘an axe with a chip broken out of the blade’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 50).

- **ndlais** or **quas ndlais** ‘typical intensifier, out of sight’ (Xiongs p. 554):

fus ndlais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [extinguished].

tsaus ndlais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [dark].

dlua ndlais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [out of sight].

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj

‘The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **ndlaug** ‘to fill’:

Coob caj coob tuag lug ndlaug toj ndlaug peg.

‘Their vast multitudes filled the hills and the highlands’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

- ndlaug ‘shiny’:

Ib lub nyuas ndlaug ndlaug dlawb dlawb zoo zoo nkauj.

‘A shiny white thing, quite beautiful’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

ib tug nplawm ndlaug ndlaug zoo le le nplawm nyaj ndlaug ndlaug

‘a smooth and shiny whip like a whip of shining silver’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

Suavdlawg nkaag rua huv lub nyuas pov dlawb dlawb, ndlaug ndlaug hov.

‘Everyone had gone into the white, shining little amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

kub ndlaug loj quas kho ‘bright golden’ (Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 17).

lub nyuas ceebpov ndlaug quas leeg

‘the gleaming gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- ndlaug ‘to crawl’:

Yawm Dlaab hab Nuj Sis Loob ob tug txa ... ua txhua yaam tsaj nyeg tsaj qus, tsaj txag tsaj dleg, tsaj yaa tsaj ndlaug

‘The Spirit and Nuj Sis Loob transformed themselves ... into all manner of tame and wild animals, cold-blooded animals and water animals, flying animals and crawling animals’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 40).

- ndlawv, intensifier:

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!

‘Los Xaab, all you’ve got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16.)

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for laj?] quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- ndlawv-ndlawv, sound of knocking:

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag ngaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **ndleeb**, sound of bells: See **ndlib-ndleeb**.

- **ndlib-ndleeb**, sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.

there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **ndliv** ‘to snap or flick with the finger; (no classifier) digit, finger’ (Xiongs).

- **ndlo** ‘typical intensifier, bodily’ (Xiongs p. 554):

tuag ndlo (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to die].

pw ndlo (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to sleep].

ndlwg quas ndlo rua Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab moog cej zeb. ... Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

‘It flowed under Ntxwj Nyoog’s stones. ... It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog’s wellsprings’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Dlej txheeb le txheeb, dlej ndlwg le ndlwg. Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

‘The water grew clearer and clearer. The water flowed more and more freely. It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog’s wellsprings’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Consider the following sentences from a folktale involving the intensifier *kag*, which the Xiongs translate as ‘completely, entirely’, and the intensifier *ndlo*, which the Xiongs translate as ‘bodily’ and which Lyman (p. 253) translates as ‘extremely; surely, definitely; completely; to the uttermost end’. The ruler puts a drop of poison in a cow’s mouth

cais ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘so then she died *kag*.’

But the ruler’s daughter Ntxawm makes the cow appear to be alive. Then the ruler puts a drop of poison in a sow’s mouth

cais ca le tuag kag lawm.
 ‘so then she died *kag*.’

But Ntxawm makes the sow appear to be alive. Then the ruler puts a drop of poison in the mouth of Ntxawm’s husband Yob

hab ca le tuag kag lawm.
 ‘and then he died *kag*.’

But Ntxawm makes Yob appear to be alive. Then the ruler, wondering why his poison isn’t working, puts a drop in his own mouth

ca le tuag ndlo lawm lauj!
 ‘then he died *ndlo*!’

Now it is final. When the ruler’s wife and his sons and his son’s wives see that he is dead they weep continuously. And the ruler’s daughter Ntxawm mourns Yob as well. And all of the villagers run to look, and see that Yob is dead as well (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* pp. 21-25).

- **ndlog** or **ntlog** ‘to roll’:

hab thaub ntuj thaub teb pawg nam pobzeb kws nwg nqaa lug tso ntawm npoo qhov ndlog vig voog moog txhaws qhovntuj lawm.

‘and hacked with all his might and main against the pile of stones which he had brought to the edge of the chasm, so that they rolled down and plugged up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

Ntl is a rarely used variant spelling of *ndl*.

- **ndlub** ‘to fall asleep soundly’ (Xiongs).

- **ndluj ndlawv** ‘tattered’:

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!

‘Los Xaab, all you’ve got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16.)

- **ndlua**, intensifier adding the idea of immediacy to the action of the verb (Heimbach p. 193 ntua):

Tes dlaabntxaug tuaj txug ndlua.

‘Then the ntxaug spirits arrived’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **ndluag** ‘torn, in rags, poor’ (Xiongs):

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for ntshauv?]. Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **ndluag**, intensifier:

Quas tswb nyuj, tswb neeg, qhev mas tamtseeb nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab.

‘Cow bells, horse bells, servants in truth filled the hills and highlands.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Quas nyuj, quas neeg, quas yaaj quas tshis mas nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ua quas tauj quas tsuag luv quas ntho.

‘Cattle, horses, sheep and goats filled the hills and highlands and cropped the weeds and shrubs to a stubble’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **ndluag rhe** ‘completely torn’ (Xiongs).

- **ndluas** ‘to shake’ (Xiongs).

- **ndluav** ‘to pour, to water, to sprinkle’ (Xiongs).

- **ndlwg** ‘to flow (liquid)’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **ndlwg nrov quas lauv** ‘to flow noisily:

Nwg maaj maam xuas tsaus ntuj nti lawv tug nyuas dlej kws ndlwg nrov quas lauv nqegtaug.

‘He carefully groped his way through the pitch darkness following a small stream which was flowing noisily downhill’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **ndlwg quas hawv** ‘to flow’:

aav ndlwg quas hawv ‘the earth flowed’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **ndlwg quas ndlo** ‘to flow’:

ndlwg quas ndlo rua Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab moog cej zeb. ... Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

‘It flowed under Ntxwj Nyoog’s stones. ... It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog’s wellsprings’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

- **ndlwg quas tsaws** ‘to flow calmly’:

Nam dlej ndlwg quas tsaws ndlwg tug quas vaws es wb moog pw nraag mav.

‘The river flows calmly and evenly so let us go to sleep down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **ndlwg quas tsag** ‘to flow’:

Nwg ob tig cev ua nwg tsag lig xub yaa lab pis vog rua huv aav cais dlej ca le npau pis dlaam tawm lug, hab ndlwg quas tsag moog rua ntxawm Txheeb Tshoj Theeb.

‘He turned himself round twice so that he emitted red flashes of lightning flying into the soil and then water boiled out and then flowed to Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

- **ndlwg tug quas vaws** ‘to flow evenly’:

Nam dlej ndlwg quas tsaws ndlwg tug quas vaws es wb moog pw nraag mav.

‘The river flows calmly and evenly so let us go to sleep down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

NDLH

- **ndlhij ndlhuj**, the sound of water boiling (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 62).

NG

- **ngaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ngaj [to make the sound ngaj] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

- **ngeg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ngeg [to make the sound ngeg] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

- **ngig ngeg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ngig ngeg [to make the sound ngig ngeg] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

- **ngig ngog**, the sound of a tiger growling (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 32).

- **ngus**: *us ngus* ‘goose’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 32).

NK

- **nkaag** ‘to enter, to go in’ (*Xiongs*):

nkaag plawg (*Xiongs* p. 555, not translated) [to enter suddenly].

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd

‘If you want to escape, flee into that gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **nkaag** ‘to crawl’ (*Xiongs*):

Nwg nkaag hawb zawg tuaj txug (*Xiongs* p. 554, not translated) [She or he arrived creeping wheezingly].

Nub tomqaab, Yawm Xeev txhaj ua txuj nkaag ib qho dlhau ib qho moog.

‘The following day, the Ruler therefore crept stealthily from one place to another’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Cais nwg tug muam txhaj nkaag tom txaaj rhu hlo tau ib naab nyaj ib naab kub muab rua tug nug ntxawg nqaa lug tsev lawm.

‘So his sister then crawled to the bed and pulled out a bag of silver and a bag of gold to give to the younger brother to carry home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 14).

The drawing on page 106 of *Village* shows the traditional Hmong bed as being made of wooden boards elevated on four short legs, so the bags of silver and gold could have been pulled out from under the bed.

- **nkaag lug huv** ‘to enter, to go into’:

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for hlo?] le

‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs) [“they don’t go into our village”].

- **nkaag rua huv** ‘to get into’ (Xiongs):

Tes Ceeb Pov txawm nkaag kag rua huv naab thoobpuab lawm hab lauj.

‘So Ceeb Pov went inside the shoulder-bag as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **nkaag sab** ‘to understand, to realize’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaaj** ‘dark blue; (classifier *rob*) ‘indigo plant’ (Xiongs):

Mej nim noj noj txiv laujtauv toog nkaaj quas ncab es ab mej sab los tsis ab?

‘You eat and eat the lauj tauv fruit, as dark as indigo, are your hearts bitter or not?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **nkaas** ‘small, skinny, lean, thin’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaub** ‘(classifier *lub*) the yolk of an egg’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaug** ‘to dart, to stab, to cast, to throw, to hurt’ (Xiongs).

- **nkauj** ‘(classifier *zaaj*) song’ (Xiongs):

tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev, hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog.

‘lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave, for I am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **nkauj** ‘young woman’:

Nkauj Ab, ua nkauj qas ntxhas moog tau xyaa naj, Nkauj Ab tsi muaj tub.

‘The Mist Maiden had been a young woman for seven years, but the Mist Maiden had not had children’ (*Initiation* p. 122).

- **nkauj**: *hluas nkauj* ‘date, lover (girl)’ (Xiongs):

Koj tug hluas nkauj puas txij koj? ‘Is your girlfriend as tall as you?’ (Xiongs.)

- **Nkauj**: *Muam Nkauj Lig*, ancient homeland of the Mong, identified by some with Mongolia (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **Nkauj**: *Muam Nkauj Ntsum*, name of a young woman who is one of the main characters in both stories in *Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug* (Tales of Marriage Customs). The first story (*Kwvhuam* pp. 7-21) tells how Muam Nkauj Ntsum found her husband Yob Nraug Ntsuag (Yob the Orphan). The second story (*Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32) introduces the custom of paying a brideprice (*them tshoob them kug*). Muam Nkauj Ntsum is married to a man named Lob Lw and they are not getting along. Finally, they learn that it is because Lob Lw did not pay a brideprice. When the brideprice is paid, the marriage goes well.

- **nkauj**: *zoo nkauj* ‘beautiful (Xiongs)’:

zoo nkauj heev ‘very beautiful’ (Xiongs).

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncu ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

- **Nkauj Ab** ‘Mademoiselle Ab’, a being that shamans speak of:

When one arrives at the entrance of the bridge, there is a crowd. As for me, I get down from my horse, I leave my horse there. I say that I’m going to the other side and I ask to be given a permit, and to be lent a mount. I borrow a horse of the dead, a wooden horse (a bier made of sticks) to pass to the other side. There, there is another huge lake, where Ngo A [Nkauj Ab] is. If, once there, I learn that the soul has already been washed, this signifies that the sick person has died. There is nothing left for me to do but go back. For one begins to wash the face at the home of Ngao A [Nkauj Ab] before beginning the rites of washing and dressing in this world. In this case, I have barely returned from my shamanic journey when it is announced to me that the sick person has died! (*Entre* pp. 160-161.)

Indeed, the road leading to Ngao A [Nkauj Ab] is without a doubt the direct way to the Beyond, the one that leads to death and to reincarnation (*Entre* p. 161).

In the text in *Entre*, the name Nkauj Ab is written in French spelling, inconsistently as Ngo A and Ngao A, but the Mong Leng spelling is given in the Index.

- **Nkauj Ab Nraug Oo** ‘the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth’, in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the parents of the first human children:

Quas tsi raug nraag ntej, yog Nkauj Ab raug nraag ntej.

‘Who appeared first? The Mist Maiden appeared first.

Quas tsi raug nraag hau, yog Nkauj Ab raug nraag hau!

Who appeared in the beginning? The Mist Maiden appeared in the beginning.

Nkauj quas Ab ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa naj tsis muaj tub.

The Mist Maiden had been married for seven long years but had no children.

Nraug Oo ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa xyoo tsis muaj nyuas.

The Cloud Youth had been married for seven long years but had no little ones.

Ntxwj Nyoog qheb lug lug has qheb lug lug nroo tas;

Ntxwj Nyoog opened his words and spoke, opened his word and roared:

Meb rov moog tu tub ntawm ntiv teg, tu nyuas ntawm ntiv ntaas.

“Go back. Cut off sons from your fingers. Cut off children from your middle fingers.”

Yawm quas Saub qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas;

Grandfather Saub open his mouth and spoke, gathered his words and roared:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj, le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshua quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj, noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.

“O Mist! O Fog! Come down to the plain, take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves’ full down onto the plain, so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world.

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev, noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj teb.

O Mist! O Fog! Come down to the road, let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring down to fill the earth.” ’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7.)

Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub, qom tsi sawv tsim noob neej,

‘Long ago, who arose to create the seeds of humankind?

Nkauj Ab Nraug Lis Oo meb sawv tsim noob neej.

The Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth arose to create the seeds of humankind.

Nkauj Ab, ua nkauj qas ntxhas moog tau xyaa naj, Nkauj Ab tsi muaj tub.

The Mist Maiden had been a young woman for seven years, but the Mist Maiden had not had children.

Nraug Oo tsi nraug lis loo moog tau xyaa xyoo, Nraug Oo tsi muaj ki.

The Cloud Youth had been a young man for seven years, but the Cloud Youth had not had offspring.

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and seek knowledge (?) on Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of silk and you will have children.”

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and seek understanding (?) on Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them.” ’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

- **nkaujfaa** ‘woman who deserts her family’:

In one story, an unmarried young woman goes to the spirit world to escape the cruelty of her older brother. He tracks her down and says:

Nam nkaujfaa nua! Koj nim tsiv lug ua nkaujfaa rua nuav lawm ais, ua caag tsi qha wb paub?

‘Family-deserter! You just ran off and deserted your family. Why didn’t you tell us?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15).

Dictionaries define *nkaujfaa* as (1) a woman who elopes, (2) a woman who is unfaithful to her husband, or (3) a woman who divorces her husband. The meaning here is that the sister went off on her own without telling her brothers where she was going.

- **Nkaujfaa:** *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **Nkauj Kaws:** *Nkauj Kub ... Nkauj Kaws* ‘Wart Girls and Toad Girls’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

- **Nkauj Kub ... Nkauj Kaws** ‘Wart Girls and Toad Girls’:

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam. Yog koj caam yeej, le pub koj koj moog. Huas yog koj caam tsi yeej, cais tsi pub hlo le!

‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you. If you win the argument, I will let you take him. If you do not win the argument, I will not’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

- **nkauj muag paag** ‘prostitute’ (Xiongs).

- **Nkauj Ntsuab** and **Nraug Naab**, a widespread couple in the mythology and folklore of the Mong Leng and other Hmong groups:

In *Initiation* (pp. 50-59), Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab are the primordial human couple who initiate agriculture and the clan system. Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab are also among the *neeb* (helper-spirits) invoked by shamans (*Initiation* p. 173).

In *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 30-40), Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab are the parents of a little girl named Nog. Nkauj Ntsuab is transformed into a cow and helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*) helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*), hanging the hanks of hemp on her head and hooves. Nraug Naab takes a second wife, who treats Nog cruelly and puts her in peril.

- **nkauj pab:** *nkauj taus ... nkauj pab* ‘the axe maiden and the adze maiden’, personifications of the axe and the adze used to cut up the tree to make the dead person’s coffin (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- **nkauj qhe** ‘servant-girl’:

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi? Nkauj Mim See yog nam nkauj qhe huas! Koj yuav Nkauj Mim See, cais koj yuav tau moog kwv kutaus tutxuas txhaj le tau noj.

‘Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See? Nkauj Mim See is a servant-girl! If you marry Nkauj Mim See, you will have to bear an axe and a brush-knife to get your food’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

- **nkauj sua** ‘Chinese girl’ (Xiongs).

- **Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas** ‘the Maiden Sua and the Youth Nplas’, personages invoked in one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas rau khau paaj pum dlej caa nyob qhov zaaj.

‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your embroidered shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the dragon’ (*Initiation* p. 120).

- **nkauj taus ... nkauj pab** ‘the axe maiden and the adze maiden’, personifications of the axe and the adze used to cut up the tree to make the dead person’s coffin:

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laj?*] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11; the coffin may be made of any hard, decay resistant wood).

- **nkauj zaag** ‘(classifier *tug*) dragon’s daughter’:

ib tug nkauj zaag ‘a dragon’s daughter (according to Mong tales)’ (Xiongs).

An example of such a folktale in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s collections is “Uncle Tuam and Little Sister Plis” (*Lug Nruag Txa* pp. 90-101), which begins by saying that a couple gave birth to a sister called *ntxawm Plis* ‘little sister Plis’ and a brother called *dlaablaug Tuam* ‘mother’s brother Tuam’. When the parents are about to die, they say to Plis and Tuam that, when Plis and Tuam are grown, whatever creature comes and asks Plis, the sister, to marry him, she should accept. Time passes, and when Plis is grown, a black bull comes and asked her to marry him.

Since Tuam, the brother, is still small and would have difficulty finding food on his own, the black bull gives him three sacks of millet and three sacks of rice and says that he is also leaving a trail of grains of millet and of rice so that if, when Tuam has finished eating the sacks of grain, he is still unable to find food on his own, he can then follow the trail of grain and be reunited with his sister and the black bull, who will help him.

Tuam “eats heaven and eats earth” and the grain is soon gone, so he sets out to follow the trail left by his kind brother-in-law, and he comes upon a Xeev Txwjlaug, a local ruler or governor, called grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv, who says to him, “When you go to the lower realm, please tell my kinsman grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob to send servants to help me make a garden and a house. At this time, the sword and the knife have burned all my servants to death.”

Tuam continues on his way and reaches the home of his sister and the black bull. The black bull’s brother takes Tuam to a dragon lake and challenges him to a contest to see who can call forth the dragon. Tuam calls out, “Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, *tug quas tog ploog!* I’ve come from the upper realm” and then conveys grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv’s request to send servants.

The old dragon, grateful for the message, takes Tuam to his home at the bottom of the lake, where Tuam meets and falls in love with the old dragon’s youngest daughter (*zaaj laug tug ntxhais ntxawm*). She tells Tuam that when her father offers to reward him for conveying the message, he must refuse whatever her father offers and say that he wants only the fish with yellow skin. Therefore, when the old dragon offers Tuam silver and gold and livestock, he replies, “As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at

the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them.”

“In that case,” says the old dragon, “what do you want?”

“I’ll just go ahead and tell you what I want,” says Tuam, “and if you don’t want to give it to me, it’s all right. I want your fish with yellow skin.”

The fish with yellow skin is the old dragon’s youngest daughter transformed. Tuam takes the fish home with him. There is a lovely illustration in the story of the fish swimming about in a glass jar filled with water. The fish changes back into the old dragon’s youngest daughter and becomes Tuam’s wife. (*Lug Nruag Txa* pp. 90-101.)

The expression *nkauj zaag* does not appear in this story. The dragon’s daughter is referred to simply as *zaaj laug tug ntxhais ntxawm* ‘the old dragon’s youngest daughter’. But she appears to be the same folktale character that the Xiongs are referring to in their definition of *nkauj zaag*.

- **nkaum** ‘to withdraw, to shrink, to ebb, to recover, to back up, to retire’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaus** ‘only’ (Xiongs):

tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb ‘not only that’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb ‘s/he can only do up to there’ (Xiongs).

tshuav peb nub nkaus xwb ‘only three more days left’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaus** ‘right away’ (Xiongs):

muab tug neeg cev nkaus hluas rua dlaab Ntxawg
‘brought the horse and handed its tether over to Uncle Ntxawg’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

moog khaws nkaus tau ib txuj suavceeb tawm plawg moog nraag roojtsuas
‘went and grabbed a headband from the cave’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62).

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for *taub*] *hai lug*.
‘The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.
‘The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **nkaus** or **quas nkaus** ‘typical intensifier, completely’ (Xiongs p. 554):

nreg nkaus ‘complete stop’

but

nreg quas nkaus ‘stop and go, stop and go’ (Xiongs p. 554).

puv nkaus ‘completely full’ (Xiongs p. 554).

tig ib neig [typo for *ncig?*] *cob nkaus* ‘make a complete turn’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaus** ‘exactly’:

hum nkaus ‘just right, fitting, exactly fine, fit well’ (Xiongs).

tim nkaus xyoo ‘exactly one year long’ (Xiongs).

tim nkaus xyaa xyoo ‘exactly seven years’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaus** ‘firmly, tightly’:

Kuv xaav muab koj zawm nkaus ‘I want to tightly embrace you’ (Xiongs).

Dlaig nkaab nwg cejdlaab
‘It will catch in his throat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

kws teem nkaus npoo ntuj hov.
‘that presses against the edge of the sky’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21)

Tes rooj tsuas qus nkaus.
‘Then the door of the cave shut tight’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

- **nkaus** ‘really’:

twb nkaus le ntaag ‘to really touch it’ (Xiongs).

- **nkaus** ‘very’:

nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.
‘in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **nkaus**: *ib yaam nkaus* ‘either’:

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests ‘in the same manner’ as an alternative translation for *ib yaam nkaus*.

- **nkaus**: *tsawg kawg nkaus* ‘at least’:

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

- **nkawg** ‘to find, to spread wrongly’ (Xiongs).

- **nkawg**, intensifier:

aav tseeg quas nkawg ‘the earth quaked’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **nkawj** ‘wasp’:

ib paab nkawj muv ‘a swarm of wasps and bees’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

- **nkawj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkawj [to make the sound nkawj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nkawm** ‘(no classifier) couple, pair’ (Xiongs):

nkawm thom khwm ‘a pair of socks’ (Xiongs).

Nwg twb cov [typo for *coj*?] *tau ib nkawm tshws hab ib nkawm puav*
 ‘She had brought with her a pair of cats and a pair of bats’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Suav txawm tso plhuav suav paab tsuag coob coob ntawd lug tum nwg, nwg txhaj tso
plhuav nwg nkawm tshws moog tum.

‘When the Chinese released their pack of rats to bite her, she released her pair of cats to bite the rats’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm puav yaa moog txais tum cov nkawj hab muv ntawd ua
nwg tuag taagnrho lawm ib yaam nkaus.

‘and she released her pair of bats, who flew about catching and biting the wasps and bees until they too were dead’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **nkawm**: *txij nkawm* ‘(no classifier) spouse’ (see also *txig*):

Koj txij koj nkawm ‘Your spouse (poetic form)’ (Xiongs).

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **nkawv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkawv [to make the sound *nkawv*] (Xiongs p. 553):

Rhu hlo paas cawv ntsuab lug cua ua quas txhaa nrov nkib pis nkawv.

‘She pulled him out and took a swig of green liquor and crunched on his bones’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **nkeeb**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkeeb [to make the sound *nkeeb*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nkeeg** ‘lazy, idle, slothful’ (Xiongs):

cisnkeeg ‘lazy’ (Xiongs).

koj tsi yoom qheb qhovrooj tug dlev dlob thawj dlev cis nkeeg hov lug tsev le huas

‘I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

- **nkeeg**: *mob nkeeg* ‘illness’:

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nqe hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj
sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.

‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

ib yaam taw teg khu mob nkeeg kws Moob muaj

‘a skill for healing illness which the Mong have’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Nchaiv Tuam hastas “Yog ntuj pum tas leej twg sab zoo, sab ncaaj, muaj pluaj sab yuav lug paab khu noob neej txuj kev mob nkeeg, hab moov txug mas ntuj le pub kom nwg txawj ua neeb”.

Nchaiv Tuam says, “If heaven sees that someone has a good heart, a straight heart, has the heart to want to heal humankind’s illnesses, and destiny/merit that reaches, then heaven will allow him to know how to be a shaman.” (*Tswv Yim* pp. 93-94.)

- **nkeeg**: *muaj mob nkeeg* ‘to be sick’:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person to be sick’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **nkib pis nkawv**, sound of crunching:

Rhu hlo paas cawv ntsuab lug cua ua quas txhaa nrov nkib pis nkawv.

‘She pulled him out and took a swig of green liquor and crunched on his bones’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **nkig** ‘fragile, frail, dried, brittle’ (Xiongs).

- **nkig nkuav**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkig nkuav [to make the sound nkig nkuav] (Xiongs p. 553).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **nkim** ‘to waste, to lose (time, hope)’ (Xiongs).

- **nkoj** ‘(classifier *lub*) boat, ship, barge’ (Xiongs):

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

- **nkoog** ‘to congeal, coagulate, harden; congealed, coagulated, hard’ (Xiongs):

ntshaav nkoog ‘blood clot’ (Xiongs).

- **nkoog** or **quas nkoog** ‘typical intensifier, little bent’ (Xiongs p. 554):

koov nkoog (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [a little bent].

laug nkoog (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [old and bent].

zaas nkoog (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [not horizontal?]

- **nkoov** ‘well twisted (rope)’ (Xiongs).

- **nkuaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) animal house, prison, jail’ (Xiongs):

Nkuaj nyuj hab nkuaj neeg ‘Cattle-pens and horse-stables’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **nkuam** ‘to row’ (Xiongs):

tug nkuav ‘rower’ (Xiongs).

- **nkuam** ‘to drive cattle’:

Txhua naj txhua nub kuv pum luas nkuam nyuj twg quas luag tuaj nruab ke
 ‘Day in and day out, I see people driving cattle and buffaloes down the middle of the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **nkuav**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkig nkuav [to make the sound nkig nkuav] (Xiongs p. 553).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaq quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag
 ‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **Nkws**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Kwm** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

NKH

- **nkhaas**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkhaas [to make the sound nkhaas] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nkhaus** ‘bent, crooked, stooped, unjust, unfair, not straight, dishonest’ (Xiongs):

cab tswv nkhaus, on a skirt, a zig-zag line in the batik, where fabric will later be sewn (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145).

ntaub tswv nkhaus, the zig-zag line of appliqued fabric in a baby-carrier (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133).

xuv tswv nkhaus, in a skirt, zig-zag line made of cross-stitch (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).

- **nkhib** (no classifier) ‘fork, crotch, the angle formed by two branches’ (Xiongs).

- **nkhub** ‘cup’ (see also *khob*):

In a story, a man has memories of when he was transformed into a tiger:

“*Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?*”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying,

‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **nkhoob**, intensifier:

Nwg moog txug hov tes dlev tum quas nkhoob

‘When he arrived, the dogs started barking’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 12).

- **nkhoos**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nkhoos [to make the sound nkhoos] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

NP

- **Npab!**, interjection:

“Npab! tsaug zug taag npaug! sim pw ib plag kuas zoo sab zog le mam sawv kev moog ntxiv!”

“Npab! how sleepy I am! I’ll try lying down for a moment so that I’ll feel good to get up and go further!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17.)

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”

“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **npaab** ‘(classifier *txhais* or *yaag*) arm, elbow’ (*Xiongs*):

saav npaab ‘twisted arm’ (*Xiongs*).

xyaab koj txhais npaab xis lug ‘extend your right arm to me’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaab**: *Moob Quasnpaab* (*Moob Txaij*), a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **npaab**: *quav npaab* ‘the fold of one’s arm’:

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **npaag** ‘muscular, big, lusty, strapping’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaaj** ‘to prepare for, to provide for’ (*Xiongs*):

Peb npaaj txhij lawm ‘We are readily preparing’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaaj tav** ‘to be ready’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaav** ‘to bet, to wager’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaig** ‘to murmur, to speak alone’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaim**: *npauj npaim* ‘butterfly’ (*Lyman* p. 188):

This form is not in the Xiongs' dictionary, nor have I come across it in Mong Volunteer Literacy's texts, but it does appear in Bertrais's White Hmong dictionary (page 205 npauj npaim) and I have seen it in White Hmong texts. There is also a White Hmong variant *npuj npaim* 'butterfly' that is recorded in Heimbach's dictionary. I include *npauj npaim* here for its phonological interest as a possible disyllabic variant of *npauj* 'moth, butterfly'.

- **npau** 'to boil, to bubble up' (Xiongs):

Nwg ob tig cev ua nwg tsag lig xub yaa lab pis vog rua huv aav cais dlej ca le npau pis dlaam tawm lug

'He turned himself round twice so that he emitted red flashes of lightning flying into the soil and then water boiled out' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

Tug quaspuj rhaub kag yag roj npau quas dlhev

'The wife quickly heated up a wokful of oil until it was at a rolling boil' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **npau suav** 'dream' (Xiongs):

ua npau suav 'to dream' (Xiongs).

Ua Npausuav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb

'A Dream of a Visit to the Country of the Spirits' (*Ua Npausuav*, title).

Lub ntuj nuav ua rua kuv ncu txug kuv zaaj npausuav kws kuv tau ua thauss kuv tsheem yau

'This sky reminds me of a dream I had when I was still small' (*Ua Npausuav* p. 6).

- **npau tawg** 'to get angry; to be angry' (Xiongs).

- **npaug** (no classifier) 'time' (Xiongs):

ob npaug 'two times, twice' (Xiongs).

peb npaug 'three times' (Xiongs).

muaj pua npaug 'hundredfold' (Xiongs).

- **npaug**, intensifier:

"Npab! tsaug zug taag npaug! sim pw ib plag kuas zoo sab zog le mam sawv kev moog ntxiv!"

"Npab! how sleepy I am! I'll try lying down for a moment so that I'll feel good to get up and go further!" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17.)

- **npauj** '(classifier *tug*) moth, butterfly' (Xiongs).

- **npauj npaim** 'butterfly' (Lyman p. 188):

This form is not in the Xiongs' dictionary, nor have I come across it in Mong Volunteer Literacy's texts, but it does appear in Bertrais's White Hmong dictionary (page 205 npauj npaim) and I have seen it in White Hmong texts. There is also a White Hmong variant *npuj npaim* 'butterfly' that is recorded in Heimbach's dictionary. I include *npauj npaim*

here for its phonological interest as a possible disyllabic variant of *npauj* ‘moth, butterfly’.

- **npaum le caag** ‘how many, how much’ (Xiongs):

luj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how big].

muaj nyaj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how much money is there].

xaav txawj neeb npaum le caag los yog nwg moov tsi txug hab luj loog tsi hum mas yeej tsi txawj ua neeb ib zag
 ‘however much he wants to know how to [perform] shamanic ceremonies, if his destiny/merit does not reach and the faint voice does not fit then he will never know how to perform shamanic ceremonies’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **npaum twg** ‘how many, how much’ (Xiongs).

- **npaus** ‘to disengage something with wings, to take out’ (Xiongs).

- **npawb**: *naab npawb* ‘number, from Lao *nàmbàə*’ (*Tswv Yim*, page 4).

- **npawg** ‘(classifier *tug*) cousin, friend (in general)’ (Xiongs):

kwv npawg ‘bilateral male cross cousin [mother’s brother’s son, father’s sister’s son], matrilinear male parallel cousin [mother’s sister’s son] (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

muam npawg ‘bilateral female cross cousin [mother’s brother’s daughter, father’s sister’s daughter], matrilinear female parallel cousin [mother’s sister’s daughter] (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

nug npawg ‘bilateral male cross cousin [mother’s brother’s son, father’s sister’s son], matrilinear male parallel cousin [mother’s sister’s son] (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

viv ncaug npawg ‘bilateral female cross cousin [mother’s brother’s daughter, father’s sister’s daughter], matrilinear female parallel cousin [mother’s sister’s daughter] (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

Notice the wordplay on the literal meaning ‘cousin’ and the metaphorical meaning ‘friend’ in *Nuj Sis Loob*:

Cais Nuj Sis Loob ca le yaa plawg peg sau kwjtse lug ti nkaus, hab nug has tas: “Leej npawg! Koj yuav moog qhov twg? Hab yog ua le caag koj yuav chim ua luaj?”

Then Nuj Sis Loob flew from the area above the drainage ditch and drew near [the Spirit] and asked him: “Cousin! Where are you going? And why are you so angry?”

Tug nam Dlaab teb has tas: “Ab, miv tub! Koj yog leeg twg? Ua caag koj yuav lug hu kuv ua npawg? Kuv yeej tsi tau muaj ib tug npawg zoo le koj hlo le! Koj hu ntawm leeg twg lug?”

The Spirit replied: “Ah, dear boy! Who are you? Why do you come here and call me ‘cousin’? I have no cousin who looks like you! Who are you calling?”

Nuj Sis Loob rovqaab has tas: “Yog tas koj tsi tau muaj ib tug npawg zoo le kuv hlo le? Cais kuv yuav yog tug kws Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug xaa tuaj tua koj xwb luas muas!”

Nuj Sis Loob responded “Do you say that you have no cousins at all who look like me? In that case, I must be the one whom His Majesty the King sent to kill you!” (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

Frequently, *npawg* is just a friendly way for one man to address another:

“Ab! npawg koj nyob twbywv es kuv ua su wb noj koj le moog”.

“Ah, cousin, you stay here quietly and I will make lunch for the two of us to eat and then you will go.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32.)

- **npawj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov npawj [to make the sound npawj] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

- **npawm** ‘to shape, to cut, to sharpen, to cut out, to carve’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaws** ‘to pinch, to nip, to bite’ (*Xiongs*).

- **npaws** ‘(classifier *kob* or *tug*) fever, chills, malaria’ (*Xiongs*):

ua ib thaj npaws ‘to have a fever’ (*Xiongs*).

Lug txaj hluas nkauj yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws
‘Song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish’
(*Cim Xeeb* p. 15).

- **npawv**, intensifier:

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits.

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,
Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.
‘Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,
To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path’ (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **npe** ‘(classifier *lub*) name, title, heading’ (*Xiongs*):

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– *MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB* –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug; xws le:

Moob Sib,

Moob Dlub,

Moob Yobtshuab,

Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),

Moob Ncuavpas,

Moob Suavfaaj,

hab lwm lub npe

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects, such as:

Moob Sib,
Moob Dlub,
Moob Yobtshuab,
Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij),
Moob Ncuavpas,
Moob Suavfaaj,
and other names

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **npeeb** ‘ugly, unsightly, bad’ (Xiongs).

- **npeeg** ‘to miss, to fall’ (Xiongs).

- **npeeg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov npeeg [to make the sound npeeg] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **npib** ‘(classifier *lub* or *lub txa*), a piece of silver coin used in Laos’ (Xiongs), from Lao *bia*:

Ntxawm txhaj rhu ib lub nyaj npib lug luv ntho ob saab.

‘Ntxawm then took out a silver coin and broke it in two’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 20-21).

Pug Xeev Txwjlaug pum cov nyaj npib kws pub qab nuav

‘The Ruler’s wife saw the silver coins that had been fed to the chickens’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

- **npo** or **quas npo** ‘typical intensifier, fully’ (Xiongs p. 554):

puv npo (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [completely full].

- **npoj** ‘(no classifier) troop, gang, flock, herd, drove, crowd’ (Xiongs).

- **npojluag** ‘companion’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **npoo** ‘border, edge, shore, brim, rim side’ (Xiongs):

kws teem nkaus npoo ntuj hov.

‘that presses against the edge of the sky’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Nwg muab kag cuaj npoo-awv paav rua nam maum nyuj.

‘She quickly tried nine clothing hems to the cow’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 21).

- **npoo ntuj** ‘horizon’ (Xiongs).

- **npooog** ‘to cover, to fill up, to load, to heap up’ (Xiongs):

Cov nam kua aav kuj ca le yeeg pis zog lug npooog kag Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

‘The mud completely covered Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm posts’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

- **npooog**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov npooog [to make the sound npooog] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **npooj** ‘to rustle’:

Huas tshuav qab npooj npooj cub tshauv.

‘He had left a little chicken rustling the ashes of the fireplace’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

- **npu** ‘to pull out, to bring out of water, to save, to help, to support, to bring out of trouble’ (Xiongs).

- **npu**, intensifier:

Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

‘Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **npub** ‘not sharp, not cutting at all’ (Xiongs).

- **npug** ‘to hide, to cover, to conceal’ (Xiongs):

dlaim npug ‘a cover’ (Xiongs).

- **npug** ‘an evil omen’:

Npawg! Kuv xaav tas yog ua npug lawm es wb txhaj nuv tau ntseg ntau ntau le ntawd!

‘Cousin, I think that it was an evil omen that we caught so many fish’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

Yog yuav rovqaab ua npug rua kuv lawv le npawg Cuav Tshoj tim tau qha

‘It is once again a bad omen for me, just as my cousin Cuav Txhoj Tim said it would be’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb aws, tsi yog ua npug dlaabtsi le, hab tsi txhob ntshai!

‘Txheeb Tshoj theeb, it’s not a bad omen at all, and don’t be afraid!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

Ab! tug quas tsuag kod, ntshai koj ua npug tag, koj yuav rawm tuag!
 ‘Hey, rat! Your speaking is really a bad omen. You’re sure in a hurry to die!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **npuj** ‘to break through, to burst open, to hit on’ (Xiongs).
- **npuj**: *ntaa npuj* ‘trap set with a spear’ (Xiongs).
- **npua** ‘(classifier *tug*) pig, stupid person’ (Xiongs) (see also *npuas*).

laag npua ‘pig’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug moog txug na, ob namtais yawmtxiv tseem nyav ua npua rooj taag. Puab tseem tsi tau caiv dlhau.

‘When the two of them arrived, [Muam Paajqawm’s] parents had just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit. They were not yet past the period of prohibition’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 18).

Cais Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj kuas nwg cov tubmaab tubqhe moog nteg qab hab npua lug tua ua ib pluag qaav rua suavdlawg tau noj

‘Then his Majesty the Ruler had his servants catch chickens and pigs and kill them and prepare a meal for everyone to eat’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

Taagkig ob tug txham le ua tau ib pluag tshais, tua ib tug nam quab npua rua dlaab Ntxawg noj.

‘The next morning, the two of them accordingly made breakfast, killing a young boar for Uncle Ntxawg to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Taub Qaub, meb muab tug laagnpua nuav tu kuas zoo zoo es pegkig kuv xaa meb moog fij meej lawm meb namtais puab.

‘Taub Qaub, the two of prepare this pig well and tomorrow I will escort the two of you to return to the door [pay the customary visit shortly after the wedding] to your wife’s mother’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 119).

*Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,
 Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,
 Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,
 Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,
 Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.*

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?
 If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.
 If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.
 If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months

of the year are named for twelve animals. The ninth month of the year is the month of the pig.

9 hlis – npua hli

9th month – month of the pig (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that khib months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with khub months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav: ‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with khib months and khub months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the seventh day of the first month is

luav hli – npua xab 7 ‘month of the hare – pig day 7’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

- **npua:** *cuab npua* ‘to call pigs’ (Heimbach p. 19 *cuab npua*):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **npua:** *ua npua dlaab / npua rooj*, name of a ceremony:

The chapter titled *Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj* ‘Doing the Spirit Pig / Door Pig’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 57-61) explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.

Chindarsi (1976:113-119) devotes seven pages to the ceremony. He calls it “The Ceremony of the Door Spirit” and includes it under the heading “Ceremonies distinguishing sub-clans” in his chapter titled “Ceremonies and Beliefs Affecting Social Cohesion”. Chindarsi includes seven drawings showing how different people divide up the meat of the pig.

- **npuanuj:** Typo for *npluanuj* ‘wealthy’?

Nwg moog lom moog tua tug muajtxag npuanuj [typo for *npluanuj*?], *hab yuam luas tej tuabneeg lug ua tauj ua qhev.*

‘He poisoned and killed a wealthy person and compelled their family to be slaves’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

- **npuateb** ‘wild pig’:

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **npuab** ‘to get next to, to stick right next to’ (Xiongs).

- **npuag** ‘(classifier *lub*) foam, froth, bull, bubble’ (Xiongs).

- **npuag** ‘(no classifier) a serious infection’ (Xiongs).

- **npuag** ‘satin’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 227 nbuas; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 104 nbuas):

Hmong-Chinese dictionaries translate *tsuj* as ‘silk’ and *npuag* as ‘satin’. Bertrais’s dictionary, which is based on the speech of Laos, reverses things, translating *tsuj* as ‘satin’ and *npuag* as ‘silk’. Other dictionaries that are based on the speech of Laos and Thailand either translate both *tsuj* and *npuag* simply as ‘a kind of expensive cloth’ (Heimbach) or omit both words altogether (Xiongs, Lyman). The Xiongs give an entirely different word for ‘silk’: *tshwb kaab*. In texts, *npuag* frequently occurs in the pairing *tsuj ... npuag* ‘silk and satin’ (or ‘satin and silk’ if we adopt Bertrais’s glosses):

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas meb rau khau npuag pum dlej caag nyob qaab qhov tsu.
 ‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your satin shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the tiger’ (*Initiation* pp. 120-121).

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to nyob txug Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of silk and you will have children.”

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to yum cev Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them.”’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncuaw ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

- **npuag**: *tsho tsuj tsho npuag* ‘shirt of silk and satin’, i.e. the placenta, which is buried in the floor of the house when a person is born and which a dead person must retrieve before they can continue on their way to meet their ancestors:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag koj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **npuaj** ‘to smea, to slap, to tap, to strike, to hit’ (Xiongs).

- **npuaj**, intensifier:

ob tug nam lujtxwv dlob dlob mas nim rog rog ci quas npuaj
‘two black mules, fat and gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **npuas** (see also *npua*):

koj puas noj nqaj npuas? ‘do you eat pork?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10.)

- **npuav** ‘to suck, to hold in the mouth’ (Xiongs).

- **npwg** ‘beautiful, joyful’:

Luas nyob ua tsev npwg quas luag.

‘The people lived in beautiful houses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

Nwg txhaj tau moog yuav qab yuav npua, yuav dlej yuav cawv lug ua noj ua haus, ua quaj quas npwg peb nub peb mos taag.

‘He then bought chickens and pigs, bought water and liquor, to eat and to drink, to celebrate for three days and three nights’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 32).

NPH

- **nphaas**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nphaas [to make the sound nphaas] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nphau** ‘to tip over’ (Xiongs):

dlej nphau nphwv ‘turbulent water’ (Xiongs).

- **nphawb**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nphawb [to make the sound nphawb] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **npho** ‘post verbal intensifier indicating a complete action’ (Xiongs).

- **nphob** ‘old, dirty, not bright (color), musty’ (Xiongs).

- **nphoo** ‘to scatter powder with hand’ (Xiongs).

- **nphoo**, sound of a crash:

nrov nphoo ‘resounding crash’ (Xiongs).

- **nphuab**: *txiv qaib nphuab* ‘strawberry’ (Xiongs).
- **nphwv**: *dlej nphau nphwv* ‘turbulent water’ (Xiongs).

NPL

- **nplag** ‘slippery, smooth (surface)’ (Xiongs).
- **nplag** ‘accurate’ (Xiongs).
- **nplaj cai** ‘the earth’:

Thau nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
 ‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Meb yog nplaj quas cai le leej tuabneeg meb tuaj quas tsw?
 ‘The two of you are from the earth. Why have you come?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
 ‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv
 ‘The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj Quas Cai koj moog cog peb tsob rua nraag taj, cog peb tsob rua nraag kev.
 ‘Earth planted three plants down in the plain, planted three plants down in the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

Nplaj Quas Cai le qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas
 ‘Earth opened its mouth to speak, gathered its words and roared, saying ...’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

Koj yog Nplaj Quas Cai leej tuabneeg koj tuaj quas tsw? ‘You are a person for the earth. Why have you come?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

- **nplaj teb** ‘the earth’ (Xiongs):

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas nug koj has tas; Koj yog nplajteb leej tuabneeg, koj yuav lug ua dlaabtsi?

‘When you reach the wall at the top of the stairway to heaven, they will ask you: “You are a human being of the earth. Why have you come here?”’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

Ub! nyaj le tom peb nplajteb nyaj kuamuag, tsaj le yog peb nplajteb tsaj rau ncoo, kuv tsi yuav.

‘As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96).

Moob nplajteb lug ntshai dlej ntub, ntshai aav lu.

‘The people on the face of the earth are afraid of getting wet, afraid of getting muddy’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **nplajteb nuav** ‘on earth’, ‘here on earth’:

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **nplajtog qaumpeg** ‘anyone in the world’:

Koj tsi txhob nrug kuv sau yim. Koj moog nrug nplajtog qaumpeg sau yim.
‘Don’t marry me. Marry anyone in the world’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **Nplas**: *Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas* ‘the Maiden Sua and the Youth Nplas’, personages invoked in one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas rau khau paaj pum dlej caa nyob qhov zaaj.
‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your embroidered shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the dragon’ (*Initiation* p. 120).

- **nplaag**, intensifier:

ci nplaag ‘sparkling, flashing’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug nim xauj xauj tes Los Xaab quaspuj ib nyuas tig saib; Ci nplaag!
‘They kept peeking at them and then Los Xaab’s wife turned to look and she was gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **nplaam** ‘to miss, to fall, to drop, to slip out of hands’ (Xiongs):

nplaam kua taw ‘to slip’ (Xiongs).

ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv yuav nplaam tuab si
‘don’t try to take too much one will lose all’ (Xiongs).

nplaam plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to drop something suddenly].

- **nplai**: “*nplai* can mean ‘scale (fish, turtle, reptile)’, or ‘kernel of corn’. Whether or not that is the same meaning as the appliqued triangle on a skirt is unclear. *Lub nplai* is the name give to the triangle; *nplai ntaub* is a triangle of fabric; *nplai cab* is a batik triangle.” (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145.)

- **nplaig** ‘(classifier *tug*) tongue’ (Xiongs).

- **nplaig txhaav** ‘tongue tied’ (Xiongs).

- **nplais** ‘(no classifier) portion, chip, piece’ (Xiongs).

- **nplais** ‘typical intensifier, out of sight’ (Xiongs p. 554):

pluj nplais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to disappear].

- **nplaum** ‘sticky, glutinous, gluey’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a dog and a cat are carrying a precious object, a gold amulet inside which is their mistress, who has magically shrunk herself so that she fits inside the amulet. When they have to cross a river, the dog says to the cat that the cat should be the one to carry the amulet in its mouth because the cat's paws are *nplaum* 'glutinous, sticky', that is, the cat is able to grip with its claws, whereas the dog's paws are *txua* 'nonglutinous, not sticky', that is, the dog's paws are not able to grip:

Koj teg taw nplawm [typo for *nplaum*?] *koj koj luas huas! Kuv teg taw txua, nam dlej hov luj dlag tsaam ntsiv kuv nplaam kuataw tes nam poob dleg hab saib yuav ua caag moj.*

'Your paws are able to grip, so you should carry her. My paws are not able to grip. The river is wide, and my paws will slip and in a moment our mistress will fall in the water, and then what will we do?' (*Ceebpov* pp. 28-29.)

- **nplaum**: *aav nplaum* 'clay' (Xiongs)'.

- **nplawg** 'post verbal intensifier indicating the separation of action taken together' (Xiongs):

nyob nplawg nta 'to sit down together' (Xiongs).

- **nplawg** 'to beat, to whip, to hit' (see also *nplawm*):

khaub nplawg tshaav 'switch, stick for beating someone' (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **nplawm** 'to beat, to whip, to hit' (Xiongs) (see also *nplawg*):

Ob tug nplawm quas ntxhas nam txiv neeg

'The two of them whipped the stallion' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Nwg nplawm quas ntxhas nam neeg

'He then whipped his horse' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **nplawm**: Typo for *nplaum* 'sticky'?

Koj teg taw nplawm [typo for *nplaum*?]

'Your paws are able to grip [literally "sticky"]' (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

- **nplej** '(no classifier) unhulled rice' (Xiongs):

hlais nplej 'to harvest' (Xiongs).

ib thaaj teb nplej 'a rice field' (Xiongs).

moov nplej 'flour' (Xiongs) [rice flour].

npluag nplej 'rice chaff' (Xiongs).

ntaus nplej 'to thresh rice' (Xiongs).

xua nplej 'rice bran' (Xiongs).

yaaj nplej 'to winnow rice' (Xiongs).

yub nplej 'rice seedling' (Xiongs).

- **nplej**: *mov nplej* ‘cooked rice’:

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **nplee** ‘to go to the other side’ (Xiongs).
- **nplee** ‘to hit by the surface’ (Xiongs).
- **nplig** ‘to console, to comfort’ (Xiongs).
- **nplo** ‘slightly used, worn’ (Xiongs).
- **nplog** ‘the people of Laos’ (Xiongs):

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **nplog** ‘(classifier *lub*) the part of a tool that holds the handle, socket’ (Xiongs).
- **nplooj** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) leaf, leaf-like, frond’ (Xiongs):

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then you all spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **nplooj**: *caij nplooj hlaav* ‘(classifier *lub*) spring’ (Xiongs) [season].
- **nplooj**: *taus nplooj* ‘leaf which has been folded up into a cone, used for holding cooked rice or for scooping water to drink’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 32 douk nblongx):

“I have seen this done in Thailand. A fairly large long leaf is selected to make the cone. Left to my own devices I would just use my hand, but the Hmong in Thailand like to take their time and drink from a mountain stream out of the leaf cone in a dignified manner (find a leaf, wash it, fold it, rinse it, scoop water, check it very carefully, drink it) – I guess that way you ensure you are not about to swallow a critter or dirt” (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

Cais tug nam Pujntxoog txawm moog cug kag tau peb taus nplooj dlej ab dlej dlaw
‘So the Pujntxoog then quickly dipped out three leaf-fuls of bitter and salty water’ (*Lug*

Nruag Tsuv p. 17).

- **nplooj luam yeeb** ‘tobacco’ (Xiongs).

- **Nplooj Lwg**, the toad who brought death into the world (*Initiation* pp. 123-126, *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 7-9). When she claimed to be able to measure the size of the sky and the earth but in reality could hop no further than a cow’s or a horse’s hoofprint, she was killed for her deceit and arrogance. As she was dying, she proclaimed that, since she had died, henceforth human beings would die as well:

Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab tsi txawj mob, qom cais tsi muaj tuag. Meb muab kuv Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws ntaus tuag taag. Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab yuav muaj mob, qom cais yuav muaj tuag.

‘On the face of the earth human beings for millennia have not known illness. For ages there has been no death. The two of you have beaten me, Nplooj Lwg the Toad, to death. On earth human beings for millennia will experience illness. For ages there will be death’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws yuav tuag, Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws tsaws tseg le nuav tas; Thau leej hlub tuag los txawj rov, leej yau tuag los txawj lug. Nwg nuav leej hlub tuag los moog ntuj quas ntag le kuv, leej yau tuag los moog ntuj quas ntag le kuv nuav. ‘As Nplooj Lwg the Toad was dying, Nplooj Lwg the Toad left these words: When adults died, they knew how to return, when children died, they knew how to come back. Now when adults die, they will be truly gone, when children die, they will be truly gone as I am now’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **nplooj sab** ‘sweetheart’:

Nwg yog kuv nplooj sab ‘She is my sweetheart’ (Xiongs).

- **nplooj xovtxheej** ‘leaf of ritual paper (spirit-money)’ (from Chinese *xiǎo qián* ‘small money’?):

Koj leej tub tuag, koj tshuav nam pis xeeb ua ntog teb, haus tsuag luas ib ntog dlej. Koj yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntaw rua koj koj moog them se dlej se tawg, se teb se chaw pis xeeb txha le tso koj kev moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. ... (Hlawv peb nplooj xovtxheej rua tug tuag hov. ...)

‘You who have died, you destroyed a portion of the land of the guardian spirit of the place, you drank up a portion of the spirit’s water. When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax, the tax of the land and of the place of the guardian spirit, so that you will be permitted to go to meet your ancestors. ... (Burn three leaves of the ritual money for the dead person. ...)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **Nplug**: *Tub Tis Tuj* and *Tub Tis Nplug*, the first human children (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7).

- **nplua** ‘to impose a fine or penalty, to condemn, to judge’ (Xiongs).

- **nplua** ‘slippery’ (Xiongs).

- **nplua nuj** ‘rich’ (Xiongs).

- **npluag** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) chaff’ (Xiongs).
- **npluag nplej** ‘rice chaff’ (Xiongs).
- **npluaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) tapeworm, taenia’ (Xiongs).
- **npluaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov npluaj [to make the sound npluaj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **npluaj nuj** ‘wealthy’ (Xiongs):

Nwg moog lom moog tua tug muajtxag npuanuj [typo for *npluanuj*?], *hab yuam luas tej tuabneeg lug ua tauj ua qhev.*

‘He poisoned and killed a wealthy person and compelled their family to be slaves’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

- **npluaw** [typo for **npluav**?] ‘to hurl, to break by throwing, to strike, to slap; (no classifier) time, strike, slap’ (Xiongs).

NPLH

- **nplhaib** ‘(classifier *nti* or *ntiv*) ring, finger ring’ (Xiongs):

Koj muab kuv lub nplhaib zais lawm puas yog? ‘You hide my ring, isn’t it?’ (Xiongs.)

- **nplhos** ‘to stab, to stick with a knife, to kill by piercing, to poniard’ (Xiongs).
- **nplhos** ‘to wound by the heart, to grieve’ (Xiongs).
- **nplhuv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nplhuv [to make the sound nplhuv] (Xiongs p. 553).

NQ

- **nqa** ‘thin in the middle and thicker at the ends’ (Xiongs).
- **nqaj** ‘(classifier *thooj*, *co*, or *cov*) meat, flesh, prey’ (Xiongs):

kua nqaj ‘meat juice’ (Xiongs).

muaj nqaj ‘fleshy, muscular’ (Xiongs).

nyuv nqaj ‘sausage’ (Xiongs).

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm ‘they already sorted out the quality meat’ (Xiongs).

Ua caag tsi pum nqaj tuag nyob qhovtwg hlo le? Koj tsis pum nqaj dlha lug hlo le lov?
‘Why is not one dead animal anywhere? Did you not see any game run past?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 19).

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv”

and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **nqaj npuas** ‘pork’:

koj puas noj nqaj npuas? ‘do you eat pork?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10.)

- **nqaj nyug** ‘beef’:

koj puas noj nqaj nyug? ‘do you eat beef?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9.)

- **nqaj rog** ‘fat’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaj ntxaug** ‘quality meat’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaa** ‘to bring, to bear, to carry, to support, to take’ (Xiongs):

taub nqaa dlej ‘gourd’ (Xiongs) [gourd for carrying water]

nqaa nplawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to lift suddenly].

nqaa rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to carry firmly].

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.
‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting him off the ground’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

Noog Yaajqawg txawm nqaa pis nroog ib tug ib rev noob zaub
‘the Swallows came one after another each carrying a stem of vegetable seeds’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 9).

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv
‘I will give you real ones to take to use’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!
‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **nqaag**: *ib nqaag* ‘all together, at the same time’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) long piece of wood, horizontal beam’ (Xiongs):

Huas tswb nyuj tswb neeg ntshu ua nqaaj ua nqug rua nqaaj tog lug
‘Moreover, cowbells and horsebells resounded to the side-beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Le nyob cuaj tshooj vaag yim tshooj tsev es tsev vuag luaj vuag av ci nraa quas ab rua qaaj [typo for *nqaaj*?] *tog tej ntug txaj.*
‘They dwelt in nine stories of gardens and eight stories of houses, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass gleaming brightly from the coins at the edges of the end beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **nqaaj**: *nqug nqaaj* ‘to grow up (said of children between 2 to 5 years of age)’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaaj**: *tsheb nqaaj* ‘train’ (Xiongs):

tsaav tsheb nqaaj ‘to drive a train’ (Xiongs).

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm
‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaaj ... nqug**, intensifier:

tsua nov luv ua nqaaj ua nqug lug.
‘[the grass and brush] is all cropped to a stubble’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj
‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the mountain pass’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

puab tub nov suab tswbnyuj tswbneeg nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim tawroob lawm.
‘they heard the sound of ox bells and horse bells resounding, coming out from the foot of the mountain’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

Huas tswb nyuj tswb neeg ntshu ua nqaaj ua nqug rua nqaaj tog lug
‘Moreover, cowbells and horsebells resounded to the side-beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **nqai** ‘to hook’ (Xiongs) (see also *nqais*).

- **nqai lauj** ‘(classifier *tug*) hook’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaim** ‘narrow, tight’ (Xiongs):

sab nqaim ‘selfish’ (Xiongs).

- **nqais** ‘(no classifier) strophe’ (Xiongs) (perhaps from *nqai* ‘to hook’ because the strophes of a couplet are hooked together):

muaj ib nqais lug Suav nyob rua huv zaaj tshoob qheb kaus kws has rua nam txiv tog tom nua.

‘there is a verse in Chinese in the wedding song of opening the umbrella which is addressed to the bride’s parents’ side’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 3).

The Xiongs use the term *nqais* in their gloss of *txwm* ‘a Mong poetic couplet containing two “nqais” (long verses)’.

- **nqaub** ‘to bend’ (Xiongs).

- **nqawm** ‘to shrink, to contract, to get small; to get well (cut, injury)’ (Xiongs).

- **nqaws tsho** ‘front shirt’ (Xiongs), ‘the bottom part of the shirt front that can be hitched up to form a pouch to carry things in’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **nqe** ‘(classifier *tug*) price, value, worth’ (Xiongs).

muaj nuj nqe ‘valuable’ (Xiongs).

them nqe ‘to pay a debt’ (Xiongs).

tshuav nuj nqe ‘in debt, to be in debt’ (Xiongs).

- **nqeg** ‘to lower, to let down, to go down, to descend’ (Xiongs).

- **nqeg taug** ‘downstream’:

Luas kuas suavdlawg txua ib lub hleb cab lug ntim nwg, hab ua ib lub nkuaj lug ntim nwg tug lauvqab tso rua sau lub hleb, cais suavdlawg ua ob lub phuaj lug ntim ob tug, hab muab ob tug tso rua huv nam dlej luj tshoob nqegtaug xwb.

‘He wants everyone to build a coffin of pine to put him in, and to make a coop and put inside his rooster and put it on top of the coffin, and then everyone make two rafts to put the two of them on and put the two of them in the big river to carry them downstream’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob nqeg taug lawm lau.

‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **nqeg teg** ‘to start, to begin, to commence’ (Xiongs):

nqeg taug teg ‘to be brave to start first’ (Xiongs).

- **nqee** ‘to cradle in one’s arms’ (Heimbach p. 272):

Awb, sawv es yaws chaw es yuav nqee mivnyuas plig luas mas.

‘Oh my! I got up to gather up my bedding and I found myself holding in my arms a little soul’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

- **nqeeb** ‘(no classifier) thatch’ (Xiongs).

- **nqog** ‘to swallow’ (Xiongs).

- **nqog** ‘(classifier *tug*) weaving shuttle’ (Xiongs), ‘(classifier *raab*) the shuttle of the loom, which is typically large and heavy on the older type of loom as it doubles up as a beater for setting the tightness of the woven cloth’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

‘Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttles, to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **nqog**: *kaab nqog vaag* ‘(classifier *tug*) locust’ (Xiongs).

- **nqu** ‘to cough’ (Xiongs):

kev nqu ‘coughing’ (Xiongs).

- **nqug** ‘to pull, to attract, to gather’ (Xiongs):

sib nqug ‘to attract each other, to pull each other’ (Xiongs).

- **nqug**: *nqaaj ... nqug*, intensifier (*Ceebpov* p. 14, *Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 37, 47).

- **nqug nqaaj** ‘to grow up (said of children between 2 to 5 years of age)’ (Xiongs).

- **nqug paa** ‘to inhale’ (Xiongs).

- **nquab** ‘pigeon, dove’ (Xiongs):

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev
 ‘But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagncuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?”
 “Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv.”
 “Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **nquag** ‘laborious, hard working, diligent’ (Xiongs).

- **nquag** ‘to be in convalescence, in recovery, to recover from sickness’ (Xiongs).

- **nquag quas txoov** ‘vigorous’:

tug nam uab dlub quas nyo, nim nquag quas txoov.
 ‘the [horse] was crow-black, and vigorous’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **nquag yig** ‘to whirl, to rotate, to move swiftly, to revolve, to gyrate’ (Xiongs).

NQH

- **nqhaa** ‘clear, no obstacle, only a few tree’ (Xiongs):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
 ‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv
 ‘The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **nqhawv**, intensifier:

Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws teb lis nqhawv qaab cim zeb tuaj
 ‘Nplooj Lwg the Toad replied at once from under the stone’ (*Initiation* p. 123).

- **nqhes** ‘to thirst, to really desire for’ (Xiongs):

nqhes dlej ‘thirsty’ (Xiongs).

Sometimes, *tuag nqhes* ‘to die of thirst’ contrasts with *tuag tshaib* ‘to die of hunger’:

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16).

Sometimes, *tuag nqhes* actually means ‘to die of hunger’:

Kuv yeej tub tas txug tsev tsuav, koj tas yuav tuag nqhes nua luas muaj.

‘I told you to wait till we got home, but you said you were dying of hunger’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

mlob tas yuav tuag nqhes nua es mlob txawm moog fuas nam tsuag.

‘The cat said that he was dying of hunger, so he went to grab the rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

- **nqhuab** ‘dry, that lives on land (not in water); to dry up’ (Xiongs).

NR

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *nr* and *nts*. If a word is not found under *nr* look under *nts*.

- **nraj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nraj [to make the sound nraj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nraj**: *ua nruj nraj* ‘in agony’ (Xiongs).

- **nraa** ‘full, complete’ (Xiongs).

- **nraa** ‘(classifier *lub*) burden, baggage, bundle, of goods, pack, load’ (Xiongs):

Mo hov tes Los Xaab, luas neej luas tsaav, luas nam luas txiv nim tuaj cuaj pwg neeg yim pwg nraa tuaj ua vaaj ua tsev rau Los Xaab hab Ceeb Pov ob tug nyob.

‘That night, Los Xaab’s wife’s family, her mother and her father, came with nine shoulder-loads on horses and eight shoulder-loads of bundles to make a house and garden for Los Xaab and Ceeb Pov to live in’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Ha muab nyaj muab kub rua leejtxiv ris tuab quas nam nraa.

‘She also gave a packload of silver and gold to her father-in-law to carry on his back’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **nraab** ‘(no classifier) half, mid, semi’ (Xiongs):

nruab nraab ‘middle, half’ (Xiongs).

kwv nraab ‘middle younger brother’ (*Village* p. 175).

tij nraab ‘middle elder brother’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **nraab**: *ib nraab ke* ‘halfway’:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke

‘The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **nraag** ‘wild, untamed’ (Xiongs).

- **nraag** ‘there, over there’ (Xiongs) [down there]:

Lug txug ncu nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag huas nam naab hab tsuv muab noj taag.

‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once and the snake and the tiger ate him up’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

Koj sim tuaj saib ob tug ca nraag saib!

‘Come take a look at the two zebra squirrels down there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62).

- **nraag** ‘down to’:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj ... Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev

‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain ... O mist! O fog! Come down to the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

Los Xaab txawm maub hau quas toog rovqaab rua nraag qub qaab

‘So Los Xaab groped his way in the dark down to the place where he had been’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlob

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **nraag**: *taj nraag* ‘plain’ (Xiongs).

- **nraag haav zog** ‘a little lower’ (Xiongs).

- **nraag ntej** ‘further down’ (Xiongs).

- **nraag qaabcub** ‘down by the fireplace’:

“Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **nraag qaab dlej** ‘downstream’:

koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej

‘You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69).

- **nraag qaab nuav** ‘below’:

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **nraaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) pheasant’ (Xiongs):

ua cav Lob Lw, nwg tug quasyawg taabtom ci ib tug nqaj nraaj dlawb ua npau roj ua txhe huv qhov cub.

‘and, why, Lob Lw, her husband, was toasting the meat of a white pheasant, boiling the fat and letting it drip into the fire’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

- **nraaj** ‘to draw batik patterns in wax’:

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.

‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batik knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

- **nraim** ‘to hide, to cover oneself, to refuge’ (Xiongs).

- **nraim** or **quas nraim** ‘typical intensifier, frequently do or be there, exactly’ (Xiongs p. 554):

lawv nraim (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to follow frequently, to follow exactly].

nrug nraim (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to accompany frequently].

saib nraim (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to watch frequently, to observe exactly].

- **nrau** ‘to hit or fight with horns or head, to bump, to fight’ (Xiongs).

- **nrau**: *saab nrau* ‘outside’ (Xiongs).

- **nraug**: *hluas nraug* ‘young man, unmarried man, lover, date (male)’ (Xiongs).

- **nraug**: *Yob Nraug Ntsuag* or *Yob ntsuag ntsuag* ‘Yob the Orphan’, stock name for male protagonists in folktales:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag hab Noog Yaajqawg Poob Qaabnraug

‘Yob the Orphan and the Swallow that Fell to the Ground’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, title).

- **nraug**: *zoo nraug* ‘nice, handsome, good looking’ (Xiongs):

zoo nraug heev ‘very handsome’ (Xiongs).

- **nraug laj** (or **nraug la?**), syllables of unknown function in the following couplet from the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for laj?] quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- **Nraug Naab:** *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab*, a widespread couple in the mythology and folklore of the Mong Leng and other Hmong groups:

In *Initiation* (pp. 50-59), *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are the primordial human couple who initiate agriculture and the clan system. *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are also among the *neeb* (helper-spirits) invoked by shamans (*Initiation* p. 173).

In *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 30-40), *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are the parents of a little girl named Nog. *Nkauj Ntsuab* is transformed into a cow and helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*) helps Nog to splice hemp (*saws*), hanging the hanks of hemp on her head and hooves. *Nraug Naab* takes a second wife, who treats Nog cruelly and puts her in peril.

- **Nraug Nplas:** *Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas* ‘the Maiden Sua and the Youth Nplas’, personages invoked in one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas rau khau paaj pum dlej caa nyob qhov zaaj.

‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your embroidered shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the dragon’ (*Initiation* p. 120).

- **nraug nrauj:** *txaij txaij nraug nrauj* ‘beautifully striped’:

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nrauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel, oh little zebra squirrel! You a mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

- **Nraug Oo:** *Nkauj Ab Nraug Oo* ‘the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth’, in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the parents of the first human children (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7, *Initiation* p. 122).

- **nraug vauv** or **nraug vau** ‘(classifier *tug*) bridegroom’ (Xiongs).

- **nraug zeeg muag** ‘dizzy’ (Xiongs).

- **nrauj** ‘to divorce; divorced’ (Xiongs).

- **nrauj** ‘to abandon, to leave’, as a parent dying and leaving the children orphaned:

Nub caaj thaus u, nam tuag nrauj txiv tuag tseg taag

‘In ancient times long ago, the mother died and left [the children], the father died and left behind [the children] completely’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

- **nrau**j: *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrau*j ntsaum, a kind of male spirit with a predilection for human women.

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are polyandrous, two or more of them marrying a single human woman. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are among the main characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place:

*Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrau*j ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Nxtawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die. (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111.)

The name Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum appears in both Mong Leng and White Hmong texts with quite a bit of variation in form, making it difficult to come up with an etymology or a literal translation. In White Hmong stories these beings are sometimes described as pockmarked or pimply, and are depicted in the illustrations as pockmarked and in general as looking rather unsavory and uncouth, sometimes with facial hair. *Mojtxiv* conceivably could be from Chinese *máozi* ‘hairy fellow’ (sometimes used in China to refer to Westerners) but in other texts the element *mojtxiv* is written quite differently or is missing altogether. *Nrauj ntsaum* conceivably could be from *nceb nrauj ntsaum* ‘toadstool’ since in this story the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum change into toadstools after they die, but, again, in other texts the element *nrauj ntsaum* is written quite differently or is missing altogether.

- **nrauj**: *txaij txaij nraug nraug* ‘beautifully striped’:

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nrauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel, oh little zebra squirrel! You a mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

- **nrauj ntsaum**: *nceb nrauj ntsaum* ‘toadstool’:

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

- **nraw-** (typo for *nrawm*?) ‘fast, rapid, quick’ (Xiongs). (The spelling *nraw-*, probably a typo, appears in the Mong-to-English part of the dictionary. The English-to-Mong part has *nrawm* for ‘fast’, ‘rapid’, and ‘quick’.)

- **nrawj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nrawj [to make the sound *nrawj*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nrawm** ‘fast, rapid, quick’ (Xiongs):

Nim sau ntawv quas plag, sau ntawv nrawm caj nrawm tuag.

‘She was writing assiduously, writing as fast as life and death’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **nrawv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nrawv [to make the sound *nrawv*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nre** ‘(no classifier) fold, pleat’ (Xiongs) (also written *ntse*).

- **nreg** ‘to stop’ (Xiongs):

nreg nkaus ‘complete stop’

but

nreg quas nkaus ‘stop and go, stop and go’ (Xiongs p. 554).

- **nreg** ‘to support’ (Xiongs):

tug paas nreg ‘cane, walking stick’ (Xiongs).

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hww tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.

‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **nreg** ‘to stand erect, to stand upright’ (Xiongs). See also *nub ntseg ntsog* ‘midday, the time when the sun is erect’.

- **nreeg** ‘(classifier *tug*) pole, stake’ (Xiongs).

- **nreeg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nreeg [to make the sound *nreeg*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nreeg** or **quas nreeg** ‘typical intensifier, steadily, firmly’ (Xiongs p. 554):

lu nreeg (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to stick firmly].

ruaj nreeg ‘firmly’ (Xiongs, entry for *ruaj* and p. 554).

kaw nreeg (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [locked up firmly].

Tes chim nruj muag quas nreeg lauj.

‘He became fiercely angry’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

Ob tug moog txug tom na cav lug tug nam khi saw hlau quas nreeg has tas, yog vim le caag es yuav lug tug le hov nua.

‘When the two of them arrived, why, there came [Little Yob], firmly bound in iron

chains, asking why he had come' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab
 'the two ntxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the boy's chest' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

"Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?"
 "Good grief! What's this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **nreeg tau** [typo for *taum*?] '(classifier *tug*) bean pole' (Xiongs).

- **nreev**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nreev [to make the sound nreev] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nrig** 'to hit with the fist; (classifier *lub*) fist' (Xiongs).

- **nrig** 'to talk about; about, concerning' (Xiongs).

- **nrig**, intensifier:

Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoog, tsaus tau quas tsi cev lug txoog? / Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?

'When the sky was dark, who was able to come? / When the earth was plunged in darkness, who was capable of coming?' (*Initiation* p. 119).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv
 'The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all.' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **Nrig**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Tsaab** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

- **nrob** '(classifier *lub*) 'chest, breast' (Xiongs):

hauv nrob 'chest, breast' (Xiongs).

- **nrob qaum** '(classifier *lub*) the back, the behind' (Xiongs):

tuaj tom nrob qaum tuaj 'from behind or from the back' (Xiongs).

txhaa nrob qaum 'spine, spinal column' (Xiongs).

zuaj nrob qaum 'to massage the back' (Xiongs).

- **nrog** '(classifier *lub*) volume' (Xiongs).

- **nrog** 'to stand back, to stay back' (Xiongs).

- **nrog**: *thoob tsib to nrog* 'enlightened, having insight, wise, understanding of matters':

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua
tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

'Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong'

(*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **nroj** ‘(classifier *rob*, *cov*, or *re*) herb, weeds, vegetation’ (Xiongs):

noob nroj ‘seed’ (Xiongs).

- **nroj tsuag** ‘herbs, weeds’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsv* pp. 109-111).

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.
‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

- **nrov** ‘noisy, loud, clamorous’ (Xiongs):

lub tswb nrov ‘the bell rings’ (Xiongs).

Taus Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseem taabtom phua tawg nyo quas nyog, nwg txawm nov ib lub suab nrov nroo quas ntwg peb kem pobtsuas lug.

‘While Txheeb Tshoj Theeb was still bent over splitting firewood, he heard a rumbling sound coming from far up on the cliff’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 9).

Nwg maaj maam xuas tsaus ntuj nti lawv tug nyuas dlej kws ndlwg nrov quas lauv nqegtaug.

‘He carefully groped his way through the pitch darkness following a small stream which was flowing noisily downhill’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

Ua lwj toj quas tog lug mas quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov

‘The hills resounded with the sounds of cow bells and horse bells’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj

‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the mountain pass’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

Tabsis nub xyaa nuav, nyav kaajntug txoog xwb, puab tub nov suab tswbnyuj tswbneeg nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim tawroob lawm.

‘However, on the seventh day, when the day had just dawned, they heard the sound of ox bells and horse bells resounding, coming out from the foot of the mountain’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

On page 553, the Xiongs list what they call phonetic intensifiers used after the verb *nrov*:

nrov awv [to make the sound awv]

nrov kuag [to make the sound kuag]

nrov khoob [to make the sound khoob]

nrov khuav [to make the sound khuav]
nrov lauj [to make the sound lauj]
nrov lauv [to make the sound lauv]
nrov les [to make the sound les]
nrov lig lawg [to make the sound lig lawg]
nrov lig loog [to make the sound lig loog]
nrov nchaa ntwg [to make the sound nchaa ntwg]
nrov ngaj [to make the sound ngaj]
nrov ngeg [to make the sound ngeg]
nrov ngig ngeg [to make the sound ngig ngeg]
nrov nkawj [to make the sound nkawj]
nrov nkawv [to make the sound nkawv]
nrov nkeeb [to make the sound nkeeb]
nrov nkig nkuav [to make the sound nkig nkuav]
nrov nkhaas [to make the sound nkhaas]
nrov nkhoos [to make the sound nkhoos]
nrov npawj [to make the sound npawj]
nrov npeeg [to make the sound npeeg]
nrov npoog [to make the sound npoog]
nrov nphaas [to make the sound nphaas]
nrov nphawb [to make the sound nphawb]
nrov npluaj [to make the sound npluaj]
nrov nplhuv [to make the sound nplhuv]
nrov nraj [to make the sound nraj]
nrov nrawj [to make the sound nrawj]
nrov nreeg [to make the sound nreeg]
nrov nreev [to make the sound nreev]
nrov nroo ntwg [to make the sound nroo ntwg]
nrov ntob [to make the sound ntob]
nrov ntwg [to make the sound ntwg]
nrov nthaab [to make the sound nthaab]
nrov nthoos [to make the sound nthoos]
nrov paag [to make the sound paag]
nrov pauj [to make the sound pauj]
nrov plij ploj [to make the sound plij ploj]
nrov ploj [to make the sound ploj]
nrov ploom [to make the sound ploom]
nrov ploov [to make the sound ploov]
nrov pluaj [to make the sound pluaj]
nrov plhawj [to make the sound plhawj]
nrov qes qawv [to make the sound qes qawv]
nrov qev [to make the sound qev]
nrov quaj qeeg [to make the sound quaj qeeg]
nrov quas xyuaj [to make the sound quas xyuaj]
nrov qhuav qhawv [to make the sound qhuav qhawv]
nrov rhij rhuaj [to make the sound rhij rhuaj]

nrov rhuaj [to make the sound rhuaj]
nrov tauj [to make the sound tauj]
nrov tawb [to make the sound tawb]
nrov tawj [to make the sound tawj]
nrov tig toog [to make the sound tig toog]
nrov toog [to make the sound toog]
nrov the tho [to make the sound the tho]
nrov txuaj [to make the sound txuaj]
nrov xuav [to make the sound xuav]

- **nrov nphoo** ‘resounding crash’ (Xiongs).

- **nrov pis nthaa** ‘clanging’:

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthaa sau ntuj tuaj
 ‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **nrov qoom** ‘the swallowing sound’ (Xiongs).

- **nroo** ‘to rumble, to roar, to boom, to growl, to sigh’ (Xiongs).

- **nroo ntwg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nroo ntwg [to make the sound nroo ntwg] (Xiongs p. 553).

Taus Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseem taabtom phua tawg nyo quas nyog, nwg txawm nov ib lub suab nrov nroo quas ntwg peb kem pobtsuas lug.
 ‘While Txheeb Tshoj Theeb was still bent over splitting firewood, he heard a rumbling sound coming from far up on the cliff’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 9).

- **nroog** ‘(classifier *lub*) city, town, country’ (Xiongs):

nraag tej nroog luj ‘in some big cities’ (Xiongs, entry for *tej*).

tuam nroog ‘(classifier *lub*) capital’ (Xiongs) [capital city of a country].

ib lub teb chaws nyob Asia, lub tuam nroog yog Tokyo
 ‘a country in Asia, the capital is Tokyo’ (Xiongs, entry for Japan).

Peb zum [typo for *zwm*] *rua lub nroog Milwaukee*
 ‘we rely on Milwaukee; we are in the Milwaukee area or boundary’ (Xiongs) (Milwaukee is the U.S. city where the Xiongs’ dictionary was written).

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas theem rua huv Plawv nroog.
 ‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs, entry for *ua*).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog.
 ‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Ob tug taug kev moog ib nub yuav laug tsaus ntuj txhaj moog txug huv ib lub nam zog luj.

Lub zog nuav yog ib lub nam nroog.

‘The two traveled all day and into the night and arrived at a large settlement. This settlement was a town’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

- **nroog**, intensifier:

Noog Yaajqawg txawm nqaa pis nroog ib tug ib rev noob zaub

‘the Swallows came one after another each carrying a stem of vegetable seeds’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 9).

Nuj Nplhaib tuab plhaw moog khaws nkaus tau ib txuj suavceeb tawm plawg moog nraag roojtsuas, muab txuj suavceeb khi hlo ua ob lub cos nrum nroog rua nraag kuntoo.

‘Nuj Nplhaib with one jump went and grabbed a headband from the cave and tied two knots in it and flung it down onto a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua, muab nrum nroog rua huv nam dlej.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd, and flung it into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.

‘The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

Lub nam nub txawm poob nroog ib theem lug zab Yawm Nyooglaug lub tebchaws.

‘The sun came down one step and dried up Grandfather Nyooglaug’s country’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **nru** ‘murky’ (Xiongs).

- **nru** ‘a throw, a fling’ (see also *nrum*):

Tsob nplej cais nwg ib nru kuas tu nrho

‘The stalks of rice she flung so that they broke apart’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

- **nrub** ‘to seek after, to look for, to hunt, to find’ (Xiongs). Typo for *nrwb*?

- **nrug** ‘far, remote, distant’ (Xiongs).

- **nrug** ‘with, together with, along with; to accompany’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas koj zuag nrug kojle? ‘Do you bring a comb with you at all?’ (Xiongs.)

nrug nraim (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to accompany frequently].

- **nruj** ‘tight, hard, intense, strict, severe, firm, stringent, precise, stern’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug nim sis caav nruj muag quas nyee.

‘The two of them argued fiercely’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

Tes chim nruj muag quas nreeg lauj.

‘He became fiercely angry’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

- **nruj nraj**: *ua nruj nraj* ‘in agony’ (Xiongs).

- **nrum** ‘to throw, to hurl, to fling’ (Xiongs) (also written *ntsum*; see also *nru* ‘a throw, a fling’):

Nuj Nplhaib tuab plhaw moog khaws nkaus tau ib txuj suavceeb tawm plawg moog nraag roojtsuas, muab txuj suavceeb khi hlo ua ob lub cos nrum nroog rua nraag kuntoo.

‘Nuj Nplhaib with one jump went and grabbed a headband from the cave and tied two knots in it and flung it down onto a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62).

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej huv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua, muab nrum nroog rua huv nam dlej.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd, and flung it into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

tsaws hlo yawm Suav nrum nroog rua huv yag roj.

‘and threw the Chinese [merchant] into the wok of [boiling] oil’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.

‘The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **nruv** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 556):

dlaaj nruv or *dlaaj quas nruv* ‘bright yellow’ (Xiongs p. 556).

- **nruab** ‘to place, to fit, to frame’ (Xiongs).

- **nruab**: *huv nruab yeeb* ‘the unborn state’ (Xiongs) [“in the spirit world”].

- **nruab nraab** ‘middle, half’ (Xiongs).

- **nruab nub** ‘daytime’ (Xiongs).

- **nruab ntawv** ‘in books, on paper, in writing, on record’ (Xiongs).

- **nruab thab** ‘the unborn state’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tāi*.

- **nruag** ‘(classifier *lub*) drum, gong’ (Xiongs).

The gong is one of the shaman’s implements (*Entre* pp. 48-49).

- **nruag**: *lug nruag* ‘(classifier *zaaj*) story’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv*, *Lug Nruag Dlaab*, *Lug Nruag Txa*, and *Lug Nruag Lom Zem*, titles; *Cim Xeeb* pp. 21, 22, 24, 30). Also written *lug ntsuag*.

- **nrwb**: *nruv* ‘to seek after, to look for, to hunt, to find’ (Xiongs). Typo for *nrwb*?

- **nrws** ‘(no classifier) lump, pack’ (Xiongs).

NRH

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *nrh* and *ntsh*. If a word is not found under *nrh* look under *ntsh*.

- **nrha?**: *rha* ‘a stitch’:

Ib nub chob lawm cuaj phaab tsoog, / Ib koob lawm cuaj rha laug
 ‘In one day she sewed nine pieces of clothing, / With one needle nine stitches of embroidery’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 7).

The corresponding word in White Hmong begins with *nrh*. It is uncertain whether this a genuine difference between the two dialects or whether *rha* is a typographical error for *nrha*.

- **nrhav** ‘to find, to look for, to search for, to seek’ (Xiongs).

- **nrhav neej** ‘to look for someone to marry’:

In the first story in *Kwvhuam*, a young woman has been instructed by her parents to find a husband and the first creature she meets is a cloud:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

- **nrhaab** ‘bur, prickly seed pods that cling to clothing’ (Xiongs).

- **nrhau** ‘(classifier *tug*) rib of an umbrella’ (Xiongs).

- **nrhau** ‘to put forth roots, buds’ (Xiongs).

- **nrho** or **quas nrho** ‘post verbal intensifier indicating the completeness of an action’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, completely’ (Xiongs p. 555) (also written *ntsho*):

dle nrho (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to pinch off completely?]

taag nrho ‘completely finished’ (Xiongs, entry for *nrho* and p. 555).

tu nrho (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to cut off completely].

txij nrho (Xiongs p. 555, to translated) [to reach completely].

txij nrho nuav moog ‘from right here on’ (Xiongs).

txhua nrho ‘all, completely’ (Xiongs).

thaum tshaav ntuj te taag nrho ‘when the sunlight covers all’ (Xiongs).

Ib puas tsaav yaam zoo yuav nyob huv taag nrho.

‘A hundred things will all be finished’ (*Tswv Yim*, unnumbered page following page 98).

- **nrhoob** ‘(classifier *txhais* or *saab*) leg wrapping’ (Xiongs).

NT

- **nta** ‘typical intensifier, left behind’ (Xiongs p. 555):

laim nta (tseg) (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to throw away].

ua nta (tseg) (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to leave behind].

Tes le muab ua pis nta rua nraag qaab tsitaug lawm.

‘So he left them by the downhill side of the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33).

- **nta**: *chua nta* ‘to snatch’ (see also *ntag*):

nwg chua nta ngog, ngog tsi tau.

‘when he snatches it to swallow, he will not be able to swallow it’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Muam Paajqawm dlha loo moog saib na cav yog nwg raab nam ncaas. Nwg txhaj chua nta lug ca lawm.

‘Muam Paajqawm ran to look, and, why, it was her jew’s harp. She snatched it down’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 16).

- **ntab**: *quab ntab tau* ‘to get someone to agree to do something’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **ntag** ‘to pull violently on’ (Xiongs).

- **ntag**, intensifier (see also *nta*):

Nwg nuav leej hlub tuag los moog ntuj quas ntag le kuv, leej yau tuag los moog ntuj quas ntag le kuv nuav.

‘Now when adults die, they will be truly gone, when children die, they will be truly gone as I am now’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

hab Ntxawm txhaj yuam pis ntag nwg tawm moog rua lwm chaav tsev lawm.

‘Then Ntxawm pushed him out into another room of the house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **ntaa** ‘support; to help supporting, to support, to take responsibility for’ (Xiongs):

ib ntaa ‘half height, hanging’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaa** ‘(classifier *tug*) trigger; to bend a crossbow’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaa npuj** ‘trap set with a spear’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaab** ‘to slip, to slide, to glide, to float’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaab** ‘bee’ (Xiongs):

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj

‘The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

The expression *qaabtsuas ntaab* apparently means ‘the base of a cliff where bees have built nests’. *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* has *ntaab* ‘yán fēng [cliff bee]’ (p. 106 ndangb) and *tsua ntaab* ‘là fēng yán [wax bee cliff]’ (p. 201 zhuat ndangb).

- **ntaab ntw** ‘news, information’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaag** ‘pertaining to swords’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntaaj*).
- **ntaag**: *le ntaag* ‘really’, ‘at all’:

twb nkaus le ntaag ‘to really touch it’ (Xiongs).

Koj xuas tsi raug le ntaag lov? ‘Can’t you get it at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **ntaaj** ‘(classifier *raab*) sword; to sabre, to cut down’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntaag*).
- **ntaaj**, intensifier:

Pug Xeev Txwjlaug nim aub pob nam kub qaug ntaaj qaug ntawg lug nkaag plawg rua huv puab txaaj.

The Ruler’s wife carried the bundle of gold on her back, stumbling with the weight of it, into their bedroom (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

- **ntaas** ‘(classifier *tug*) carrying pole’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaas**: *kas ntaas* ‘(classifier *dlaim*) board, wooden plank, from Lao *kadaan*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **ntaig** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) bamboo plaited carpet or wall’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaim** ‘to borrow’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaiv** ‘(classifier *tug*) stairs, ladder, scale’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaiv** ‘to face with, to give heat’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaiv ntuj** ‘stairway to heaven; ladder of heaven’:

Koj moog txug nuav, kuv qha koj nce ntaiv ntuj. Koj nce ntaiv ntuj ib qeb tes koj has tas koj tsi tau nce. Koj nce ob qeb tes koj has tas koj nce ib qeb. Koj nce peb qeb tes koj has tas koj nce ob qeb. Ib nub nce ib qeb, ob nub nce ob qeb. Suav ib tsug kaumpeb nub nce kaumpeb qeb. Tes koj le nce nto Ntxwj Nyoog tug ntaiv ntuj.

‘Now that you have come to this point, I will tell you how to climb the stairway to heaven. When you have gone one step, say that you have not gone any steps. When you have gone two steps, say that you have gone one step. When you have gone three steps, say that you have gone two steps. In one day you will go one step. In two days you will go two steps. When you have counted a cycle of thirteen days you will have gone thirteen steps. Then you will have climbed to the top of Ntxwj Nyoog’s stairway to heaven’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15; the dead person lies about how many steps they have gone in order to prevent malevolent spirits from finding them).

- **ntau** ‘many, much’ (Xiongs):

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **ntau**: *feem ntau* ‘for the most part’:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **ntau**: *hov ntau* ‘how much’ (Xiongs).

- **ntau**: *ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv* ‘to take too much’:

ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv yuav nplaam tuab si
‘don’t try to take too much one will lose all’ (Xiongs).

- **ntau dlhau** ‘too much’:

Koj yuav toum [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hwv
‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaub** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) cloth, woven tissue, textile’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaub**: *nplai ntaub*, triangle of fabric on a skirt (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145).

- **ntaub**: *paaj ntaub* ‘embroidery’:

xaws paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to sew embroidery].

xuas teg ua paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to make embroidery by hand].

- **ntaub**: *paaj ntaub puas yaam tsaav* ‘embroidery’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaub**: *tsev ntaub* ‘(classifier *lub*) tent’:

yaws lub tsev ntaub ‘to take down the tent’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaub**: *txaj ntaub*, in a needlework square (*noob-ncoos*), tiny squares of material (usually white) with even smaller squares set on top as diamonds (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140).

- **ntaub ntawv** ‘writing, document’, literally “cloth and paper”; in ancient China, people wrote on both cloth and paper:

Suav ... tsi pub Moob muaj ntaub ntawv. ... yuav tsum siv Suav le taag nrho.

‘The Chinese ... did not allow the Mong to have a writing system. ... they had to use that of the Chinese’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 1).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv.

‘the two sides wrote up a contract’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Ua ntaub ua ntawv xaamnyas tuabsi es pauv kuj tau mas.

‘Prepare a contract and we will make the exchange’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’
(*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **ntaub paag** ‘silk textile’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaub tswv nkhaus**, the zig-zag line of applied fabric in a baby-carrier (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133).
- **ntaug** ‘to hurt less, to decrease in intensity (as inflammation)’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaug** ‘to pound or stamp with fist or foot’ (Xiongs).
- **ntauj** ‘to walk and walk’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus** ‘to hit, to strike, to stamp, to knock, to mint, to play an instrument, to beat’ (Xiongs):

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”].

Nwg xuas ib tug qws ntaus kuv ‘s/he uses a stick to beat me’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yeem ca puab ntaus ‘s/he is willing to let them beat her or him’ (Xiongs).

sib ntaus ‘to fight each other’ (Xiongs).

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj;

muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food.

They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’
(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

“Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?” “Awv, tuaj los tuaj lau!”

“Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, let us come!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **ntaus cim** ‘to mark, to stamp, to sign’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus hau** ‘leading’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus kev** ‘to look for a way’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus nplej** ‘to thresh rice’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus ntseg** ‘to catch fish in a net’:

Cav muaj ib yawm Suav ntaus ntaus ntseg lawv dlej.

‘Why, there was a Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

I have not found the expression *ntaus ntseg* (literally “to hit fish”) in any dictionary but I infer that it means to catch fish in a net because the next sentence refers to the Chinese man’s *vaag* ‘fish net’.

- **ntaus nyuj kub tsaab** ‘to jump and turn up and down’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaus teg** ‘to guess future events by examining the palm lines of a hand’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus thwj** ‘to seal, to certify with a seal’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus tswb** ‘to ring the bell’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus xuv** ‘to convey a message’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus sab yau** ‘pessimistic’ (Xiongs).
- **ntaus thawj** ‘to go ahead, to lead, to go first’ (Xiongs):

Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw.

‘People say that older brothers rule the country’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

- **ntaus yeej** ‘to win in fist fighting’ (Xiongs).
- **ntawd** ‘there, over there’ (Xiongs):

wb muab nwg tsaas ua ib tug tuam yij rua hov ntawd saib cov nam txwm zeej.

‘we must elevate him to the position of tuam yij there who watches over the criminals’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **ntawd** ‘at’ (see also *ntawm*):

Ab, kuv moog cuab ntxab peg roob es tsaus ntuj kuv lug es kuv lug pw ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab. Kuv laam moog muab nam ncej puj dlaab no no es kuv lug pw ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab

‘Well, I went to set traps up on the mountain and when it got dark, I came, I came and slept at the female-spirit post. I just went ahead and pierced the female-spirit post and I came and slept at the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **ntawd** ‘that’:

Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd.

‘Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab nwg tug dlev taug kev lug txug ntawd ib ntog kev

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum and her dog followed the road to that place partway along the road’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the

mountain' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv
'Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book'
(*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd
'If you want to escape, flee into that gourd and then you'll escape' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.
'all of those fled into the gourd' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38) ["that group then fled completely into the gourd"].

- **ntawd**: *hov ntawd* 'that':

Ab! quas tsuv tum dlev hov ntawd
'Damn that dog!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 66.)

- **ntawd**: *le ntawd* 'like that':

Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.
'How can there be all those kinds of writing?' (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!
'Oh, those bellows, why are they worthless like that?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **ntawd**: *ua le ntawd* 'thus, like that':

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!
'Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.' (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

Kuv xaav tas Saub qha rua kuv le hov taag lawm, cais peb ua tau ua le ntawd.
'I want us to do everything that Saub told me' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, p. 26).

Huas cov kws tu tes yog ntsuj teb kws Siv Yig Muas kaav. Txha le tu rua lub cuaj hli hab xyaa hli. Txhua paab pawg tuabneeg txha le ua le ntawd.
'But those who cut are of the region that Siv Yig Muas ruled. Therefore they cut in the ninth month and the seventh month. Every lineage therefore does it like that' (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 33-34).

- **ntawg** 'to divine to the dead' (Xiongs):

TUG CUABTSAAV: Yog tug muab dlejcawv nqajmov lug ntawg rua tug tuag tau nqaa moog noj taugkev. Nwg siv ib txwm txheej ntawg lug ntawg.
'The cuabtsaav is the one who brings water and liquor, meat and rice, to the divination ceremony for the dead person to eat on the way. He uses a pair of divinatory rods to divine' (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14).

Ntaus peb txheej ntawg rua nam tuag.

‘Cast the divinatory rods three times to communicate with the dead person’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

The rods are made from short lengths of bamboo split lengthwise into two halves. They are cast to ascertain whether communication has been established between the human world and the spirit world. A rod falling with the flat side up signifies the spirit world. A rod falling with the rounded side up signifies the human world. If one rod falls flat side up and one rod falls rounded side up, this means that communication between the two worlds has been established.

- **ntawg**, intensifier:

Pug Xeev Txwjlaug nim aub pob nam kub qaug ntaaj qaug ntawg lug nkaag plawg rua huv puab txaaq.

The Ruler’s wife carried the bundle of gold on her back, stumbling with the weight of it, into their bedroom (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

- **ntawm** ‘at, by’:

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncu ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

Pua chaw ntawm ntug cub rua puj dlaab nam ntshais pw hov.

‘They spread out bedding by the fire for the female spirit’s daughter to lie on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

- **ntawm** ‘on’:

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwm kaab

‘The three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 55-56).

- **ntawm** ‘in’:

tuab nam naab xyaab quas leeg ntawm txuj kev.

‘a snake was stretched out in the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **ntawm** ‘for’:

hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **ntawm** ‘from’:

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm

Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug’s house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuij ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

kuv tau ntawm nam puj dlaab paug.

‘I got them from the female paug spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **ntawm** ‘there, that’ (see also *ntawd*):

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **ntawm: rua ntawm** ‘to’:

Muab nwg zag rua ntawm ntoo ‘tie her, him or it to the tree’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawm nuaav** [typo for *nuav*] ‘here, over here’ (Xiongs):

muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw

‘we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **ntawm tej** ‘somewhere there’ (Xiongs).

- **ntaws** ‘navel’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv** ‘paper’ (Xiongs):

ib pawg ntawv ‘a pile of papers’ (Xiongs).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors’ garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors’ house.

Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev tshab.

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors’ new home.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors' garden!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18. On the day before burial, bunches of ritual paper money are brought as offerings to the deceased and tucked into the rafters of the house or hung around the corpse.)

- **ntawv** 'writing (English, French –)' (Xiongs):

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

'Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?' (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **ntawv** 'letter' (Xiongs):

sau ib dlaim ntawv 'write a letter' (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau txais dlaim ntawv le 'They did not receive the letter yet' (Xiongs).

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.

'Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

- **ntawv** 'contract':

Sau zoj ib tsaab ntawv rovqaab rua

'They quickly wrote a new contract' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

Nwg saib saib cov ntawv

'He looked at the contract' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj rhu hlo ntawv lug nrug suav sis has.

'Then the Maiden Ntsum pulled out the contract and discussed it with the Chinese' (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **ntawv**: *kawm ntawv* 'to study':

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv

'Pao scolds his son because he doesn't study' (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *nruab ntawv* 'in books, on paper, in writing, on record' (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *ntaub ntawv* 'writing, document', literally "cloth and paper"; in ancient China, people wrote on both cloth and paper:

Suav ... tsi pub Moob muaj ntaub ntawv. ... yuav tsum siv Suav le taag nrho.

'The Chinese ... did not allow the Mong to have a writing system. ... they had to use that of the Chinese' (*Tswv Yim* p. 1).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg.

'the two sides wrote up a contract and had everyone witness it' (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **ntawv**: *poob ntawv* ‘to fail in school’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *phau ntawv* ‘book’ (Xiongs) (also written *phoo ntawv*):

phau ntawv ceev nyaj ‘accounting book’ (Xiongs).

phau ntawv lab ‘red book’ (Xiongs).

phau ntawv nyeem ‘text book, reading book’ (Xiongs).

phau ntawv sau ‘writing book’ (Xiongs).

phau ntawv txhais lug ‘dictionary’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *phoo ntawv* ‘book’ (Xiongs) (also written *phau ntawv*):

sau ib phoo ntawv ‘write a book’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug tswv phoo ntawv nuav ‘I am the owner of this book’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *Rooj Ntawv Moob* ‘Mong Volunteer Literacy’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Mong Volunteer Literacy’s logo is a drawing of a clump of bamboo with three birds sitting on one of the branches, surrounded by the words Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc. – Rooj Ntawv Moob.

- **ntawv**: *tuab neeg txawj ntawv* ‘literate people’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *them nyaj ntawv* ‘to pay cash’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *tsaj ntawv* ‘letter of the alphabet’:

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

The use of *tsaj* ‘animal’ to refer to letters of the alphabet may be modeled on Thai and Lao, where *tua*, the classifier for, among other things, animals, also means ‘letter of the alphabet’.

- **ntawv**: *tsev kawm ntawv* ‘school’ (Xiongs).

- **ntawv**: *tshuab luam ntawv* ‘copying machine’ (Xiongs).
- **ntawv**: *xwb fwb qha ntawv* ‘teacher’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **ntawv lu** ‘contract’:

Luas tub sau ntawv lu ntawm lub eeb neeg tuabsi tas

‘The contract for the saddle has already been signed’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **ntawv tshaaj xu** ‘notice, news, information’ (Xiongs).
- **ntawv xaamnyas** ‘contract’, from Lao *sǎn nyáa*:

Ua ntaub ua ntawv xaamnyas tuabsi es pauv kuj tau mas.

‘Prepare a contract and we will make the exchange’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **ntawv xwmkaab** ‘the xwmkaab paper’, a sheet of ritual paper hung from the wall of the main room of the house, opposite the main door.

The chapter titled *Ntawv Xwmkaab* ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 53-56) describes the origin of the xwmkaab paper and includes a drawing showing a sheet of decorated paper, with three chicken feathers glued to it in the shape of an inverted triangle, and hung on the wall, next to the shaman’s altar.

The xwmkaab or xim kaab is referred to both as ‘the xwmkaab paper’ (*ntawv xwmkaab*) and ‘the xim kaab altar’ (*thaaj xim kaab*). It is hung on the wall of the main room of the house (*chaav tsev hauv taag*), opposite the main door (*qhov rooj taag*), and next to the shaman’s altar (*thaaj neeb*) and the altar of the medicine king (*thaaj yum vaaj*). Three chicken feathers, arranged in an inverted triangle, are glued to the xwmkaab paper. Each year, at the New Year, the xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced. (*Tswv Yim* p. 15; *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56; Chindarsi 1976:61-62.)

The xwmkaab spirit (*txivdlaab xwmkaab* or *Xwm Kaab los yej*) is one of the household spirits who try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house.

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

Different people give different explanations for the name xwmkaab. Num Tswb Xyooj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj in Joliet, Illinois in 1982, says that xwmkaab is a deformation of Vaajkaav, the name of a Mong king who gave his subjects copies of his portrait to put up in their houses as a sign of his protection when the kingdom was invaded by the Chinese. Each year, at the New Year, the king instructed his subjects to burn his portrait and he would give them a new one. The xwmkaab paper is Vaajkaav’s

portrait and shows that even though Vaajkaav was killed and the kingdom destroyed centuries ago the Mong of the household installing the xwmkaab paper are still under his protection. The xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced each year at the New Year in commemoration of Vaajkaav's instruction regarding his portrait. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56.)

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwmkaab mas lub ntsab yog has tas, puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca ntawm dlaim ntawv hov nua nawb.

'The essential meaning of the three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper is that they bring to mind Vaajkaav's mouth and two eyes, there on the paper' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Num Tswb Xyooj provides the following explanation of the Chinese honorific title Los Yej (*Lǎo Yé*) 'Old Father' or 'Old Gentleman' used with the name Xwmkaab. When the Chinese invaded Vaajkaav's kingdom, they could not at first defeat him in battle. Impressed by his prowess, the Chinese called him Tuam Yej (*Dà Yé*) 'Great Father' or 'Great Man'. The Mong wished to retain something of this Chinese honorific, but did not want to lose the name Vaajkaav.

Yog le nuav tes puab yuav hu ua Txiv Tuam Yej los yuav tau Suav lu xwb, Moob lu poob lawm. Yog puab hu Vaajkaav los Suav lu Txiv Tuam Yej yuav poob lawm. Tes puab txha le muab txav lug kuas tuablu. Yog le, puab txhua tug kws txiv xwmkaab txha le has tas, "Txiv Xwmkaab Los Yej."

'If, then, they were to call him Father *Dà Yé*, using Chinese words only, the Mong words would be lost. If they called him Vaajkaav, the Chinese words Father *Dà Yé* would be lost. Therefore they abbreviated it and made one word. Thus, each xwmkaab specialist says, "Xwmkaab *Lǎo Yé*." (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56.)

Nusit Chindarsi describes a very different explanation. He says that one of his informants, Yaitong Tang, told him that Sierglung [Xwmkaab] comes from Laosier [Los Xwm, from Chinese *Lǎo Sì*] 'Fourth-Born Son'. The Sierglung is put up to appease the spirit of Laosier, for whom people did not hold a funeral because he was a lazy good-for-nothing (Chindarsi 1976:24).

Finally, Jacques Lemoine derives Xwmkaab from the name of a Chinese deity, Sī Guān 'the Fourth Mandarin', whom Lemoine describes as the spirit of wealth (*Entre* pp. 37, 55; *Initiation* p. 29).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that Lemoine may be referring to the *sì guān*, four generals of the Warring States period, whose idols are kept in the Sī Guān Temple in Zhenyuan in eastern Guizhou province in China. However, even though the current name of the xim kaab altar may be derived from the Chinese four generals, the altar itself may have existed prior to the introduction of the Chinese name and the practice of gluing three, not four, chicken feathers to the xwmkaab paper may predate the introduction of the Chinese name.

- **n̄te** 'to warm oneself by a fire or heater' (Xiongs).
- **n̄te** (see also *n̄tev* 'long'): *yoov n̄cauj n̄te* 'mosquito' (Xiongs) ["fly with a long mouth"].

- **nte tawg** ‘to warm oneself by the fire’ (Xiongs).

- **nteg** ‘to catch, to take, to stop’ (Xiongs):

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam nteg ib nam pujqab dlawb rua koj nqaa.

‘If you want to return home, ask your sister to catch a white hen for you to carry with you’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16).

- **nteg caum cuag** ‘to catch’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: nraag ntej** ‘further down’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: sau ntej** ‘further up’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: tom hauv ntej** ‘in front’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: tom ntej zog** ‘a little further’ (Xiongs):

thov txaav tom ntej zog ‘move over a little’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: ua ntej** ‘before, first, to go first’ (Xiongs):

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

Ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le ca meb ua ntej, meb moov zoo es ca meb uantej. Kuv maav uaqaab, kuv ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le.

‘I’m afraid that Father will scold me, so you two go on ahead. Your luck was good, so you two go on ahead. I will follow slowly after, for I am very afraid that Father will scold me’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 18-19).

Thaus kawg, Ntxawm quab ntab tau Txheeb Txheeb Theeb nce ua ntej

‘Finally, Ntxawm forced Txheeb Tshoj Theeb to agree to go up first’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **ntej: ua ntej qho yim** ‘first’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **ntej: ua ntej tshaaj plawg** ‘first’:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **ntej: yaav tom ntej nua** ‘in the future, following’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: yaav tom ntej u** ‘in the past, previous times’ (Xiongs).

- **ntej: zaam ... ua ntej** ‘to yield, to allow to go first’:

zaam, kev ca puab ua ntej

‘give them the way to go first’ (Xiongs) [since *zaam kev* ‘to yield the way’ is a constituent, the comma separating *zaam* and *kev* may be a typographical error].

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **ntev** ‘long’ (Xiongs) (see also *nte*):

ntev loo ‘a pretty long time’ (Xiongs).

tsi thev ntev ‘do not last long’ (Xiongs).

- **nteeg** ‘to perform death ceremonies’ (Heimbach p. 187 ntees):

Ob tug moog txug huv luas nteeg plig cais, tug nug hlub nim zoo zoo sab.

‘The two of them reached the place where they were performing the ceremony [of releasing] the soul; the older brother was very happy’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16)/

- **nteeg qhua** ‘funeral guests’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm muab tug nam phubthawj hov tua lug ua nqaj rua nteeg qhua ntawd noj.

‘So the Male Spirit then killed the Kammu woman and prepared meat for the funeral guests to eat’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 12).

- **nteeg tuag** ‘the funeral’ (Xiongs).

- **nti** ‘to move, to budge, to stir, to writhe, to wriggle’ (Xiongs):

Cais zaaj lub nam cev nti huam cheej lauj!

‘The dragon’s body began to writhe in its death throes’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Tug nam zaaj nti nti zaaj tuag quas zug cais tsaus quas zug tuaj.

‘As the dragon gradually writhed to death, their surroundings grew darker and darker’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag txhaj quaj los quaj, qw los qw hab nti ua vig ua voog.

‘Yob the ‘Orphan yelled and yelled, screamed and screamed, and tossed to and fro’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

- **nti** ‘to chip, to splinter off in layers’ (Xiongs):

Nim quaj quaj, nim nti nti ua ntshaav nrug quas ntsuav le.

‘They began to weep and to scratch themselves so that their blood dripped’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **nti** ‘to spit something out’ (Xiongs):

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then spit a drop of saliva on the road and break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road, and then come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **nti** (see also *ntiv*):

nplhaib ‘(classifier *nti* or *ntiv*) ring, finger ring’ (Xiongs).

- **nti**, intensifier:

nwg nim chim chim nwg quaj quaj pus muag nti nraag qaab cub
‘he was very angry and was crying and sitting down by the fireplace covering his face with his hands’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14).

nub nua koj yuav quaj quaj pus muag ntuj quas nti
‘today you are crying and covering your face with your hands’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14).

ntuj tsaus fuab quas nti ua naag tshawv zig quas zoj tau ib xyoos
‘the sky had been completely overcast and it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

ntsag ntuj ntsag teb quas nti tsi pum muaj ib tug nyuas tuabneeg tawm twg
‘sky and earth were still and not one human being was seen to come out anywhere’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Tes aub! nrug puj dlaab nam ntXHais nyob tsausntuj quas nti huv nam qhov tsuas.
‘And then, do you know what? He stayed with the female spirit’s daughter in the darkness of the cave!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

- **ntig** ‘(classifier *lub*) cup, bowl’ (Xiongs) (also written *ntim*).

- **ntim** ‘to hold, to contain, to keep back’ (Xiongs):

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab
‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **ntim** (classifier *lub*) ‘bowl, cup’ (Xiongs) (also written *ntig*).

- **ntim su** ‘to get a lunch bag’ (Xiongs).

- **ntim nyaj ntim kub** ‘silver bowls and gold bowls’, used to determine if someone will live or die:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls:

Kawg kag rhu ntim nyaj ntim kub lug taw.
Quick, pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate.

Tes puj dlaab nam ntXHais moog rhu hlo ntim nyaj ntim kub lug tes;
So the female spirit’s daughter pulled out silver bowls and gold bowls:

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”.

“Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag”.

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

Plawg moog tes;

Plawg went then:

“Kuv paab, kuv paab koj!”

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”.

“Tuag luas mas nam! Tuag le lauj nam lauj!”

“If I can help, I will help you!”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

Tes nam puj dlaab tuag le lauj.

Then the female spirit died.

(Lug Nruag Dlaab pp. 21-22.)

Then the female spirit’s daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is repeated. The female spirit’s daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

“Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj”.

“If you are to live, Little Kaub [man’s name] and Little Mais [woman’s name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live.”

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **ntiv** ‘(classifier *tug* or no classifier) finger’ (Xiongs) (see also *nti*):

nplhaib (classifier *nti* or *ntiv*) ‘ring, finger ring’ (Xiongs).

- **ntiv taw** ‘toe’ (Xiongs):

rwg taw or *rwg ntiv taw* ‘little toe’ (Xiongs).

- **ntiv teg** ‘finger(s)’ (Xiongs):

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

rwg teg or *rwg ntiv teg* ‘little finger’ (Xiongs).

- **nto** ‘for, until, up to’ (Xiongs):

suav nto peb ‘to count up to three’ (Xiongs).

tuaj nto ‘to come up to the level of the ground (planting), to put forth, to sprout’ (Xiongs).

yuav thev nto plaub xyoo ‘will last for four years’ (Xiongs).

- **nto** ‘to go or come out; to emit’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 234 *ndaot*; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 107 *ndaot*):

nto plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to emerge suddenly].

- **ntofws** ‘sweating’ (Xiongs).

- **nto plawg** (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to arrive suddenly].

- **ntob**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ntob [to make the sound ntob] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **ntog** ‘partway’:

txug ib ntog dlej ‘when he got partway across the river’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab nwg tug dlev taug kev lug txug ntawd ib ntog kev, ua cav txawm muaj ib twv fuab dlawb yaa lug quas luag.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum and her dog followed the road to that place partway along the road, and, why, there was a white cloud flying lug quas luag’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

- **ntoo** ‘(classifier *tug*) tree; wood’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntoos*):

Muab nwg zag rua ntawm ntoo ‘tie her, him or it to the tree’ (Xiongs).

tsob ntoo txiv dluaj ‘peach’ (Xiongs) [peach tree].

tseem ntoo ‘real wood’ (Xiongs).

The *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant speaks of the origin of bamboo and trees:

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless.

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

- **ntoo** ‘to put on a hat’ (Xiongs).

- **ntoo**: *kuntoo* ‘tree’:

txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo.

‘and there was a little minivet on a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **ntoo**: *txav ntoo* ‘to cut down trees’ (Xiongs):

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **ntoo tawv** ‘hard wood’ (Xiongs).

- **ntoo thuv** ‘pine tree, pine’ (Xiongs).

- **ntoo zawg** ‘a kind of tree’ (Xiongs), ‘huàgāo tree’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 323 reul), ‘kuāshān tree’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 152 reul), probably birch (*Betula*), or else transferred to a birch-like tree (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **ntoos** (see also *ntoo*):

paaj ntoos ‘flower’ (Xiongs).

pob ntoos ‘stump of a fallen tree’ (Xiongs).

- **ntoos**: *tswmcab paajntoos* ‘votive candle’:

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab

‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **ntoos taav** ‘(no classifier) rib’ (Xiongs).

- **ntu** ‘to spit’ (Xiongs):

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **ntu quas zug** ‘at successive places’:

Suavdlawg txhaj tuaj moog muab ntawv peg Paaj Cai lug teev ua ntu quas zug nqeg lug.
 ‘Everyone brought ritual paper up to Paaj Cai, and then conducted different parts of the ceremony at successive places moving from north to south’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **ntub** ‘to moisten, to drench, to soak; wet’ (Xiongs).

- **ntug** ‘(classifier *lub*) horizon, border, limit, shore’ (Xiongs):

dlaab ntug cub ‘spirit of the edge of the fireplace’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Pua chaw ntawm ntug cub rua puj dlaab nam ntchais pw hov.
 ‘They spread out bedding by the fire for the female spirit’s daughter to lie on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

Huas Muam Paajlig, Yawm Fuabtais tug nam hlub, kuj ua plhu nphob quas zug, hab xuab kutaw rhuaj rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.
 ‘But Muam Paajlig, His Majesty’s senior wife grew more and more pale and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

Tabsis nub xyaa nuav, nyav kaajntug txoog xwb, puab tub nov suab tswbnyuj tswbneeg nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim tawroob lawm.
 ‘However, on the seventh day, when the day had just dawned, they heard the sound of ox bells and horse bells resounding, coming out from the foot of the mountain’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

huas tshuav tuab nam dlev pw caws ceeg ntawm ntug qhovcub huas tshwsmllov pw caws ceeg peg qhovtsus quaj: “mi-aub! mi-aub!”
 ‘All that remained was a dog curled up by the fire and a cat curled up on top of the stove crying, “Miau! Miau!”’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26.)

Le nyob cuaj tshooj vaag yim tshooj tsev es tsev vuag luaj vuag av ci nraa quas ab rua qaaj [typo for nqaaj?] tog tej ntug txaj.
 ‘They dwelt in nine stories of gardens and eight stories of houses, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass gleaming brightly from the coins at the edges of the end beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **ntug** ‘muscular, big’ (Xiongs).

- **ntug** ‘region, area’ (see also *ntuj*):

Thau u Moob tsi tau muaj vaaj. Muaj ib tug hu ua Lis Sub Tuam. Nwg kaav ib ntsuj teb. Muaj ib tug hu ua Siv Yig Muas. Nwg kaav ib ntug teb.
 ‘Long ago, the Mong did not have a king. Instead there was someone named Lis Sub Tuam who ruled one region and someone named Siv Yig Muas who ruled another area’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 20).

- **ntug**: *kaaj ntug* ‘daylight’ (*Heimbach* p. 15 *kaj ntug*):

kaaj ntug plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [daybreak].

The Xiongs do not translate *kaaj ntuj plawg*. The translation ‘daybreak’ is from Heimbach (p. 15 *kaj ntug plaws*).

- **ntug**: *neej xai plaub ntug* ‘court, justice’ (Xiongs).

- **ntug**: *qaab ntug* ‘west’:

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for *qaum*?] *teb dlhau qaab teb.*

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

‘As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **ntug**: *qaab ntug* ‘horizon’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Dlaab, nwg leej muam tug quasyawg, txawm yaa plawg tim qaab lug tsaws nkaus sau qhovmuag tsev ua qhovncauj lab pistsuag.

‘the Male Spirit, his sister’s husband, then came flying in from the horizon [or ‘from the west’] and perched on the gable, with his mouth all red’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **ntug**: *roojntug* ‘the door of heaven’:

Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ... ”

The doorkeeper of the door of heaven cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...” (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **ntug dlej qawj** ‘the shore is washed away’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj** ‘(classifier *lub*) sky’ (Xiongs):

tshoom kub lub ntuj ‘to go straight up into the sky’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj

‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntsooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **ntuj** ‘sky’ used metaphorically to mean a region, a part of the world (see also *ntug*):

Poob luas ntuj yoog luas txuj (Mong proverb)

‘Being among them, follow or accept what they have’ (Xiongs) [“Fall into their region / Follow their customs”].

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (Tswv Yim p. 141).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (Tswv Yim p. 144).

- **ntuj**, intensifier:

Nwg nuav leej hlub tuag los moog ntuj quas ntag le kuv, leej yau tuag los moog ntuj quas ntag le kuv nuav.

‘Now when adults die, they will be truly gone, when children die, they will be truly gone as I am now’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 9).

nub nua koj yuav quaj quaj pus muag ntuj quas nti

‘today you are crying and covering your face with your hands’ (Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 14.)

- **ntuj**: *caij ntuj* ‘season’:

caij ntuj kub ‘summer’ (Xiongs).

caij ntuj naag ‘rainy season’ (Xiongs).

caij ntuj no ‘winter’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *huv qaab ntuj* ‘in the world’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *ib ntxee ntuj* ‘the other side of the world’ (also written *ib ntxees ntuj*):

nam neeg yaa quas laag rua ib ntxee ntuj

‘the horse flew lightly to the other side of the world’ (Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 20).

- **ntuj**: *ib ntxees ntuj* ‘the other side of the world’ (Xiongs) (also written *ib ntxee ntuj*).

- **ntuj**: *mo ntuj* ‘night time’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *naag mo tsaus ntuj* ‘yesterday night or last night’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *npoo ntuj* ‘horizon’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *ntaiv ntuj* ‘stairway to heaven; ladder of heaven’:

Koj moog txug nuav, kuv qha koj nce ntaiv ntuj. Koj nce ntaiv ntuj ib qeb tes koj has tas koj tsi tau nce. Koj nce ob qeb tes koj has tas koj nce ib qeb. Koj nce peb qeb tes koj has tas koj nce ob qeb. Ib nub nce ib qeb, ob nub nce ob qeb. Suav ib tsug kaumpeb nub nce kaumpeb qeb. Tes koj le nce nto Ntxwj Nyoog tug ntaiv ntuj.

‘Now that you have come to this point, I will tell you how to climb the stairway to heaven. When you have gone one step, say that you have not gone any steps. When you have gone two steps, say that you have gone one step. When you have gone three steps, say that you have gone two steps. In one day you will go one step. In two days you will go two steps. When you have counted a cycle of thirteen days you will have gone

thirteen steps. Then you will have climbed to the top of Ntxwj Nyoog's stairway to heaven' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15; the dead person lies about how many steps they have gone in order to prevent malevolent spirits from finding them).

- **ntuj**: *ntsig txug ntuj ceeb tsheej* 'heavenly' (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *qaum ntuj* 'up in heaven' (Xiongs):

Yaav thaus u, yawm Xeev txwjlaug qawm [sic] ntuj muaj ib tug ntxhais npe hu ua MUAM NKAUJ NTSUM.

'Long ago, the Ruler of heaven had a daughter named Muam Nkauj Ntsum' (*Kwvhuam* p. 7)

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

'Ntsum's mother and Ntsum's father, the Ruler, reigned in heaven, but the Maiden Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth' (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Cais cov nam hluas nkauj sau qaum ntuj sis ntxhi pis chiv

'The young women of heaven whispered to one another' (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 23).

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

'The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **ntuj**: *qaum ntuj* 'east':

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for qaum?] teb dlhau qaab teb.

'The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south' (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

'As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am' (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **ntuj**: *qhovntuj* 'chasm':

Cuav Tshoj Tim dlov pobzeb moog txhawg qhovntuj taag lawm

'Cuav Tshoj Tim had rolled stones completely stuffing up the chasm' (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 23).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

'That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **ntuj**: *thov ntuj* 'to pray' (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *tsaus ntuj* 'dark, darkness, to get dark' (Xiongs):

Nwg maaj maam xuas tsaus ntuj nti

‘He carefully groped his way through the pitch darkness’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

ntuj tsaus fuab quas nti ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyoos

‘the sky had been completely overcast and it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

txug tsaus ntuj, nwg txhaj moog qev lub tsev kws Yob Ntsuag nyob ntawd pw.

‘when night fell she asked permission to sleep in the house where Yob the Orphan was’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Ob tug taug kev moog ib nub yuav laug tsaus ntuj txhaj moog txug huv ib lub nam zog luj.

Lub zog nuav yog ib lub nam nroog.

‘The two traveled all day and into the night and arrived at a large settlement. This settlement was a town’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoog, tsaus tau quas tsi cev lug txoog? / Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?

‘When the sky was dark, who was able to come? / When the earth was plunged in darkness, who was capable of coming?’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

Tes aub! nrug puj dlaab nam ntshais nyob tsausntuj quas nti huv nam qhov tsuas.

‘And then, do you know what? He stayed with the female spirit’s daughter in the darkness of the cave!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **ntuj**: *tsev teev ntuj* ‘church’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuj**: *tshaav ntuj* ‘to shine (sun)’ (Xiongs):

kaus roog tshaav ntuj ‘(classifier *lub*) parasol’ (Xiongs).

muaj tshaav ntuj ‘shiny’ (Xiongs).

thaum tshaav ntuj te taag nrho ‘when the sunlight covers all’ (Xiongs).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

Tshaav ntuj lawm nam peb nub tis ua kub, noob xyoob caj tsis nyog ntshoo xyoob hluv.

‘For three days the weather was hot. The seeds of bamboo could not live long enough for bamboo branches to grow’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 76-77).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua tshaav ntuj quas lug lawm cais, kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb lug lawm tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky has cleared, for my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is truly coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

- **ntuj aw!** ‘by heaven!’:

Ab! yawm hov caag nam quaspuij los yuav zoo nkauj ua luaj le ne? Ab! yog yug tau es yug puag ib mos ntshai yug yuav tuag ib tsig le lau, ntuj aw ...

‘Ah, how can that man’s wife be so beautiful? If one spent the night in her arms it would

be like dying, by heaven!’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18.)

- **ntuj ceeb tsheej** ‘heaven’ (Xiongs) (Chinese *jīngchéng* ‘capital city of a country’):

lub ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heaven’ (Xiongs).

ntsig txug ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heavenly’ (Xiongs).

- **Ntuj nis** ‘Good heavens!’:

Ub! Ntuj nis nam Dlaav aw! ‘Good heavens, Eagle!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

- **Ntujsua Teb Tompeg** ‘the Upper Realm’ and **Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug** ‘the Lower Realm’:

Conventional terms in folklore for neighboring countries, either in the human world on earth or in the spirit world in the sky.

In *Nuj Sis Loob*, the Upper Realm and the Lower Realm appear to be on earth. They are neighboring countries which become closely allied when the son of the king of the Upper Realm marries the daughter of the king of the Lower Realm. Saub sets events in motion when he comes down from the sky (*sau ntuj*) to earth (*nplajteb*) and visits the Upper Realm:

At that time, the Ruler ruled as King over the Upper Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*). (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16.)

On that day, Grandfather Saub in heaven (*sau ntuj*) did not feel like doing anything. He said to his retainers: “Little ones! Why don’t I feel like doing any work today? You stay here, I’m going to travel round earth (*nplajteb*) a bit!”

After saying this to his retainers, Grandfather Saub came down to wander around and take a look at things here on earth (*nplajteb nuav*).

In his wanderings Grandfather Saub arrived at His Majesty the Ruler’s village, and saw Muam Paajlig, His Majesty the Ruler’s senior wife, holding Tub Ceeb Pov’s hand and running down to the lower part of the village. Muam Paajlig took Tub Ceeb Pov to a black chasm below the village. She pushed him into the chasm and ran home. Grandfather Saub then transformed himself into a white cloud-wind stallion (the traditional flying horse of Mong folklore) and flew down and caught Tub Ceeb Pov. (*Nuj sis Loob* pp. 24-25.)

Having thought this, Nuj Sis Loob then leapt down to join Tub Ceeb Pov on the back of the cloud-wind horse. Then the horse flew out of the chasm and brought the two brothers to the Lower Realm (*rua Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*).

They were between the Lower Realm and the Upper Realm (*huv nruabnraab Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug, hab Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*) and there was an enormous mountain. On that mountain lived a very wicked Spirit. There was no human being who dared to cross that Spirit’s lands and domains. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 26)

His Majesty the Ruler kept shooting the tender sambar deer all day until it was almost getting dark. Finally the sambar deer, the wicked Spirit, led His Majesty the Ruler across the border (*dlhau ntsim teb*) and His Majesty continued to shoot at it. His Majesty the

Ruler lifted his gun and was about to shoot when, lo and behold, the sambar deer transformed itself into a Spirit with a bright-red mouth who said to him angrily, “You wretched human! Why have you been shooting me all day? Do you not know that I have fled to my own house and my own garden and yet you continue to shoot at me?” (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 28-29.)

His Majesty the Ruler pleaded with the Spirit some more: “Uncle: although you feel that way, I beg you not to harm me and not to kill me. I am a King. I rule the Upper Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*). (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 29).

Grandfather Saub had transformed himself into a cloud-wind stallion to carry Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov out of the black pit and had deposited them in a site of the King of the Lower Realm (*Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug lub xyeemtshaav*). He entrusted them to the care of the King and found a place for the two of them to stay, and then he went back to heaven.

The Lower Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*) was a very large country. The King who ruled this country was a good person who loved his subjects. He had led his subjects in making his country bright and prosperous for a long time. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34.)

Nuj Sis Loob knew that he was still young and would not be able to handle Grandfather Spirit, so, as they were flying and fighting each other, he forced Grandfather Spirit to go to the Lower Realm (*rua Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*) so that his younger brother would see them and be able to help him.

Tub Ceeb Pov, who was now on his own, would go to school every day together with the sons and daughters of His Majesty the Ruler of the Lower Realm (*Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub cov ntxhais*). (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 40-41.)

When he had said all this, Nuj Sis Loob flew back to the Upper Realm (*rua Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*). Then Tub Ceeb Pov descended to join the sons and daughters of his Majesty the Ruler of the Lower Realm (*Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub cov ntxhais*). (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42.)

Nuj Sis Loob came flying in, ran to look under the rock and found Nkauj See crying so that her eyes were all red. So he embraced her and flew off with her to the Lower Realm (*rua Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*). (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42.)

From the day that Grandfather Spirit died, the big mountain where he had lived on the border between the Upper Realm and the Lower Realm (*huv cam teb Ntujsua Teb Tompeg hab Ntujudua Teb Tomtaug nuav*) became bright and was not darkened by the clouds which passed over it. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 43.)

The following day, His Majesty the ruler accordingly sent his servants to call upon the old man and ask him to lead them to Nkauj See.

When the servants of His Majesty the Ruler of the Upper Realm arrived (*Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug Ntujsua Teb Tompeg cov tubmaab tubqhe*), His Majesty the Ruler of the Lower Realm (*Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*) caught chickens and pigs to kill and prepared a fine meal for them. Then he led them round to see his subjects and to look at his entire kingdom.

Nuj Sis Loob, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj See were sitting and thinking with great longing about their parents. Then they saw the servants coming. But they were unable to do anything at all. The day that the servants were going to set out to go back, Nuj Sis Loob made up his mind to do the work of his hands, so he went and said to his father's servants, "Listen, my brethren, I ask you not to be in a hurry to leave. I want you to stay and help me do a little work before you go."

Then Nuj Sis Loob took out silver and gold to buy "water and liquor" (i.e. liquor, traditionally prepared for marriage ceremonies) and went to ask for His Majesty the Ruler's Youngest Daughter Nkauj Fuab to be his wife. But when he brought the water and the liquor and went to make his request, when he had finished speaking to His Majesty the Ruler, His Majesty said, "Tub Nuj Sis Loob, if it were anyone else, I would not consent, but since it is you, I give my consent. But right now, if you can find your way back and want to go back to help your parents, then take my youngest daughter with you. When you go, wait until you have a home, and then the two of you come back, and we will have a feast and celebrate the marriage."

Then Nuj Sis Loob sent the three servants on ahead to give the news to his parents.

When the three servants got back, they told all that had happened: the country they had gone to see, its prosperity, its goodness, its hospitality, how they had seen Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj See. They told this to his Majesty, to the Senior Queen, and to the Junior Queen. They also said, "Your Majesty, when we arrived, Txiv Nuj Sis Loob (note the switch from the title *Tub* 'Son' to the title *Txiv* 'Father' in recognition of Nuj Sis Loob's new status) also asked us to go with him to ask for the youngest daughter of the King who rules that country. Today, they have already begun their journey here."

When they heard all this, His Majesty and the Queen were happier than ever than ever. Every day, they went up to the site to listen and to see whether they could see them coming. They kept watch for six days, but they did not come. However, on the seventh day, when the day had just dawned, they heard of sound of ox bells and horse bells resounding, coming out from the foot of the mountain. (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 45-47.)

At last, Nuj Sis Loob, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj See had returned to their mother and father. Then His Majesty the Ruler had his servants catch chickens and pigs and kill them and prepare a meal for everyone to eat, and he elevated Nuj Sis Loob to be King and to rule the Upper Realm (*kaav Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*) in place of his father. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48.)

Nuj Sis Loob, moreover, led his subjects out to make paddy fields and dry fields beyond the large mountain which had been the lands and the domains of the evil Spirit, and they also went out to the Lower Realm (*moog tawm plawg rua Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*).

Not long after, the Upper Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*) passed into being a country with name and fame, as bright and beautiful as the Lower Realm (*ib yam le tebhaws Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*). The two of them built a building with nine "horns" and eight "fangs" to be a royal palace for the two of them and for Nuj Sis Loob's parents, His Majesty the Ruler and Nkauj Nubqub, to live in. From that time on, the Upper Realm and the Lower Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg, hab Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*) passed into being two countries

that were like father and son, like younger brother and older brother, like daughter and son-in-law. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49.)

In “Uncle Tuam and Youngest Sister Wildcat” (*Lug Nruag Txa* pp. 90-101), the upper realm and the lower realm may be in the spirit world.

A young man going to join his sister and her husband comes upon a Xeev Txwjlaug (Ruler) called grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv who says to him,

“When you go to the lower realm (*ntuj sua teb tom taug*), please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob to send servants to help me make a garden and a house. At this time, the sword and the knife have burned all my servants to death.” (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92.)

The young man continues on his way and reaches the home of his sister and her husband. The young man’s sister’s husband’s brother takes the young man to a dragon lake and challenges him to a contest to see who can call forth the dragon. The young man calls,

“Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob! I’ve come from the upper realm (*ntuj sua teb tom peg*)” (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94)

and then conveys grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv’s request to send servants. The old dragon, grateful for the message, takes the young man to his home at the bottom of the lake, where the young man meets and falls in love with the old dragon’s daughter, who tells him that when her father offers to reward him for conveying the message, he must refuse whatever her father offers and say that he wants only the fish with yellow skin. Therefore, when the old dragon offers the young man silver and gold and livestock, he replies,

“As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth (*peb nplajteb*) silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral.” (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96.)

In other words, grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv lives in *ntuj sua teb tom peg* ‘the upper realm’ and grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob lives in *ntuj sua teb tom taug* ‘the lower realm’ and both places are contrasted with *nplajteb* ‘the face of the earth,’ where human being live, suggesting that the upper realm and the lower realm may both be parts of the spirit world.

Finally, “Yob the Orphan and the Swallow that Fell to the Ground” starts out in the Upper Realm and then the protagonist’s brother moves to the Lower Realm:

Long ago, in ancient times, there was a couple who had two sons, but the couple had been dead for some time leaving the two boys orphaned for a long time. They were Yob the Orphan and Yob the Orphan’s elder brother. Yob the Orphan moved upstream to the Upper Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*), and left his older brother alone in the Lower Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug*). (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7.)

Yob the Orphan’s older brother and older brother’s wife lived as king to the Lower Realm (*Ntujsuav Teb Tomtaug*). (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

Yob the Orphan then sat and told everything from beginning to end to his older brother. Finally, he said: “Older brother! I miss my wife and son very much, so I’m afraid that I

want to go back to see my wife and son!”

Yob the Orphan’s older brother said: “Younger brother Yob the Orphan! Long ago, the two of us were very poor, so I sent you to find a wife, to live in the Upper Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*) to see if you could get a wife, and if you could have a good life. Now, you found one, you married the Ruler’s youngest daughter, so you work with me and study for three months so that you are ready and then go back!”

When Yob the Orphan heard what his older brother told him to do, he replied: “*Ab* older brother. If it is that you want me to stay and study, then I will stay as you said. But if I am to stay for another reason, I’m afraid that I do not want to stay!”

Finally, Yob the Orphan was happy to stay to study with his older brother. His older brother every day brought Yob the Orphan to go round his lands and domains, among his subjects, and to watch him rule and administer. Yob the Orphan studied observed everything for a full three months, then he set out on his way back to the Upper Realm (*Ntujsua Teb Tompeg*) and went to see his wife and son. (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29.)

There is no particular indication in the story that either realm has any special connection with the spirit world. They could both be on earth.

- **ntuj ... teb** ‘with great intensity; with all one’s strength’:

thaub ntuj thaub teb ‘hacked with all his might and main’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **ntum** ‘pressed tight, close, packed tight’ (Xiongs).

- **ntus** ‘to weave; (classifier *tug*) powerloom’ (Xiongs).

- **ntus** ‘(no classifier) period of time, instance’ (Xiongs):

cais suavdlawg txhaj nyob ua zog ua moog rua ntus ntawd.

‘and everyone came to live in villages and communities at that time.’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **ntuv** ‘to chop down, to cut down’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuag** ‘to advocate, to counsel, to advise, to teach, to give a lesson to’ (Xiongs).

- **ntuag** ‘(no classifier or classifier *rob*) hemp thread, hemp tree’ (Xiongs):

Ntuag implies raw hemp, from the stage it is stripped from the stalk up to when it is spun. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

saws ntuag ‘to spin hemp’ (Xiongs).

A better translation is ‘to splice hemp’. The individual strips of prepared raw hemp are prepared and joined/spliced end-to-end to make a single strip hundreds of meters long. Only once this is accomplished will the hemp be further processed – spun on the spinning wheel, bleached, etc. The strips are spliced by twisting two strands one way and then twisting the whole back the other way (not by tying knots). (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

In a story, a woman who has been transformed into a cow helps her young daughter

splice hemp (the girl is speaking to her step-mother, whom she addresses as *nad* 'mother'):

Kuv moog ces kuv muab ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj taub hau, ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj teg nam nyuj taw, tes nam nyuj nrug kuv saws thab. Txhaj le tau ntuag npaum le los mos nad!

'When I go, I hang a hank on the cow's head, a hank on the cow's front hoof and rear hoof, and the cow splices with me. So I get so much hemp fiber, mother!' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 32.)

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of cloth but tied with hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

'You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person's footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person's arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

'Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They're big as young ewes. Don't forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They're big as young sows. Don't forget your hempen shoes!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and kaab no are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors' (*Initiation* p. 135).

The *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant also speaks of the origin of hemp:

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless.

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

- **ntuas** 'to kick away, to disengage a covering' (Xiongs).

- **ntuav** 'to vomit, to throw up' (Xiongs).

- **ntw**: *ntaab ntw* 'news, information' (Xiongs).

- **ntwg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ntwg [to make the sound ntwg] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **ntwg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nchaa ntwg [to make the sound nchaa ntwg] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **ntwg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nroo ntwg [to make the sound nroo ntwg] (Xiongs p. 553):

Thaus Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseem taabtom phua tawg nyo quas nyog, nwg txawm nov ib lub suab nrov nroo quas ntwg peb kem pobtsuas lug.

'While Txheeb Tshoj Theeb was still bent over splitting firewood, he heard a rumbling sound coming from far up on the cliff' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 9).

- **ntwg** or **quas ntwg** 'typical intensifier, sound of expansion' (Xiongs p. 555):

nchaa ntwg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [the sound nchaa ntwg; also listed as a phonetic intensifier].

poog ntwg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [the sound poog ntwg].

NTH

- **nth** 'to lean on' (Xiongs).

- **nthaab** ‘overhead storage platform, attic’ (Xiongs).

- **nthaab**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nthaab [to make the sound nthaab] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **nthaav**, sound of clanging weapons:

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthaav sau ntuj tuaj
 ‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **nthawv** ‘typical intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 555):

hliv nthawv (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to pour, to dump].

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laaj*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- **nthe** ‘to shout loudly’ (Xiongs).

- **nthee** ‘to fry (egg)’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug nim ua zaub ua qai nthwb qai nthee tsw qej tsw dlog noj.
 ‘They made vegetables and fragrant fried eggs and fragrant garlic and onions to eat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **ntheeb** ‘to spread out (legs)’ (Xiongs).

- **nthi** ‘post verbal intensifier indicating the completeness of the action’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, firmly’:

tsuj nthi (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to step firmly].

tuag nthi ‘stick hundred percent to’ (Xiongs, entry for *nthi* and p. 555).

- **ntho** or **quas ntho** ‘post verbal intensifier indicating the completeness of the action’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, completely’ (Xiongs p. 555):

luv ntho ‘completely broken’ (Xiongs, entry for *ntho* and p. 555).

Quas nyuj, quas neeg, quas yaaj quas tshis mas nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ua quas tauj quas tsuag luv quas ntho.

‘Cattle, horses, sheep and goats filled the hills and highlands and cropped the weeds and

shrubs to a stubble' (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **nthoos**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov nthoos [to make the sound nthoos] (Xiongs).

- **nthu tab** 'middle section of the skirt. The base fabric is the *cab* or batik. It's indigo on white, or indigo on light blue. There are several designs for the batik pattern, and very few of the women in the U.S. remember all of them. Most of the designs are called *txaj tab* or 'skirt mark'. (*Grandmother's Path* p. 145.)

- **nthua** 'to sort out weeds in a garden' (Xiongs).

- **nthuav** 'to unfold, to spread out, to enlarge, to branch out, to unroll, to bring out (in conversation)' (Xiongs).

- **nthw** '(no classifier) gust (of wind)' (Xiongs).

- **nthwb ... nthee** 'fried (eggs)':

Ob tug nim ua zaub ua qai nthwb qai nthee tsw qej tsw dlog noj.

'They made vegetables and fragrant fried eggs and fragrant garlic and onions to eat' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **nthwv** or **quas nthwv** 'typical intensifier, expansion, pouring' (Xiongs p. 555):

nchuav nthwv (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to pour].

noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj teb.

'Let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring down to fill the earth' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

Yawm Nyooglaug paab nam tub txawm sau nthwv lug muab Cuav Tshoj Tim khi kag hab caab tawm lawm.

'Grandfather Nyooglaug's sons all gathered together, tied up Cuav Tshoj Tim and led him out' (*Txheeb Tshoj Tim* p. 36).

N TL

Variant spelling of *ndl* occasionally found in Xiongs and *Initiation*:

qhav '(classifier *ntliv*) ginger' (Xiongs).

xub ntlag 'front' (Xiongs).

ntlog 'to roll' (*Initiation* p. 135).

N TS

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *nts* and *nr*. If a word is not found under *nts* look under *nr*.

- **ntsa** '(classifier *tug*) nail, screw' (Xiongs).

- **ntsa** 'to nail' (Xiongs):

ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab

‘the two nttxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **ntsa** ‘to fix, to fasten, to set, to establish, to settle’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsa** ‘to stare at, to gaze at’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsab** ‘(classifier *lub* or no classifier) rice’ (Xiongs), ‘hulled-rice, husked-rice (rice which has been husked but is still uncooked)’ (Lyman p. 237).

- **ntsab** ‘kernel’:

lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

‘the pronunciation is slightly different, but the kernel of the language and the letters of the alphabet are the same’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **ntsab**: *moov ntsab* ‘flour’ (Xiongs) [rice flour].

- **ntsag** ‘to cease crying, to stop crying or making any noise’ (Xiongs), ‘still, quiet’ (Heimbach p. 201 ntsiag):

Luas tej tuabneeg zejzog ntsuabze tub lug txug huv tsev taag. Luas tub nqaa nqaj nqaa no lug ua noj ua haus, hab luas tub moog pw ntsag zog lawm.

‘Their neighbors from all over the village came to the house. They brought meat and rice for a meal and then they went to lie down quietly’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 31).

ntsag ntuj ntsag teb quas nti tsi pum muaj ib tug nyuas tuabneeg tawm twg

‘sky and earth were still and not one human being was seen to come out anywhere’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

‘Pw pw ib chim ntsag quas tu, nam yawm dlaabnttxaug taws teeb quas lug moog saib.

‘When they had been sleeping for a while and there was no sound, the male nttxaug spirit lit a lamp and went to look’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **ntsas** ‘(no classifier) piece, bit, lump, snack’ (Xiongs):

tshuaj ‘(classifier *lub*, *ntsas*, or no classifier) tablet of medicine, medication, chemical’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsaa** ‘(classifier *phaab*) wall’ (Xiongs), ‘upright posts (beams or sticks) placed vertically in the ground to form a wall or fence’, ‘a picket fence (i.e. a fence made of vertically placed posts, poles, sticks, or boards)’ (Lyman p. 238):

ntsaa tsev ‘house wall’ (Lyman p. 238).

ntsaa vaaj ‘garden fence’ (Lyman p. 238).

ntsaa loog ‘wall (of stone or brick)’ (Lyman p. 238).

Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian (p. 291 nzhangd) translates *nzhangd* [*ntsaav*] as ‘bǎnbì’ (wooden wall, boards partitioning a house) and refers also to stone walls (*nzhangd reb* [*ntsaav zeb*]) and bamboo walls (*nzhangd xongb* [*ntsaav xyoob*]).

The dictionary entries cited above suggest that *ntsaa* (or *ntsaav*) refers to a whole wall or

fence, which may be made of wood, of bamboo, of stone, or of brick, but, in a folktale, *ntsaa* appears to refer to the individual wooden boards or posts out of which a wall or fence is made. A man visiting the spirit world is told not to eat beef or pork because in the spirit world beef and pork are actually human flesh. Instead, he is told to ask for a dry *ntsaa*, which, in the spirit world, turns out to be a rib of pork:

luas has tas, 'koj puas noj nqaj nyug?' los koj has tas, 'koj tsi noj', luas has tas, 'koj puas noj nqaj npuas?' los koj has tas, 'koj tsi noj'. Luas has tas, 'koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?' nua cais koj teb has tas, 'yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb' nua nawb!

when they say, 'do you eat beef?' you must say that you do not eat it, when they say 'do you eat pork?' you must say that you do not eat it'. When they say, 'what do you want to eat?' then you must reply that if there are dry wall-planks, then you will eat just a bit of dry wall-plank together with rice mixed with cold water, so! (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 9-10.)

"Yog muaj ntsaa qhuav nua cais, kuv noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav hab mov ntse dlej txag xwb!"

"If there are dry wall-planks, I'll eat a bit of dry wall-plank and rice with cold water added only!"

Puab txhaj teb has tas:

They then replied:

"Peb muaj kawg luas mas! Yog yuav noj los le mam muab!"

"We certainly have a lot of those! If that's what you want to eat, go right ahead and have some!"

Cais puab txhaj moog rhu hlo tau ib sawb nqaj npuas lug hlais kag ci, hab has ib taig mov ntse dlej txag rua nwg noj.

So they then pulled out a rib of pork and cut it up and toasted it, and spooned out a bowl of rice with cold water added for him to eat. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13.)

- **ntsaa** 'shining, brilliant' (Xiongs) (see also *ntsaag*).

- **ntsaag** '(classifier *lub*) buttock' (Xiongs).

- **ntsaag** 'gleaming, bright' (see also *ntsaa*):

Nwg nkaag moog ib nyuas ntsiv xwb, txawm tawm plawg rua ib lub nam tebhaws ci ntsaag quas ab.

'When he had gone a small distance [into the cave], he emerged into a gleaming, bright country' (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43).

muaj ib lub nam phuj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab

'there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly' (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **ntsaaj** 'to suffer a pain' (Xiongs).

- **ntsaaj quas lawg** 'to groan':

Tug nam zaaj raug mob lawm es lug pw ntsaaj quas lawg tom nwg chaav chaw pw xwb.

'The dragon was suffering from his wound and was lying and groaning in his bedroom'

(*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

Pw pw ib chim nyuas tub ntsaaj quas lawg.

‘After sleeping for a little while, the boy began to groan’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **ntsaa**v: see **ntsaa** ‘wall’; I have not seen the form *ntsaa*v in Mong Leng dictionaries and texts but it appears in *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* (p. 291 nzhangd), representing a dialect similar to Mong Leng.

- **ntsai**g ‘to arrange, to set in order, to pick up, to gather’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsai**s ‘to sparkle, to coruscate, to glitter, to blink’ (Xiongs):

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsais muag** ‘to blink the eyes’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav tau qe-muag ib nyuas ntsais muag xwb, cais koj moog txug koj Nkauj Mim See lawm!

‘If you will shut your eyes for just a moment, we will take you to Nkauj Mim See!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10.)

- **ntsais quas tsa** ‘blinking (eyes)’:

Qhovmuag ntsais quas tsa, qhovmuag tooj quas tsa ‘Blinking eyes, glittering eyes’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **ntsau** ‘(no classifier) group, lump, bunch’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsaub** ‘to throw down, to overturn, to turn upside down, to fall back, to get around or close to’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsaub tawg** ‘to intensify the fire’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsaum** ‘(classifier *tug*) ant’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **ntsaum**: *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum*, a kind of male spirit with a predilection for human women.

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are polyandrous, two or more of them marrying a single

human woman. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are among the main characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place:

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their

basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog's tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Nxtawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die. (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111.)

The name Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum appears in both Mong Leng and White Hmong texts with quite a bit of variation in form, making it difficult to come up with an etymology or a literal translation. In White Hmong stories these beings are sometimes described as pockmarked or pimply, and are depicted in the illustrations as pockmarked and in general as looking rather unsavory and uncouth, sometimes with facial hair. *Mojtxiv* conceivably could be from Chinese *máozi* 'hairy fellow' (sometimes used in China to refer to Westerners) but in other texts the element *mojtxiv* is written quite differently or is missing altogether. *Nrauj ntsaum* conceivably could be from *nceb nrauj ntsaum* 'toadstool' since in this story the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum change into toadstools after they die, but, again, in other texts the element *nrauj ntsaum* is written quite differently or is missing altogether.

- **ntsau**m: *nceb nrauj ntsaum* 'toadstool':

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj ntsaum txug ntawd hab.

'Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

- **ntsau**v 'to cluster or swarm around, to get honey from flowers (bees); (no classifier) group, crowd' (Xiongs).

- **ntsaw**j 'to blow, to scold, to hide, to sweep over; (no classifier) blow, sweep' (Xiongs):

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

'Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud from Grandfather Nyooglaug's two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug's house' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for qaum?] teb dlhau qaab teb.

'The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south' (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

- **ntsaw**m 'to throw violently, to strike out forcibly' (Xiongs).

- **ntsaw**s 'to stop, to plug; (classifier *lub*) plug, cap' (Xiongs):

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”
 “Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **ntsawv**, intensifier:

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. ... Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. ... The axe maiden knew how to to chop. She chopped the log into four sections’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11).

- **ntse** ‘clever, sharp, cutting, intelligent (Xiongs)’:

Luas yog ntxhais fuabtais hab luas txawj ntse heev.
 ‘Now princesses know how to keep their wits about them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **ntse** ‘pleat’ (also written *nre*):

khaws ntse-tab ‘to gather the pleats of a skirt’; the pleats are anchored in the top section with special stitches; the pleats are held in place with long threads, that are pulled out each time the skirt is worn. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146.)

- **ntse** ‘to add water to’ (Bertrais):

“Yog muaj ntsaa qhuav nua cais, kuv noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav hab mov ntse dlej txag xwb!”

“If there is dried up wall, I eat a bit of dried up wall and rice with cold water added only!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13.)

- **ntseg** ‘(classifier *tug*) fish’ (Xiongs):

plhaws ntseg ‘fish scale’ (Xiongs).

txaaj ntseg ‘a fish trap built as a small dam across a river’ (Xiongs).

yawm ntseg ‘to scoop up fish’ (Xiongs).

- **ntseg** ‘pertaining to the ear’ (see also *ntsej*):

laag ntseg ‘deaf’ (Xiongs).

pob ntseg ‘ear’ (Xiongs).

- **ntseg**, intensifier:

Kuv tes kuv moov tsam zoo es kuv moog tes kuv moog mob mob hab kuv moog nrug Suav nyob nyob es kuv ha rov tug nam dlaaj ntseg quas ntsuv le nuav lug luas muaj!

‘But my luck was such that I got sick and went to stay with a Chinese and came back pale and wan like this!’ (*Ceebpov* p. 15.)

- **ntseg**: *nub ntseg ntsog* ‘midday, the time when the sun is erect’ (see also *nreg* ‘to stand erect, to stand upright’):

“Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?”

“How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **ntseg**: ‘to catch fish in a net’:

Cav muaj ib yawm Suav ntaus ntaus ntseg lawv dlej.

‘Why, there was a Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

I have not found the expression *ntaus ntseg* (literally “to hit fish”) in any dictionary but I infer that it means to catch fish in a net because the next sentence refers to the Chinese man’s *vaag* ‘fish net’.

- **ntsej** ‘collar, neck, burcle, curl (of a rope)’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsej** ‘pertaining to the ear’ (see also *ntseg*):

qhov ntsej ‘ear’ (Xiongs).

mob qhov ntsej ‘ear-ache’ (Xiongs).

huas saab ntsej ‘to struggle to hear clearly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

quav ntsej ‘what is in the ear (collection)’ (Xiongs).

tsi quav ntsej ‘do not care about, to not bother, to disregard, to not listen to, careless’ (Xiongs).

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej
‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **ntsej**: *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum*, a kind of male spirit with a predilection for human women.

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum are polyandrous, two or more of them marrying a single human woman. Two *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* are among the main characters in the story “*Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub* and *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries *Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub*’s wife *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa* away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa* is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two *Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum* brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place:

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: "Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?"

Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: "Miss! How would you come to be here?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

"Miss," say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, "if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?" Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, "Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well." The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a "close relative" of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog's tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. "How can you snatch a wife from her husband's feet like that?" he cries.

"What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?" reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. "We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons", i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

"Do you have proof?" says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

"Yes, we do," reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog's tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die. (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111.)

The name Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum appears in both Mong Leng and White Hmong texts with quite a bit of variation in form, making it difficult to come up with an etymology or a literal translation. In White Hmong stories these beings are sometimes described as pockmarked or pimply, and are depicted in the illustrations as pockmarked and in general as looking rather unsavory and uncouth, sometimes with facial hair. *Mojtxiv* conceivably could be from Chinese *máozi* ‘hairy fellow’ (sometimes used in China to refer to Westerners) but in other texts the element *mojtxiv* is written quite differently or is missing altogether. *Nrauj ntsaum* conceivably could be from *nceb nrauj ntsaum* ‘toadstool’ since in this story the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum change into toadstools after they die, but, again, in other texts the element *nrauj ntsaum* is written quite differently or is missing altogether.

- **ntsej**: *quav ntsej* ‘to listen to, to concern about, the have interest in’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsej muag** ‘(classifier *lub*) face’ (Xiongs):

muaj ntsej muag ‘not shy, ability to face’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsev** ‘salt’ (Xiongs):

cov ntsev zeem lawm ‘the salt melts’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsev**: *dlaw ntsev* ‘salty’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsee**, intensifier:

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **ntseeg** ‘to believe’ (Xiongs):

kev ntseeg ‘belief’ (Xiongs).

Tswv Yim Ntseeg hab Teev ‘Ideas about Belief and Worship’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 79, chapter title).

- **ntseeg**, intensifier:

Nwg naj nub ncu txug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab nyem teg quas ntseeg tsi pub leej twg tuav hab kov nwg hlo le.

‘Every day she missed Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and kept her fist clenched and wouldn’t let anyone hold her or touch her at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

- **ntseej** ‘(classifier *rob* or *tug*) chestnut tree’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsib** ‘to meet with, to face with’ (Xiongs):

kev sib ntsib ‘meeting’ (Xiongs).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj tawm ntawd lug ntsib kag YOB NRAUG NTSUAG taab tom nyob huv nwg lub tsev qhuavsuv.

‘So Muam Nkauj Ntsum then came out and found Yob the Orphan there in his bare hut’

(*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **ntsig**: *kaabntsig* or *kaabntswg* ‘hairy caterpillar which stings on contact’ (Heimbach 1979:73 kab), ‘a kind of caterpillar whose hairs go into the flesh of one who touches it’ (Bertrais 1978:264 ntsig):

“In Thailand my mother-in-law was very wary of stinging hairy caterpillars (kab ntsig), they can appear en masse at certain times of the year and might be in trees etc. She said that when the hair stings you it goes into your skin and can makes its way through your flesh over many years before coming out again. Not sure if that is true, but certainly they are worth being wary of.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication; kab ntsig is the White Hmong spelling of *kaabntsig*.)

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

‘Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttle, to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of hemp cloth but tied with hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They’re big as young ewes. Don’t forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They’re big as young sows. Don’t forget your hempen shoes!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luaj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no caterpillars are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **ntsig**, intensifier:

“*Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?’*”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **ntsig**: *txaj ntsig* ‘(classifier *lub*) credit, something good or help provided by or to others’ (Xiongs) (see also *txaj oob txaj ntsim*).

- **ntsig txug ntuj ceeb tsheej** ‘heavenly’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsim** ‘spicy, hot (pepper)’ (Xiongs):

hov txob ntsim ‘hot pepper’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsim**: *txaj oob txaj ntsim* ‘to treasure’ (see also *txaj ntsig*):

Haus taag nam dlej ab nam peb lu, koj yuav tsis nrug ncu. Koj yuav haus taag nam dlej ab qas tag, nam ncauj le yuav yaug taag, koj le txaj oob txaj ntsim tsis ncu taag nplaj lis teb.

‘When you have drunk three mouthfuls of the bitter water, you will lose your memory. When you have drunk the bitter water truly, when your mouth is completely rinsed, you will forget all that you treasured on the face of the earth’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

- **ntsis** ‘to comb’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsis** ‘(classifier *lub*) top (tree), end (story)’ (Xiongs):

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.
‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits:

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,

Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.

‘Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,

To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path’ (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **ntsiv**: *ib ntsiv* ‘in a little while’:

“Mej moog nua tes ib ntsiv mej ntu ib phawb quavncaug rua huv txuj kev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua huv txuj kev, mej le lug ov”.

‘‘When you go, in a little while, spit a glob of saliva in the road and break off a fern frond and leave in the road before you come back.’’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29.)

- **ntsiv**: *mivntsiv* ‘a little’:

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!

‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **ntsiv**: *qho ntsiv* ‘some’:

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab

‘you should save some money too’ (*Xiongs*).

- **ntsiv**: *tsaam ntsiv* ‘moment’:

koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej es wb noj peg hauv dlej tsaam ntsiv qas qas wb.

‘You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream, and we’ll eat upstream, in a moment you’re going to disgust us’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69).

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **ntsiv**: *txeeb ib ntsiv* ‘almost’ (*Xiongs*).

- **ntsiv**: *ua muaj txhaa ib ntsiv* ‘to handle well, to do it carefully or with necessary attention and force’ (*Xiongs*).

- **ntso** or **quas ntso** ‘typical intensifier, used after SAB only’ (*Xiongs* p. 555):

qaab sab ntso ua (*Xiongs* p. 555, not translated) [to be intensely happy to do it].

rau sab ntso ua kom tav (*Xiongs* p. 555, not translated) [to make sure that one is ready].

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **ntsoj**: *tub ntsoj* ‘orphan’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsog**: *nub ntseg ntsog* ‘midday, the time when the sun is erect’ (see also *nreg* ‘to stand erect, to stand upright’):

“*Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?*”

“How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **Ntsos**: *Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos*, name of a boy whom Siv Yig Muas rescues from Sub Tuam, the tyrant who, after death, becomes the spirit that causes bloody accidents (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-22).

- **ntsoog** ‘abolished, destroyed, tired, sad’ (Xiongs):

Siv Yig Muas tuab ntaag cejdlaab poob ntsoog

‘and Siv Yig Muas with one blow of his sword cut off his head’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **ntsooj** ‘(classifier *tug*) rat’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) explains the referents of *naag*, *tsuag*, and *ntsooj* as follows:

naag – generic rodent – covers almost every genera of rodent but excludes the porcupines. Time will tell whether the New World giant members (beaver and capybara) will be included or excluded.

tsuag – vermin rodents – rats and mice around the house.

ntsooj – very large edible rats from several genera, live in the forest in underground tunnels, all edible and hunted.

- **ntsoov** ‘always’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsoov** or **quas ntsoov** ‘typical intensifier, perception’ (Xiongs p. 555):

ncu ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to think about, to remember].

noog ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to listen].

paub ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to know].

pum ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to see].

saib ntsoov ‘to stare at, to look steadily at’ (Xiongs, entry for *saib* and p. 555).

tog ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to wait].

vaam ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to hope, to wish].

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab ‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

- **ntsu** ‘productive, fruitful, good crop’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsu quas lawg**, intensifier:

Nwg muab muab ib taagkig tsi tau nqaj lug tso huv yag hlo le, cais cov nam ua zaub ua mov tshev ntsu quas lawg has tas:

‘He fetched and fetched all morning but did not get meat to send into the wok at all, so the women making vegetables and rice scolded ntsu quas lawg saying:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11).

- **ntsug** ‘to lock, to lock up’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsug**, intensifier:

sawv ntsug ‘to stand up’ (Xiongs).

Dlaabntxaug ntshai tes dlaabntxaug quaj ntsug quas qeeg.

‘The ntxaug spirits were frightened so the ntxaug spirits cried out continuously’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **ntsug** ‘portion of territory’ (see also *ntsuj*):

An account of the origin of the ceremonies of Cutting Off the Sub Spirit (*Tu Sub*) and Waving Away the Sub Spirit (*Lwm Sub*) says:

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb. Puab lwm xwb.

‘Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month do not cut. They only wave.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33.)

- **ntsuj** ‘(classifier *tug*) shadow, shade, ghost’ (Xiongs):

According to one source, each person has three *ntsuj* and seven shadows. It is to the three *ntsuj* that funeral chants are addressed: one remains by the grave, one journeys to heaven to obtain a document of reincarnation and then returns to earth to be reincarnated in a new body, and one journeys to heaven and remains there, in the city of the dead, with the souls of its ancestors (Yaj 1986:44).

- **ntsuj** ‘(no classifier) portion’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntsug*):

Thau u Moob tsi tau muaj vaaj. Muaj ib tug hu ua Lis Sub Tuam. Nwg kaav ib ntsuj teb. Muaj ib tug hu ua Siv Yig Muas. Nwg kaav ib ntug teb.

‘Long ago, the Mong did not have a king. Instead there was someone named Lis Sub Tuam who ruled one region and someone named Siv Yig Muas who ruled another area’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 20).

Huas nwg muab ob ntsuj teb kaav le kws tub has ntawm hauvpaug.

‘But they ruled two regions as was said at the beginning [of the story]’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **ntsuj dluab** ‘(classifier *tug*) spirit, soul’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsum** ‘to throw’ (Xiongs) (also written *nrum*).

- **ntsum** ‘to design, to makes lines, to draw’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsum** ‘sprawled out’:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej cais nwg ca le lug mob pw ntsum quas laam lawm.

‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear, so he was in pain, and was lying sprawled out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **Ntsum**: *Muam Nkauj Ntsum*, name of a young woman who is one of the main characters in both stories in *Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug* (Tales of Marriage Customs). The first story (*Kwvhuam* pp. 7-21) tells how Muam Nkauj Ntsum found her husband Yob Nraug Ntsuag (Yob the Orphan). The second story (*Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32) introduces the custom of paying a brideprice (*them tshoob them kug*). Muam Nkauj Ntsum is married to a man named Lob Lw and they are not getting along. Finally, they learn that it is because Lob Lw did not pay a brideprice. When the brideprice is paid, the marriage goes well.

- **ntsuv** ‘(classifier *lub*) hump, hunch’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsuv**, intensifier:

Kuv tes kuv moov tsam zoo es kuv moog tes kuv moog mob mob hab kuv moog nrug Suav nyob nyob es kuv ha rov tug nam dlaaj ntseg quas ntsuv le nuav lug luas muaj!

‘But my luck was such that I got sick and went to stay with a Chinese and came back pale and wan like this!’ (*Ceebpov* p. 15.)

- **ntsuab** ‘green (color); blue’ (Xiongs):

ntsuab ‘green or blue in general’:

ntsuab laj or *ntsuab quas laj* ‘blue, pure blue’

ntsuab xab or *ntsuab quas xab* ‘green, pure green’

(Xiongs p. 557).

Nyob rua huv tsev tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘In their homes Mong people have two kinds of clothing. Namely: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) clothing and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Tug quaspuj rhaub kag yag roj npau quas dlhev, tsaws hlo yawm Suav nrum nroog rua huv yag roj. Kawg kag rhu kuv paas cawv ntsuab lug. Rhu hlo paas cawv ntsuab lug cua ua quas txhaa nrov nkib pis nkawv.

‘The wife quickly heated up a wokful of oil until it was at a rolling boil and threw the Chinese [merchant] into the wok of oil. Finally, she pulled him out and took a swig of green liquor. She pulled him out and took a swig of green liquor and crunched on his bones’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **ntsuab**: *kaab ntsuab*, a kind of spiny bright green caterpillar, called *bājiǎodīng* in Chinese (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 104 gangb nzhuad; Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Michael Johnson sent me this photograph of a *bājiǎodīng*:



- **Ntsuab**: *Moob Ntsuab* ‘Green Mong’, an alternate name for Mong Leng:

Nyob rua huv tsev tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘In their homes Mong people have two kinds of clothing. Namely: Green Mong (or

Mong Leng) clothing and White Hmong clothing' (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **Ntsuab:** *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab*, a widespread couple in the mythology and folklore of the Mong Leng and other Hmong groups:

In *Initiation* (pp. 50-59), *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are the primordial human couple who initiate agriculture and the clan system. *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are also among the *neeb* (helper-spirits) invoked by shamans (*Initiation* p. 173).

In *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 30-40), *Nkauj Ntsuab* and *Nraug Naab* are the parents of a little girl named *Nog*. *Nkauj Ntsuab* is transformed into a cow and helps *Nog* to splice hemp (*saws*) helps *Nog* to splice hemp (*saws*), hanging the hanks of hemp on her head and hooves. *Nraug Naab* takes a second wife, who treats *Nog* cruelly and puts her in peril.

- **ntsuab:** *taub ntsuab* '(classifier *lub*) squash' (Xiongs).

- **ntsuab:** *yoov ntsuab* 'fly' (Xiongs).

- **ntsuab:** *zaub ntsuab* 'mustard greens' (Xiongs).

- **ntsuag** '(classifier *tug*) bud, shoot, sprout, growth' (Xiongs).

- **ntsuag** 'orphan' (Xiongs):

miv nyuas ntsuag '(classifier *tug*) orphan' (Xiongs).

tub ntsuag 'orphan' (Xiongs).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag or *Yob ntsuag ntsuag* 'Yob the Orphan', stock name for male protagonists in folktales.

- **ntsuag** 'to measure' (Xiongs):

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **ntsuag:** *lug ntsuag* 'story, tale' (Xiongs). Also written *lug nruag*.

- **ntsuag:** *ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv* 'to take too much':

ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv yuav nplaam tuab si

'don't try to take too much one will lose all' (Xiongs).

- **ntsuag:** *Yob Nraug Ntsuag* or *Yob ntsuag ntsuag* 'Yob the Orphan', stock name for male protagonists in folktales:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag hab Noog Yaajqawg Poob Qaabnraug

'Yob the Orphan and the Swallow that Fell to the Ground' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, title).

- **ntsuav** ‘to touch, to dot, to mark; (no classifier) dot, mark’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsuav** or **quas ntsuav** ‘typical intensifier, bad’ (Xiongs p. 555):

dlaag ntsuav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to lie].

phem ntsuav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [bad].

gas ntsuav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [ugly, dirty, bad].

yawm laug muab tua es Sub tub Sub txiv tuag taag es nam puj Sub nim quaj tuab nam quas quas ntsuav yeeg quas yi

‘my husband killed the Sub’s, both son and father, and now Grandma Sub is crying her eyes out’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **ntsw** ‘to touch, to make a dot’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsw quas naa ... ntsw quas ntsee** ‘all over ... everywhere’ (see also *ntswm*):

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **ntswg** ‘nose, pertaining to the nose’ (Xiongs):

phuam tshuab ntswg ‘(classifier *txuj*) handkerchief’ (Xiongs).

qhov ntswg ‘(classifier *lub*) nose’ (Xiongs).

txhaws ntswg ‘stuffy nose’ (Xiongs).

- **ntswg** ‘to work at, to work on, to cook’ (Xiongs).

- **ntswg**: *kaabntswg* or *kaabntsig* ‘hairy caterpillar which stings on contact’ (Heimbach 1979:73 kab), ‘a kind of caterpillar whose hairs go into the flesh of one who touches it’ (Bertrais 1978:264 ntsig):

“In Thailand my mother-in-law was very wary of stinging hairy caterpillars (kab ntsig), they can appear en masse at certain times of the year and might be in trees etc. She said that when the hair stings you it goes into your skin and can makes its way through your flesh over many years before coming out again. Not sure if that is true, but certainly they are worth being wary of.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication; kab ntsig is the White Hmong spelling of kaabntsig.)

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

‘Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttle, to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

At the funeral, special shoes, either plaited of hemp or made of hemp cloth but tied with

hemp strings, are placed on the feet of the deceased so that he or she can walk safely on the stinging hairy caterpillars on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no.

Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.

The stinging hairy caterpillars come in swarms. They’re big as young ewes. Don’t forget your shoes of hemp! The stinging hairy caterpillars swarm over the hill. They’re big as young sows. Don’t forget your hempen shoes!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16.)

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no caterpillars are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **ntswj** ‘to twist, to wring; twisted, bent’ (Xiongs).

- **ntswm** ‘all over’ (see also *ntsw*):

Los Xaab, wb rovqaab moog pw nraag nam taj suav ntswm

‘Los Xaab, let us go back and sleep down in the field that is sandy all over’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

- **ntsws** ‘to fade away, to wither, to dry up; withered, dried up’ (Xiongs):

kev ntsws ‘withering, drying up’ (Xiongs).

- **ntsws** ‘(classifier *lub*) lung’ (Xiongs).

- **ntswv** or **tswv** (varying in the same sentence) ‘thin stripe’:

Tab Moob Leeg yog tab toog nkaaj, muaj tswv lab tswv ntsuab tswv yag, hab ntsvw nkhaus.

‘Mong Leng skirts are of a deep indigo color, and have thin red and green stripes, both straight and crooked’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

NTSH

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *ntsh* and *nrh*. If a word is not found under *ntsh* look under *nrh*.

- **ntshab** ‘clear, limpid, fresh, not ambiguous’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshaa** ‘pink, rosy, pertaining to blood’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntshaav*):

hlaab ntshaa ‘nerve, blood vessel’ (Xiongs).

koom roj ntshaa ‘thoroughbred’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshaav** ‘(no classifier) blood; pink, rosy’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntshaa*):

lug ntshaav ‘to bleed’ (Xiongs).

ntxiv ntshaav ‘transfusion’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshaav nkoog** ‘blood clot’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshaav tuag** ‘congealed blood’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshai** ‘afraid, fear, dread, fright; to be afraid of, to fear’ (Xiongs):

tsi ntshai ‘fearless, courageous’ (Xiongs).

ua yaam tsi ntshai le ‘fearlessly, courageously’ (Xiongs).

yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshai** ‘perhaps’:

ntshai yog ‘perhaps’ (Xiongs).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so

battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat' (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

'Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?' (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **ntshai tsaam** 'to worry that' (Xiongs).

- **ntshaub** '(classifier *tug*) sparrow' (Xiongs).

- **ntshaus** 'weak, sickly, tired' (Xiongs).

- **ntshauv** '(classifier *tug*) head louse (lice)' (Xiongs):

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for ntshauv?]. Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.

'Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don't have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **ntshaw** 'to envy, to want, to desire keenly; passionately, vividly, sharply' (Xiongs).

- **ntshawb** 'to choke; choking' (Xiongs).

- **ntshis**:

ib plag ntshis 'only a short while' (Xiongs).

ob tug nim txaajmuag quas ntshis tes tsi kaav hu le lauj!

'the two of them were a bit abashed and did not dare to call out to them' (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **ntshiv** 'good quality (meat)' (Xiongs).

- **ntsho**, intensifier (also written *nrho*):

Txij nrho ntawm lub rooj vaag ntawd rov rua sau ntuj tes muab ob tug nyob

'All the way from the garden gate back up to the sky was given to the two of them to dwell' (*Tswv Yim*, unnumbered page following page 98).

- **ntshoo quas qeeg** 'continuously':

taujaub abhau nim quaj ntshoo quas qeeg

'the blue-throated barbets and great barbets sang continuously' (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

- **ntshu** 'noisy' (Xiongs):

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj, le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj, noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.

‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain. Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain, so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

Luas tej mas nim ua zaam lab quas vog, hab nojnqaj hauscauw ntshu quas fwv rua tom u tom nua.

‘Everyone else was dressed up in speckled red clothing, feasting and celebrating all over the place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

Huas tej nam taujvaub los nim quaj: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!” ntshu quas au rua tim tej haavzoov

‘But the blue-throated barbets cried: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!”, making a great noise in the forest’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

Huas tswb nyuj tswb neeg ntshu ua nqaaj ua nqug rua nqaaj tog lug

‘Moreover, cowbells and horsebells resounded to the side-beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **ntshu quas lawg** ‘loudly’:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **ntshua** ‘to split and detach’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshuab** ‘(classifier *tug*) otter’ (Xiongs).

- **ntshuas** ‘(no classifier) hank of thread’ (Xiongs):

In a story, a woman who has been transformed into a cow helps her young daughter splice hemp (the girl is speaking to her step-mother, whom she addresses as *nad* ‘mother’):

Kuv moog ces kuv muab ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj taub hau, ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj teg nam nyuj taw, tes nam nyuj nrug kuv saws thab. Txhaj le tau ntuag npaum le los mos nad!

‘When I go, I hang a hank on the cow’s head, a hank on the cow’s front hoof and rear hoof, and the cow splices with me. So I get so much hemp fiber, mother!’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 32.)

- **ntshws**, intensifier:

Dlev ntso quas ntshws kuatwv tsi tso.

‘The dog held tightly onto [the otter’s] tail with his teeth and wouldn’t let go’ (*Ceebpov*

p. 30).

NTX

- **ntxab**: *rooj ntxab* ‘trap’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxab** ‘to stay idle’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxag** ‘to console, to persuade, to try to stop someone from crying or doing something, to try to pay someone to do something, to date’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxag** ‘to plait’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxaa** ‘(classifier *lub*) tomb’ (Xiongs) (see also *ntxaas*):
txhim ntxaa ‘to build the tomb with stones’ (Xiongs).
Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas qab qua koj qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.
 ‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if their chicken crows first and your chicken responds, then it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).
- **ntxaab ntxawm** ‘to take advantage of’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jiāngjiù* ‘to make do with; to accept reluctantly’.
- **ntxaas** (see also *ntxaa*): *toj ntxaas* ‘graveyard’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxaib** ‘twin, double’ (Xiongs).
miv nyuas ntxaib ‘twins’ (Xiongs).
phom ntxaib ‘double barreled gun’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxaij** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) screen, tail of an arrow’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxais** ‘to suck, to nurse’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxais** ‘to sting, to smart’ (Xiongs):
tshuaj ntxais ‘the medicine stings’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxais**: *ib ntxais* ‘all together, next to each other’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxais mig** ‘to suck the bottle or the breast’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxaiv** ‘(classifier *tug*) a spinning spindle, bobbin; a reel made of two poles on a spindle and upon which the thread is wound’ (Xiongs):
qaiv ntxaiv ‘to hang the thread on the reel’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxau** ‘(classifier *lub*) pimple (on the face or back)’ (Xiongs).
- **ntxaug** ‘skinny, thin’ (Xiongs):
nqaj ntxaug ‘quality meat’ (Xiongs) [lean meat].

- **ntxaug**: *dlaab ntxaug* (mistyped as *dlaab ntxauz*) ‘wild spirit’ (Xiongs):

One possible translation of *dlaab ntxaug* is ‘skinny spirit’ (from *ntxaug* ‘skinny, thin’), an idea supported by Graham (1954:45), who describes *dlaab ntxaug* as ‘dry lean demons, the very thin demons without flesh’.

Lyman (p. 222), who seems to have known only of female *ntxaug* spirits, translates *pui ntxaug* as ‘the Emaciated Widow’ (I don’t know why Lyman calls her a widow) and describes her as “one of the most dreaded demons of the jungle (if your blood falls on the leaf of a jungle plant, this demon will then cast a spell on you)”.

Heimbach’s White Hmong dictionary translates *dab ntxaug* as ‘A powerful spirit greatly feared. It has certain places of abode and if troubled it may cause the death of whole families. Plagues or epidemics are often blamed on this spirit.’

Bertrais’s White Hmong dictionary translates *dab ntxaug* simply as ‘spirits who live in the soil’.

Yet another translation is given in *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (p. 24 dlangb nzous), which glosses *dlaab ntxaug* as ‘will o’ the wisp, ignis fatuus’.

In the story “Ob Txivtub hab Dlaabntxaug” (The Father and Son and the Ntxaug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 34-38), a man and his son are on their way to visit their kinsmen and they stop at the house of a *ntxaug* spirit. The *ntxaug* spirit invites them to spend the night. The *ntxaug* spirit spreads out an oxhide for the man to sleep on and says that the boy can sleep in the bed with the *ntxaug* spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night the boy begins to groan. The man lights a lamp and gets up to look and sees that the *ntxaug* spirit’s two daughters have become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest and that the boy is dead.

The man flees in terror and meets two people named Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm, who insist that he tell them why he is fleeing. The man says that he is fleeing because he and his son fell into the country of the *ntxaug* spirits and the *ntxaug* spirits killed his son.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the man not to be frightened and ask him to take them to the *ntxaug* spirits. When they arrive, the *ntxaug* spirit couple welcomes the three of them and invites them to spend the night.

The *ntxaug* spirits spread out bedding in the main room for the man to sleep on and say that Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm can sleep in the bed with the *ntxaug* spirits’ two daughters. In the middle of the night, there is no sound coming from the bed, so the male *ntxaug* spirit lights a lamp and gets up to look. He sees that his daughters have each been cut in half (“one made two sides, two made four sides”). He calls upon his daughters to join themselves back together and they do so, but then they are each cut in half again. “These two oxen have sharp horns”, cries the male *ntxaug* spirit and calls upon other *ntxaug* spirits to come and do battle with Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tuck razors in their mouths, the folds of their arms, and the hollows of their knees. When the *ntxaug* spirits attack them, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm cut off the *ntxaug* spirits’ hands.

The ntxaug spirits are terrified and ask how they can escape. Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the ntxaug spirits to go inside a gourd. Then Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm plug up the gourd and throw it into a river. A Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river catches the gourd in his net and starts to unplug it but, when the Chinese man hears the ntxaug spirits inside the gourd say that as soon as they are free they are going to eat him, the Chinese man plugs the gourd up again and throws it back in the river and the river carries it away.

Once the ntxaug spirits are gone, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm sort through the ntxaug spirits' silver and find such a huge amount of silver that they are unable to carry it home and so the story ends.

- **ntxaug:** *ntxub ntxaug* 'to hate' (Xiongs).

- **ntxauz:** *dlaab ntxauz* 'wild spirit' (Xiongs). Typo for *dlaab ntxaug*.

- **Ntxawd**, vocative form of *Ntxawm*, name for the youngest younger:

Ntxawd, koj koj koj vauv tuaj saib peb kuas, peb nyav ua npua rooj taag. Peb tsi tau caiv dlhau.

'Dear, you've brought your husband to see us, but we've just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit. We're not yet past the period of prohibition' (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

- **ntxawg** 'youngest (boy)' (Xiongs):

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb addresses *Yawm Xub Ntxawg* 'Grandfather Thunder's Youngest Son' as *Npawg Ntxawg* 'Cousin Ntxawg' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

- **ntxawg:** *dlaab ntxawg* 'wife's younger brother':

In a story about a young woman who marries a spirit (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 6-17), the woman's older brother is referred to and addressed as *txiv dlaab* 'wife's older brother' and the woman's younger brother is referred to and addressed as *dlaab ntxawg* 'wife's younger brother':

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua nwg dlaab ntxawg, tug nug ntxawg, has tas: "Dlaab ntxawg, koj tuag txug ko ..."

so the Spirit then said to his wife's younger brother, the woman's younger brother, "Wife's younger brother, you've come ..." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **ntxawg:** *kvw ntxawg* 'youngest brother' (*Village* p. 175).

- **ntxawg:** *tub ntxawg* 'youngest son':

Nyob nyob, muaj ib nub, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj tso nwg tug tub ntxawg dlha tuaj moog has rua Yob Nraug Ntsuag tas: "Yawm yij! Txiv has tas ..."

Time passed, and one day, the Ruler sent his youngest son to run and say to Yob the Orphan: "Sister's husband! Father says that ..." (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **ntxawm** 'youngest (girl)' (Xiongs) (see also *Ntxawd*):

Name for the youngest daughter, a stock character in folktales:

Muaj ib zag, ob tug txawm moog thaam tau Yawm Nyooglaug tug ntshais Ntxawm.
 ‘On one occasion, they courted Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter’ (or ‘they courted Grandfather Nyooglaug’s daughter Ntxawm’) (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

Used as an affectionate nickname for a woman, not necessarily one who is the youngest daughter:

Ntuj nis kuv miv aib Ntxawm, kuv neu neu koj tsi tuaj dlaabndlub le lauj.
 ‘By heaven, my darling Ntxawm, I’ve missed you so much that I haven’t slept’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30; Los Xaab speaking affectionately to his wife Ceeb Pov, who is *not* referred to in the story as the youngest daughter).

In kinship terms, *ntxawm* may refer to both females and males:

nam ntxawm ‘father’s younger brother’s wife, younger brother’s wife’

txiv ntxawm or *txwv ntxawm* ‘father’s younger brother’

- **ntxawm:** *nam ntxawm* ‘father’s younger brother’s wife, younger brother’s wife’ (*Village* p. 175):

In a folktale, a man visiting his sister in the spirit world is invited by his sister’s spirit-husband to attend a funeral, where the spirit is in charge of preparing food for the funeral guests. The spirit goes off to fetch “meat” – i.e. human beings – and asks the young man whether it would be appropriate to kill the person he has fetched. At one point, the spirit brings the young man’s father’s younger brother’s wife:

Nwg rua ib tsuag tim u, ua cav kag nwg nam ntxawm lug. Yawm Dlaab tig lug nug has tas:

He [the spirit] took a step way over there, why he had brought his [the young man’s] father’s younger brother’s wife. The Male Spirit turned [to the young man] and asked:

“Dlaab ntxawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?”

“Wife’s younger brother, this one is she appropriate to kill or not appropriate?”

Tug nug ntxawg kuj teb tas:

The younger brother then replied:

“Yawm yij, tug ko yog tuv nam ntxawm, tua tsi nyog ho!”

“Sister’s husband, that one is my father’s younger brother’s wife, to kill her is not appropriate!”

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **ntxawm:** *ntxaab ntxawm* ‘to take advantage of’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxawm:** *txiv ntxawm* ‘father’s younger brother’ (also written *txwv ntxawm*):

In a folktale, a man visiting his sister in the spirit world is invited by his sister’s spirit-husband to attend a funeral, where the spirit is in charge of preparing food for the funeral guests. The spirit goes off to fetch “meat” – i.e. human beings – and asks the young man whether it would be appropriate to kill the person he has fetched. At one point, the spirit brings the young man’s father’s younger brother:

Nwg rua ib tsuag tim u, ua cav kag nwg txiv ntxawm lug. Yawm Dlaab tig lug nug has tas:

He [the spirit] took a step way over there, why he had brought his [the young man's] father's younger brother. The Male Spirit turned [to the young man] and asked:

"Dlaab ntxawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?"

"Wife's younger brother, this one is he appropriate to kill or not appropriate?"

Tug nug ntxawg teb tas:

The younger brother replied:

"Yawm yij, tug ko yog tuv txiv ntxawm, tua tsi nyog ho!"

"Sister's husband, that one is my father's younger brother, to kill him is not appropriate!"

(Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 11.)

- **ntxawm:** *txwv ntxawm* 'father's younger brother' (*Village* p. 175). Also written *txiv ntxawm*.

- **Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub**, name of one of the title characters in the story "Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub's wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

"Miss," say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, "if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?" Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, "Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well." The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a "close relative" of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog's tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. "How can you snatch a wife from her husband's feet like that?" he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Nxtawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **ntxeb**: *tsuag moj ntxeb* ‘mouse’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxee** ‘to cross over, to get to the other side’ (Xiongs):

ib ntxee ntuj ‘the other side of the world’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20) (also written *ib ntxees ntuj*).

- **ntxeem** ‘to survive from a trouble or crisis’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxees** ‘turn, round’ (Xiongs):

ib ntxees ntuj ‘the other side of the world’ (Xiongs) (also written *ib ntxee ntuj*).

- **ntxeev** ‘to turn, to roll over, to change over’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxeev laj** ‘face up’:

Nwg poob lug nyob ntxeev laj ‘It had fallen face up’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 14).

- **ntxeev sab** ‘to betray, to turn back to’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxi** ‘to open’ (Xiongs):

ntxi ncauj ‘open the mouth’ (Xiongs).

ntxi qhov muag ‘open the eyes’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxig** ‘to insert into an opening or hole’ (Xiongs):

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxig**:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag pw ua ib ce ntxig fws quas zaum.

‘Yob the Orphan was lying there his whole body perspiring slightly’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

- **ntxim** ‘to be worth, to be effective, to please’ (Xiongs):

tshuaj ntxim zoo ‘effective medicine’ (Xiongs).

Oo, tug ntxim hlub. ‘Ong, my sweetheart’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxim sab** ‘wholeheartedly, earnestly’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxim yuav muab neu rua sab ca** ‘memorable’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxiv** ‘to add to’ (Xiongs):

rau sab heev zog ntxiv ‘work a little harder’ (Xiongs).

tseem tshuav ob theem ntxiv ‘there are two more steps’ (Xiongs).

Tsaus lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntxiv lawm ‘enough! I don’t need anymore’ (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it any more’ (Xiongs).

Cais Yawm Fuabtais txhaj moog tau Nkauj Nubqub lug ua nwg tug nam yau ntxiv hab.
‘So the King took, in addition, Star Maiden as his junior wife’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16).

- **ntxiv** ‘to repair, to fix up, to mend, to make up’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxiv ntshaav** ‘transfusion’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxiv tsev** ‘to patch up the roof’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxo** ‘to bite, to grasp someone as cause of the problem’ (Xiongs):

Dlev ntxo quas ntshws kuatwv tsi tso.

‘The dog held tightly onto [the otter’s] tail with his teeth and wouldn’t let go’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **ntxoo**: *ntxoov ntxoo* ‘shadow’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxoog**: *puj ntxoog* ‘ghost’ (Xiongs), ‘a kind of female spirit related to tiger spirits’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 5-45, 73-97).

- **ntxooj** ‘to haunt; haunted’ (Xiongs), ‘to take possession of’, referring to a spirit taking possession of a human being:

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **ntxoov** ‘to put shadow over’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxoov ntxoo** ‘shadow’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxub** ‘to hate’ (Xiongs):

sib ntxub ‘to hate each other’ (Xiongs).

ua tau txaus ntxub ‘stink’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxub ntxaug** ‘to hate’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxug** ‘to chop up’:

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!
 ‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

In the following example the verbs *peg* ‘to hit, to beat, to strike’, *luaj* ‘to cut down vegetation with a bush-knife’, *tsuav* ‘to cut, to chop, to cut in very small pieces’, and *ntxug* ‘to chop up’ are used together to convey the motions of two young men fighting with a spirit; ‘with hands and with feet’ is an idiom referring to martial arts skill:

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntxug nrov pis ntxhas rua.
 ‘Striking and slashing with hands and with feet, the two of them cut and chopped with a great clamor at her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **ntxuv** ‘early’ (Xiongs):

pu ntxuv [typo for *pw ntxuv*] ‘sleep early’ (Xiongs).

sawv ntxuv ‘to get up early’ (Xiongs).

thaum sawv ntxuv ‘early in the morning’ (Xiongs).

yaam ntxuv ‘early’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxuag** ‘to eat little by little’ (Xiongs):

noj ntxuag mov ‘to eat along with rice’ (Xiongs).

noj mov ntxuag kua muag ‘to have extreme sorrow or trouble’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxuaj** ‘to wave, to fan, to flap’ (Xiongs):

- **ntxuaj teg** ‘to wave the hand’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxuaj tis** ‘to flap the wing’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxuam** ‘(classifier *raab*) fan’ (Xiongs):

ib ntxuam txiv tsawb ‘a pack of bananas’ (Xiongs).

In a story, a man has memory of when he was transformed into a tiger:

“*Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhib ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?’*”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were

like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child', why is that?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **ntxuav** 'to wash, to wash away with a liquid' (Xiongs).

- **ntxuav cev** 'to take a bath' (Xiongs).

- **ntxuav teg** 'to wash the hands' (Xiongs).

- **Ntxwj Nyoog** 'the ruler of heaven' (see also *Nyooglaug*):

(1) taking a passive role; to say that something is "Ntxwj Nyoog's such-and-such" just means that it is in heaven:

ndlwg quas ndlo rua Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab moog cej zeb. ... Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

'It flowed under Ntxwj Nyoog's stones. ... It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog's wellsprings' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyoob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug. Noob xyoob noob lis ntoo tsua yuav lug tau Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog qaab nrau lis caav kws.

'Let me tell you, O elder, the origin of bamboo and trees. The seeds of bamboo and trees came from behind Ntxwj Nyoog's logs', i.e. from behind the wooden stockade that surrounds heaven, i.e. from heaven (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

(2) taking an active role, may be linked with Saub:

Yawm Saub qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas; Meb yog nplaj quas cai le leej tuabneeg meb tuaj quas tsw? ... Ntxwj Nyoog qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas; Koj yog Nplaj Quas Cai leej tuabneeg koj tuaj quas tsw?

'Grandfather Saub opened his mouth to speak, gathered his words and roared, "The two of you are people from the Earth. Why have you come?" ... Ntxwj Nyoog opened his mouth to speak, gathered his words and roared: "You are a person from the Earth. Why have you come?"' (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 9-10).

(3) regarded as evil, as the source of illness and death:

Cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus, muaj ib txha, puab leeg lug moog paub hastas txuj kev cai dlaab qhua yog teev hab ntseeg dlaab Ntxwu [typo for Ntxwj] Nyoog. Tabsis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub, puab leeg raws le puab txuj kev xaav hab kwv yees xwb. Peb txhua leej txhua tug yeej tsi nyam hab tsi pe hawm Ntxwj Nyoog vim peb yeej ntseeg hastas nwg yog tug kws phem.

'Among the Mong who worship in the rites of Jesus, there are some who know that the rites of household spirits are to worship and believe in the spirit Ntxwj Nyoog. But the truth is that there is no one who knows. Everyone just follows what they think and suppose. None of us can love and kneel and bow to Ntxwj Nyoog because we believe that he is one who is evil.' (*Tswv Yim* p. 80.)

Tshwm sim lug ua neej nyob rua lub nplaj teb nuav, ntshai yuav tsi muaj leej twg teev hab pe hawm Ntxwj Nyoog ib zag vim peb ntseeg hastas nwg yog tug kws phem hab ndlais ntuj. Peb tsi muaj leej twg pum hab paub hastas Ntxwj Nyoog zoo le caag hab nyob rua qhov twg, tabsis vim yog peb noob neej txawj mob txawj tuag kam rua Ntxwj

Nyoog. Peb lam hastas yog Ntxwj Nyoog coj peb txuj sa lawm, muab kev tuag, kev phem hab kev tsi zoo lug rau peb.

‘Among those who emerge as human beings here on the face of the earth, there is perhaps no one who ever worships or kneels and bows to Ntxwj Nyoog because we believe that he is someone who is evil and breaks the sky. We do not have anyone who sees him or knows what Ntxwj Nyoog is like and where he lives, but because our human race knows illness and death, we blame Ntxwj Nyoog. We make the accusation that it is Ntxwj Nyoog who takes away our lives, who brings death, and evil, and all that is not good to us.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81.)

- **ntxws** ‘(classifier *lub*) buttock’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxwv**: *txiv*, *txwv*, or *ntxwv*, noun suffix, from Chinese 子 *zǐ*, *zi* ‘child’, noun suffix:

khawm txiv ‘button’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kòuzi*.

lujtxwv ‘mule’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*). From Chinese *luózi*.

txav txwv ‘a share’ (*Kwvhuam*).

vaaj ntxwv ‘king’ (Xiongs, *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*, *Ceebpov*). From Chinese *wángzǐ* ‘prince’.

xeeb ntxwv ‘nephew or niece’, ‘grandson or granddaughter’ (Xiongs, *Village*). From Chinese *sūnzi*.

yaam ntxwv ‘example, behavior’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàngzi*.

zimtxwv ‘time, hour, period of time’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 日子 *rìzi*.

zimtxwv ‘chair’ (*Ceebpov*).

NTXH

- **ntxha** ‘(no classifier) a sharp and sudden pain in the chest’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhab** ‘(classifier *tug*) smell, odor’ (Xiongs):

tug ntxhab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le ‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs).

tsw ntxhab ‘smell bad, stink’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhas** or **quas ntxhas** ‘post verbal intensifier signifying with pride’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 555):

ua qhuas ntxhas ‘to do with pride’ (Xiongs).

hluas ntxhas (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [young].

laav ntxhas (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to guarantee].

Ob tug nplawm quas ntxhas nam txiv neeg

‘The two of them whipped the stallion’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Nwg nplawm quas ntxhas nam neeg

‘He then whipped his horse’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntug nrov pis ntahas rua.

‘Striking and slashing with martial art skill, the two of them cut and chopped with a great clamor at her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **ntahas:** *ua neej quas ntahas* ‘to be married’, used in reference to the primordial human couple:

Nkauj quas Ab ua neej quas ntahas tau xyaa naj tsis muaj tub.

The Mist Maiden had been married for seven long years but had no children.

Nraug Oo ua neej quas ntahas tau xyaa xyoo tsis muaj nyuas.

The Cloud Youth had been married for seven long years but had no little ones.

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6.)

- **ntahas:** *ua neej ua ntahas* or *ua neej quas ntahas*, formula at the end of folktales, similar to ‘lived happily ever after’ in English:

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug ntahais Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv puiyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaabteb hab ua fuabtais kaav tebhaws, hab nyob ua neej ua ntahas lug lawm.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Nyooglaug daughter Ntxawm then took Ntxawm’s parents down to live in the southern part [of the country] and became king and queen ruling the country, and lived in peace and happiness’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntahas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **ntxhaab** ‘steep, sharply inclined, rising’ (Xiongs):

kev ntxhaab ‘steep way’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhai:**

kua ntxhai ‘rice juice’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhais** ‘(classifier *tug*) daughter, girl’ (Xiongs), ‘daughter’ (*Village* p. 176):

nyuas ntxhais ‘girl’ (Xiongs).

Txaaj chaw rua tub ntxhais hluas ‘The bed for the younger sons and daughters’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **ntxhais puag** ‘adopted girl or daughter’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhais xeeb ntawv** ‘(classifier *tug*) niece’ (Xiongs), ‘granddaughter’ (*Village* p. 176).

- **ntxhawv** ‘small river rapid’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhe** ‘to bounce (noise), to amplify (sound)’ (Xiongs):

suab ntxhe ‘(classifier *lub*) echo’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxheb** ‘to clean, to rub’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhej**:

Hlub ua ntxhej tis ntxhuv dlaab ... Hlub ua ntxhej pes ntxhuv cev.

‘It grew luxuriantly in spirit ... It grew luxuriantly in body’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **ntxhee** ‘swift and turbulent (water)’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxheev** ‘not sticky’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhi** ‘to whisper’ (Xiongs):

sib ntxhi ‘to whisper to each other’ (Xiongs).

Cais cov nam hluas nkauj sau qaum ntuj sis ntxhi pis chiv ‘The young women of heaven whispered to one another’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 23).

- **ntxhi** ‘(classifier *tug*) elephant’ (Xiongs) (also written *ntxhw*):

kaug ntxhi ‘(classifier *tug*) the tusk of an elephant’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhib** ‘rough, coarse, poorly done, not good listening’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhoo** ‘branches (of bamboo)’:

Tshaav ntuj lawm nam peb nub tis ua kub, noob xyoob caj tsis nyog ntxhoo xyoob hlub.

‘For three days the weather was hot. The seeds of bamboo could not live long enough for bamboo branches to grow’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 76-77).

- **ntxhuv** ‘weedy, overgrown, thick in growth, troubled, unsettled, disturbed’ (Xiongs):

Hlub ua ntxhej tis ntxhuv dlaab ... Hlub ua ntxhej pes ntxhuv cev.

‘It grew luxuriantly in spirit ... It grew luxuriantly in body’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **ntxhuv sab** ‘having trouble or an unsettled mind; to be upset, worried’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhua** ‘to wash (clothes)’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhuab** ‘(no classifier) moss (on trees or on the ground)’ (Xiongs).

- **ntxhuav** ‘animal similar to an elephant’:

The Green Mong elders tell of a gigantic creature resembling the elephant which existed in the bygone ages. It was ‘to the elephant in size as the elephant is to the carabao’ (Lyman pp. 209-210).

Yawm Dlaab hab Nuj Sis Loob ob tug txa ua dlev ua maa, ua tsuv ua dlais, ua ntxhuav ua ntxhw, ua nyuj ua neeg, ua qaav ua ntseg, ua naab ua zaaj, ua kaab ua kooj, ua npauj ua ntsaum, hab ua txhua yaam tsaj nyeg tsaj qus, tsaj txag tsaj dleg, tsaj yaa tsaj ndlaug
‘The Spirit and Nuj Sis Loob transformed themselves into dogs and into wolves, into tigers and into bears, into ntxhuav and into elephants, into cattle and into horses, into frogs and into fish, into snakes and into dragons, into insects and into grasshoppers, into

moths and into ants and into all manner of tame and wild animals, cold-blooded animals and water animals, flying animals and crawling animals' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 40).

txawm tawm plawg rua ib lub nam tebchaws ci ntsaag quas ab. Nwg nim muaj nyuj muaj twm, muaj neeg muaj zaag, muaj dlev muaj npua, muaj qab muaj us, hab muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw noj zaub puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

'he emerged into a gleaming, bright country. It had cattle and it had buffaloes, it had horses and it had mules, it had dogs and it had pigs, it had chickens and it had ducks, and it had ntshuav and it had elephants grazing and filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon' (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntshuav cov ntshw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

'Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab's cattle and horses, and their ntshuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab's parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48.)

Koj xij pheej yuav moog yuav Yob Nraug Ntsuag xwb le kuas! Thaus kuv tuaj saib meb, ntshai meb yuav tua nyuj rua kuv noj, hab muab ntshuav muab ntshw pub rua kuv xwb!
'You insist on marrying Yob the Orphan! When I come to see the two of you, perhaps you two will kill cattle for me to eat, and just give me ntshuav and elephants!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 12; the speaker is being sarcastic; Yob is too poor to provide any sort of livestock.)

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub. Cais luas yuav tsum muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw, hab muab com kwv kuv moog xwb!

'I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law. Then they have to take ntshuav and elephants, and take a palanquin and carry me on their shoulders!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **ntshuav**: *tsuv ntshuav* 'lion' (Xiong).

- **ntshw** 'elephant' (also written *ntshi*):

Nub tomqaab, yawm laug tuaj moog saib nwg dlaim teb na, ua cav ntshw lug muab nplej noj taag. Zagnua, nwg txawm chim heev. Cais nwg txhaj khawsnkaus neev lawv paab nam ntshw qaab, hab moog nrhav tua. Nwg taug taug neev ntshw moog rua peg kaumhaav na, ua cav muaj tuab lub nam qhovtsua nyob ntawd, cais paab nam ntshw txawm nkaag rua huv lawm.

'The following day, the old man went to look at his field and saw that elephants had eaten all the rice. Then he became very angry. So he picked up his crossbow and set out in pursuit of the elephants in hopes of shooting them. He followed the trail of the elephants up to a corner of the valley, where he found that there was a cave, and that the elephants had gone inside' (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

Taag ntawd, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug kuj caij quas nreeg sau lub nam com ntshw kws tawgpaaj quas paug

‘Then Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab came riding firmly on an elephant-palanquin which was festooned with flowers’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

cais Ntxawm hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug txhaj sawbsim tau tuab pob nam nyaj hab dlaws kag ib nam txiv ntxhw caab lug has rua Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug tas:

‘so Ntxawm and Yob the Orphan packed a bundle of silver and untied a male elephant and came leading it and said to the Ruler:’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

NY

- **nyab**: *kub nyab* ‘to burn’ (Xiongs):

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

- **Nyab Laaj** ‘Vietnamese’ (from Chinese *Ānnán*) (also written *Nyaablaaj*):

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebhaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebhaws Suav, tsiv tebhaws Suav rua tebhaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebhaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebhaws Los Tsuas rua tebhaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebhaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebhaws. Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebhaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries. At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **nyag** ‘to steal, to do secret by’ (Xiongs):

tub saab tub nyag ‘(classifier *tug*) robber’ (Xiongs).

- **nyag** ‘thin’ (Xiongs).

- **nyag** ‘pertaining to money’ (Xiongs) (see also *nyaj*).

- **nyag** ‘each’:

nyag ua nyag zum zawg le
‘everyone works by herself or himself here and there’ (Xiongs).

Moog Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug nim nyag quaj quaj quas nyag
‘Then Big Yob and Little Yob each wept, wept each one’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **nyag**: *sab nyag* ‘timid, fearful’ (Bertrais p. 392 lub *siab nyias*):

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm
‘Those who were timid fled first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **nyaj** ‘(no classifier) money’ (Xiongs) (see also *nyag*):

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab
‘you should save some money too’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txas [typo for *txais*] *nyaj yuav tsheb*

‘I borrow money to buy a car, I get a loan to buy a car’ (Xiongs).

muaj nyaj npaum le caag dlag (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [how much money is there].

- **nyaj** ‘(no classifier) silver’ (Xiongs):

Silver and gold in the spirit world represent tears on earth. In a folktale, the old dragon, grateful to a man for conveying a message, takes the man to his home at the bottom of the lake, where the man meets and falls in love with the old dragon’s daughter, who tells him that when her father offers to reward him for conveying the message, he must refuse whatever her father offers and say that he wants only the fish with yellow skin.

Therefore, when the old dragon offers the man silver and gold and livestock, he replies,

Ub! nyaj le tom peb nplajteb nyaj kuamuag, tsaj le yog peb nplajteb tsaj rau ncoo, kuv tsi yuav.

‘As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96).

In another folktale, a man sweeps out the home of a female spirit. To reward him, the female spirit asks a group of spirit children to spit a glob of saliva on the road, and also to place a fern leaf there. When the man comes to the road, the saliva has been transformed into a pile of silver and the fern leaf has been transformed into a rooster:

Lug tes taagkig Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog tsev tes moog txug nraag na ua cav muaj ib nyuas pawg nyaj.

‘The following morning, Yob the orphan was on his way home and when he got down to the road, he saw to his surprise that there was a pile of silver there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

In a third story, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm, after getting rid of the ntxaug spirits that have been killing people, try to take possession of the ntxaug spirits’ silver:

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug moog xawb dlaabntxau nyaj. Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm went and sorted through the ntxaug spirits’ silver.

They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **nyaj** ‘may, if, whether’, probably from ‘it can reckoned, it can be guessed that’, a dialectal meaning of Chinese *ān*:

Koj qheb qhovmuag los nyaj tsi ua caag lawm laub!

‘You may open your eyes now’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam

pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **nyaj**: *choj nyaj* ‘an ingot of silver’:

Ntxawm moog nqaa hlo plaub choj nyaj lug xab ceg rooj.

‘Ntxawm brought four ingots of silver to put under the legs of the table’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **nyaj**: *muaj nyaj* ‘rich’ (Xiongs).

- **nyaj**: *ntim nyaj ntim kub* ‘silver bowls and gold bowls’, used to determine if someone will live or die:

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls:

Kawg kag rhu ntim nyaj ntim kub lug taw.

Quick, pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate.

Tes puj dlaab nam ntxhais moog rhu hlo ntim nyaj ntim kub lug tes;

So the female spirit’s daughter pulled out silver bowls and gold bowls:

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”.

“Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag”.

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

Plawg moog tes;

Plawg went then:

“Kuv paab, kuv paab koj!”

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”.

“Tuag luas mas nam! Tuag le lauj nam lauj!”

“If I can help, I will help you!”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

Tes nam puj dlaab tuag le lauj.

Then the female spirit died.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 21-22.)

Then the female spirit's daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is repeated. The female spirit's daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

"Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj".

"If you are to live, Little Kaub [man's name] and Little Mais [woman's name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live."

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **nyaj**: *phau ntawv ceev nyaj* 'accounting book' (Xiongs).

- **nyaj**: *Rhawm Nyaj Rhawm Kub* 'the Jar of Silver and of Gold', which holds the tears of the relatives of a sick person who may die (*Entre* pp. 161-162):

Lemoine's spelling of the word for 'jar' as *rhawm* is unusual. Normally the word for 'jar' is spelled *rhawv*.

- **nyaj**: *them nyaj ntawv* 'to pay cash' (Xiongs).

- **nyaj**: *tsev txhaab nyaj* 'bank' (Xiongs).

- **nyaj**: *xab nyaj* 'to bribe' (Xiongs).

- **nyaj dlaab** 'spirit-money':

The discussion of ritual paper in Mottin (1982:104-105) suggests that an ingot of spirit-money (*ib choj nyaj dlaab*) may be a sheet of ritual paper in which holes have been cut in the shape of ingots. In one story, a dead man has paid an ingot of silver in the spirit

world to arrange for a Pujntxoog (a kind of female spirit connected with tiger spirits) to marry his orphaned son and take care of him. Generally in stories, things of value in the spirit world appear on earth as humble things, and this may be true of the ingot of silver in this story. It is likely that it appears on earth as a sheet of ritual paper like that described by Mottin:

“Nuj Yob, koj txiv muab tau peb com txaj ntawd saws kuv rua koj nua es, koj sim moog saib maj!” Nuj Yob tig hlo moog saib saib tim lub nyuas kem zeb na cav muaj ib choj nyaj dlaab ‘“Nuj Yob, your father paid me these three bundles of money on your behalf. Go look!” Nuj Yob turned to look at a small crevice in the stone and lo and behold, there was an ingot of spirit-money’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 84-85).

- **nyaj mob** ‘to suffer a pain’:

Kuv xum noj tshuaj ab tsi xum nyaj mob
‘I prefer taking bitter medicine over suffering a pain’ (Xiongs).

- **nyaj txag** ‘money’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntaw rua koj coj moog them se dlej se tawg, se teb se chaw pis xeeb
‘When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax, the tax of the land and of the place of the guardian spirit’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **Nyaj Yig**: See **Siv Yig** or **Nyaj Yig**, the first shaman.

- **Nyaj Vaab** or **Nyuj Vaab** or **Nyawj Vaab**, from Chinese *Yánwang* ‘King Yama’ (for the identification of Nyaj Vaab with Yánwang, I am indebted to Graham 1954:64):

In Indian and Chinese belief King Yama is the ruler of the underworld but in Mong belief he lives in the sky, judges the dead, and gives out the documents of reincarnation:

Hmong call one class of supernatural beings Kao Eh Tu [Qaum Ntuj?] ... I shall call these beings gods, because they are more powerful than other spirits: they live in the sky and each has a personal name. ... *Yawang* is often said to be the god under Yonglao [Nyooглаug]. His duty is to interview all the souls of people who have died. If he finds people who have committed crimes such as stealing and murdering in the world of men, he will not allow them to be reincarnated straight away, but punishes them as servants pounding rice for the people in the sky world. They cannot obtain licence to be reincarnated until they have completed this punishment. When they are ready to be reborn, Yawang will tell them to pick licences to be born again in the human-world. Some licences last a very long time but others terminate quickly. When the licence has expired the owner of the licence must die, unless Yawang allows him an extension. One’s span of life on earth is therefore seen as predetermined, and dependent on the luck of the draw (Chindarsi 1976:18-19).

It may happen that the vital spirit, the *pli* [French spelling for *plig*], has been kept in the home of Nyou Vang (Nyuj Vaab Laug). He [the shaman] must go there to find it. How to get there? The path goes up, it makes a fork. It is there that Nyou Vang is found in a cave, it is there that he has his office, and summons the souls, to decide between life and

death. It is he also who deals with victims of untimely death. Since they have died by accident and their arrival in the Beyond does not coincide with the duration written in their permits for existence on earth, Nyou Vang does not allow them to go to be reincarnated and keeps them until a shaman pleads their case and makes reparatory offerings. He then sends them to be reincarnated by a short route. He has an enclosure where the shaman looks for the reindeer and the fleeing buffalo [types of souls]. When he appears in front of him, the shaman asks him to verify that the souls have not been lost in the enclosure and to prepare the papers authorizing the shaman to go to look for them in his enclosure (*Entre* pp. 151, 153).

Nyaj Vaab is often called *Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem* or *Nyawj Vaab Tuam Teem*. Jacques Lemoine believes that this expression comes from Chinese *Yánwang Dà Diàn* ‘King Yama’s Great Palace’, the name of the building in which King Yama dwells being used metaphorically to refer to King Yama himself:

Thus the shamans who, by their profession, are led to visit the Beyond say that once past Ndzeu Nyong, one climbs to the “Great Palace of Nyaeu Vang”, *Nyawj Vaab tuam teem* ... When the Hmong use this expression they are not able to decompose it and use it as if “Great Palace” was part of the Spirit’s name (*Initiation* p. 91).

Ob tug txha moog rua tom nyaj vaab tuam teem lub chaw rooj ntug kws luas tu plaub. ... Ob tug moog txug tom na cav lug tug nam khi saw hlau quas nreeg has tas, yog vim le caag es yuav lug tug le hov nua. Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ...”

‘The two of them then went to Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem’s gate of heaven where judgement is passed. ... When they arrived, why, there came [Little Yob], firmly bound in iron chains, asking why he had come. The doorkeeper cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...”’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Nyaj vaab tuam teem ha muab tso plhuav. Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv

‘Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem then released him and the two of them then went to prepare the documents for him to be reborn as a high official’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Tuag moog txug sau tes Nyaj vab tuam teem muab teem txim, tso quas nkawj quas dlaiv plev, hab tso quas yoov tum ua dlaab ua tuag le hov rua.

‘When they died and arrived on high, then Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem found them guilty and released wasps and giant hornets to sting them and released mosquitoes to bite them mercilessly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

tes moog txug sau nyaj vaab tuam teem muab plaub txuj saw hlau khi plaub txhais teg taw ua ruam quas rug

‘and when they arrived on high, Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem took four iron chains and bound their four limbs rendering them immobile’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **nyam** ‘to like, to love’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *ài*:

Koj puas nyam lub tsho lab? ‘Do you like the red shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem

‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

xaiv tug koj nyam ‘choose the one you like’ (Xiongs).

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb
‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

- **nyam**: *sib nyam* ‘to like each other’ (Xiongs).

- **nyam**: *txaus nyam* ‘lovely’ (Xiongs).

- **nyas** ‘baby-carrier’:

hlaab-nyas ‘baby-carrier’ (description in Mong Leng and English translation, illustration, and notes in *Grandmother’s Path* pp. 129-133).

cev nyas, the main section of the baby-carrier (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133).

ncauj nyas, the top section of the baby-carrier (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133).

plawv cev nyas, the center of the main section of the baby-carrier. The batik foundation is indigo/white or indigo/light blue with red and yellow applique sewn in the spaces left in the batik pattern. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133.)

plawv ncauj nyas, the center section of the *ncauj nyas* (top section of the baby carrier). This part is usually covered with tiny appliqued squares, and sometimes yarn pom-poms. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133.)

- **nyas**: *xaamnyas* ‘contract’, from Lao *sǎn nyáa*:

Ua ntaub ua ntawv xaamnyas tuabsi es pauv kuj tau mas.
‘Prepare a contract and we will make the exchange’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **nyav** ‘to cry to mourn some one’s death’ (Xiongs).

- **nyav** ‘to have just done something’ (Xiongs):

Kuv nyav yuav tau lub tsho nuav ‘I have just bought this shirt’ (Xiongs).

Puab nyav ua tau ib yaam txawv txawv
‘They have just made something very strange’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug moog txug na, ob namtais yawmtxiv tseem nyav ua npua rooj taag.
‘When the two of them arrived, [Muam Paajqawm’s] parents had just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 18).

Ntxawd, koj koj koj vauv tuaj saib peb kuas, peb nyav ua npua rooj taag.
‘Dear, you’ve brought your husband to see us, but we’ve just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

Tabsis nub xyaa nuav, nyav kaajntug txoog xwb, puab tub nov suab tswbnyuj tswbneeg nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim tawroob lawm.

‘However, on the seventh day, when the day had just dawned, they heard the sound of ox bells and horse bells resounding, coming out from the foot of the mountain’ (*Nuj Sis*

Loob p. 47).

- **nyav** ‘to be at that moment in the story doing something’:

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb

‘The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

Tug nam txiv twmkum nyav moog dlhau plhawv xwb

‘A male rhinoceros came galloping up’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 18).

- **nyav yuavlaug taavsu** ‘just before noon’:

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntshuav cov ntshw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntshuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **nyaa** ‘to wrinkle over, to grin, to grimace, to simper, to mince, to sham, to crease, to pucker’ (Xiongs).

- **nyaab** ‘(classifier *tug*) daughter in law’ (Xiongs), ‘daughter-in-law’ (*Village* p. 176):

Txig tub nyaab hluv pw chaav nuav

‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **nyaab**: *quav nyaab* ‘straw’ (Xiongs):

In one story, it appears that straw shoes are needed to walk in the spirit world. At the beginning of the story, a young woman is scolded and beaten by her older brother, so

leej muam txhaj kuas tug nug ntxawg hab ib nkawm khau quavnyaab rua nwg. Leej muam tau nkawm khau quavnyaab cais nwg txawm tawm moog lawm.

‘the sister then had the younger brother weave a pair of straw shoes for her. The sister got the pair of straw shoes so she then went out.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

The sister does not return and it is eventually learned that

Yog moog yuav ib Yawm Dlaab lawm.

‘It was that she married a Male Spirit.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

The younger brother goes in search of her and finds her footprints:

Nwg taug moog na, nwg tug muam txawm nkaag rua huv ib lub qhov aav.

‘He followed them and, why, his sister had gone into a hole in the ground.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

Finally, he finds his sister, they have a tearful reunion, and then she takes him to her house. On the way, however, they must cross a deep ravine, spanned by only a single plank, impossible for the younger brother to negotiate.

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quavnyaab rua nwg rau. Ob tug txawm

taug lawg moog rua saab tim u.

‘So the sister then took off the pair of straw shoes for him to put on. The two of them then proceeded to the other side.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9.)

- **nyaab** ‘to flood’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yān*:

puab thaam txug dlej nyaab ‘They talk about the flood’ (Xiongs).

- **Nyaablaaj** ‘Vietnamese’ (from Chinese *Ānnán*) (also written *Nyab Laaj*):

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. ... Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thooj: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg

‘We Mong have many Clans. ... Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

- **nyaab xeeb ntawv** ‘grandson’s wife’ (*Village* p. 176).

- **nyaag** ‘to be on the lookout for’ (Xiongs); ‘to approach stealthily, to creep’:

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb nyaag nyaag lug txug qhov kaaj quas lug, nwg saib mas yog ib lub nam tsev luj heev.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb crept up to the bright place and saw that it was a very large house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **nyaag**, intensifier:

When a person dies, the household spirits try to prevent him or her from leaving the house:

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab.

‘The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag

lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

- **nyaaj** or **puj nyaaj** ‘aunt’ (Xiongs), **puj nyaaj** ‘father’s sister’ (*Village* p. 174).

- **nyaam** ‘(no classifier) time (court hearing)’ (Xiongs):

ib nyaam ‘once’ (Xiongs).

ob nyaam ‘twice’ (Xiongs).

- **nyaav** ‘heavy’ (Xiongs):

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev

‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

- **nyaum** ‘fierce, severe, stern, prone to fight’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *è*.

- **Nyawj Vaab** ‘King Yama’ (from Chinese *Yánwang*): See **Nyaj Vaab**.

- **nyeg** ‘domestic, tame, domesticated’ (Xiongs):

tsaj nyeg ‘domestic animal’ (Xiongs).

- **nyem** ‘to hold tight on, to thrill, to grasp firmly, to close the hand, to clench the fist’ (Xiongs):

Nwg naj nub ncu txug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab nyem teg quas ntseeg tsi pub leej twg tuav hab kov nwg hlo le.

‘Every day she missed Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and kept her fist clenched and wouldn’t let anyone hold her or touch her at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

- **nyem**: *txom nyem* ‘poor, suffering; poor, needy, in poverty, worthy of pity, unfortunate’ (Xiongs), from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin 造孽 *zàoniè*:

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem

‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

nwg quaj vim nwg ntsib kev txom nyem

‘s/he cries because s/he is facing poverty or great problems’ (Xiongs).

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **nyee**, intensifier:

saaj quas nyee ‘flexible, moveable’ (Xiongs).

txaag quas nyee ‘loosely moving’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug nim sis caav nruj muag quas nyee.

‘The two of them argued fiercely’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

- **nyeem** ‘to read’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *niàn* ‘to read aloud’:

phau ntawv nyeem ‘text book, reading book’ (Xiongs).

- **nyeem** ‘thick (liquid)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàn*.

- **Nyij Pooj** ‘Japanese’, from Lao *Nyīpūn*:

tug tuab neeg Nyij Pooj ‘a Japanese person’ (Xiongs, entry for *Japanese*).

ib lub teb chaws nyob Asia, lub tuam nroog yog Tokyo (teb chaws Nyij Pooj)

‘a country in Asia, the capital is Tokyo (the country of Japan)’ (Xiongs, entry for *Japan*).

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **nyo** ‘to lower, to bow one’s head down’ (Xiongs).

- **nyo**, intensifier:

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

tug nam uab dlub quas nyo, nim nquag quas txoov.

‘the [horse] was crow-black, and vigorous’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

Muab quas nyaj noj taag haus taag lug tug nam khaubhlaab quas nyo, dlaajntseg quas ntsuv.

‘He used up all his money and he is ragged, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

Nwg lug txug hov nwg khuam quas nyo nam naab thoobpuab txug hov.

‘Then Los Xaab hung the shoulder-bag on his shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14)

tug nyaab ib nyuas xauj tes leejtxiv tau ib plhaw, leejtxiv qaug tuab nam rawg qaab sawv tseeg ua nam taubqaab lu aav quas nyo

‘When he got a glimpse of the daughter-in-law, he felt his heart jump and fell down on his behind and stood up covered with dirt from head to toe’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

Tes ob tug nim tsiv ob tug nam lu aav nywb quas nyo rovqaab lug.

‘They ran away and returned home all covered with dirt’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

ua Los Xaab qaab quas nyo

‘followed close behind Los Xaab’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

plaubhau nim dlub dlub suaj quas nyo suaj quas zaws nraag laujtaws

‘with black hair, falling and tumbling to her heels’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- nyob ‘to sit down’ (Xiongs):

rooj nyob ‘(classifier *lub*) chair’ (Xiongs).

Qaab yem khaav hab chaw nyob ‘Porch and place to sit’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- nyob ‘to be’ (Xiongs):

Oo, kuv xaav nyob ze koj

‘Ong, I want to be close to you; Ong, I want to stay near you’ (Xiongs).

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm

‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘The couple’s wife’s mother and wife’s father, HIS MAJESTY, reigned in heaven, but the Maiden Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- nyob ‘to live’ (Xiongs):

chaw nyob ‘address, habitation’ (Xiongs).

nyob ib tse ‘to live in the same family’ (Xiongs).

nyob koom zog ‘to live in the same village, from the same village’ (Xiongs).

cais suavdlawg txhaj nyob ua zog ua moog rua ntus ntawd.

‘and everyone came to live in villages and communities at that time’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebhaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- nyob ‘to stay’ (Xiongs):

puab tseem nyob ‘they still stay’ (Xiongs).

- nyob ‘in’:

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”].

- **nyob**: *kev tau zoo nyob* ‘health’ (Xiongs).

- **nyob huv** ‘in’:

Muaj pis tsawg yim nyob huv koj lub zog?

‘How many families are there in your village?’ (Xiongs.)

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub?*] *zaig zig*

‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

- **nyob huv rua** ‘within’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **nyob huv qaab** ‘to be under’ (Xiongs).

- **nyob nyob** ‘time passed, after a while’:

Nyob nyob, muaj ib nub, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj tso nwg tug tub ntxawg dlha tuaj moog has rua Yob Nraug Ntsuag tas: “Yawm yij! Txiv has tas ...”

Time passed, and one day, the Ruler sent his youngest son to run and say to Yob the Orphan: “Sister’s husband! Father says that ...” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

Nyob nyob tes Yob ntsuag ntsuag tsua rov tuaj, tuaj na aub! ua caag nam ncej puj dlaab muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Some time later, Yob the orphan came back, and when he got there, why – good grief! – the female-spirit post was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **nyob qhuas npaws** ‘feverish’:

lug txaj hluas nkaui yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws

‘song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 15).

- **nyob rawv** ‘to stay firmly’ (Xiongs).

- **nyob rua** ‘in’:

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **nyob sau** ‘over, on top of; on’ (Xiongs):

txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo.

‘and there was a little minivet on a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **nyob tuab ywv** ‘be quiet, keep quiet, don’t move’ (Xiongs). See also *nyob twb ywv*.

- **nyob twb ywv** ‘to be quiet’ (Xiongs) (see also *nyob tuab ywv*):

Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog.

‘You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **nyob txug ... yum cev** ‘to seek knowledge’?:

In the version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant presented in *Initiation*, the primordial human couple are told that they must *nyob txug* and *yum cev* Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed in order to be able to have children:

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to *nyob txug* Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of silk and you will have children.”

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to *yum cev* Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them.”’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

In his French translation of this couplet (*Initiation* p. 21), Lemoine translates the expression as “seek knowledge (*querir la connaissance*) on Ndzeu Shi Nyong’s bed”. The meaning may be that the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth must learn how to have sex first before they will be able to have children.

- **nyob ua neej ua ntxhas**, formula at the end of folktales, similar to ‘lived happily ever after’ in English:

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv pujiyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaabteb hab ua fuabtais kaav tebhaws, hab nyob ua neej ua ntxhas lug lawm.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Nyooglaug daughter Ntxawm then took Ntxawm’s parents down to live in the southern part [of the country] and became king and queen ruling the country, and lived in peace and happiness’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

- **nyob yaaj saab** ‘to live in the country’ (Xiongs):

Yaaj saab is “probably a loan of 阳山 *yáng shān* which seems to have a primary sense of ‘the south side of a mountain which receives direct sunlight’.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **nyob zoo** ‘general purpose greeting regardless of time including good morning, good

afternoon, good evening, hello, hi, etc.’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes:

This an innovation made after leaving China. No one in China knew this phrase although it has started to become known nowadays. Hmong in northwestern Guizhou still find it baffling. A common equivalent in China is “gaox rongt” [*koj zoo* “you are good”] as a direct translation of 你好 [*nǐhǎo* “you are good”, the usual way of saying hello in Chinese]. I get the feeling that there was no generic greeting in the past. The polite way of greeting (outdoors) was to say things like “have you eaten?”, “you are walking to the fields?”, “what are you going to do?”, without it feeling like you are being nosy.

- **nyob zuj quas zug saib** ‘look over thoroughly’:

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

- **nyog** ‘freely, unrestrainedly, permittedly’ (Xiongs):

muab tug zagroj lawv quaj lawv quaj nyog quas nuj.

‘They followed the giant cricket, weeping unrestrainedly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **nyog** ‘fitting, suitable, appropriate, likely’ (Heimbach):

In a folktale, a man visiting his sister in the spirit world is invited by his sister’s spirit-husband to attend a funeral, where the spirit is in charge of preparing food for the funeral guests. The spirit goes off to fetch “meat” – i.e. human beings – and asks the young man whether it would be appropriate to kill the person he has fetched:

“Dlaab ntxawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?”

“Wife’s brother, this one is it appropriate to kill or not appropriate?”

The young man replies:

“Yawm yij, tug ko yog kuv txiv, tua tsi nyog ho!”

“Sister’s husband, that one is my father, to kill him is not appropriate!”

This goes on for some time, until finally the spirit fetches of a woman of the Kammu (*phubthawj*) ethnic group, no relation to the young man, whereupon the young man replies:

“*Yawm yij, nam ua zaub ua mov puab tshev heev hwv lawm cais, tua nyog tsi nyog nyog los ca le tua lauj!*”

“Sister’s husband, the woman who are making the vegetables and the rice are scolding a lot so, whether killing her is appropriate or not, you’d better kill her!”

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 10-12.)

- **nyog nyog**, the sound of a tiger growling:

In a story, a man has memories of when he was transformed into a tiger:

“*Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?*”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **nyoj** ‘to boil down’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *áo*.

- **nyom** ‘to pry’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *ào*.

- **nyom** ‘(no classifier) grass’ (Xiongs).

- **nyos** ‘to laugh at’ (Xiongs):

Wv! nim muab kuv txiv kuv tub tua tuag taag kuv tub tsi nyos nwg, nwg teem nyos kuv oj!
‘So, when they killed my husband and my son, I didn’t mock them, but now they’re mocking me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

- **nyoo** ‘to surrender, to yield, to submit’ (Xiongs).

- **nyoog** ‘raw, crude’ (Xiongs).

- **nyoog**: *noobnyoog* ‘date’:

Moob Xaam Noobnyoog ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 77, chapter title).

- **Nyooglaug** ‘the ruler of heaven’ (see also *Ntxwj Nyoog*):

Hmong call one class of supernatural beings Kao Eh Tu ... I shall call these beings gods, because they are more powerful than other spirits, they live in the sky and each has a personal name. ... *Yonglao* is usually mentioned in the Hmong stories and is often referred to as the head of all the gods. Some people said that he gives Yorso the job of sending rain and also of judging the Hmong people. He also delegates some functions to Yawang. During the Hmong New Year festival, *Yonglao* is invited to join the celebration. He does not come himself, but sends one of his sons or daughters to join the festival (Chindarsi 1976:18).

Yawm Nyooglaug Ntxhais Ntxawm ‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s Youngest Daughter’
(*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb*, title and throughout story).

- **nyooj** ‘to grumble, to growl, to roar, to boom’ (Xiongs):

*Tug nam zaaj nim quaj nyooj quas lawg tas: “Ntxawd! Maaj maam maj! Ua caag koj nim
yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!”*
‘The dragon growled: “Ntxawm! Gently! Why are you going at my wound with such
force?”’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

- **nyooj**: *ywg nyooj* ‘to grumble’:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb kuj ywg nyooj quas qawg tom nwg chaw pw
‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb grumbled in his sleeping chamber’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb*
p. 18).

- **nyooj hoom** ‘(classifier *lub*) airplane’ (Xiongs). From Lao *nyónhǒng* ‘powered aeronautical
balloon’.

- **nyoov** ‘to color, to dye’ (Xiongs).

- **nyug** (see also *nyuj*): *laij nyug txwg* ‘plow-ox’:

*koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib
suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb*
‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at
them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

suav laij nyug txwg zoo zoo saib le ho!
‘See how beautiful the plow-oxen of the Chinese are!’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16.)

Yob Nraug Ntsuag tau moog ua nyuj laij nyug txwg
‘Yob the Orphan had become a plow-ox’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Suav nim hawv los hawv, hu los hu kuas Muam Nkauj Ntsum saib luas laij nyug txwg
‘The Chinese called out to the Maiden Ntsum and kept trying to get her to look at their
plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg
‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle
shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

The creatures that accompany the plow-oxen are referred to both as *dlaav dlub yug yaav*
(black eagles?) and *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’.

- **nyug** (see also *nyuj*): *nqaj nyug* ‘beef’:

koj puas noj nqaj nyug? ‘do you eat beef?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9.)

- **nyuj** ‘(classifier *tug*) cow or bull (in general)’ (Xiongs) (see also *nyug*):

Nyuj ob txhim kub zuag heev ‘The bull’s two horns are very sharp or pointed’ (Xiongs).
tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, the stake will lean over too”]

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The eleventh month of the year is the month of the ox.

*11 hlis – nyuj hli*****

*11th month – month of the ox*****

***** nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for tsaug?] rua lub hlis nuav.*

***** in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain, the harvest is in this month. (Dlaab Qhuas p. 79.)*

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the ninth day of the first month is

luav hli – nyuj xab 9 ‘month of the rabbit – ox day 9’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that the day of the ox is a very inauspicious day on which to be born:

Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.

Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person’s horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

Nkuaj nyuj hab nkuaj neeg ‘Cattle-pens and horse-stables’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Txhua naj txhua nub kuv pum luas nkuam nyuj twg quas luag tuaj nruab ke

‘Day in and day out, I see people driving cattle and buffaloes down the middle of the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **nyuj**: *maum nyuj* ‘cow’ (Xiongs):

ib tug maum nyuj qhuav ‘a cow with no calf’ (Xiongs).

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm
‘This cow has given birth to three calves already’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuj**: *ntaus nyuj kub tsaab* ‘to jump and turn up and down’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuj**: *tawv nyuj* ‘oxhide’:

muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw
‘we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **nyuj**: *txiv nyuj* ‘(classifier *tug*) bull; ox, bull’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuj**: *viv thaaj nyuj* ‘radio, from Lao *vī thā nyū*’ (*Tswv Yim* p.4).

- **nyujqus** ‘wild ox’:

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **Nyuj Vaab** ‘King Yama’ (from Chinese *Yánwang*): See **Nyaj Vaab**.

- **nyuv** ‘(classifier *txuj*) intestine, bowels’ (Xiongs):

kauj nyuv ‘intestine, bowels’ (Xiongs).

miv nyuv ‘small intestine’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuv mog** ‘small intestine’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuv laug** ‘large intestine, colon’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuv nqaj** ‘sausage’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuv roj maab** ‘plastic tube’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuv twg** ‘appendix’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuaj sab** ‘to be upset, worried’ (Xiongs).

- **nyuas** ‘(classifier *tug*) child, children’ (Xiongs):

muaj nyuas ‘to be pregnant’ (Xiongs).

peb pom nyuas ‘pregnant three times (used only for animals)’ (Xiongs).

pob nyuas ‘to miscarry’ (Xiongs).

ua nyuas ‘act like a child, childish’ (Xiongs).

Ab yab! meb nim zuv meb ob tug nam nyuas

‘Hey! How about you two watching your two children’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

Tes cov nyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig lawm

‘Then the spirit children were running round and round’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **nyuas** ‘small’:

xuas tau tug nyuas cev tes laws tau dlaim nyuas tawv cev

‘she touched a small body and peeled off a small piece of skin’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“Yuaj! yog kuv tej nyuas qab os. Ca es kuv muab kaw. Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog”.

“Gracious! It is my chicks. Let me lock them up. You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **nyuas**, conveying endearment or condescension:

Puab nyuas! ‘Little ones!’ (ruler addressing his sons and Yob the Orphan) (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **nyuas**, conveying anger or dismissiveness:

Tamtseeb aj! Koj nyuas Siv Yig Muas kod koj txawm siv muab kuv tub Tuam tua tuag lawm tag.

‘Damn it! You little Siv Yig Muas you, you really *have* killed my son Tuam’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

Txiv! Tsi xob kov dlaim nyuas ko! Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.

‘Father! Don’t bother with that! It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb

‘you will eat just a bit of dry wall-plank together with rice mixed with cold water’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **nyuas**, placed before nouns without any apparent meaning other than that what follows is a noun:

Cais nwg tug nyuas muam txawm nqaa ob nagtxiv Suab lub vaab dlha dlha tuaj tso plhuav tig hlo yuav rovqaab

‘So his sister then took the Chinese couple’s sifting-tray and came running back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8).

The phrase *nyuas muam* does not mean “little sister”, since she is, in fact, the young man’s older sister. Nor does it mean “dear sister”, since, later in the story, the same phrase *nyuas muam* is used when talking about her other brother who is abusive and hateful to her.

muaj ib tug twm laag tuam hlaa ib lub nyuas haav tub tub moog rau tim u.

‘there was a single rail crossing a deep ravine to go to the other side’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 8-9).

The phrase *nyuas haav* does not mean “a little ravine”. On the contrary, the ravine is said to be very deep.

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quavnyaab rua nwg rau.

‘So the sister then took off the pair of straw shoes for him to put on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

It is possible that the shoes are in fact small, since they were originally made to be worn by a young woman, but, since her brother is also able to wear them, more likely *nyuas* here conveys nothing other than that *khau* ‘shoe’ is a noun.

tsi pum muaj ib tug nyuas tuabneeg tawm twg

‘not one human being was seen to come out anywhere’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

The story takes place in a village where all of the people have been eaten by a spirit. There is no reason to think that the people were of small size or particularly endearing but it is possible that *nyuas* might convey pity, “not one poor soul”.

Sometimes it’s really not clear, as in the following example:

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

A female dove could well be little and she might even be endearing, despite being a thief, but I really don’t know if *nyuas* is meant to convey either of those in the above example:

- **nyuas**: *miv nyuas* ‘(classifier *tug*) child’ (Xiongs).

cov miv nyuas ‘children’ (Xiongs).

ib tug miv nyuas tsaub ‘an illegitimate child’ (Xiongs).

miv nyuas mog lab ‘baby’ (Xiongs).

miv nyuas ntsuag ‘(classifier *tug*) orphan’ (Xiongs).

miv nyuas ntxaib ‘twin’ (Xiongs).

miv nyuas qab ‘chick’ (Xiongs).

nchuav miv nyuas ‘to miscarry, to abort’ (Xiongs).

tu miv nyuas ‘to give birth, to raise children’ (Xiongs).

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv; tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

‘A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents; an animal refuses to obey its master’ (Meej Hab Tsi Meej p. 1).

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm

‘This cow has given birth to three calves already’ (Xiongs).

Tes nam ncej puj dlaab cov mivnyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj

‘Then the spirit children of the female-spirit post came running round and round’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 27).

- nyuas ntxhais ‘girl’ (Xiongs):

Wb los kuj tsi paub tsi pum le hab kuas, muaj ib nyuas ntxhais pheej tuaj qev vaab qev tshaus.

‘The two of us do not know [if she’s your sister], but there’s a girl who keeps coming to borrow sifting-trays and sifters’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 8).

Hlais ib dlaim nqaj nyuas tub, dlaim nqaj nyuas ntxhais ua ib nyuas ke

‘They cut a slice from the flesh of the boy, a slice from the flesh of the girl, and put them together’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 24).

- nyuas tub ‘boy’ (Xiongs):

Hlais ib dlaim nqaj nyuas tub, dlaim nqaj nyuas ntxhais ua ib nyuas ke

‘They cut a slice from the flesh of the boy, a slice from the flesh of the girl, and put them together’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 24).

- nyuas tsuag:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (Ceebpov p. 22).

- nywb, intensifier:

Tes ob tug nim tsiv ob tug nam lu aav nywb quas nyo rovqaab lug.

‘They ran away and returned home all covered with dirt’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **nywj**, malign influence that hovers where someone has died:

An account of the origin of the ceremonies of Cutting Off the Sub Spirit (*Tu Sub*), performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar, and Waving Away the Sub Spirit (*Lwm Sub*), performed at the New Year, says:

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb. Puab lwm xwb.

‘Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month do not cut. They only wave.

Lub caij hov yog lub caij Siv Yig Muas ob tug sis tua tes Sub Tuam tuag. Puab txha le lwm xwm. Yog muaj tug nywj xwb.

This time of year is the time of year when Siv Yig Muas [and Sub Tuam] fought and Sub Tuam died. They therefore only wave. There is only the nywj.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33.)

O

- **o** ‘swollen; to swell’ (Xiongs).

- **o paa** ‘(classifier *lub*) goiter’ (Xiongs).

- **o txa** ‘to be very angry, very unhappy’ (Xiongs).

- **ob** ‘two, the number two’ (Xiongs):

ob txhais teg ‘two hands’ (Xiongs).

ob xyoos ‘two years’ (Xiongs).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **ob nyaam** ‘twice’ (Xiongs).

- **ob puas** ‘two hundreds’ (Xiongs).

- **ob phoo teg** ‘two times the containing of two open hands joined; two handfuls’ (Xiongs).
From Southwestern Mandarin *pǒng*.

- **ob sim** ‘to try a couple of times’:

Nwg ob sim yuav tua, Ntxawm saib ntshai yuav tsi zoo heev, Ntxawm txhaj cheem Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseg.

‘He tried a couple of times to kill it but Ntxawm saw that it might be a very bad idea so she restrained Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

- **ob ... tsi tau** ‘to try unsuccessfully’:

Dlaig nkaus nwg cejdlaab ob ntuav tsi tau

‘It will catch in his throat and he will be unable to throw it up’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Los Tuam ob nqog, ob nqog tsi tau.

‘Tuam tried and tried to swallow it, but could not’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

Nam Sib Tuam ob fuas ob fuas tsi tau taubhau lug txawb txuas rua le

‘Sub Tuam snatched about and snatched about but could not find his head to join it back on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **ob txheeb** ‘two thousands’ (Xiongs).

- **ob yaav qaab** ‘both ends’ (Xiongs).

- **ob zag** ‘twice’ (Xiongs).

- **Od yauj!** ‘Well!’:

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!

‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **oj** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of black bird’ (Xiongs).

- **oj**, final particle:

Wv! nim muab kuv txiv kuv tub tua tuag taag kuv tub tsi nyos nwg, nwg teem nyos kuv oj!

‘So, when they killed my husband and my son, I didn’t mock them, but now they’re mocking me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

“Es koj puas ntshai naab pluajce?” “Aub! naab pluajce, tsi has oj. Kuv ntshai ntshai le oj”.

‘Then are you afraid of ribbon-snakes?’ ‘Oh my! Don’t talk about ribbon snakes. I’m very afraid of them.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 22-23.)

- **os**, final particle:

tsum os! ‘enough!’ (Xiongs.)

Sub nim tag os.

‘What? Really?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas npua tes koj muab kaw os?

‘if it’s your chicks and piglets, then will you lock them up?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33.)

- **ov**, final particle:

Haus cawv tes Lis Sub Tuam muaj muaj zaaj muaj zeg pav ov!

‘They drank until Lis Sub Tuam became quite inebriated!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

OO

- **oo** or **ab oo** ‘haze’ (Xiongs):

Nkauj Ab Nraug Oo ‘the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth’, the parents of the first

human children (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7, *Initiation* p. 122).

- **Oo** (a personal name):

Oo, kuv hlub koj ‘Ong, I love you’ (Xiongs).

Oo, kuv xaav nyob ze koj

‘Ong, I want to be close to you; Ong, I want to stay near you’ (Xiongs).

Oo, Kuv xaav txug ‘Ong, I think about you’ (Xiongs).

Oo, tug ntxim hlub. ‘Ong, my sweetheart’ (Xiongs).

- **oob** ‘gray’ (Xiongs).

- **oob**: *txaj oob txaj ntsim* ‘to treasure’ (see also *txaj ntsig*):

Haus taag nam dlej ab nam peb lu, koj yuav tsis nrug ncu. Koj yuav haus taag nam dlej ab qas tag, nam ncauj le yuav yaug taag, koj le txaj oob txaj ntsim tsis ncu taag nplaj lis teb.

‘When you have drunk three mouthfuls of the bitter water, you will lose your memory. When you have drunk the bitter water truly, when your mouth is completely rinsed, you will forget all that you treasured on the face of the earth’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

P

- **pab** ‘adze’, ‘to hew with an adze’:

nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for laj?] quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11).

- **pam moos** ‘a kind of fish with a thick mouth, from Lao *paa môm*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **pas** ‘finger millet (hóngbài)’, *Eleusine coracana* (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 4 bak; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 1 bak; *A Linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*):

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Below is a photograph of finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **pas**: *Moob Ncuavpas*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **pav** ‘a slap’ (Xiongs).

- **pav** ‘to tell, to cite, to recite, to converse’ (Xiongs).

- **pav lug** ‘illustration, figurative language’ (Xiongs).

- **pav twb quas tawg** ‘to mutter’:

*Yuav tsausntuj tuab tag Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug nim pav twb quas tawg hab cov
nam qhev puab nim pav twb quas tawg*

‘When it was truly nightfall, Los Tuam and Los Lwm began to mutter and the servants
also began to mutter’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 17-18).

Nim pav twb quas tawg le hov taug kev.

‘They kept muttering in that fashion all along the road’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **paa** ‘(classifier *tug*) breath, smoke, air’ (Xiongs):

nchu paa ‘smoking’ (Xiongs).

nqug paa ‘to inhale’ (Xiongs).

pem paa ‘to hold the breath’ (Xiongs).

tso paa ‘to let the air out, to exhale’ (Xiongs).

ua paa ‘to breathe’ (Xiongs).

- **paa**: *o paa* ‘(classifier *lub*) goiter’ (Xiongs).

- **paab** ‘to help, to give a hand, to support’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bāng*:

sib paab ‘to help each other’ (Xiongs).

Kuv xaav kom koj paab ua qhov nuav rua kuv
‘I wish you can do this for me’ (Xiongs).

thov koj paab kuv tuav ib plag ‘help me hold it for a while please’ (Xiongs).

thov paab tsaa kuv thaum ob teev tawm ‘please wake me up at two thirty’ (Xiongs).

thov paab txheem kom tsi xob poob ‘Help me hold it from falling, please’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.
‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **paab** ‘(no classifier) crowd, group (people, animals)’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bān*:

ib paab nkawj muv ‘a swarm of wasps and bees’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug paab txivtub ‘the Ruler and his sons’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 20).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thai.
‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **paab puav** ‘some group’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bān* ‘group’ + dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *bǎ* ‘some’.

- **paab twg** ‘which group’ (Xiongs).

- **paag** ‘(classifier *lub*) lake, pond, pool, puddle, trough’ (Xiongs).

- **paag** (see also *paaj*): *ntaub paag* ‘silk textile’ (Xiongs).

- **paag**: *nkauj muag paag* ‘prostitute’ (Xiongs).

- **paag**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov paag [to make the sound *paag*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **paag dlej tauv** ‘dam pool’ (Xiongs).

- **paag tuag** ‘still-water pond’:

Muaj ib nub, ob tug kwvnpawg tau ua ke moog nuv ntseg nraag lub nam paag tuag.
 ‘One day, the two cousins went fishing together in a still-water pond’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* page 5 and illustration on page 4).

- **paag zaaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) wild lake, virgin lake’ (Xiongs):

Perhaps literally “dragon lake”. Dragons in East Asian cultures are water deities and in Hmong stories and descriptions of Hmong beliefs are often said to live at the bottoms of large lakes. *Paag zaaj*, therefore, may mean literally “dragon lake”, that is, a lake in which a dragon lives or potentially might live.

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that the expression “dragon lake” is

Also extremely common in Chinese toponyms in, for example, Guizhou – browsing a map reveals dozens of sites named 龙潭 *lóngtán*

in which 龙 *lóng* means ‘dragon’ and 潭 *tán* means ‘deep pool, lake’.

- **paaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) ‘flower’ (Xiongs) (see also *paag*).

- **paaj** ‘(classifier *cov*) interest of an investment’ (Xiongs).

- **paaj** ‘cotton’ (Xiongs).

- **Paaj** (woman’s name):

Pa [typo for *Paaj*?] *yau dlua min* [typo for *Mim*?]
 ‘Pang is smaller than Mae [typo for *Mee*?]’ (Xiongs).

- **paaj**: *zaub paaj* ‘cauliflower’ (Xiongs).

- **paaj lug** ‘proverb, flowery speech’ (Xiongs).

- **paaj ntaub** ‘embroidery’:

xaws paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to sew embroidery].

xuas teg ua paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to make embroidery by hand].

- **paaj ntaub puas yaam tsaav** ‘embroidery’ (Xiongs).

- **paaj ntoos** ‘flower’ (Xiongs).

- **paaj ntoos**: *tswmcab paajntoos* ‘votive candle’:

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab
 ‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **paaj pawg** ‘a jump’:

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwmlob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj pawg, quaj mi-aub.

‘But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried “Miau”.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27.)

- **paaj pawg plhu** ‘face’ (Xiongs).

- **Paajtaag**: *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from

their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Nxtawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paaajtaag. Muam Paaajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **paam** ‘to carry out the funeral ceremony’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bàn*:

kev paamtuag ‘funeral rites’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14, chapter title).

tsev paam tuag ‘funeral home’ (Xiongs).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg muab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug paam puv xyaa-nub xyaa-mo

‘The people all had a funeral for the Ruler and Yob the Orphan for a full seven days and seven nights’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26.)

- **paam thawj** ‘a wooden mallet’ (Xiongs).

- **paas** ‘(classifier *tug*) stick, cane’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, when someone pierces a female spirit’s house with arrows, she says to a group of spirit children:

“Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os”.

“When you go, as soon as you’re ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

When the person who pierced the female spirit’s house with arrows comes to the road, what he finds is a tiger and a snake. The tiger kills the person and the tiger and the snake eat him.

In other examples, *paas* refers to a cane:

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.

‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **paas** ‘(no classifier) drink’ (Xiongs).

- **paas nreg** ‘(classifier *tug*) cane, walking stick’ (Xiongs).

- **paav** ‘to fasten, to tie, to bind together’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎng*:

muab nam txiv neeg uab dlob peem ib lub nam eeb kub ndlaug loj quas kho, le muab dlaab Ntxawg paav rua sau lub nam eeb kub.

‘they saddled the crow-black stallion with a bright golden saddle and fastened Uncle Ntxawg upon the golden saddle’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Nwg txawm muab nam Suav paav kawg kag rua nam eeb kub txaij txaij

‘Then he fastened the Chinese [merchant] on the resplendent golden saddle’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **paav**: *los paav* ‘Chinese merchant’, from Chinese *lǎobǎn*:

Lug lug txug ib lub nam nraag taj, lug ntsib ib tug nam Suav Tuam Los Paav lawv ib paab nam lujtxwv ndlaag quas naj, thauj nyaj thauj kub lug.

‘He travelled down to a plain, and met a Big Chinese Merchant who was driving a huge herd of mules transporting silver and gold’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Ab yawd! yog meb pum Suav Los Paav ua luam dlua kev meb qhovmuag txaij meb laam has le.

‘Oh, my! When the two of you saw the Chinese merchant going by on business, you must have had a hallucination. You’re pulling my leg’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **paav laj** ‘rice swamp’ (Xiongs).

- **paav ywj** ‘the fat around the stomach’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 板油 *bǎnyóu*.

- **paib** ‘(classifier *lub*) stomach (used by small children)’ (Xiongs).

- **paig** ‘short and round’ (Xiongs).

- **paim** ‘to excrete liquid breaking forth from an abcess’ (Xiongs).

- **paim**: *txawb paim* ‘to crouch’:

Moog txug nraag kev na tuab nam txiv tsuv txawb paiv nraag kev

‘When he got down to the road, why, a male tiger was crouching down by the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **pau** ‘curve, bent’ (Xiongs).

- **paub** ‘to know, to hear about, to realize’ (Xiongs):

kuv paub thoob lawm ‘I know it completely, I know it all’ (Xiongs).

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb

‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

paub ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to know].

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

Koj nim tsiv lug ua nkaufaa rua nuav lawm ais, ua caag tsi qha wb paub?

‘You just ran off and deserted your family. Why didn’t you tell us?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15).

Luas yeej paub txug suav txuj kev limham ntawd taag lawm

‘She knew all about the cruelty of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Tab sis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub, puab leeg raws le puab txuj kev xaav hab kwv yees xwb.

‘But the truth is that there is no one who knows. Everyone just follows what they think and suppose’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 80).

- **paub** ‘to know how to’:

tsi paub tuag le ‘everlasting, to live forever’ (Xiongs) [“not know how to die at all”]

cov tuabneeg kws paub ua neeb twb yog cov dlaab nuav ua cov cob hab qha puab.

‘the people who knew how to perform shamanic rites, it was in fact these spirits who were the ones who trained and taught them’ (*Ua npausuav* p. 22).

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **paug** ‘(classifier *lug*) necklace’ (Xiongs).

- **paug** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 556):

dlawb paug or *dlawb quas paug* ‘pure white’ (Xiongs p. 556).

tshuav nam txhaa taubhau dlawb paug

‘all that’s left is the gleaming white skull’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **paug**: *hauv paug* ‘stump, base, origin, basis, root’ (Xiongs).

- **paug**: *kua paug* ‘thick secretion from an abscess, pus’ (Xiongs).

- **paug**: *puj dlaab paug* ‘female paug spirit’:

In the story “Yob hab Pujdlaab Paug” (Yob and the Female Paug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 30-33), Yob follows a dove that is stealing millet from his field and comes to the home of the female paug spirit.

The female paug spirit promises to lock up her birds so that they will not steal Yob’s crops. Then the female paug spirit invites Yob to lunch. She knocks on a steamer and it fills with rice. She knocks on a bottle and it fills with liquor. She knocks on a wok and it fills with meat.

After lunch, Yob says that he is drunk and asks the female paug spirit to go cut him a cane to walk with. While she is gone, Yob steals the steamer, the bottle, and the wok and runs home.

One of Yob’s friends comes by and Yob invites him to lunch. Yob knocks on the steamer and it fills with rice, he knocks on the bottle and it fills with liquor, he knocks on the wok and it fills with meat.

Yob’s friend asks Yob how he got these things, and Yob says that he got them from the female paug spirit. Yob’s friend then says that he will visit the female paug spirit and get such things. This time, however, the female paug spirit knows that Yob’s friend is going

to steal from her, so she leaves a steamer and a wok that fill, not with rice and meat, but with feces and she leaves a bottle that fills, not with liquor, but with urine.

One possible translation of *puj dlaab paug* is ‘avenging female spirit’ (from *pauj* ‘to fight back, to revenge, to pay back’), which would make sense insofar as the spirit in the story gets back at the young man who was going to steal from her by leaving him a steamer, wok, and bottle that fill with feces and urine.

- **pauj** ‘to fight back, to revenge, to pay back’ (Xiongs). See also *puj dlaab paug*.

- **pauj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov paj [to make the sound paj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **pauv**: *taum pauv* ‘soybeans’ (Xiongs).

- **pawg** ‘(no classifier) group, crowd, pile, stack’ (Xiongs):

ib pawg tuab neeg ‘a group of people’ (Xiongs).

ib pawg ntawv ‘a pile of papers’ (Xiongs).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

Lug tes taagkig Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog tsev tes moog txug nraag na ua cav muaj ib nyuas pawg nyaj.

‘The following morning, Yob the orphan was on his way home and when he got down to the road, he saw to his surprise that there was a pile of silver there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **pawg**: *paaj pawg* ‘a jump’:

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwmlob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj pawg, quaj mi-aub.

‘But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried “Miau”.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27.)

- **pawg**: *paaj pawg plhu* ‘face’ (Xiongs).

- **pawg twg** ‘which group’ (Xiongs).

- **paws** ‘(classifier *lub*) roll’ (Xiongs).

- **pawv** ‘to disappear, to lose’ (Xiongs).
- **pe** ‘to kneel to pray to or to ask for an excuse’ (Xiongs) (see also *pes*).
- **pe ib pes** ‘to kneel down one time’ (Xiongs).
- **pe peb pes** ‘to kneel down three times’ (Xiongs).
- **peb** ‘we, us’ (Xiongs):

Mej txhaj peb txhais ‘You propound the riddles and we explain them’ (Xiongs).

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **peb** ‘the numeral three’ (Xiongs):

pe peb pes ‘to kneel down three times’ (Xiongs).

suav nto peb ‘to count up to three’ (Xiongs).

tshuav peb nub nkaus xwb ‘only three more days left’ (Xiongs).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

- **peb caug** ‘thirty’ (Xiongs).
- **Pebcaug** ‘New Year Celebration in Mong culture’ (Xiongs), which takes place on the thirtieth day of the last month of the lunar calendar.
- **peb le** ‘our, ours’ (Xiongs).
- **peb pom nyuas** ‘pregnant three times (used only for animals)’ (Xiongs).
- **peb phaav** ‘three thousands’ (Xiongs). From Lao *phéen*.
- **peb qaib** or **peb qeb** ‘three steps’ (Xiongs).
- **peb zag** ‘three times’ (Xiongs).

- **peg** ‘to hit, to beat, to strike’ (Xiongs):

In the following example the verbs *peg* ‘to hit, to beat, to strike’, *luaj* ‘to cut down vegetation with a bush-knife’, *tsuav* ‘to cut, to chop, to cut in very small pieces’, and *ntxug* ‘to chop up’ are used together to convey the motions of two young men fighting with a spirit; ‘with hands and with feet’ is an idiom referring to martial arts skill:

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntxug nrov pis ntxhas rua.

‘Striking and slashing with hands and with feet, the two of them cut and chopped with a great clamor at her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **peg** ‘up there, over there’ (Xiongs):

Nwg txawm taug kev moog rua peg luagteb, na txawm pum nwg tug muam tug neevtaw tuaj moog lawm.

‘He then followed the road up to the upper part of the swidden field’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

- **peg**: *nplajtog qaumpeg* ‘anyone in the world’:

Koj tsi txhob nrug kuv sau yim. Koj moog nrug nplajtog qaumpeg sau yim.

‘Don’t marry me. Marry anyone in the world’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **peg**: *poob rua huv peg teb* ‘to fall to the ground’ (Xiongs).

- **peg**: *toj roob hauv peg* ‘lands and mountains’ (Xiongs).

- **peg**: *tom peg tom taug* ‘everywhere (in the city, in the country)’ (Xiongs).

- **peg**: *yaav peg suab* ‘in the future’ (Xiongs).

- **peg hauv haav** ‘upstream, source’ (Xiongs).

- **peg ncov roob** ‘upon the mountain top’ (Xiongs).

- **peg qaum teb** ‘to the north’ (Xiongs).

- **peg sau** ‘top, area above’:

Cais Nuj Sis Loob ca le yaa plawg peg sau kwjtse lug ti nkaus

‘Then Nuj Sis Loob flew from the area above the draining ditch and drew near [the Spirit]’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39).

- **Pej**: *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm*, names of two major characters in a folktale:

In the story “Ob Txivtub hab Dlaabntxaug” (The Father and Son and the Ntxaug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 34-38), a man and his son are on their way to visit their kinsmen and they stop at the house of a ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit invites them to spend the night. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the man to sleep on and says that the boy can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night

the boy begins to groan. The man lights a lamp and gets up to look and sees that the ntxaug spirit's two daughters have become two green sickles nailed into the boy's chest and that the boy is dead.

The man flees in terror and meets Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm, who insist that he tell them why he is fleeing. The man says that he is fleeing because he and his son fell into the country of the ntxaug spirits and the ntxaug spirits killed his son.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the man not to be frightened and ask him to take them to the ntxaug spirits. When they arrive, the ntxaug spirit couple welcomes the three of them and invites them to spend the night.

The ntxaug spirits spread out bedding in the main room for the man to sleep on and say that Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirits' two daughters. In the middle of the night, there is no sound coming from the bed, so the male ntxaug spirit lights a lamp and gets up to look. He sees that his daughters have each been cut in half ("one made two sides, two made four sides"). He calls upon his daughters to join themselves back together and they do so, but then they are each cut in half again. "These two oxen have sharp horns", cries the male ntxaug spirit and calls upon other ntxaug spirits to come and do battle with Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tuck razors in their mouths, the folds of their arms, and the hollows of their knees. When the ntxaug spirits attack them, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm cut off the ntxaug spirits' hands.

The ntxaug spirits are terrified and ask how they can escape. Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the ntxaug spirits to go inside a gourd. Then Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm plug up the gourd and throw it into a river. A Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river catches the gourd in his net and starts to unplug it but, when the Chinese man hears the ntxaug spirits inside the gourd say that as soon as they are free they are going to eat him, the Chinese man plugs the gourd up again and throws it back in the river and the river carries it away.

Once the ntxaug spirits are gone, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm sort through the ntxaug spirits' silver and find such a huge amount of silver that they are unable to carry it home and so the story ends.

- **pej kum teb** 'abroad' (Xiongs). From Chinese *biégè*.

- **pej xeem** 'the people, population' (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎixìng* 'the hundred surnames':

- **pejxeem**: *lajmej pejxeem* 'the populace, the common people':

Hab kuas tsoom lajmej pejxeem moog tsua kag ib lub nyuas hleb cab lug ntim Yob Nraug Ntsuag.

'And she had the people build a pine coffin to put Yob the Orphan in' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

- **pejxeem fuabfwm** 'the people':

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg muab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug paam puv xyaa-nub xyaa-mo

‘The people all had a funeral for the Ruler and Yob the Orphan for a full seven days and seven nights’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26.)

- **pem** ‘to hold the breath, to control the horse to run in a certain way’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *biē*.

- **pem**: *meej pem* ‘conscious’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *míngbái*.

- **pem kom** ‘(classifier *tug*) defendant’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *pèigào*.

- **pem paa** ‘to hold the breath’ (Xiongs).

- **pem thaaj** ‘sugar’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *báitáng* ‘white sugar’.

- **pemthuum** ‘(classifier *tug*) a tower, structure, a station’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tǎ*.

- **pes** ‘(no classifier) kneeling down’ (Xiongs) (see also *pe*):

pe ib pes ‘to kneel down one time’ (Xiongs).

pe peb pes ‘to kneel down three times’ (Xiongs).

- **peeb** ‘(classifier *tug*) water blood sucker’ (Xiongs).

- **pev** ‘to compare’, from Chinese *bǐ*:

kev sib pev ‘comparison’ (Xiongs).

muab sib pev ‘to compare’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **peem** ‘to try to pass through a crowd or in between the people’ (Xiongs). From dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *bèn*.

- **peem** ‘to saddle a horse, to put packs on a pack animal’:

Wb le wb nyuj wb neeg coob coob le wb yuav peem nyuj peem neeg es koj ca le uantej mas!

‘Our cattle and horses are numerous, and we must put packs and saddles on them, so you go on ahead’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

Tes ob tug txawm peem kag neeg ob tug lug.

‘So the two of them quickly saddled their horses and left’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

Tug quaspuj caij tug lujtxwv peem lub eeb nyaj, huas nwg caij tug lujtxwv dlob dlob peem lub eeb kub

‘His wife rode the mule saddled with a silver saddle while he rode the black mule saddled with a gold saddle’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

muab nam txiv neeg uab dlob peem ib lub nam eeb kub ndlaug loj quas kho, le muab dlaab Ntxawg paav rua sau lub nam eeb kub.

‘they saddled the crow-black stallion with a bright golden saddle and fastened Uncle Ntxawg upon the golden saddle’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **peem**: *xwj peem* ‘it doesn’t matter, up to’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *suibiàn*:

xwj peem koj ‘up to you, it is up to you’ (Xiongs).

- **peev** ‘(classifier *cov*) capital of an investment’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *běn*:

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog.
‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Yog Lob Lw xaav tau Muam Nkauj Ntsum cais, Lob Lw moog khwv kuas tau cuaj laag peev yim laag xwm.

‘If Lob Lw wants to get Muam Nkauj Ntsum, Lob Lw should work hard so that he gets nine taels of capital and eight taels of funds’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 28).

- **peev** ‘ability’:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **pib** ‘to start, to begin’ (Xiongs):

tub yuav pib tuab tag ‘almost begin, open’ (Xiongs).

- **pib** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) ticket’ (Xiongs).

- **pig kig** ‘tomorrow’ (Xiongs).

- **pim** ‘(classifier *lub*) vagina, female sexual organ’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bī*.

- **pis**, rhythm syllable in poetry:

hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog.

‘I am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **pis**, linker syllable with intensifiers:

rhe or *quas rhe* or *pis rhe* ‘typical intensifier, completely separated’ (Xiongs p. 556).

Yawm Nyooglaug ob nam tub txawm saib moog rua nraag lub nam qhovntuj dlob hab xaam pis nuv

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two sons then looked into the black chasm and thought things over bewilderedly’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 12).

hab Ntxawm txhaj yuam pis ntag nwg tawm moog rua lwm chaav tsev lawm.

‘Then Ntxawm pushed him out into another room of the house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

nwg kuj yawm kag ib taig nam moov tshauv moog pleev pis zog tug nam zaaj lub qhov nqaj. Nam zaaj nov mob heev

‘she scooped up a bowlful of ashes and smeared them on the dragon’s wound. The dragon felt severe pain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16).

Cais Txheeb Tshoj Theeb txhaj dlha lug muab nwg raab taus moog leem tshauv pig kag
‘Then Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ran to fetch his axe and coated it with ashes’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pages 18-19).

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

Nwg ob tig cev ua nwg tsag lig xub yaa lab pis vog rua huv aav cais dlej ca le npau pis dlaam tawm lug

‘He turned himself round twice so that he emitted red flashes of lightning flying into the soil and then water boiled out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

Nwg ... tsag lig xub yaa lab vog cais cov nam pobzeb txawm yaa tawg pis txua

‘He [Grandfather Thunder’s Youngest Son] ... sent red bolts of lightning flying everywhere and the stones then flew and cracked into pieces’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

Cov nam kua aav kuj ca le yeeg pis zog lug npoog kag Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

‘The mud completely covered Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm posts’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

Ceeb Pov lawv pis lag nkaag plawg rua huv.

‘Ceeb Pov went inside following close behind them’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Noog Yaajqawg txawm nqaa pis nroog ib tug ib rev noob zaub

‘the Swallows came one after another each carrying a stem of vegetable seeds’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 9).

Cais cov nam hluas nkauj sau qaum ntuj sis ntshi pis chiv

‘The young women of heaven whispered to one another’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 23).

Nuj Yob saib taag cais tug nam Pujntxoog txhaj moog muab dlaim nyuas khaubhlaab qhwv pis zog choj nyuas nyaj hab cov ntim cov khob nqaa lug tso rua huv nam Pujntxoog lub mej loos lawm.

‘When Nuj Yob was finished looking, the Pujntxoog took a rag, wrapped the silver ingot and the bowls and the cups and put them in her storage basket’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 85).

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthav sau ntuj tuaj
 ‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.
 ‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

Yawm Dlaab, nwg leej muam tug quasyawg, txawm yaa plawg tim qaab lug tsaws nkaus sau qhovmuag tsev ua qhovncauj lab pistsuag.

‘the Male Spirit, his sister’s husband, then came flying in from the horizon [or ‘from the west’] and perched on the gable, with his mouth all red’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Lug txug ncu nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag
 ‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.

‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth and ran home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

Tes le muab ua pis nta rua nraag qaab tsitaug lawm.

‘So he left them by the downhill side of the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **pis**: *nkib pis nkawv*, sound of crunching:

Rhu hlo paas cawv ntsuab lug cua ua quas txhaa nrov nkib pis nkawv.

‘She pulled him out and took a swig of green liquor and crunched on his bones’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **pis tsawg** ‘how much, how many’ (Xiongs):

Muaj pis tsawg tsaa? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muaj pis tsawg yaam? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muag [typo for muaj?] pis tsawg txheeb? ‘How many thousands are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muaj pis tsawg yim nyob huv koj lub zog?

‘How many families are there in your village?’ (Xiongs.)

- **po** ‘(classifier *tug*) spleen’ (Xiongs).

- **po** ‘rotten (tree)’ (Xiongs).

- **pob** ‘(classifier *lub*) ball, ball-like’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bāo* ‘bundle’:

caa ‘(classifier *pob*) trunk, stem’ (Xiongs).

khoom ‘(classifier *pob* or *cov*) things, luggage, package’ (Xiongs).

ib pob khoom sib ‘a light package’ (Xiongs).

phaib ‘(classifier *dlaim* or *pob*) card (game cards)’ (Xiongs).

cospob ‘knots of thread’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

foob pob ‘bomb’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *fēng* ‘wind’ + *bāo* ‘bundle’.

ib pob choj ‘a bedroll’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 23).

qhwv pob khoom plig ‘to wrap the gift’ (Xiongs).

cais Ntxawm hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug txhaj sawbsim tau tuab pob nam nyaj
‘so Ntxawm and Yob the Orphan packed a bundle of silver’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **pob** ‘to crumble (e.g. the earth crumbling in an avalanche)’:

ib kaab tojpob ‘a landslide’ (Xiongs).

pob rhe (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [a landslide].

The Xiongs do not translate *pob rhe*. The translation ‘a landslide’ comes from Heimbach (p. 231 *pob rhe*)

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

The above examples of *pob* all appear to refer to the earth crumbling in a landslide or avalanche, but Lyman (p. 261) gives the example *muab pob taag* ‘to tear down (e.g. a building)’, Heimbach gives a White Hmong example in which *pob* refers to a pill of medicine crumbling, and Bertrais gives a White Hmong example in which *pob* refers to a bridge collapsing.

- **pob**: *txhoj pob heev* ‘very bothersome, mischievous’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes that *txhoj* is “probably a loan of 嘈 *cáo* ‘noisy’, but I am not sure. It is definitely Southwestern Mandarin. The *pob* is probably 包 *bāo* which forms a number of compounds describing people's character.”

- **pob cos** ‘knot’ (Xiongs).

- **pob chim** ‘what makes one angry’ (Xiongs).

- **pob kws** ‘ear of corn’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bāogú*:

moov pob kws ‘corn-flour’ (Xiongs).

tug neeg thauj pob kws ‘the horse transports corn’ (Xiongs).

tw yaaj pob kws ‘corn tassels’ (Xiongs).

txhaa pob kws ‘corncob’ (Xiongs).

yub pob kws ‘corn seedling’ (Xiongs).

- **pob luag** ‘(classifier *lub*) anthill’ (Xiongs).

- **pob na** ‘gum’ (Xiongs).

- **pob ntoos** ‘stump of a fallen tree’ (Xiongs).

- **pob ntseg** ‘ear’ (Xiongs).

- **pob nyuas** ‘to miscarry’ (Xiongs).

- **pob phij** ‘dowry, marriage portion, marriage gift’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *péi* as in *péijia* ‘dowry’:

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov nttxhuav cov nttxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their nttxhuav [animal similar to an elephant] and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **pob roob** ‘mountain, hill’ (Xiongs).

- **pob qej taw** ‘ankle’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **pob qej tsg** [typo for **teg**] ‘wrist’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **pob qej txhaa** ‘bone joint’ (Xiongs).

- **pob tais** ‘between the legs’ (Xiongs).

- **pob tw** ‘(classifier *lub*) buttocks’ (Xiongs).

- **pob tsaig** ‘inferior jaw, lower jaw’ (Xiongs).

- **pob tsaig nav** ‘denture’ (Xiongs).

- **pob tsua** ‘cliff, rocky mountain’ (Xiongs), also written *pobtsuas*:

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlob

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **pob txhaa** ‘(classifier *tug*) bone’ (Xiongs).

- **pob zeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) stone, rock’ (Xiongs):

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub*?] *zaig zig*
‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

tawv le pob zeb ‘hard like a stone, rock’ (Xiongs).

Cuav Tshoj Tim dlov pobzeb moog txhawg qhovntuj taag lawm

‘Cuav Tshoj Tim had rolled stones completely stuffing up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **pob zeb**: *kem pobzeb* ‘a crevice in the rock’:

nwg twb nteg tau Yawm Xub tub Ntxawg lug kaw tseg ca rua tom ib kem pobzeb lawm.
‘he had captured Grandfather Thunder’s youngest son and had imprisoned him in a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb txhaj nrhav moog txug kem pobzeb kws zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb kaw Yawm Xub tug tub ntxawg.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb then came upon the crevice in the rock in which the dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had imprisoned Grandfather Thunder’s youngest son’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

cais nwg txhaj muab taus tsoo kem nam pobzeb.

‘So then he took his axe and he struck the crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tsaav zog rua tom kem pobzeb lawm

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moved away into a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **pog** ‘not good looking shape as put on unfit clothes’ (Xiongs).

- **poj**: *quav poj* ‘burnt area’ (Xiongs).

- **pom** ‘(no classifier) the number of times being pregnant (used only for animals)’ (Xiongs):

peb pom nyuas ‘pregnant three times (used only for animals)’ (Xiongs).

- **pov** ‘to throw (Xiongs).

- **pov** ‘(no classifier) game of chance’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎo* ‘kind of gambling device’:

twv pov ‘to play a game of chance’ (Xiongs).

- **pov** ‘to protect, to guard against devils; (classifier *lub*) something believed to be sacred and can help solve problems or protect’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎo*:

Muaj ob namtxiv Suav muaj ib tug ntxhais lub npe hu ua Ceeb Pov nua

‘There was a Chinese couple who had a daughter named Ceeb Pov [Chinese for “Gold Amulet”]’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8)

hab wb muab lub nyuas ceebpov nua rua koj coj moog yaug ncauj yaug lug

‘and we will give you this gold amulet to take with you as your means of sustenance’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9; in giving Los Xaab the ceebpov (gold amulet), the Chinese couple are giving him their daughter Ceeb Pov, who, unbeknownst to Los Xaab, is inside the ceebpov).

Suavdlawg nkaag rua huv lub nyuas pov dlawb dlawb, ndlaug ndlaug hov.

‘Everyone had gone into the white, shining little amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Tes cov nyuj cov neeg dlha ndlaug quas nab lug rua huv lub nyuas ceebpov tes pluj taag

rua huv.

‘The vast herds of cattle and horses all disappeared into the little gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Cav Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug txawm muab lub nyuas ceebpov nyag tuag kab lawm lauj. Los Xaab pw pw Los Xaab tsim lug na cav nyuas ceebpov dlu dlav

‘At once, Los Tuam and Los Lwm stole the gold amulet. Los Xaab was sleeping, and when he awoke, there was no trace of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 25-26).

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam mlob npuav quas nreeg ceebpov

‘The cat took the gold amulet firmly in his mouth’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Rov lug txug tes Ceeb Pov tawm plawg huv lub nyuas ceebpov lug

‘They had brought her back and so now Ceeb Pov came right out of the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

- **Pov**, a man’s name:

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv

‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (*Xiongs*).

- **pov**: *muab pov tseg* ‘to throw away’ (*Xiongs*):

Koj yuav toum [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hwv

‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (*Xiongs*).

- **pov**: *xwv pov* ‘to save money’:

tuab neeg txawj xwv pov ‘people that know how to save money’ (*Xiongs*).

The second syllable, *pov*, is from Chinese 宝 *bǎo* ‘treasure’. This suggests that the first syllable, *xwv*, may also be a Chinese word, but what Chinese word it comes from has not been ascertained.

- **pov khawv**: *thaam povkhawv* ‘to talk to one’s heart’s content’, from Chinese 饱口 *bǎo kǒu* ‘to fill the mouth’:

Ob tug sis thaam sis thaam povkhawv

‘The two of them talked and talked to their hearts’ content’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **pov fwm pov yoom** ‘to protect against devils’ (*Xiongs*).

- **pov thawj** ‘(classifier *tug*) witness, guarantor’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎo* ‘to guarantee, ensure’:

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj moog hu kev txwj quas laug lug nrug ua povthawj zoo zoo tseg.

‘and so the Maiden Ntsum called upon the elders to be witnesses’ (*Kwmhuam* p. 19).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg.

‘the two sides wrote up a contract and had everyone witness it’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Coj txiv tuam mej koob moog ua hau has, hab ua povthawj.

‘He brought marriage negotiators to be the head speaker, and to be the guarantor’ (*Kwvhuam* pp. 31-32).

- **poo** ‘to get along with, to settle down with the group, to mix in the group, to be in a group’ (Xiongs).

- **poob** ‘to fall, to drop’ (Xiongs):

nim poob tej quas nam lub kuamuag hlaws quas hlo

‘big round tears kept falling from his eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

cais nam zaaj tuab ncus cev ua nwg Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm ib saab khau paaj poob tawv lug rua ntawm nwg.

‘Then the old dragon trembled, knocking off one of the embroidered shoes of Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter so that it fell off and landed near [Txheeb Tshoj Theeb]’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

Lub nam nub txawm poob nroog ib theem lug zab Yawm Nyooglaug lub tebchaws.

‘The sun came down one step and dried up Grandfather Nyooglaug’s country’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **poob** ‘to come to be in a particular place’:

Poob luas ntuj yoog luas txuj (Mong proverb)

‘Being among them, follow or accept what they have’ (Xiongs) [“Fall into their region / Follow their customs”].

Kuv coj ib tug nyuas tub es moog poob tau rua dlaabntxaug teb

‘I brought a boy and fell into the ntxaug spirits country’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **poob** ‘to fail, to miss’ (Xiongs).

- **poob**: *cejdlaab poob* (literally “the neck falls”) ‘one’s head is cut off’:

Siv Yig Muas tuab ntaag cejdlaab poob tawv.

‘Siv Yig Muas beheaded him with one blow of his sword’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

Siv Yig Muas tuab ntaag cejdlaab poob ntsoog

‘and Siv Yig Muas with one blow of his sword cut off his head’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **poob**: *nub poob* ‘west’:

phaab nub poob ‘west’ (Xiongs).

suam nub poob ‘west region’ (Xiongs).

raab xub taw phaab nub poob ‘the arrow points to the west’ (Xiongs).

- **poob**: *nub poob qho* ‘sunset’ (Xiongs).

- **poob dleg** ‘to drown’:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **poob luas teg** ‘to fall under their control, to be in their hands’ (Xiongs).

- **poob ntawv** ‘to fail in school’ (Xiongs).

- **poob rua huv peg teb** ‘to fall to the ground’ (Xiongs).

- **poob tawv** ‘to fall’:

cais nam zaaj tuab ncus cev ua nwg Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm ib saab khau paaj poob tawv lug rua ntawm nwg.

‘Then the old dragon trembled, knocking off one of the embroidered shoes of Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter so that it fell off and landed near Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

nwg rhu hlo ntaaj tuab ntaag ua nwg txuj hlua neeg poob tawv rua huv qhovntuj
‘he took out his sword and severed his horse-rope so that it fell into the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 21).

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

‘Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

- **poob sab** ‘to be worried that – ’ (Xiongs).

- **poob tsaag** ‘to fall off a cliff, to make an important mistake in life’ (Xiongs).

- **poob zoo** ‘(tone changed from zoov) to get lost in the woods, to get lost (in general)’ (Xiongs).

- **poog** ‘to like to live around, to get to know’ (Xiongs).

- **poog** ‘to make dirty; dusty, dirty’ (Xiongs).

- **poog ntwg** ‘sound of expansion’ (Xiongs p. 555).

- **pooj** ‘(classifier *lub*) natural pool or pond for wild animals to drink’ (Xiongs).

- **Pooj**: *Nyij Pooj* ‘Japanese’, from Lao *Nyīpūn*:

tug tuab neeg Nyij Pooj ‘a Japanese person’ (Xiongs, entry for *Japanese*).

ib lub teb chaws nyob Asia, lub tuam nroog yog Tokyo (teb chaws Nyij Pooj)
 ‘a country in Asia, the capital is Tokyo (the country of Japan)’ (Xiongs, entry for *Japan*).

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **pu**: *txhaa pu* ‘scapula, shoulder blade’ (Xiongs).

- **pu**, typo for *pw*: *pu ntxuv* [typo for *pw ntxuv*] ‘sleep early’ (Xiongs).

- **pub** ‘(classifier *lub*) a windbox used as a bellows to pump air for a blacksmith’s fire’ (Xiongs).

- **pub** ‘to give, to offer to donate’ (Xiongs):

Nyuas laublaig nis laublaig! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo nkauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little minivet oh minivet! You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear and and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nraug rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel oh little zebra squirrel! You had mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

- **pub** ‘to allow, to let’:

tsi pub xaiv ‘sorting is not allowed’ (Xiongs).

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam. Yog koj caam yeej, le pub koj coj moog. Huas yog koj caam tsi yeej, cais tsi pub hlo le!

‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you. If you win the argument, I will let you take him. If you do not win the argument, I will not let you’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

- **Pug Fuabtais** ‘the wife of a king’ (see also *puj* ‘Mrs.’):

Tabsis, Pug Fuabtais ca le tshev

‘But the Queen scolded him’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

Thaus kawg, Yawm Txivyaig ca le foom lawv le Pug Fuabtais xaav lawm.

‘Finally, Grandfather Txivyaig decreed as the Queen wished’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

pub rau Yawm Fuabtais, Pug Fuabtais Hlub, hab Pug Fuabtais Yau puab noog [typo for *moog*?] *taagnrho.*

‘they allowed the King, the Senior Queen [senior wife of the king], and the Junior Queen [junior wife of the king] all to go’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **pug ... yawg** ‘ancestors’ (also written *puj ... yawm*):

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your chicken crows and their chicken joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv maug hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the coffin.

Koj qab teb luas qab xaa txha yog koj pug koj yawg huav muag ntxaa.

But if your chicken replies and their chicken joins in, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb, txha le yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the coffin’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors’ garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors’ house.

Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev tshab.

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors’ new home.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors’ garden!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18.)

- **puj** ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) grandmother’ (Xiongs), ‘paternal grandmother’ (*Village* p. 174).

- **puj**, polite address to an older woman:

“Puj hab yawd, meb nyob nua ais,

“Grandmother and grandfather, the two of you are here,

meb puas pum kuv tug muam tuaj txug ntawm nuav?”

did the two of see my sister come here?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

In the above example, a young man is speaking politely to a couple who are strangers to him, but in the following example, I do not know whether the children are being polite or whether the spirit to whom they are talking is their actual paternal grandmother:

“Puj aw, peb moog ua zoj ua zig os puj?”

“Grandmother, shall we go and run round and round, grandmother?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

In the next two examples, a man is speaking to a female spirit, so *puj* merely conveys politeness; she is not related to him:

“*Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv*”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chick and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“*Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg*”.

“Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32.)

- **puj** ‘female bird’ (Xiongs):

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“*Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv*”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **puj** ‘Mrs.’ (Xiongs) (see also *Pug Fuabtais* ‘Queen’):

puj Swm Laaj ‘Mrs. Shew Lang’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug dlha dlha xauj na has, ub! puj Los Xaab mas cav yog tug nam kws naag ob tug pum quas tag.

‘The two of them ran to take a peek and, why, oh my!, Mrs. Los Xaab was indeed the one they had seen the previous day’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **puj**: *lau puj*, emphatic final particle (see also *los puj*):

“*Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?*” “*Awv, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov*”. *Nyob nyob ib ntsiv. “Tuaj peb sis ntaus lau puj lauj!”*

“Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, but I’m out a breath, let me rest a bit first.” They waited for a moment. “Now let’s fight!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21.)

- **puj**: *los puj?*, used at the end of sentence to form a yes-no question (see also *lau puj*):

“*Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?*” “*Awv, tuaj los tuaj lau!*”

“Shall we come and fight each other?” “Yes, come!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **puj**: *muaj quas puj* ‘married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs):

Literally “has a wife”, as opposed to

muaj txiv lawm ‘married (said of a lady)’ (Xiongs)

literally “has a husband *already*”.

- **puj**: *quas puj* ‘(classifier *tug*) woman, lady; wife’ (Xiongs), ‘wife (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 174):

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

Muaj ib zag, Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm, nwg tug quaspuj, ntim mov rua Nug Xyu, los Nug Xyu tsi yuav.

‘One time, Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm, his wife, dipped out rice for Nug Xyu, but he did not want it’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 5).

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuj ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!
‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **puj**: *quas puj tub se* ‘wife and children, the whole family’ (Xiongs).

- **puj**: *yuav quas puj* ‘to get married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs).

- **puj cuag** ‘mother-in-law of my daughter’ (*Village* p. 174):

Txawm yog yawm cuag hab puj cuag nrug meb tuaj los ca le coj nrug meb lug tsev.
‘If the parents of my daughter’s new husband accompanied the two of you, bring them with you to the house’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 121).

- **puj dlaab** ‘female spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 18-29):

Noob caaj thaus u av...muaj ib zog nam Moob nyob tau yuam kev kev rua dlaab chaw lawm tes muaj ib nam puj dlaab pheej tuaj muab cov tuabneeg tua tua noj taag tshuav ob nam hluas nkauj tseg ca ua npua rooj.

‘Long ago, there was a Mong village that went astray and came to live in the spirits’ country and so there was a female spirit who kept coming and killed and ate all the people leaving two young women to perform the door-pig ceremony [ceremony of offering a pig to the spirit of the door]’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **puj dlaab**: *nam ncej pujdlaab* ‘female-spirit post’:

The word *ncej* means ‘post, pillar, stake, support’. Often it refers to houseposts. Some

versions of the *Qhuab Ke* or Showing the Way funeral chant, when speaking of the spirits associated with different parts of the house, speak not of the spirit of the fireplace, the spirit of the main room, and so forth, but rather of the spirit of the *ncej* of the fireplace, and so on, i.e. of the housepost that is located in or near that part of the house.

In the story “Nam Ncej Pujdlaab” (The Female-Spirit Post) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 26-29), Yob the orphan (*Yob ntsuag ntsuag*) comes upon a *ncej* in which a female spirit (*pujdlaab*) lives.

Eb! nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog cuab cuab ntxab ib nub tsausntuj tes nam Yob ntsuag ntsuag lug txug ntawd nam ncej puj dlaab.

‘Well! Yob the orphan was setting traps all day until nightfall and so Yob the orphan arrived at the female-spirit post’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

He goes inside, sweeps it out nicely, and sleeps there.

The female spirit then asks to a group of spirit children (*cov mivnyuas dlaab*) to spit a glob of saliva (*ib phawb quavncaug*) on the road and put a fern leaf (*ib rev nplooj suab*) there. The next morning, when Yob the orphan comes to the road, he finds a pile of silver (*ib pawg nyaj*) and a rooster (*ib nam lauv qab*).

A second person comes and asks permission to sleep in the female-spirit post but this person pierces the post with arrows.

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

This time, the female spirit instructs the spirit children to tie up a red-eyed dog (*dlev lab muag*) in the road and to place a stick (*ib tug paas*) there. When the person who pierced the post with arrows comes to the road, he finds a tiger and a snake. The tiger kills him at once and the snake and the tiger eat him.

- **puj dlaab paug** ‘female paug spirit’:

In the story “Yob hab Pujdlaab Paug” (Yob and the Female Paug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 30-33), Yob follows a dove that is stealing millet from his field and comes to the home of the female paug spirit.

The female paug spirit promises to lock up her birds so that they will not steal Yob’s crops. Then the female paug spirit invites Yob to lunch. She knocks on a steamer and it fills with rice. She knocks on a bottle and it fills with liquor. She knocks on a wok and it fills with meat.

After lunch, Yob says that he is drunk and asks the female paug spirit to go cut him a cane to walk with. While she is gone, Yob steals the steamer, the bottle, and the wok and runs home.

One of Yob’s friends comes by and Yob invites him to lunch. Yob knocks on the steamer and it fills with rice, he knocks on the bottle and it fills with liquor, he knocks on the wok and it fills with meat.

Yob's friend asks Yob how he got these things, and Yob says that he got them from the female paug spirit. Yob's friend then says that he will visit the female paug spirit and get such things. This time, however, the female paug spirit knows that Yob's friend is going to steal from her, so she leaves a steamer and a wok that fill, not with rice and meat, but with feces and she leaves a bottle that fills, not with liquor, but with urine.

One possible translation of *puj dlaab paug* is 'avenging female spirit' (from *pauj* 'to fight back, to revenge, to pay back'), which would make sense insofar as the spirit in the story gets back at the young man who was going to steal from her by leaving him a steamer, wok, and bottle that fill with feces and urine.

- **puj koob** 'great grandmother' (Xiongs), 'paternal great grandmother' (*Village* p. 174).

- **puj laug** 'father's older brother's wife' (*Village* p. 174).

- **puj ntxoog** 'ghost' (Xiongs), 'a kind of female spirit related to tiger spirits' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 5-45, 73-97):

In "Nug Xyu and Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 5-45), Nug Xyu is on his way to play the qeej at a funeral. His wife Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm offers him food and water to take with him but he refuses them. On the way, he becomes terribly hungry and thirsty. Hearing the sound of running water, he goes to drink from a stream and suddenly notices that, upstream, a Pujntxoog is allowing her snot and saliva to drip into the water. He drinks from the stream anyway. Shortly thereafter, he comes upon the Pujntxoog lying across the path blocking his way. When he tries to walk over her, she hooks him with her claw and sends him crashing to the ground, unable to get up. She will not help him up until he agrees to marry her. He runs home but the moment he reaches home, he falls ill and dies. The Pujntxoog calls him forth from the grave and leads him away to be transformed into a tiger spirit. His wife goes with them (pretending to be his sister so that the Pujntxoog will not kill her) and after various adventures is able to bring him back home and transform him back into a human being but the transformation back to human is not complete. Ultimately, his wife loses him to the Pujntxoog again.

In "Nuj Yob and the Ruler" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 73-97), the Ruler murders Nuj Yob's parents, leaving Nuj Yob and his sister as orphans. Nuj Yob's dead father, in the spirit world, arranges for a Pujntxoog to come and marry Nuj Yob and take care of him. When the Ruler plots to murder Nuj Yob as he murdered Nuj Yob's father, the Pujntxoog calls upon her own father, who is a tiger spirit. The tiger bursts forth from the ground, tears the Ruler limb from limb, and devours him.

- **puj nyaaj** or **nyaaj** 'aunt' (Xiongs), **puj nyaaj** 'father's sister' (*Village* p. 174).

- **puj qab** 'chicken, hen' (Xiongs).

- **puj suab** 'great great grandmother' (Xiongs), 'paternal great great grandmother' (*Village* p. 174).

- **puj tsag** 'mother' (used only in the Mong marriage custom word)' (Xiongs).

- **puj ... yawm** 'ancestors' (also written *pug ... yawm*):

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **pum** ‘to see’ (Xiongs):

qhov muag xauj tsi pum ‘cannot see with the eyes’ (Xiongs).

pum ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to see].

- **pum**: *tsam pum* ‘there is no trace of’:

Txiv aw, wb tub nrhav nrhav txhua tog vaaj tog tsev tsam pum Los Xaab sas.

‘Father, we have searched throughout the house and garden, but there is no trace of Los Xaab’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

wb moog saib nraag tsam pum le.

‘We looked down there but there was no trace of him’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you

come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **pum**: *xaam pum* ‘to observe’:

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hlub

‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

- **pum ke** ‘to have enough light to see’:

ua tau suavtawg rovqaab cig pum ke tuaj.

‘to make a fire so that there was once again enough light to see’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

The spelling *pum ke* is unusual. On the basis of other Hmong dialects one would expect *pum kev*.

- **pum ntsoov** or **pum quas ntsoov** (Xiongs p. 555; *pum* ‘to see’ + *ntsoov*, intensifier).

- **pum sab** ‘to be able to read what others’ attitude is’ (Xiongs).

- **pum zem zuag** ‘dim, dimly’ (Xiongs).

- **pum zoo** ‘to agree, to accept’ (Xiongs):

koj yuav tsum taij saib puab puas pum zoo ‘you must ask to see if they agree’ (Xiongs).

- **pus** ‘to cover with hands’ (Xiongs):

nwg nim chim chim nwg quaj quaj pus muag nti nraag qaab cub

‘he was very angry and was crying and sitting down by the fireplace covering his face with his hands’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14).

Dlaab Ntxawg nis dlaab Ntxawg, caag txhua nub koj yuav luag ntshuj quas ntshi huas, nub nua koj yuav quaj quaj pus muag ntuj quas nti nis dlaab Ntxawg.

‘Uncle Ntxawg, oh Uncle Ntxawg, why is it that each day you’ve been smiling, but today you are crying and covering your face with your hands, oh Uncle Ntxawg?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14).

- **pus** ‘to go together, to lead’ (Xiongs):

sib pus tsiv ‘to escape together’ (Xiongs).

- **puv** ‘full, complete’ (Xiongs):

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev ‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

puv nkaus ‘completely full’ (Xiongs p. 554).

puv npo (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [completely full].

luas tub muab paab nam hluasnkauj kws lug has nwg ntawd khi taag, hab kaw ua tuab khuaj puv nkaus.

‘the young women who had spoken to him had been tied up, and imprisoned, completely filling the pillory’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 15).

- **puv ib tsug kaum peb nub** ‘for a complete period of thirteen days’ (Xiongs). The cycle comprises twelve days named for the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) – Day of the Rabbit, Day of the Dragon, and so forth – but the Mong reckon it as thirteen days because they count the day on which one returns to the animal with which one started.

- **pua** ‘to put a mat on the floor, to put something to cover the bottom before putting something else on’ (Xiongs):

muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw

‘we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **pua** ‘hundred’ (Xiongs) (see also *puas*):

xyaa pua ‘seven hundred’ (Xiongs).

yim pua ‘eight hundred’ (Xiongs).

cuaj pua ‘nine hundred’ (Xiongs)

muaj pua npaug ‘hundredfold’ (Xiongs).

- **puab** ‘they, them’ (Xiongs):

Cov tub saab qhwv tau puab lawm. ‘The thieves encircled them already’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*

‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

puab khawb tshaab, saab tod laum [typo for *lawm*?]

‘they dig through the other side already’ (Xiongs).

puab moog kawm ntawv ‘they go to school’ (Xiongs).

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? ‘Do they speak English?’ (Xiongs.)

puab pheej ua le ‘they are still doing’ (Xiongs).

puab sib tshe ‘they are fighting each other verbally’ (Xiongs).

puab thaam txug dlej nyaab ‘They talk about the flood’ (Xiongs).

puab tseem nyob ‘they still stay’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau txais dlaim ntawv le ‘They did not receive the letter yet’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tseev le ‘They don’t accept or agree at all’ (Xiongs).

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm ‘they already sorted out the quality meat’ (Xiongs).

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

Puab txaav chaw lawm ‘They already changed place’ (Xiongs).

tom puab tsev ‘at their houses’ (Xiongs).

Puab ua cov tshawv kev ‘They are the ones who create the way’ (Xiongs).

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlob

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **puab** ‘(no classifier) group, unit (people)’ (Xiongs).

- **puab** ‘to build up, to glue one to the other to make something up’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bā*:

yog koj yuav tua kuas tuag nua cais koj muab tshauv lug leem hab puab koj raab taus
‘If you want to kill him, you must mold a coating of ashes on your axe’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18).

- **puab**: *ncej puab* ‘thigh’ (Xiongs).

- **puab**: *thoobpuab* ‘shoulder-bag’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

In *Ceebpov*, the title character, Ceeb Pov ‘Gold Amulet’, who is the daughter of a Chinese couple, has the power to make herself small so that she can fit into a gold amulet (whence her name) and also to make other things small so that they can fit into the amulet or into a shoulder bag. When she marries Los Xaab and brings him prosperity, she knows that Los Xaab’s brothers will try to take her from him, so she uses her power to hide herself and to hide her and Los Xaab’s horses and cattle from Los Xaab’s brothers.

Ib ntsiv quav tes Los Xaab dlhau plhawv tes nwg txa ntshis ua ib tug yoov yaa ceev ceev moog tsaws nkaus rua ntawm Los Xaab lub naab thoobpuab.

‘The instant that Los Xaab was gone, the old Chinese man’s daughter transformed herself into a fly and flew at top speed and landed on Los Xaab’s shoulder-bag’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

Hu quas lawg tes cov qhev lawv kag cov nyuj cov neeg lug txug. Tug dlha quas loo lug txug ncuu thoobpuab, quas plhaw pluj plag rua huv lawm

‘She called loud and long and the servants quickly herded the cattle and horses. Each ran right to the shoulder-bag and disappeared inside’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

ob tug muab lawv kag rua naab thoobpuab

‘the two of them quickly put their [horses] in the shoulder-bag’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 14).

Kuv yuav moog nyob huv hab es, koj khuam lub naab thoobpuab xwb.

‘I am going to go inside as well, and you will just hang the shoulder-bag on your shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Tes Ceeb Pov txawm nkaag kag rua huv naab thoobpuab lawm hab lauj.

‘So Ceeb Pov went inside the shoulder-bag as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

Nwg lug txug hov nwg khuam quas nyo nam naab thoobpuab txug hov. ‘Then Los Xaab hung the shoulder-bag on his shoulder’ (Ceebpov p. 14).

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!

‘Los Xaab, all you’ve got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?’ (Ceebpov p. 16.)

Los Xaab ngeg hab Ceeb Pov ngeg tes ob tug lujtxwv dlha quas loo rua thoobpuab nkaag plawg rua huv pluj plag lawm hab.

‘Los Xaab dismounted and Ceeb Pov dismounted and their mules ran into the shoulder-bag and disappeared as well’ (Ceebpov p. 17).

Nwg khuam lub naab thoobpuab lug txug ntawm qaab-tsi-taug

‘Los Xaab slung the shoulder-bag over his shoulders and reached the area just below the house on the downhill side’ (Ceebpov p. 17).

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (Ceebpov p. 19).

Ceeb Pov txawm has huv lub nam thoobpuab tuaj tas

‘Then Ceeb Pov spoke from inside the shoulder-bag’ (Ceebpov p. 20).

- **puab le** ‘their, theirs’ (Xiongs).

- **puab nyuas** ‘little ones’:

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj has rua nwg paab tub, hab Yob Nruag Ntsuag puab tas:

“Puab nyuas! Mej nyob ntawm nuav tog”

‘the Ruler then said to his group of sons and to Yob the Orphan, “Little ones! You all wait here” ’ (Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg p. 20).

- **puab tib mej ua tau** ‘It is good that you can do it’ (Xiongs).

- **puag** ‘to embrace, to hold in one’s arms’ (Xiongs):

“Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhib ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?” (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 44.)

Nwg txhaj moog qawm hab puag hlo.

‘She then put her arms around him and hugged him tight’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 8).

Puag tuab tsuag nam nyuv tsiv tsiv rov qaab lawm

‘Clutching her intestines in her arms she fled back’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 21).

muab tau lauv qab tes puag lug tsev.

‘he took the rooster and carried it home in his arms’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **puag** ‘to encircle to complete a circular path’ (Xiongs).

- **puag** ‘adopted’ (Xiongs):

ntxhais puag ‘adopted girl or daughter’ (Xiongs).

tub puag ‘adopted son or boy; adopted child, adopted son’ (Xiongs).

- **puag** ‘destroyed, broken, not working, damaged, spoiled’ (Xiongs).

- **puag sab** ‘deceived’ (Xiongs).

- **puag taab** ‘a moment or a while ago’ (Xiongs).

- **puaj?** ‘is it not so that?’:

koj ntshai dlaab Ntxawg tau zoo neej ua lawm luas puaj? ‘Is it not so that you sense that Uncle Ntxawg has become prosperous?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **puam** ‘(classifier *tug*) support, as a piece of wood’ (Xiongs).

- **puam**: *chiv chawj puam lam* ‘all in disorder’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qī qiú bā lài* ‘seven strivings and eight accusations’.

- **puam**: *taj suab puam* ‘dry land’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shābà*.

- **puam chawj** ‘let it go, it doesn’t matter, no great importance’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bà qiú* ‘stop striving’.

- **puas** ‘word used before a verb to make a question’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas coj zuag nrug kojle? ‘Do you bring a comb with you at all?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj puas muaj – ? ‘Do you have – ?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj puas nyam lub tsho lab? ‘Do you like the red shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj tug hluas nkauj puas txij koj? ‘Is your girlfriend as tall as you?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? ‘Can you find my new shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj yos puas tau koj lub tsho dhub? ‘Do you find your black shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Puab puas moog – ? ‘Do they go – ?’ (Xiongs.)

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? ‘Do they speak English?’ (Xiongs.)

Puas muaj zaub mov seem le? ‘Is there any food left at all?’ (Xiongs.)

puas muaj xwm dlaab tsi? ‘Is there something happening? Is there any news?’ (Xiongs.)

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?

‘Son-in-law Yob came to try the medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **puas** ‘if, whether’:

koj yuav tsum taij saib puab puas pum zoo ‘you must ask to see if they agree’ (Xiongs).

Mej yaum saib puas tau luag

‘You try to get others to join’ (Xiongs) [“You-plural persuade to see whether get companions”].

- **puas** ‘hundred’ (see also *pua*):

ib puas ‘one hundred’ (Xiongs).

ob puas ‘two hundreds, etc.’ (Xiongs).

puas zag ‘hundredfold’ (Xiongs).

qaib ib puas ‘hundredth’ (Xiongs).

thib ib puas ‘hundredth’ (Xiongs).

Peb muaj ib puas tug yaaj ‘We have a hundred sheep’ (Xiongs).

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav

‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas theem rua huv Plawv nroog. ‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs).

- **puas**: *luas puas* ‘will you?’:

In the first story in *Kwvhuam*, a young woman has been instructed by her parents to find a husband and the first creature she meets is a cloud:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

- **puas**: *paaj ntaub puas yaam tsaav* ‘embroidery’ (Xiongs).

- **puas yog**, at the end of a yes-no question: ‘isn’t it so?’:

Koj muab kuv lub nplhaib zais lawm puas yog? ‘You hide my ring, isn’t it?’ (Xiongs.)

- **puav** ‘(classifier *tug*) bat’ [animal] (Xiongs):

*Nwg twb cov [typo for *coj*?] tau ib nkawm tshws hab ib nkawm puav kws nwg muab zais zoo zoo lug lawm.*

‘So she had brought with her a pair of cats and a pair of bats, which she hid carefully’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm puav yaa moog txais tum cov nkawj hab muv ntawd ua nwg tuag taagnrho lawm ib yaam nkaus.

‘and she released her pair of bats, who flew about catching and biting the wasps and bees until they too were dead’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum kuj muab nwg nkawm puav zais nkaus lawm hab.
 ‘Then the Maiden Ntsum quickly hid her pair of bats as well’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **puav** ‘to seize, to encircle for taking over’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎ*:

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,

‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,

Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.

Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* pp. 129).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

- **puav** (from Southwestern Mandarin *bǎ* ‘several’):

tug puav ‘some people, some’ (Xiongs).

paab puav ‘some group’ (Xiongs).

- **puav leej** ‘everyone, all’ (Xiongs).

- **puavpheej** ‘article of evidence, proof, token’, from Chinese *bǎ* ‘to hold’ + *píng* ‘evidence, proof’:

Knowing that she is about to be stolen from her husband, Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter breaks a coin in half, and gives half to her husband to use as proof that she is his when he goes to get her back:

wb koj ib leeg ib saab nyaj nuav tseg ca ua puavpheej rua yaav tomqaab.

‘each of us will keep half of the coin as proof for the future’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **pw** ‘to sleep, to go to bed’ (Xiongs):

caij pw ‘bedtime, sleeping time’ (Xiongs).

chaav chaw pw ‘bedroom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

chaav pw ‘bedroom’ (Xiongs).

chaw pw ‘bed’ (Xiongs), ‘bedroom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

koj pw sau txaaj ‘you sleep on the bed’ (Xiongs).

pw ndlo (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to sleep].

pw zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to lie down for a short instant].

Txig tub nyaab hluab pw chaav nuav

‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Luas tej tuabneeg zejzog ntsuabze tub lug txug huv tsev taag. Luas tub nqaa nqaj nqaa no lug ua noj ua haus, hab luas tub moog pw ntsag zog lawm.

‘Their neighbors from all over the village came to the house. They brought meat and rice for a meal and then they went to lie down quietly’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 31),

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej cais nwg ca le lug mob pw ntsum quas laam lawm.

‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear, so he was in pain, and was lying sprawled out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

- **pw ib txaag** ‘to sleep in the same bed’ (Xiongs).

- **pw ntxuv**: *pu ntxuv* [typo for *pw ntxuv*] ‘sleep early’ (Xiongs).

- **pwg** ‘(classifier *lub*) ‘shoulder’ (Xiongs):

xub pwg ‘shoulder’ (Xiongs).

Mo hov tes Los Xaab, luas neej luas tsaav, luas nam luas txiv nim tuaj cuaj pwg neeg yim pwg nraa tuaj ua vaaj ua tsev rau Los Xaab hab Ceeb Pov ob tug nyob.

‘That night, Los Xaab’s wife’s family, her mother and her father, came with nine shoulder-loads on horses and eight shoulder-loads of bundles to make a house and garden for Los Xaab and Ceeb Pov to live in’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **pwm** ‘(no classifier) moldiness, mustiness’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bú*.

- **pwm** ‘(no classifier) speed, way, position, behavioral condition’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *bù* ‘stride’.

- **pwm**: *zaub looj pwm* ‘radish’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *luóbo*. I do not know why the first syllable of *looj pwm* has a nasal vowel in Mong. Michael Johnson points out that there is the same random rime variation in the first syllable of ‘elbow’: *luj tshib* ~ *lauj tshib* ~ *looj tshib*.

- **pwv** ‘to train’ (Xiongs):

kev pwv ‘training’ (Xiongs).

PH

- **phab** ‘(classifier *lub*) plate’ (Xiongs).

- **Phab Mab** ‘Burmese’, from Lao *Phā Maa*:

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **phaj** ‘(no classifier) line, group (people)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pái*.
- **phaj** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) target (of an arrow)’, perhaps from Chinese *pái* ‘plate, tablet’:

raab xub moog xu dlaim phaj ‘the arrow misses the target’ (Xiongs).

- **phaj zeb** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) a slate, sheet of stone, a slab of rock’ (Xiongs).

- **phav** ‘flat’ (Xiongs).

- **phaa** ‘(no classifier) hunter, lucky hunter’ (Xiongs).

- **phaab** ‘(no classifier) section, page’ (Xiongs):

ntsaa ‘(classifier *phaab*) wall’ (Xiongs).

qwb ‘(classifier *lub* or *phaab*) the uncutting side of a tool’ (Xiongs).

- **Phaab**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) for which there is no corresponding *qhua* (Mong clan name) (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Pān*.

- **phaab nub poob** ‘west’ (Xiongs):

raab xub taw phaab nub poob ‘the arrow points to the west’ (Xiongs).

- **phaab nub tuaj** ‘east’ (Xiongs).

- **phaab taav** ‘the side’ (Xiongs):

A man throws a pestle at a rat and misses, whereupon the pestle says:

Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le.

‘Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **phaab toj** ‘hill, incline’ (Xiongs).

- **phaaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) bowl’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *pán* ‘tray, plate, dish’:

cuaj dlav yim phaaj zaub ‘nine spoons and eight platters of vegetables’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

- **phaam** ‘big (children)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pàng*.

- **phaav** ‘to touch’ (Xiongs).

- **phaav** ‘thousand’ (Xiongs), from Lao *phéen*:

ib phaav ‘one thousand’ (Xiongs).

peb phaav ‘three thousand’ (Xiongs).

yim phaav ‘eight thousand’ (Xiongs).

- **phaib** ‘(classifier *dlaim* or *pob*) card (game cards)’ (Xiongs). From Lao *phày*.

- **phaig** ‘to cut up’ (also written *phais*):

*Cais Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug, hab nwg paab nam tub txhaj muab cov tsaj nuav phaig.
Yawm Xeev moog phaig yuav tuab cov tsib nkaus xwb.*

‘Then the Ruler and his group of sons cut up these animals. The Ruler cut them up and wanted only the gall bladders’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **phais** ‘to cut, to operate, to open, to draw (poultry), to gut (fish)’ (Xiongs) (also written *phaig*):

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for lub?] zaig zig
‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

- **phau ntawv** ‘book’ (Xiongs) (also written *phoo ntawv*):

phau ntawv lab ‘red book’ (Xiongs).

- **phau ntawv ceev nyaj** ‘accounting book’ (Xiongs).

- **phau ntawv nyeem** ‘text book, reading book’ (Xiongs).

- **phau ntawv sau** ‘writing book’ (Xiongs).

- **phau ntawv txhais lug** ‘dictionary’ (Xiongs).

- **phaum** ‘(no classifier) generation, occurrence, happening’ (Xiongs), from Chinese dialectal use of *pō* ‘sprinkle, splash, spill’ as in *yī pō rén* ‘a person’, *yī pō yǔ* ‘a rainfall’:

ib phaum ‘same generation, same happening’ (Xiongs).

- **phawb** ‘a glob’ (?):

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then you all spit a glob (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a glob (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

I can not find the word *phawb* in any dictionary and am therefore uncertain how much saliva *ib phawb quavncaug* refers to. Dictionaries give *ib tawb quavncaug* for a glob of saliva. Possibly *phawb* signifies a bigger glob than *tawb*. Sound symbolism may play a role too. Michael Johnson has heard Hmong utter a syllable *phij* when spitting something out. In the story, the *phawb* of saliva is transformed into a pile (*pawg*) of silver and the fern leaf is transformed into a rooster.

- **phaws** ‘male (buffalo)’ (Xiongs):

ib tug phaws twm luj ‘a big male buffalo’ (Xiongs).

- **pheb** ‘worn out, not cutting’ (Xiongs). Possibly, with shift in meaning, from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *piē* ‘to twist one’s ankle’.

- **phem** ‘bad, awful, ugly, evil, wicked’ (Xiongs), from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *piè*:

suab phem ‘rough voice’ (Xiongs).

tsu phem ‘stink, smell bad’ (Xiongs).

phem ntsuav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [bad].

- **phem**: *saab xuam phem* ‘left side’ (Xiongs).

- **phev** ‘(no classifier) sperm’ (Xiongs):

cov phev ‘sperm’ (Xiongs).

- **pheeb** ‘to lean against, to lean over’ (Xiongs), from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *pēn*:

Nwg muaj tuab pawg nam ntaaj pheeb ua lu ntshaav dhub quas ncab nyob nraag qaabcub
‘There was a pile of swords leaning, caked with pitch-black blood, down by the fireplace’
(*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 36).

- **pheej** ‘full, complete. Pre verbal intensifier signifying again, repeatedly, regularly, continually, still’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *pín*:

puab pheej ua le ‘they are still doing’ (Xiongs).

- **pheej**: *puavpheej* ‘article of evidence, proof, token’, from Chinese *bǎ* ‘to hold’ + *píng* ‘evidence, proof’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **pheej**: *xij pheej* ‘to insist’:

Koj xij pheej yuav moog yuav Yob Nraug Ntsuag xwb le kuas!
‘You insist on marrying Yob the Orphan!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 12.)

From Chinese 随 *suí* ‘to follow’ + 频 *pín* ‘frequently, repeatedly’. There is no expression 随频 *suípín* in current Chinese usage, but presumably it was once used in Southwestern Mandarin.

- **pheej yig** ‘cheap, inexpensive’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *piányi*.

- **pheev** ‘to hit hard, to beat forcibly’ (Xiongs). Possibly, with shift in meaning, from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *piǎn* ‘to whittle with a knife or ax’.

- **phij** ‘slow’ (Xiongs). From dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *pí*.

- **phij**: *pob phij* ‘dowry, marriage portion, marriage gift’ (Xiongs, *Nuj Sib Loob* p. 48). From Chinese *péi* as in *péijià* ‘dowry’:

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntshuav cov ntshw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntshuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the

lower part of the village' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **phij xaab** '(classifier *lub*) luggage, large box; luggage, bag, box' (Xiongs). From Chinese *píxiāng* 'leather case (especially one used to store clothing)'.

- **phim** 'to be proper to, to match, to be worth; fitting, suitable, matching' (Xiongs). From Chinese *pèi*.

- **phim fwj** 'honor, to do deference, to respect' (Xiongs). From Chinese *pèifú*.

- **phiv phoov**, sound of gunfire:

puab txawm tua phom phiv phoov moog rua Faabkis.

'they fired their guns phiv phoov at the French' (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **phob** 'to spend, to waste, to use up' (Xiongs). From Chinese *pāo*.

- **phoj** 'to search for, to look for' (Xiongs). "Presumably from a Southwestern Mandarin *páo*. I have looked for it and can't see anything with very close senses. There are 'shovel food into mouth with chopsticks' and 'use a stick to drag a pen out e.g. from the back of the wardrobe'." (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **phom** '(classifier *raab*) gun' (Xiongs), from Chinese *pào*:

tua phom 'to fire a gun' (Xiongs).

tuam phom 'cannon, huge gun' (Xiongs, *Rog Vwm* p. 2). From Chinese *dàpào*.

tshoob phom 'fire in the air' (Xiongs).

txhaab khum phom '(classifier *lub*) gunstock' (Xiongs). From Chinese *qiāngké*, a wooden holster or case for a revolver or pistol used during the Qing dynasty, shaped like a gunstock. The revolver could be attached to the end of it.

xuas phom tua 'to kill with a gun' (Xiongs).

yaaj phom 'handgun' (Xiongs). From Chinese *yáng* 'from overseas'.

yauj qeb phom 'trigger' (Xiongs).

zuaj phom rua 'to fire at, to shoot, to pull the trigger at' (Xiongs).

Nqai raug phom hab ntoo ntaus tes tug tuag cuab teb le kws has sau nuav. Kuas xaus ib yam le nqai 4 ntaag.

'In the cantos about being shot and struck by a tree, the dead person begins his or her reply as written here, and ends as in canto 4' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

'They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons' (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

Cov tuabneeg kws muaj phom lawd txha moog zuv kev tua Faabkis

'The people who had guns already went to lie in ambush to shoot the French' (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb, puab txawm tua phom phiv phoov moog

rua Faabkis.

‘The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market, and they [the Mong partisans] fired their guns *phiv phoov* at the French’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”

‘When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!”’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

- **phom** ‘soft, pliable, flexible, tractable, adaptable’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pào*.

- **phom lug thoob** ‘rifle’ (Xiongs).

- **phom ntxaib** ‘double barreled gun’ (Xiongs).

- **phoo** ‘(no classifier) the containing of two open hands together, a handful’ (Xiongs) (see also *phoov*), from Southwestern Mandarin *pǒng*:

ob phoo teg ‘two times the containing of two open hands joined; two handfuls’ (Xiongs).

- **phoo** ‘book’:

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **phoo ntawv** ‘book’ (Xiongs) (also written *phau ntawv*):

sau ib phoo ntawv ‘write a book’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug tswv phoo ntawv nuav ‘I am the owner of this book’ (Xiongs).

- **phoo txhais lug** ‘dictionary’:

Phoo Txhais Lug Aakiv – Moob – Aakiv

‘English – Mong – English Dictionary’ (Xiongs, title).

- **phooj ywg** ‘(classifier *tug*) friend’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *péngyou*:

tsoom phooj ywg ‘all friends, friends’ (Xiongs).

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo ‘to be among good friends’ (Xiongs).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv

kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **phooj ywg kwv luag** ‘friend, accompanying friend’ (Xiongs).

- **phoom** ‘to bump against’ (Xiongs), from Southwestern Mandarin *pòng*:

Lug muab Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug cov nam nyuj nam neeg phoom phoom phoom quas neeg nraa poob taag.

‘They bumped into all of Los Tuam and Los Lwm’s cattle and horses one after the other so that all the horse-packs fell’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

- **phoov** ‘(no classifier) handful’ (Xiongs) (see also *phoo*). From Southwestern Mandarin *pǒng*.

- **phoov**, sound of gunfire:

puab txawm tua phom phiv phoov moog rua Faabkis.

‘they fired their guns phiv phoov at the French’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **phubthawj** ‘Kammu’, from Lao *Phûu Tháang* ‘Hillside People’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm muab tug nam puj phubthawj hov tua lug ua nqaj rua nteeg qhua ntawd noj.

‘So the Spirit then killed the Kammu woman and prepared meat for the funeral guests to eat’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 12).

- **phua** ‘to cut, to judge, to divide, to branch out, to open’ (Xiongs):

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits.

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,

Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.

‘Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,
To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path’ (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **phua** ‘(classifier *tug*) sign or mark of ownership’ (Xiongs).

- **phuaj** ‘raft’ (Xiongs). A loan, ultimately from Chinese *fǎ*.

dluav phuaj ‘(classifier *tug*) oar’ (Xiongs).

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab

‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **Phuaj Hoos** ‘Phou Hong’, a mountain in Sayaboury Province in Laos, near the village where Jacques Lemoine did his fieldwork (*Village* p. 31) (Lao *phûu* ‘mountain’):

Neej Tsu as koj nyob Phuaj Hoos nua teb le chaw, sov koj haus luas pes tsawg dlej, tsauv luas pes tsawg le tawg, muab ib com nyaj nuav rua koj koj moog them luas nqe dlej

nqe tawg koj le tau kev moog tov Neej Tsu!

‘O Neej Tsu ... when you lived here in the area of Phou Hong, you drank I don’t know how much of someone else’s water, burned I don’t know how much of someone else’s firewood. Take this bundle of money with you to pay for the cost of the water and the firewood and you will be able to go on your way, Neej Tsu!’ (*Initiation* p. 131.)

- **phuam** ‘(classifier *txuj* or *dlaim*) towel, napkin, cloth’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pà*.
- **phuam dlaa dlej** ‘(classifier *txuj*) bath towel’ (Xiongs).
- **phuam so teg** ‘(classifier *txuj*) hand towel’ (Xiongs).
- **phuam tshuab ntswg** ‘(classifier *txuj*) handkerchief’ (Xiongs).
- **phuas** ‘(no classifier or classifier *cov*) the remaining pieces after taking out the juice; curds’ (Xiongs).
- **phwj** ‘to overflow, to flow over the brim’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *pú*.

PL

- **plab** ‘to hide, to bend oneself down’ (Xiongs).
- **plab** ‘flat, shallow’ (Xiongs).
- **plag** ‘(no classifier) instant, short period of time, while’ (Xiongs):

ib plag ntshis ‘only a short while’ (Xiongs).

tog ib plag ‘wait for a while, a moment’ (Xiongs).

yuav tau pw ib plag tsaiv ‘to have to sleep for a short while before all’ (Xiongs).

mej yuav tau moog theem tom puab tsev ib plag

‘you will have to stop at their house for a while’ (Xiongs, entry for theem).

thov koj paab kuv tuav ib plag

‘help me hold it for a while please’ (Xiongs, entry for tuav).

Tuab plag ntsig xwb, nwg ca le tsaug zug hla lawm.

‘In only a moment, he was fast asleep’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

- **plag**, intensifier:

Tes Los Xaab tsua nqeg tes ob tug muab lawv kag rua naab thoobpuab tes pluj plag hab Los Xaab khuam lauj.

‘So Los Xaab dismounted, and the two of them quickly put [their horses] in the shoulder-bag so that they vanished from sight and then Los Xaab hung it on his shoulder’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 13-14).

Los Xaab nqeg hab Ceeb Pov nqeg tes ob tug lujtxwv dlha quas loo rua thoobpuab nkaag plawg rua huv pluj plag lawm hab.

‘Los Xaab dismounted and Ceeb Pov dismounted and their mules ran into the shoulder-bag and disappeared as well’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog

‘You say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Nim sau ntawv quas plag, sau ntawv nrawm caj nrawm tuag.

‘She was writing assiduously, writing as fast as life and death’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

Tug nyaab los sau ntawv quas plag, huas tug tub los sau ntawv quas plag.

‘Her daughter-in-law was writing assiduously and her son was writing assiduously’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **plaj**: *hauv plaj* ‘forehead’ (Xiongs).

- **plav**, intensifier:

In a folktale, a dragon has the characteristic (involving the kind of reversal that is common in Mong folktales) that when his eyes are closed, he is awake, and when his eyes are open, he is asleep:

Thaus nwg pw qe muag nti, cais yog tsi tau tsaug zug. Huas yog ob lub qhovmuag qheb quas plav txhaj yog tsaug zug tag!

‘When he lies with his eyes shut, then he has not fallen asleep. But if his two eyes are open, then it is that he is really asleep!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18.)

Tsi ntev, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Ntxawm ob tug txawm ua ke nyaag nyaag moog saib na tug nam zaaj pw tsaug zug ua qhovmuag qheb quas plav tag lauj!

‘Not long afterward, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Ntxawm crept over together to look and, why, the dragon really was sleeping with his eyes open!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19.)

- **plav**: *cos plav* ‘scar’ (Xiongs).

- **plaab** ‘(classifier *lub*) stomach, abdomen’ (Xiongs):

kem plaab ‘indigestion’ (Xiongs).

mob plaab ‘stomach ache, stomach pain’ (Xiongs).

thoj plaab ‘diarrhea; to have diarrhea, loose stool’ (Xiongs). The word *thoj* is probably from Chinese *táo* ‘to rinse’, but the expression *thoj plaab* is probably modeled on the Chinese expression *xiè dùzi* ‘to have diarrhea’, literally “pour-down/drain-off belly”.

tshaib plaab ‘hungry’ (Xiongs).

zaig plaab ‘fat or big stomach, distended abdomen’ (Xiongs).

zawv plaab ‘diarrhea, loose stool’ (Xiongs).

zuaj plaab ‘to massage the stomach’ (Xiongs).

- **plaab**: *xevthim plaab* ‘to give up one’s old body and be reincarnated’:

saib quas ntsoov tug kwv moog thawj hlo nam xevthim plaab.

‘watched carefully as his younger brother was reborn, abandoning his old body’ (*Yob*

Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 16).

The expression *xevthim plaab* may mean literally “to slough off one’s belly”, from Chinese *shě* ‘to give up, abandon’ + Chinese *tui* ‘to slough off’ + Mong *plaab* ‘belly’. But Michael Johnson is doubtful about my idea that the first syllable, *xev*, represents Chinese 舍 *shě* ‘to give up, abandon’. Mong *x*, pronounced “s”, does sometimes correspond to Chinese *sh*, so the idea that *xev* could come from 舍 *shě* is not implausible. But in White Hmong, 舍 *shě* is *sev*, with *s*, pronounced “sh”, and in the dialect represented in *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet*, which uses the official Chinese orthography, 舍 *shě* is *shed*, again with *sh*. The Mong Leng form *xev*, therefore, is anomalous vis-à-vis the way 舍 *shě* is pronounced in other closely related Hmong dialects, and may therefore have a different source, something other than 舍 *shě*.

- **plaab hlaub**: *txhaa plaab hlaub* ‘fibula’ (Xiongs).
- **plaag** ‘(no classifier) a disorderly fashion, here and there’ (Xiongs).
- **plaag toj** ‘hill, incline’ (Xiongs).
- **plaag txuas** ‘area adjacent to the main room’:

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **plaas** ‘(classifier *tug*) owl’ (Xiongs).
- **plau** ‘to go away, to leave’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub** ‘four’ (Xiongs):

plaub txhais kua taw ‘four legs’ (Xiongs).

- **plaub** ‘(classifier *txuj* or *cov*) hair’:

plaub hau ‘hair’ (Xiongs) [hair of the head].

plaub noog ‘feather’ (Xiongs).

plaub tsaj ‘fur’ (Xiongs).

tshib plaub hau ‘to thin the hair’ (Xiongs).

tu plaub txhab vog ‘to grow hair or feathers fairly well’ (Xiongs).

Yog koj yuav rovqaab moog tsev nua cais, koj has kuas koj tug muam nteg ib nam pujqab dlawb rua koj nqaa. Koj ib ke moog ib ke dlob plaub nua nawb!

‘If you want to return home, ask your sister to catch a white hen for you to carry with you. As you walk, pull out its feathers!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16.)

- **plaub** ‘(no classifier) court case’ (Xiongs):

The term *plaub* may be a bilingual pun, since in Mong Leng *plaub* ‘court case’ is homophonous with *plaub* ‘four’ and in Chinese *shì* ‘matter, affair’ sounds like, and in some dialects is homophonous with, *sì* ‘four’.

- **plaub**: *has plaub* ‘to involve in a hearing’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub**: *neej xai plaub ntug* ‘court, justice’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub**: *tu plaub* ‘to judge’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub**: *thaab plaub* ‘to try to cause trouble’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that the first syllable, *thaab*, might be from Chinese 攤 *tān* ‘to spread something out, to lay out; stand, stall or table where good are exhibited and sold’, in the sense of “taking certain matters into your hand and spreading them out / exhibiting them in public – asking for trouble.”

- **plaub**: *tsev tu plaub* ‘courthouse’ (Xiongs):

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub
‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs) [“I prefer to go and speak immediately in the courthouse”].

- **plaub**: *zig plaub* ‘to try to cause trouble’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub caug** ‘forty’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub hau** ‘hair’ (Xiongs):
tshib plaub hau ‘to thin the hair’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub hau ua lauj vaub** ‘badly knotted hair’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub muag** ‘eyelashes, eyebrows’ (Xiongs).
- **plaub noog** ‘feather’ (Xiongs).
- **plauv tshauv** ‘dust’ (Xiongs). Also written *plawv tshauv*.

- **plawg** ‘post verbal intensifier signifying the completeness of an action’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, immediately’ (Xiongs p. 555):

tawm plawg ‘completely out, completely gone’ (Xiongs).

cig plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to flame up].

dlim plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [freed suddenly, escaped].

dlhau plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [through, has gone or come through].

kaaj ntug plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [daybreak].

nkaag plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to enter suddenly].

nplaam plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to drop something suddenly].

nqaa nplawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to lift suddenly].

nto plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to emerge suddenly].

thoob plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [completely, to the end].

tshaab plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [suddenly pierced through].

yaa plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to suddenly fly off].

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej

‘The Spirit accordingly flew down to the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Tes ob nam hluasnkauj tawm pis plawg huv tsev tuaj tas;

‘Then two young women came out from the house and said:’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Cais Nuj Sis Loob ca le yaa plawg peg sau kwjtse lug ti nkaus

‘Then Nuj Sis Loob flew from the area above the drainage ditch and drew near [the Spirit]’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

In the following example, the intensifier *plawg* appears without any verb, possibly conveying an idea of the action moving along at breakneck speed as Yob the orphan pursues the female dove:

Puj nquab quas plawg qaab zeb, puj nquab quas plawg qaab caa los Yob ntsuag ntsuag quas plawg qaab caa.

‘The female dove, right under a stone, the female dove, right under a log, then Yob the orphan, right under a log’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **plawg**: *tshaaj plawg* ‘-est’ (marks the superlative):

Kuv yog tug tau tsawg tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who gets the least’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug xub ua tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who does it first’ (Xiongs).

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs).

luj tshaaj plawg ‘the biggest, the greatest’ (Xiongs).

zoo tshaaj plawg ‘best, most beautiful’ (Xiongs).

Qhov kws tseem ceeb tshaaj plawg

‘The thing that was most important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **plawg**: *ua ntej tshaaj plawg* ‘first’:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **plawg**, word of uncertain meaning in the following example:

A female spirit has eaten all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls:

Kawg kag rhu ntim nyaj ntim kub lug taw.

Quick, pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate.

Tes puj dlaab nam ntshais moog rhu hlo ntim nyaj ntim kub lug tes;

So the female spirit’s daughter pulled out silver bowls and gold bowls:

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”.

“Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag”.

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

Plawg moog tes;

Plawg went then:

“Kuv paab, kuv paab koj!”

“Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”.

“Tuag luas mas nam! Tuag le lauj nam lauj!”

“If I can help, I will help you!”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

Tes nam puj dlaab tuag le lauj.

Then the female spirit died.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 21-22.)

Hmongb-Shuad Jinaming Cidian (p. 16 bleul) says that *plawg* means both ‘good fortune’ and ‘soul’ so it might refer to the fortune predicted by the bowls or to the soul of the bowls. *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (p. 5 bleul blas) says that *plawg plag* means ‘marvellously quick’ so the meaning might be that the bowls responded quickly.

- **plawv** ‘(classifier *lub*) heart’ (Xiongs):

lub plawv dlha ‘the heart is beating’ (Xiongs).

- **plawv** ‘(classifier *lub*) center, nucleus, middle’ (Xiongs):

huv plawv ‘in the center, in the middle’ (Xiongs).

- **plawv**: *choj plawv xaub* ‘thick cotton blanket’ (Xiongs).

- **plawv cev nyas**, the center of the main section of the baby-carrier. The batik foundation is indigo/white or indigo/light blue with red and yellow applique sewn in the spaces left in the batik pattern. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133.)

- **plawv ncauj nyas**, the center section of the *ncauj nyas* (top section of the baby carrier). This part is usually covered with tiny appliqued squares, and sometimes yarn pom-poms. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133.)

- **plawv nroog** ‘downtown’:

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas theem rua huv Plawv nroog.

‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs, entry for *ua*).

- **plawv tshauv** ‘dust’ (also written *plauv tshauv*):

Tshaav ntuj kub kub lug zab tau peb hlis ua aav qhuav nkig quas nkuav tawm plawv tshauv quas tog.

‘The hot sun dried everything for three months, making the soil brittle and turning it to dust’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud out from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **ple** ‘(classifier *tug*) sting of a bee, the central part of a hot pepper’ (Xiongs). See also *plev*.

- **pleb** ‘(classifier *cov*) the soil dug out’ (Xiongs):

kaab pleb ‘a crack’ (Xiongs).

tawg pleb ‘to crack’ (Xiongs).

xwb pleb ‘showing a crack’ (Xiongs).

- **plev** ‘to sting’ (Xiongs) (see also *ple*):

Tuag moog txug sau tes Nyaj vab tuam teem muab teem txim, tso quas nkawj quas dlaiv plev, hab tso quas yoov tum ua dlaab ua tuag le hov rua.

‘When they died and arrived on high, then Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem found them guilty and released wasps and giant hornets to sting them and released mosquitoes to bite them mercilessly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **pleeg** ‘to act vigorously, vividly, that likes to joke a lot’ (Xiongs).

lug txaj pleeg ‘love song’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 18).

- **pleev** ‘to apply a color on, to swab, to paint, to color’ (Xiongs).

- **pleev pis zog** ‘to smear’:

nwg kuj yawm kag ib taig nam moov tshauv moog pleev pis zog tug nam zaaj lub qhov nqaj. Nam zaaj nov mob heev

‘she scooped up a bowlful of ashes and smeared them on the dragon’s wound. The dragon felt severe pain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16).

- **plig** ‘(classifier *tug*) human spirit, soul’ (Xiongs).

- **plig**: *hu plig* ‘to call in a human spirit or soul so that the living person can be in good health’ (Xiongs).

- **plig**: *khoom plig* ‘a gift, donation’ (Xiongs), a translation of Lao *khǒng khwǎn* ‘gift’, literally “soul thing”:

qhvw pob khoom plig ‘to wrap the gift’ (Xiongs).

- **plig**: *tso plig* ‘a belief in the Hmong culture to release the dead’s soul before he can go to heaven or reincarnation’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a young woman marries a spirit. When her younger brother visits her, the spirit, who has been asked to be a funeral officiant, invites the younger brother to accompany him to the funeral. When, some time later, the older brother visits, the spirit invites the older brother to accompany him to the *tso plig* ceremony:

“Txiv dlaab! nubnua koj tuaj saib wb cais, piskig kuv yuav tau rovqaab moog khee kuv tej qub num, los yog moog tso plig ais koj nrug kuv moog tso plig ib nub.”

“Wife’s older brother! today you’ve come to see us so, tomorrow I will have to go back to finish my old work, or go to release the soul so you go with me to spend the day releasing the soul.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16.)

- **plig**: *xw plig* ‘to call back the spirit after thirteen days of death’ (Xiongs):

Thirteen days is one cycle, the day on which, in cycling through the twelve animals (**kaum-ob tug tsaj**), one returns to the animal with which one started. The spirit is called back temporarily so that further offerings may be made to it.

- **plij ploj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov plij ploj [to make the sound plij ploj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **plis** ‘(classifier *tug*) wildcat’ (Xiongs).

- **pliv** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 557):

lab pliv or *lab quas pliv* ‘very light red as weak batteries for portable light’ (Xiongs p. 557).

- **ploj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov plij ploj [to make the sound plij ploj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **ploj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ploj [to make the sound ploj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **plos** ‘to go where there is no path before’ (Xiongs).
- **plov** ‘(classifier *lub*) empty cartridge shell; a circular toy played by spinning the shaft on the table’ (Xiongs).
- **plov meej** ‘to clarify the conversation or the meaning’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *biāomíng*.
- **plov tub hauv caug** ‘(classifier *lub*) kneecap’ (Xiongs).
- **ploob** ‘to feed and get to know each other (said of people and animals)’ (Xiongs).
- **ploog** ‘post verbal color intensifier meaning really’ (Xiongs), ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 557):

lab ploog or *lab quas ploog* ‘pure red’ (Xiongs p. 557).

- **ploog**: *quas tog ploog*, syllables of uncertain meaning in the following examples:

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.
 ‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog [?] to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti
 ‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog [?!] I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **plooj** ‘to cover; blurred, indistinct, not clearly visible’ (Xiongs):

kaam plooj ‘covering’ (Xiongs).

kev plooj ‘covering’ (Xiongs).

- **plooj noob-ncoos**, bands of material sewn one on top of another, forming a border around the central square of a needlework square. Traditional needlework squares (*noob-ncoos*) are about 12 inches square. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140.)
- **plooj ncauj nyas**, bands of fabric sewn one on top of another around the edge of the baby-carrier (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 133).

- **ploom**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ploom [to make the sound ploom] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **ploov**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov ploov [to make the sound ploov] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **pluj** ‘disappear’ (Xiongs):

pluj nplais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to disappear].

- **pluj plag** ‘to disappear’:

Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog

‘You say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

- **Plua**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Khaab** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

- **pluag** ‘(no classifier) meal, dose’ (Xiongs):

- **pluag** ‘poor’ (Xiongs):

cov tuab neeg pluag ‘poor people’ (Xiongs).

- **pluag mov** ‘meal’ (Xiongs):

ib pluag mov ‘a meal’ (Xiongs).

- **pluag qaav** ‘meal’:

Cais Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj kuas nwg cov tubmaab tubqhe moog nteg qab hab npua lug tua ua ib pluag qaav rua suavdlawg tau noj

‘Then his Majesty the Ruler had his servants catch chickens and pigs and kill them and prepare a meal for everyone to eat’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **pluag su** ‘noon meal’ (Xiongs).

- **pluag tshais** ‘breakfast’ (Xiongs).

- **pluaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov pluaj [to make the sound pluaj] (Xiongs p. 553).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

- **pluajce**: *naab pluajce* ‘ribbon-snake’, ‘a small, white, very poisonous snake’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 55), ‘a kind of snake with a flat body’ (Bertrais):

“*Es koj puas ntshai naab pluajce?*” “*Aub! naab pluajce, tsi has oj. Kuv ntshai ntshai le oj*”.

“Then are you afraid of ribbon-snakes?” “Oh my! Don’t talk about ribbon snakes. I’m very afraid of them.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 22-23.)

“*Nuav yog dlaabtsi niv yuam?*” “*Koj tsi saib ntshai yog naab pluajce pob*”. *Tes aub yaub! nam puj dlaab nam ntshais tuag pis tsag lawm lauj.*

“What is this?” “You don’t suppose it might be a ribbon snake.” Then – oh my! – the

female spirit's daughter died instantly. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23.)

- **pluas** 'puckery to the mouth, astringent (unripe fruit, some kinds of food)' (Xiongs).

- **pluav naag xub naag cua** 'thunderstorm':

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

'Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat' (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **pluav taum** 'whole piece of bean' (Xiongs).

PLH

- **plhaub** '(classifier *lub* or *dlaim*) shell, case, envelope, covering' (Xiongs).

- **plhaub kws** 'corn husks' (Xiongs).

- **plhaub maag** 'hemp stalks' (see also *plhaub maaj*):

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

'In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks' (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **plhaub maaj** 'hemp stalks' (Xiongs). See also *plhaub maag*.

- **plhaw** 'to jump, to make a jump, to dance' (Xiongs) (see also *plhawv*):

caws plhaw 'to hop' (Xiongs).

- **plhaw kaus** 'to jump with a parachute, to sky dive' (Xiongs).

- **plhawj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov plhawj [to make the sound plhawj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **plhaws** '(classifier *dlaim*) scale, skin, loose skin' (Xiongs).

- **plhaws**, intensifier:

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits.

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab, Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.

'Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise, To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path' (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **plhaws ntseg** 'fish scale' (Xiongs).

- **plhawv** 'a jump' (see also *plhaw*):

Ob tug nim tau tuab nam plhawv! ‘The two of them were startled’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **plhawv**: *xeev plhawv* ‘to get sudden attention’ (Xiongs).

- **plhis** ‘to change form, to lose the old skin or covering, to become young again’ (Xiongs).

- **plhis tawv** ‘to change form (snake)’ (Xiongs).

- **plhob** ‘to hunt’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *piāo* ‘to roam, to wander’:

moog plhob ‘to go hunting’ (Xiongs).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?”’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- **plhob** ‘to go the bathroom’:

chaav plhob ‘bathroom, water closet’ (Xiongs).

tsev plhob ‘bathroom, water closet’ (Xiongs).

moog plhob ‘to go the bathroom’ (Xiongs).

Perhaps a euphemistic use of *plhob* ‘to hunt’, from Chinese *piāo* ‘to roam, to wander’.

- **plhom moj** ‘foolish, unrestrained, rash, to speak worthlessly’ (Xiongs). Probably from an as yet unidentified Southwestern Mandarin expression pronounced *piàomáo*.

- **plhov** ‘to burn or expose a short while to the flame or blaze’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *piǎo* ‘to singe, to burn something’.

- **plhov xem** ‘to imply indirectly to something’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Southwestern Mandarin *piǎo* ‘to skew the eyes’.

- **plhu** ‘(classifier *lub*) face, cheek, cheeks’ (Xiongs):

fee plhu ‘to turn the face away or at angle’ (Xiongs).

paaj pawg plhu ‘face’ (Xiongs).

- **plhus**:

muaj plhus ‘to speak carelessly, to act carelessly’ (Xiongs).

tsi muaj plhus ‘to lose respect, to be afraid facing some situation’ (Xiongs).

- **plhuav** ‘post verbal intensifier meaning completely, entirely off’ (Xiongs):

tso plhuav ‘to leave completely, to release all, to completely let go’ (Xiongs).

Suav txawm tso plhuav suav paab tsuag coob coob ntawd lug tum nwg, nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm tshws moog tum.

‘When the Chinese released their pack of rats to bite her, she released her pair of cats to bite the rats’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm puav yaa moog txais tum cov nkawj hab muv ntawd ua nwg tuag taagnrho lawm ib yaam nkaus.

‘and she released her pair of bats, who flew about catching and biting the wasps and bees until they too were dead’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

Nyaj vaab tuam teem ha muab tso plhuav. Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv

‘Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem then released him and the two of them then went to prepare the documents for him to be reborn as a high official’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **plhw** ‘to caress, to rub lightly, to touch smoothly, to touch gently’ (Xiongs):

hab muab tug nyuas laublaig plhw quas zog
and kept stroking the little minivet (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81)

- **plhw taub hau** ‘touch gently on the head’ (Xiongs).

Q

- **qa** ‘(classifier *lub*) origin, end, the central part, the portion of a fruit that is connected to the tree, the main idea, the bad thing about some person or some group’ (Xiongs).

- **qa**: *caws qa* ‘to hop’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **qa ntsej** ‘behind the ear; base of the ear’:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej
‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **qab** ‘chicken’:

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav
‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

Puab tuab [typo for tua?] qab txi xeeb
‘They sacrifice a chicken for the most important tree in the village (The Mong believed that in doing so, spirits brought them protection and good hopes)’ (Xiongs).

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.
‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?’

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

'The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* 'How the Mong Calculate Dates' in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The seventh month of the year is the month of the chicken.

7 hlis – qab hli

7th month – month of the chicken (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khlib* months (*hli khlib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

'A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khlib* months and *khub* months as follows:' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the fifth day of the first month is

luav hli – qab xab 5 'month of the rabbit – chicken day 5' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

In the funeral ritual, a chicken is sacrificed to serve as the dead person's guide in their journey to meet their ancestors:

Koj moog txug paag dlej ab. Paag dlej ab tes ua ab! Koj haus tsi tau, koj fuas hawv peb tug caag maaj peb tug caag dlaab. Fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab haus, fuas hawv peb teg rua koj qab hlw koj txha moog cuag taug koj pug koj yawg.

'Go until you reach the lake of bitter water. The lake of bitter water is bitter indeed! If you cannot drink it, snatch up three maple roots and three firmiana [?] roots. Snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to drink, snatch up three handfuls for your chicken to suck on, and then you will be able to to meet your ancestors' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hawv muag ntxaa.

'When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your chicken crows and their chicken joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hawv maug hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the coffin.

Koj qab teb luas qab xaa txha yog koj pug koj yawg huav muag ntxaa.

But if your chicken replies and their chicken joins in, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb, txha le yog koj pug koj yawg huav muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the coffin' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **qab**: *lauv qab* 'cock, rooster' (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a man sweeps out the home of a female spirit. To reward him, the female spirit asks a group of spirit children to spit a glob of saliva on the road, and also to place a fern leaf there. When the man comes to the road, the saliva has been transformed into a pile of silver and the fern leaf has been transformed into a rooster:

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

'When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **qab**: *miv nyuas qab* 'chick' (Xiongs).

- **qab**: *pug qab* 'chicken, hen' (Xiongs).

- **qab**: *qai qab* 'chicken eggs' (Xiongs).

- **qab**: *yoov qab* 'gnat' (Xiongs).

- **qab qua** 'the rooster crows' (Xiongs):

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg huav muag ntxaa.

'When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your rooster crows and their rooster joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **qab saam** 'castrated rooster, capon':

Ntuj ai! caag koj yuav muaj zoo qab saam ua lauj le hab lauj!

'By Heaven! How do you come to have such delicious capons?' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

Cais ob tug txhaj nteg hlo ib tug qab saam lug tua ua rau ob tug namtais noj.

'So the couple then caught a capon to kill to cook for the wife's mother to eat' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p.14).

- **qab saam qab sis** 'capons':

Ob tug nim zoo sab tag tag tes ob tug nim tua qab saam qab sis noj.

'The two of them were really happy so they killed capons to eat' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **qag** 'to have a space, room left yet' (Xiongs).

- **qag**: *ua qag* 'to vomit (baby)' (Xiongs).

- **qag hli** ‘moonlight’ (Xiongs).

- **qas** ‘ugly, dirty, bad, disgust’ (Xiongs):

tsw qas ‘smell bad, stink’ (Xiongs).

qas ntsuav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [ugly, dirty, bad].

- **qas**, rhythmic syllable in poetry (see also *qom* and *quas*):

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyoob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug. Noob xyoob noob lis ntoo tsua yuav lug tau Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog qaab nrau lis caav kws.

‘Let me tell you, O elder, the origin of bamboo and trees. The seeds of bamboo and trees came from behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s logs’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

- **qas qhov muag** ‘bad looking’ (Xiongs).

- **qav** (also written *qaav*): *rooj qav* ‘meal, feast, banquet’ (Xiongs).

Kuv vaam tas koj yuav tuaj koom peb rooj qav hab

‘I hope that you will participate in the feast with us’ (Xiongs).

zoo sab tog txais mej suav dlawg tuaj huv rooj qav nuav

‘welcome all of you to the meal or banquet’ (Xiongs).

- **qav** ‘to kill, to eliminate, to slaughter’ (Xiongs).

- **qaa** ‘(classifier *tug*) inner throat, throat’ (Xiongs):

mob qaa ‘to have a sore throat’ (Xiongs).

mob txhaws qaa ‘to have diphteria’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab** ‘delicious, taste good, tasty’ (Xiongs):

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus hab tua ob tug lauv qab saam coj moog tso rua peg.

‘Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full, and kill a capon and bring it and leave it up there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **qaab** ‘(classifier *lub*) bottom, base’ (Xiongs):

caum qaab ‘to run after’ (Xiongs).

huv qaab ‘under, underneath; bottom, base’ (Xiongs).

huv qaab ntuj ‘in the world’ (Xiongs) [“under the sky”]

lawv qaab ‘following, to follow’ (Xiongs).

lawv ... qaab ‘to pursue’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

lub suab thawv qaab ‘the voice bounces back’ (Xiongs).

nyob huv qaab ‘to be under’ (Xiongs).

taub qaab ‘(classifier *lub*) buttock, the behind’ (Xiongs).

tom qaab ‘after, below’ (Xiongs).

thaubqaab ‘backward’ (Xiongs).

koj dlha thaubqaab ‘you run backward’ (Xiongs).

them rov qaab ‘to pay back’ (Xiongs).

ua qaab ‘following, to follow’ (Xiongs).

ua ... qaab quas nyo ‘to follow someone closely, stay close behind someone, not let someone out of one’s sight’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

yaav qaab ‘the end’ (Xiongs).

ob yaav qaab ‘both ends’ (Xiongs).

Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog tej qaab nrau lis caav

‘behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s logs’, i.e. behind the wooden stockade that surrounds heaven, i.e. in heaven (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

Koj leej tub tuag, xaa koj tuaj txug nuav, cej laag qaab ntaiv ntuj.

‘O you who have died, I have brought you this far, to the wall at the bottom of the stairway to heaven.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14.)

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj

‘The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

The expression *qaabtsuas ntaab* apparently means ‘the base of a cliff where bees have built nests’. *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* has *ntaab* ‘yán fēng [cliff bee]’ (p. 106 ndangb) and *tsua ntaab* ‘là fēng yán [wax bee cliff]’ (p. 201 zhuat ndangb).

- **qaab**: *nov qaab* ‘to forget’:

Cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag txawm saib saib nov qaab moog le lawm.

‘So Yob the Orphan did look and forgot his journey’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16).

- **qaab**: *nraag qaab dlej* ‘downstream’:

koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej

‘You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69).

- **qaab**: *nraag qaab nuav* ‘below’:

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **qaab**: *rovqaab* ‘to go or come back’:

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog

rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dhub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **qaab**: *rov qaab*, following a verb, ‘back’:

them rov qaab ‘to pay back’ (Xiongs).

Mey [typo for *Mej*?] *yuav tsum them \$10 txhiv rov qaab*

‘You should pay \$10 in order to buy it back’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab**: *taub qaab* ‘short’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab**: *tom qaab* ‘after, below’ (Xiongs):

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

wb coj ib leeg ib saab nyaj nuav tseg ca ua puavpheej rua yaav tomqaab.

‘each of us will keep half of the coin as proof for the future’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **qaab**: *tsw qaab* ‘fragrant, smell good’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab**: *txhaa ncej qaab* ‘femur’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab**: *ua lawv qaab* ‘to follow’:

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

- **qaabcub**: *nraag qaabcub* ‘down by the fireplace’:

“*Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?’*”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **qaab lus** ‘to have appetite’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab mib** ‘sugar’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab ntug** ‘west’:

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for *qaum*?] *teb dlhau qaab teb.*

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

‘As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **qaab ntug** ‘horizon’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Dlaab, nwg leej muam tug quasyawg, txawm yaa plawg tim qaab lug tsaws nkaus sau qhovmuag tsev ua qhovncauj lab pistsuag.

‘the Male Spirit, his sister’s husband, then came flying in from the horizon [or ‘from the west’] and perched on the gable, with his mouth all red’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **qaab rooj** ‘under the table, secretly’ (Xiongs).

- **qaab sab** ‘happy, at ease, satisfied in heart’ (Heimbach p. 255 qab siab):

qaab sab ntso ua (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to be intensely happy to do it].

- **qaab teb** ‘south’ (Xiongs):

yaav qaab teb ‘south’ (Xiongs).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for *qaum*?] *teb dlhau qaab teb.*

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

‘As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj muab nwg lub tebchaws tu rua nwg tug vauv hab nwg paab tub tau kaav. Nwg muab tog qaabteb pub rua nwg tug ntxhais ntxawm has Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, cais muab tog qaumteb faib rua nwg cov tub.

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then divided his kingdom for his son-in-law and his sons to rule. He gave the southern part to his youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, and he divided the northern part among his sons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

- **qaab tsuas** ‘(classifier *lub*) cliff’ (Xiongs):

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj

‘The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

The expression *qaabtsuas ntaab* apparently means ‘the base of a cliff where bees have built nests’. *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* has *ntaab* ‘yán fēng [cliff bee]’ (p. 106 ndangb) and *tsua ntaab* ‘là fēng yán [wax bee cliff]’ (p. 201 zhuat ndangb).

- **qaabvaag tsitaug** ‘garden and area downhill from house’, ‘area around the house’:

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud out from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug’s house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **qaab yem khaav** ‘porch’:

Qaab yem khaav hab chaw nyob ‘Porch and place to sit’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **qaab zeb** ‘under a stone’:

In a folktale, Yob the orphan, in hot pursuit of a female dove who has taken an ear of millet from his field, follows her as she dashes under stones and logs:

Puj nquab quas plawg qaab zeb, puj nquab quas plawg qaab caa los Yob ntsuag ntsuag quas plawg qaab caa.

‘The female dove, right under a stone, the female dove, right under a log, then Yob the orphan, right under a log’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **qaab zib** ‘sweat’ (Xiongs).

- **qaag**, intensifier:

Ua tau tej nam tsev zeb tsev tsua ua yig quas qaag rua nraag nam taj dlej hlub lawm le.
‘There are houses of stone and of limestone making households all over the place down in a large river plain’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **qaag**: *fuab qaag* ‘betel-palm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

- **qaaj**: *ua qaaj* ‘to snore, snoring’ (Xiongs).

- **qaaj**: typo for *nqaaj* ‘long piece of wood, horizontal beam’?:

Le nyob cuaj tshooj vaag yim tshooj tsev es tsev vuag luaj vuag av ci nraa quas ab rua qaaj [typo for *nqaaj*?] *tog tej ntug txaj.*

‘They dwelt in nine stories of gardens and eight stories of houses, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass gleaming brightly from the coins at the edges of the end beams’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **qaav** ‘(classifier *tug*) frog’ (Xiongs).

- **qaav kaws** ‘(classifier *tug*) toad’ (Xiongs).

- **qaav** ‘food, a meal’ (also written *qav*):

Cais Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj kuas nwg cov tubmaab tubqhe moog nteg qab hab npua lug tua ua ib pluag qaav rua suavdlawg tau noj

‘Then his Majesty the Ruler had his servants catch chickens and pigs and kill them and prepare a meal for everyone to eat’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **qai** ‘(classifier *lub*) egg’ (Xiongs) (see also *qais*):

tev qai ‘to peel an egg’ (Xiongs).

- **qai** ‘the worst thing about some one or some group of people’ (Xiongs).

- **qai nthwb qai nthee** ‘fried eggs’:

Ob tug nim ua zaub ua qai nthwb qai nthee tsw qej tsw dlog noj.

‘They made vegetables and fragrant fried eggs and fragrant garlic and onions to eat’
(*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **qai qab** ‘chicken eggs’ (Xiongs).

- **qaib**: *peb qaib* ‘three steps’ (Xiongs). Also written *peb qeb*.

- **qaib**: *txiv qaib nphuab* ‘strawberry’ (Xiongs).

- **qaib ib puas** ‘hundredth’ (Xiongs).

- **qaig** ‘(no classifier) spittle, thick spittle (from bronchitis)’ (Xiongs).

- **qaig** ‘clavicle’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **qaij** ‘to incline, to lean over, to turn to; inclined, oblique, slanted’ (Xiongs):

nub qaij ‘oblique sun’ (Xiongs).

yaav nub qaij ‘afternoon’ (Xiongs).

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, then the stake will lean over too”]

- **qais** ‘(no classifier) a load of thread’ (Xiongs). See also *qaiv*.

- **qais** (see also *qai*):

noob qais ‘(classifier *lub*) testicle’ (Xiongs).

noov qais ‘(classifier *lub*) testicle’ (Xiongs).

- **qais**: *cisqais* ‘(no classifier) secret, fault, mistake’ (Xiongs).

- **qaiv** ‘to weave’ (Xiongs). See also *qais*.

- **qaiv ntxaiv** ‘to hang the thread on the reel’ (Xiongs).

- **qau** ‘(classifier *tug* or *raab*) penis, male sexual organ’ (Xiongs).

- **qaub** ‘sour’ (Xiongs).

- **qaub** ‘to pull down for reaching something’ (Xiongs).

- **qaub**: *kua qaub* ‘vinegar’:

cov kua qaub thaws taag rua huv lawm

‘the vinegar soaks in all’ (Xiongs).

- **qaub**: *zaub qaub* ‘pickled vegetables’ (Xiongs).

- **qaug** ‘to fall down, to slip and fall’ (Xiongs):

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, the stake will lean over too”]

- **qaug**: *tshuaj qaug* ‘dangerous medicine, poisonous medicine’ (Xiongs).

- **qaug cawv** ‘drunk’ (Xiongs):

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.

‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **qaug dlaab qaug dle** ‘to stagger’:

nwg aub tuab lub nam taubhau zaaj ua qaug dlaab qaug dle

‘he staggered along carrying on his back the dragon-head’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

‘He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19)

- **qaug ntaaj qaug ntawg** ‘to stumble with the weight of something’:

Pug Xeev Txwjlaug nim aub pob nam kub qaug ntaaj qaug ntawg lug nkaag plawg rua huv puab txaaj.

‘The Ruler’s wife carried the bundle of gold on her back, stumbling with the weight of it, into their bedroom’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14).

- **qaug tshuaj** ‘to be poisoned’ (Xiongs).

- **qauj** ‘decayed (egg), dumb’ (Xiongs):

ruag qauj ‘stupid, not clever, retarded’ (Xiongs).

- **qauj muag** ‘to make eye signal (bad or good)’ (Xiongs).

- **qaum**: *nrob qaum* ‘(classifier *lub*) the back, the behind’ (Xiongs).

tuaj tom nrob qaum tuaj ‘from behind or from the back’ (Xiongs).

txhaa nrob qaum ‘spine, spinal column’ (Xiongs).

zuaj nrob qaum ‘to massage the back’ (Xiongs).

- **qaum**: *txiv qaum* ‘fruit’ (Xiongs).

- **qaum**: *xuam qaum* ‘chalk, from Lao ສ໋໋ວ *khǎaw*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **qaum cai** ‘heaven’:

Thau nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv

‘The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **qaum ntuj** ‘up in heaven’ (Xiongs):

Yaav thaus u, yawm Xeev txwjlaug qawm [sic] ntuj muaj ib tug ntxhais npe hu ua MUAM NKAUJ NTSUM.

‘Long ago, the Ruler of heaven had a daughter named Muam Nkauj Ntsum’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 7)

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘Ntsum’s mother and Ntsum’s father, the Ruler, reigned in heaven, but the Maiden Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Cais cov nam hluas nkauj sau qaum ntuj sis ntxhi pis chiv

‘The young women of heaven whispered to one another’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 23).

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

‘The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **qaum ntuj** ‘east’:

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for qaum?] teb dlhau qaab teb.

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

‘As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **qaumpeg**: *nplajtog qaumpeg* ‘anyone in the world’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **qaum rooj** ‘on the table, openly’ (Xiongs).

- **qaum teb** ‘north’ (Xiongs):

peg qaum teb ‘to the north’ (Xiongs).

yaav qaum teb ‘north’ (Xiongs).

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for teb] ‘turn the head to the north’ (Xiongs).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for qaum?] teb dlhau qaab teb.

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

‘As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj muab nwg lub tebchaws tu rua nwg tug vaub hab nwg paab tub tau kaav. Nwg muab tog qaabteb pub rua nwg tug ntxhais ntxawm has Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, cais muab tog qaumteb faib rua nwg cov tub.

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then divided his kingdom for his son-in-law and his sons to rule. He gave the southern part to his youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, and he divided the northern part among his sons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

- **qaum taw** ‘the top part of the foot’ (Xiongs).

- **qauv** ‘(classifier *tug*) model, example, style, original’ (Xiongs):

cuab qauv ‘to begin the model’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **qawg**, intensifier:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb kuj ywg nyooj quas qawg tom nwg chaw pw

‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb grumbled in his sleeping chamber’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18).

- **qawg**: *yaajqawg*, a kind of bird which plays a prominent role in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and which is depicted in the illustrations to the book as a swallow:

Muaj ib nub, Yob Nraug Ntsuag taabtoom tawm moog nyob ua si tom togtsev na, txawm muaj ib paab nam Noog Yaajqawg quaj ntsoog qeeg, hab yaa dluab quas vog hlaa lub nam taj quavsuv nuav moog.

‘One day, Yob the Orphan was going out for a stroll beside the house when, why, there was a flock of Yaajqawg Birds calling noisily, and flying, in such numbers that the sky was speckled black with them, over a field of artemisia’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 8).

Yob finds a Yaajqawg Bird that has fallen to the ground and nurses it back to health. The birds reward him for his kindness by giving him magic seeds that grow into plants that produce nuggets of silver and gold instead of grain.

Hmong-Chinese dictionaries translate *yaajqawg* as ‘yàn é’ (wild goose) (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 402 yangx gheus; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 184 yangx gheus), but the illustrations on the cover of *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and at the beginning of the story (page 6) show swallows.

- **qawj**: *quawj* [typo for *qawj*] ‘to be washed or used away bit by bit’ (Xiongs):

ntug dlej qawj ‘the shore is washed away’ (Xiongs).

- **qawm** ‘to embrace, to hold back in the arms, to enfold’ (Xiongs) (see also *qaws*):

Nwg txhaj moog qawm hab puag hlo.

‘She then put her arms around him and hugged him tight’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8).

- **qaws** ‘to lift up (sleeve, pants) so as not to be wet or dirty (Xiongs).

- **qaws** ‘to hold back in one’s arms; to embrace’ (Xiongs). See also *qawm*.

- **qawv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov qes qawv [to make the sound qes qawv] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **qe** ‘to close the eyes’ (Xiongs).

- **qe** ‘to pour out a liquid’ (Xiongs).

- **qe ib saab qhov muag** ‘to close one eye’ (Xiongs).

- **qeb** ‘to pull on the trigger, to shoot’ (Xiongs):

yauj qeb ‘(classifier *tug*) trigger’ (Xiongs).

yauj qeb phom ‘trigger’ (Xiongs).

- **qeb** or **noob qeb** ‘a kind of crop’ (Xiongs), ‘Job’s tears (*Coix lacryma-jobi*)’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **qeb** ‘(no classifier) step’ (Xiongs):

peb qeb ‘three steps’ (Xiongs). Also written *peb qaib*.

Koj moog txug nuav, kuv qha koj nce ntaiv ntuj. Koj nce ntaiv ntuj ib qeb tes koj has tas koj tsi tau nce. Koj nce ob qeb tes koj has tas koj nce ib qeb. Koj nce peb qeb tes koj has tas koj nce ob qeb. Ib nub nce ib qeb, ob nub nce ob qeb. Suav ib tsug kaumpeb nub nce kaumpeb qeb. Tes koj le nce nto Ntxwj Nyoog tug ntaiv ntuj.

‘Now that you have come to this point, I will tell you how to climb the stairway to heaven. When you have gone one step, say that you have not gone any steps. When you have gone two steps, say that you have gone one step. When you have gone three steps, say that you have gone two steps. In one day you will go one step. In two days you will go two steps. When you have counted a cycle of thirteen days you will have gone thirteen steps. Then you will have climbed to the top of Ntxwj Nyoog’s stairway to heaven.’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 15; the dead person lies about how many steps they have gone in order to prevent malevolent spirits from finding them.)

- **qeb** ‘canto, major division of a ritual chant’:

Taav nuav taag nam ib qeb, txij nuav taag nam ib quas.

‘Now we have completed one canto, at this point we have completed one division’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 2).

- **qeg** ‘low, low level’ (Xiongs).

- **qeg qeg** ‘very low’ (Xiongs).

- **qej** ‘(classifier *lub* or *tsob*) garlic’ (Xiongs):

Tes tug nyaab nim tsaws pis hlo quas nqaj qab, qai nthee tsw qej tsw dlog quas lawg rua leejnam noj ib pluag tuab quas tsau.

‘Then the daughter-in-law quickly served some chicken and fragrant fried eggs, fragrant garlic, and sizzling onions to her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law ate her fill’

(*Ceebpov* p. 24).

Ob tug nim ua zaub ua qai nthwb qai nthee tsw qej tsw dlog noj.

‘They made vegetables and fragrant fried eggs and fragrant garlic and onions to eat’

(*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **qej**: *pob qej taw* ‘ankle’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **qej**: *pob qej tsg* [typo for *teg*] ‘wrist’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **qej**: *pob qej txhaa* ‘bone joint’ (Xiongs).

- **qej**: *taum qej* ‘lima beans’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 77 *douf ghenx*; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 32 *douf ghex*):

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas tev taum qej taum rhawv tes koj tsi tim saib.

‘When you reach the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, pay no attention to those who peel lima beans and rhawv beans.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

- **qes** ‘sprained (joint); to sprain’ (Xiongs).

- **qes qawv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov qes qawv [to make the sound *qes qawv*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **qes teg** ‘sprained wrist’ (Xiongs).

- **qev** ‘to lend, to let use for a while’ (Xiongs).

- **qev**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov qev [to make the sound *qev*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **qev ... tsev** ‘to ask for permission to sleep in someone’s house, to ask for lodging’:

nwg txawm moog qev suav tsev su.

‘he asked the Chinese for permission to use one of their hostels’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16).

txug tsaus ntuj, nwg txhaj moog qev lub tsev kws Yob Ntsuag nyob ntawd pw.

‘when night fell she asked permission to sleep in the house where Yob the Orphan was’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

“Puj aw, peb lug qev koj tsev pw ib mos”.

“Grandmother, I’ve come to ask for permission to sleep in your house for one night.”

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

- **qee** ‘to share, to divide, to partition’ (Xiongs):

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **qeeb** ‘slow, late’ (Xiongs):

tug kawm tau qeeb ‘slow learner’ (Xiongs).

- **qeeb heev** ‘very slow’ (Xiongs).

- **qeeb qeeb** ‘very slow’ (Xiongs).

- **qeeg** or **quas qeeg** ‘post verbal intensifier meaning continuously or still doing’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, continuously’ (Xiong p. 556):

cais qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to be separated continuously].

dlha qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to run continuously].

foob qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [continuously sealed?]

hai qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to pull continuously].

lauj qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to destroy continuously?]

noj qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to eat continuously].

yuav qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to want continuously].

taujaub abhau nim quaj ntshoo quas qeeg

‘the blue-throated barbets and great barbets sang continuously’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

Dlaabntxaug ntshai tes dlaabntxaug quaj ntsug quas qeeg.

‘The ntxaug spirits were frightened so the ntxaug spirits cried out continuously’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **qeeg** ‘to shake, quake’ (Xiongs):

aav qeeg ‘earthquake’ (Xiongs).

- **qeeg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov quaj qeeg [to make the sound quaj qeeg] (Xiong p. 553).

- **qeej** ‘(classifier *raab*) a Hmong traditional talking instrument used to sing poems, lyric songs, and especially funeral songs in a funeral’ (Xiongs):

thi qeej ‘holding ring of the qeej’ (Xiongs).

The rites of dressing the deceased are finished. The first couplet of a *Kreng* [*Qeej*] piece that will be played later, the *Kreng tou sha* [*Qeej Tu Sav*] “*Kreng* of the Severed Life”, depicts it thus:

Now, *A Ndjo Li Vo* will die for good, die completely.

Die, his life severed, saliva coming into his mouth.

Died, his breath cut off, slaver flowing to his gums from his teeth

(*Initiation* p. 15).

Nub caaj thaus u, tsoom tuabneeg zej zog tuag cais luas pheej tuaj tog Nug Xyu moog ua txiv qeej.

‘Long ago, when any of the villagers died, people would ask Nug Xyu to be the qeej-player’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 5).

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj

‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the mountain pass’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

- **qim quas qom**: *quaj qim quas qom* ‘to squawk’:

Nwg kuj ib ke lug ib ke dlob plaub ua nam pujqab quaj qim quas qom, hab ua plaub poob dlawb vog lug lawm.

‘As he walked he pulled out feathers making the hen squawk, and making the feathers fall many white things all over’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

- **qob** ‘to gather, to put together, to assemble, to group’ (Xiongs).

- **qoj** ‘to run, to push back and forth’ (Xiongs).

- **qom**, rhythmic syllable in poetry (see also *qas* and *quas*):

Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab tsi txawj mob,

Qom cais tsi muaj tuag.

Meb muab kuv Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws ntaus tuag taag. Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg

Qom txhab yuav muaj mob. Qom cais yuav muaj tuag.

‘On the face of the earth human beings for millennia have not known illness,

For ages there has been no death.

The two of you have beaten me, Nplooj Lwg the Toad, to death. On earth human beings

For millennia will experience illness. For ages there will be death’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,

All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

Has koj tas koj ib leeg tub qom ceeg

Tub coj dlaab, koj lug nyog, koj rov los rov tsi nyog

‘Everyone stretches out their arms to block your path, stretches out their fingers to bar your way.

They say to you that you are a good young man

A bearer of spirits, you are always able to come but you will not being able to return’

(*Initiation* p. 130).

- **qom**: *quaj qim quas qom* ‘to squawk’:

Nwg kuj ib ke lug ib ke dlob plaub ua nam pujqab quaj qim quas qom, hab ua plaub poob dlawb vog lug lawm.

‘As he walked he pulled out feathers making the hen squawk, and making the feathers fall many white things all over’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

- **qos** ‘(classifier *thooj*, *cov*) potato (in general)’ (Xiongs).

- **qos lab** ‘sweet potato’ (Xiongs).

- **qos yaaj ywv** ‘potato’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yángyù*.

- **qoob** or **noob qoob** ‘crops, harvest, grain’ (Xiongs).

muab qoob ‘to harvest’ (Xiongs).

noobqoob ‘reserved grains for the next planting’ (Xiongs).

sau qoob ‘to harvest’ (Xiongs).

nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for *tsaug?*] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

‘in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain. The harvest is in this month’
(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **qoob** ‘measles, booster’ (Xiongs):

txhaaj tshuaj qoob ‘measles immunization’ (Xiongs).

- **qoob loo** ‘crops’ (Xiongs).

- **qoog** ‘to get, to have got, to have met, to grow full (crops), to be effective, to get the target well (arms), to get the animal (hunting)’ (Xiongs).

- **qoom**, sound of swallowing:

nrov qoom ‘the swallowing sound’ (Xiongs).

- **qoov** ‘(classifier *tsob*) asparagus’ (Xiongs).

- **qub** ‘old, dirty, worn, used, same’ (Xiongs):

khaws qub ‘to take the used ones’ (Xiongs).

lub caij qub ‘the same time’ (Xiongs).

zoo le qub ‘the same as before, similar to the previous one, identically’ (Xiongs).

- **qub tsheb** ‘used car’ (Xiongs).

- **qub tsho** ‘used shirt’ (Xiongs).

- **qub txeeg qub teg** ‘heritage, antiques, old things, old articles’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug lug txug tsev, cais nwg pheej najnub xaav tuab quas ywv has tas:
“Ab! Yuav ua caag txhaj tua tau Yob Nraug Ntsuag, hab txhaj txeeb tau nwg tej

qubtxeeg qubteg ntawd lug ua yug tug!’

‘When the Ruler arrived home, he every day kept thinking quietly: “Ah! How to get to kill Yob the Orphan and then seize his inheritance as one’s own!”’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

- **qug** ‘(classifier *lub*) lump, carbuncle’ (Xiongs).

- **qug** ‘to mimic, to repeat after; to convey a message, to pass on a message’ (Xiongs).

- **qug kuv** ‘repeat after me’ (Xiongs).

- **quj** ‘to make a ponder, to chew, to destroy’ (Xiongs).

- **qus** ‘wild, untamed, not domesticated’ (Xiongs):

nyujqus ‘wild ox’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

tsaj qus ‘wild, untamed animal’ (Xiongs).

- **qus** ‘to close’:

“Qus rooj tsuas, qus rooj tsuas!” Tes rooj tsuas qus nkaus.

“Close the door of the cave, close the door of the cave!” Then the door of the cave shut tight. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

According to the various dictionaries, this verb can mean:

to close a door (Bertrais qos; *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* ghok; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* ghok)

to close an umbrella (Heimbach qos)

to close one’s mouth (Lyman p. 284; Heimbach qos; Bertrais qos; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* ghok)

to close one’s eyes (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* ghok)

to close the mouth and eyes of a dead person (Bertrais qos)

- **qua** ‘to crow (rooster, cock)’ (Xiongs).

qab qua ‘the rooster crows’ (Xiongs).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your rooster crows and their rooster joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv maug hleb.

If your rooster crows and their rooster replies, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the coffin.

Koj qab teb luas qab xaa txha yog koj pug koj yawg huav muag ntxaa.

But if your rooster replies and their rooster joins in, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb, txha le yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your rooster crows and their rooster replies, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the coffin' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **qua** 'to marry one's daughter to her boyfriend' (Xiongs).

- **quab** 'to oblige, to push someone to accept something, to put pressure on, to order someone doing something' (Xiongs):

cov raug quab yuam 'the oppressed people' (Xiongs).

Thaus kawg, Ntxawm quab ntab tau Txheeb Txheeb Theeb nce ua ntej
'Finally, Ntxawm forced Txheeb Tshoj Theeb to agree to go up first' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **quab** 'young (pig)' (Xiongs):

Taagkig ob tug txham le ua tau ib pluag tshais, tua ib tug nam quab npua rua dlaab Ntxawg noj.

'The next morning, the two of them accordingly made breakfast, killing a young boar for Uncle Ntxawg to eat' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **quag**: Typo for *qaug*?

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug*?] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*
'if I am hurt you will be the same' (Xiongs) ["if the ox falls, the stake will lean over too"]

- **quaj** 'to cry, to weep, to sing, make noise (animal)' (Xiongs):

noog quaj 'the bird sings' (Xiongs).

nwg quaj vim nwg ntsib kev txom nyem
's/he cries because s/he is facing poverty or great problems' (Xiongs).

Mo nuav koj nrug peb pw ib mos, yog koj tsi quaj le cais pegkig peb tso koj moog. Huas yog koj quaj, cais koj yuav tsum nrug peb nyob, ua peb qhev ntawm nuav.

'Tonight, when you are staying with us, if you do not cry out, tomorrow we will let you go. But if you cry out, then you must remain with us, and become our slave' (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag txhaj quaj los quaj, qw los qw hab nti ua vig ua voog.
'Yob the Orphan yelled and yelled, screamed and screamed, and tossed to and fro' (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

koj nim quaj los quaj, qw los qw ib mos
'you yelled and screamed all night' (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Nwg txhaj tau moog yuav qab yuav npua, yuav dlej yuav cawv lug ua noj ua haus, ua quaj quas npwg peb nub peb mos taag.

'He then bought chickens and pigs, bought water and liquor, to eat and to drink, to celebrate for three days and three nights' (*Kwvhuam* p. 32).

muab tug zagroj lawv quaj lawv quaj nyog quas nuj.
'They followed the giant cricket, weeping unrestrainedly' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

Nim yuav lawv lawv quaj quas nuj le hov.

‘They kept following it, weeping like that’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

Moog Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug nim nyag quaj quas nyag

‘Then Big Yob and Little Yob each wept, wept each one’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Nim quaj dlaa quaj dlaa los tuav tsi tau tug kwv txhais teg

‘He kept weeping but he could not take hold of his younger brother’s hand’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

taujvaub abhau nim quaj ntshoo quas qeeg

‘the blue-throated barbets and great barbets sang continuously’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

Huas tej nam taujvaub los nim quaj: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!” ntshu quas au rua tim tej haavzoov

‘But the blue-throated barbets cried: “Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!”, making a great noise in the forest’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

Huas tej nam taujvaub abhau los nim quaj zug quas zawg

‘Then the blue-throated barbets and great barbets cried out here and there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

Leejnam moog txug quaj dlhawv quas dlheev: “Ntuj e! kuv miv nyaab aw, caag tub lug los tub nim tsi qha tseeb ...”

‘When the mother arrived, she cried out abruptly, “By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law, why did you not tell me the truth? ...”’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 23-24).

quaj dlhawv quas dlhev: “Ntuj nis kuv miv nyaab es tub Los Xeeb nim lawv lawv sab, kuv tsi paub kuv nim tshev dlaab tshev tuag ntshai kuv tug miv nyaab nim tu tu sab”.

and cried out abruptly: “By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law, my son Los Xaab followed his heart. I did not know, and I said terrible things to you. I’m afraid that my dear daughter-in-law must think very ill of me” (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

Tes nam mlob hab nam dlev ob tug quaj dlhuj quas dlhev tes ob tug ha moog lauj.

‘The cat and the dog cried out and off they went’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

Tes txha has qhauv rua dlev hab mlo ob tug noj taag ob tug le quaj dlob quas dleev lawm.

‘Then he gave the dog and the cat some food and when they had finished eating, they began to howl’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30).

Tug nam zaaj nim quaj nyooj quas lawg tas: “Ntxawd! Maaj maam maj! Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!”

‘The dragon growled: “Ntxawm! Gently! Why are you going at my wound with such force?”’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16).

yawm laug muab tua es Sub tub Sub txiv tuag taag es nam puj Sub nim quaj tuab nam qas quas ntsuav yeeg quas yi

‘my husband killed the Sub’s, both son and father, and now Grandma Sub is crying her eyes out’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **quaj qeeg**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov quaj qeeg [to make the sound quaj qeeg] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **quaj qim quas qom** ‘to squawk’:

Nwg kuj ib ke lug ib ke dlob plaub ua nam pujqab quaj qim quas qom, hab ua plaub poob dlawb vog lug lawm.

‘As he walked he pulled out feathers making the hen squawk, and making the feathers fall many white things all over’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

- **quaj taug** ‘easily cry, to cry often’ (Xiongs).

- **quas** ‘to separate, to put away from each other, to divide, to partition, to stop from’ (Xiongs):

yaam quas ‘obstacle, problem’ (Xiongs).

- **quas**, linker syllable with intensifiers (see also *qas* and *qom*):

The word QUAS can be put before ... intensifiers, usually it doesn’t make any difference, but sometimes the meaning can have a new idea of ON AND OFF or BACK AND FORTH (Xiongs p. 556):

nreg nkaus ‘complete stop’

but

nreg quas nkaus ‘stop and go, stop and go’ (Xiongs p. 554).

Examples of *quas* as a linker syllable include the following:

caab ke quas zig ‘slowly, in a long line’ (Djoua Xiong, personal communication, *Rog Vwm* p. 3).

caav nruj muag quas nyee ‘to argue fiercely’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

ci kaa quas lug ‘to gleam’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

ci quas hob ‘gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

ci quas npuaj ‘gleaming’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

cheb dlu quas dlav ‘to sweep out thoroughly’ (*Lug Nraug Dlaab* p. 27)

chim nruj muag quas nreeg ‘fiercely angry’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28)

dlaaj lig or *dlaaj quas lig* ‘light yellow’ (Xiongs p. 556)

dlaaj nruv or *dlaaj quas nruv* ‘bright yellow’ (Xiongs p. 556)

dlaaj ntseg quas ntsuv ‘pale and wan’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 15, 19)

dlaaj quas nyo ‘pale and sickly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19)

dlaaj vog or *dlaaj quas vog* ‘many yellow things all over’ (Xiongs p. 556)

dlai ntsw quas ntsee ‘hanging everywhere’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68)

dlawb lag or *dlawb quas lag* ‘not quite white, something white passes by once’ (Xiongs

p. 556)

dlawb paug or *dlawb quas paug* ‘pure white’ (Xiongs p. 556)

dlawb quas vog ‘many white things all over’ (Ceebpov p. 20)

dlo cwb quas cuas ‘smooth and featureless’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

dlo cwj quas cuas ‘smooth and featureless’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23)

dlo quas ncog ‘completely bare’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

dlu quas dlav ‘bare, empty’ (*Yob Hlub has Yob Yau* p. 11)

dlub ncab or *dlub quas ncab* ‘very black’ (Xiongs p. 556)

dlha dlheev or *dlha quas dlheev* (Xiongs p. 553; *dlha* ‘to run’).

dlha ndlaag quas nab ‘a huge herd runs’ (Ceebpov p. 17)

faab fo or *faab quas fo* ‘lively, stirred up’ (Ceebpov p. 14, Xiongs p. 553).

hawb zawg or *hawb quas zawg* ‘wheezingly’ (Xiongs p. 554).

kaaj quas lug ‘perfectly clear’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42, *Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 31-33)

kaim muag quas zoj ‘to have long beautiful eyelashes’ (Ceebpov pp. 8, 12)

kaumpaam ntsw quas naa ‘patched all over’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68)

kub ndlaug loj quas kho ‘bright golden’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17)

khaubhlaab quas nyo ‘ragged’ (Ceebpov p. 19)

khi cos ntsw quas naa ‘tied with knots all over’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68)

khi quas nreeg ‘to bind firmly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15)

khi ua ruam quas rug ‘to bind’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16)

khuam quas nyo ‘to hang something on one’s shoulder’ (Ceebpov p. 14)

lab quas khiv ‘all red’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9)

lab pliv or *lab quas pliv* ‘very light red as weak batteries for a portable light’ (Xiongs p. 557)

lab ploog or *lab quas ploog* ‘pure red’ (Xiongs p. 557)

lab tseb or *lab quas tseb* ‘light red’ (Xiongs p. 557)

lab quas vog ‘speckled red’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 9, 43-44)

laug suab quas zaws ‘embroidered all over with a fern-leaf pattern’ (Ceebpov p. 23)

lu aav quas nyo ‘covered with dirt’ (Ceebpov p. 25)

lu aav nywb quas nyo ‘covered with dirt’ (Ceebpov p. 23)

- lug* or *quas lug* ‘all’ (Xiongs p. 554).
- maub hau quas toog* ‘to grope one’s way in the dark’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21)
- moog ua si khuj quas khuav* ‘to wander about aimlessly’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 8)
- nov quas ntsoov* ‘to feel’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10)
- noo quas zaws* ‘moist’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24)
- nuj quas txeeg* ‘wild or virgin (forest)’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17)
- ncaaj quas nceeg* ‘straight’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- ncaws quas ntsig* ‘half asleep’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44)
- nchu auv quas nab* ‘to produce smoke in great clouds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24)
- nchuav quas nthwv* ‘to pour down’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7)
- ndlais* or *quas ndlais* ‘out of sight’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- ndlaug quas leeg* ‘bright and shiny’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12)
- ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab* ‘filled the hills and highlands’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12)
- ndlwg quas hawv* ‘to flow’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28)
- ndlwg quas ndlo* ‘to flow’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4)
- ndlwg nrov quas lauv* ‘to flow noisily’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14)
- ndlwg quas tsag* ‘to flow’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26)
- ndlwg quas tsaws* ‘to flow calmly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21)
- ndlwg tug quas vaws* ‘to flow evenly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21)
- nkaus* or *quas nkaus* ‘completely’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- nkoog* or *quas nkoog* ‘a little bent’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- nkuam ... quas luag* ‘to drive cattle’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2)
- npo* or *quas npo* ‘fully’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- npau quas dlhev* ‘to boil’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19)
- npwg quas luag* ‘beautiful’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26)
- nplawm quas ntchas* ‘to whip’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* pp. 17, 20)
- nquag quas txoov* ‘vigorous’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20)
- nghaa quas su* or *nghaa quas suv* ‘totally treeless’ (both variants on page 9 of *Dlaab Qhuas*)
- nroo quas ntwg* ‘to rumble’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 9)

- nraim* or *quas nraim* ‘frequently do or be there, exactly’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- nreeg* or *quas nreeg* ‘steadily, firmly’ (Xiongs p. 554)
- nrho* or *quas nrho* ‘completely’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- ntu quas zug* ‘at successive places’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2)
- ntwg* or *quas ntwg* ‘sound of expansion’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- ntho* or *quas ntho* ‘completely’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- nthwv* or *quas nthwv* ‘expansion, pouring’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- ntsag quas tu* ‘no sound’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36)
- ntsaaj quas lawg* ‘to groan’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15)
- ntsais quas tsa* ‘to blink’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1)
- ntsaws quas nreeg* ‘plugged up tight’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38)
- ntso* or *quas ntso* ‘used after SAB only’, e.g. *rau sab ntso* ‘to put one’s heart into, do devotedly’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- ntsoov* or *quas ntsoov* ‘perception’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- ntsuab laj* or *ntsuab quas laj* ‘blue, pure blue’ (Xiongs p. 557)
- ntsuab xab* or *ntsuab quas xab* ‘green, pure green’ (Xiongs p. 557)
- ntsuav* or *quas ntsuav* ‘bad’ (Xiongs p. 555)
- ntshu quas fwv* ‘with a great noise’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7, *Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9)
- ntshu quas lawg* ‘loudly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19)
- ntxo quas ntshws* ‘to hold tightly onto with one’s teeth’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30)
- ntxha* or *quas ntxha* ‘sharp and sudden pain in the chest’ (Xiongs p. 555).
- pav twb quas tawg* ‘to mutter’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 17-18)
- pus muag ntuj quas nti* ‘to cover one’s face with one’s hands’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 14)
- pw ntsum quas laam* ‘to lie sprawled out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14)
- plhw quas zog* ‘to stroke’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81)
- qeeg* or *quas qeeg* ‘continuously’ (Xiongs p. 556)
- quaj dlub quas dleev* ‘to cry out loudly, to howl’ (*Ceebpov* p. 30)
- quaj dlhawv quas dlhev* ‘to cry out abruptly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 25)
- quaj dlhawv quas dlheev* ‘to cry out abruptly’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 23-24)

- quaj dlhuj quas dlhev* ‘to cry out’ (*Ceebpov* p. 26)
- quaj ntsug quas qeeg* ‘to weep continuously’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37)
- quaj ntshoo quas qeeg* ‘to sing continuously’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9)
- quaj qim quas qom* ‘to squawk’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17)
- quaj quas nuj* ‘to weep’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9)
- quaj nyog quas nuj* ‘to weep unrestrainedly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9)
- quaj nyooj quas lawg* ‘to cry out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16)
- quaj quas npwg* ‘to celebrate’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 32)
- quaj tuab nam qas quas ntsuav yeeg quas yi* ‘to cry one’s eyes out’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31)
- quaj zug quas zawg* ‘to cry out here and there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10)
- qheb quas plav* ‘open (eyes)’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18, 19)
- raag quas tshis* ‘to gallop’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17)
- rawv or quas rawv* ‘tightly’ (*Xiongs* p. 556)
- rua lu quas huav* ‘to open the mouth wide’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17)
- rhe or quas rhe* ‘separated’ (*Xiongs* p. 556)
- saaj quas nyee* ‘flexible, moveable’ (*Xiongs*)
- sau ntawv quas plag* ‘to write assiduously’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23)
- sawv quas tseeg* ‘arise’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2)
- seev quas yeeg* ‘to sigh’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 21)
- suaj quas nyo suaj quas zaws* ‘(long hair) falling and tumbling’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8)
- taj quas lag* ‘(sun) level with the horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9)
- tawm ndlaag quas nab* ‘to come out in a great crowd’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12)
- teev quas mag* ‘(tears) accumulate’, ‘moist (eyes)’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).
- tooj quas tsa* ‘glittering (eyes)’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).
- tug quas vuv* ‘flat, level (field)’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20)
- tum quas nkhoob* ‘to bark’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 12)
- thaam ua luj quas lawg* ‘to chatter away’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17)
- thaus taavsu quas lug* ‘right at noon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41)
- thuav or quas thuav*, e.g. *xoob thuav* [not tight, not severe, at ease, ample, big, roomy] (*Xiongs* p. 556).

- tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog* ‘lift your ears to listen’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2)
- tsaus fuab quas nti* ‘completely overcast’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28)
- tsausntuj quas nti* ‘dark’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22)
- tseeg quas nkawg* ‘(the earth) quaked’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27)
- tshau quas thawv* ‘to shake from a sieve’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7)
- tshev quas tawg* ‘to berate’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20)
- txaag quas nyee* ‘loosely moving’ (Xiongs)
- txaajmuag quas ntshis* ‘a bit abashed’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23)
- txaij quas zeeg* ‘dotted, speckled’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).
- txho lag* or *txho quas lag* (Xiongs p. 557, not translated) [not quite gray, something gray passes by once]
- ua dlaaj quas nyaag* ‘spread wide (one’s fingers)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 5, 6)
- ua dlaaj quas ruav* ‘spread wide (one’s arms)’ (also written *ua dlaaj quas tsuav*) (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 4-6)
- ua dlu quas nyaag* ‘spread apart (one’s fingers)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 4-6).
- ua dlu quas ruav* ‘spread apart (one’s arms)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).
- ua ntu quas zug* ‘(worshipped) at successive places’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2)
- ua ... luv quas ntho* ‘to crop (vegetation) to a stubble’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12)
- ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj* ‘to drizzle’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 22, 28)
- ua ... qaab quas nyo* ‘to follow someone closely, stay close behind someone, not let someone out of one’s sight’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11)
- ua zaam quas sees* ‘beautifully dressed up’ (Xiongs)
- uab dlub quas nyo* ‘crow-black’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20)
- xav lug* or *xav quas lug* (Xiongs p. 557, not translated) [purple or blue]
- xaam quas nuv* ‘to look around bewildered’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 15)
- xyaab quas leeg* ‘stretched out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28)
- yaa quas txhuas* ‘to fly’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17)
- yaaj quas ntsuav* ‘to melt away’ (*Initiation* p. 125)
- ywg nyooj quas qawg* ‘to mutter, to grumble’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18)
- ywg quas tawg* ‘to mutter, to grumble’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18)
- zoo nkauj quas tshib* ‘beautiful’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24)

zuj quas zug ‘slowly, thoroughly’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

zum quas zog ‘to be sticky, to cling’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38)

- **quas**, rhythmic syllable in poetry and heightened prose (see also *qas* and *qom*):

The syllable *quas* may be inserted to create poetic forms such as *Ntxwj quas Nyoog* (for *Ntxwj Nyoog* ‘the ruler of heaven’), *nplaj quas cai* (for *nplaj cai* ‘earth’), and *qaum quas cai* (for *qaum cai* ‘heaven’):

ndlwg quas ndlo rua Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab moog cej zeb. ... Ndlwg quas ndlo Ntxwj quas Nyoog qaab dlej caa.

‘It flowed under Ntxwj Nyoog’s stones. ... It flowed from Ntxwj Nyoog’s wellsprings’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Meb yog nplaj quas cai le leej tuabneeg meb tuaj quas tsw?

‘The two of you are from the earth. Why have you come?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv

‘The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

The syllable *quas* may be placed in front of nouns in poetry and heightened prose, creating poetic forms such as *quas tsug* ‘period of time’, *quas tug* ‘possessions’, *quas tub* ‘sons’, *quas nyag* ‘each’, *quas tswb nyuj* ‘cow bells’, *quas lab* ‘monkeys’, *quas tswg* ‘sparrow’, and so forth (this is perhaps different from the more fully lexicalized use of *quas* in the nouns *quas puj* ‘woman, wife’ and *quas yawg* ‘man, husband’):

Tes neej has tas; Yog le tsi tau, ca peb fib mej quas tsug. Dlaab has tas; Tsi tau, dlaab chua quas nta neej quas tug.

‘Then the human beings said, “If we have lost the contest, let us return to you for a rematch after a time.” The spirits said, “No you may not,” and snatched away the human beings’ possessions.

Yog le ca peb fib mej quas cais. Dlaab has tas; Tsi tau, dlaab ha dlua quas tshe neej quas tub quas ntshais.

“If it is thus, let us return to you after a while.” The spirits said, “No, you may not,” and ripped apart the human beings’ sons and daughters’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 3).

Moog Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug nim nyag quaj quaj quas nyag

‘Then Big Yob and Little Yob each wept, wept each one’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Quas tswb nyuj, tswb neeg, qhev mas tamtseeb nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab.

‘Cow bells, horse bells, servants in truth filled the hills and highlands.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,
rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
and little insects and ants' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

'My mother my father that side [the bridegroom's parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim's roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim's roots of oratory faculty.' (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

'Oh, those bellows. What's wrong with them?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev

'But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

"Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagnuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?"

"Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **quas** 'canto, major division of a ritual chant':

Taav nuav taag nam ib qeb, txij nuav taag nam ib quas.

'Now we have completed one canto, at this point we have completed one division' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **quas**: *haav zoov nuj quas txeeg* 'wild or virgin jungle' (Xiongs):

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

'Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **quas**: *haav zoov nuj quas xab* '(classifier *lub*) wild or virgin jungle' (Xiongs).

- **quas**: *tuaj quas tsug* 'to laugh' (Xiongs):

lug tuaj quas tsug 'joke, funny words' (Xiongs).

- **Quasnpaab:** *Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij)*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).
- **quas puj** ‘(classifier *tug*) woman, lady; wife’ (Xiongs), ‘wife (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 174):

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
 ‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

Muaj ib zag, Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm, nwg tug quaspj, ntim mov rua Nug Xyu, los Nug Xyu tsi yuav.
 ‘One time, Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm, his wife, dipped out rice for Nug Xyu, but he did not want it’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 5).

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrau ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrau ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspj ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!
 ‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **quas puj:** *muaj quas puj* ‘married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs):

Literally “has a wife”, as opposed to

muaj txiv lawm ‘married (said of a lady)’ (Xiongs)

literally “has a husband *already*”.

- **quas puj:** *yuav quas puj* ‘to get married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs).
- **quas puj tub se** ‘wife and children, the whole family’ (Xiongs).
- **quas qaag** ‘all over the place’:

Ua tau tej nam tsev zeb tsev tsua ua yig quas qaag rua nraag nam taj dlej hlub lawm le.
 ‘There are houses of stone and of limestone making households all over the place down in a large river plain’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **quas tag** ‘indeed’:

Ob tug dlha dlha xauj na has, ub! puj Los Xaab mas cav yog tug nam kws naag ob tug pum quas tag.
 ‘The two of them ran to take a peek and, why, oh my!, Mrs. Los Xaab was indeed the one they had seen the previous day’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **quas tog ploog**, syllables of uncertain meaning in the following examples:

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.
 ‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog [?] to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm

Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **quas xyuaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov quas xyuaj [to make the sound quas xyuas] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **quas yawg** ‘(classifier *tug*) man, gentleman’ (Xiongs), ‘husband (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 174):

Moob Dlawb le, quas yawg naav tsig (losyog rig) taug luv (pov taub).

‘Among the White Mong, the men wear trousers – *tsig* (or *rig*) – with a short – *luv (pov taub)* – seat’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **quas yawg**: *yuav quas yawg* ‘to get married (said of a woman)’ (Xiongs):

lug txaj hluas nkauj yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws

‘song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 15-17).

lug txaj moov tsis saws, hluas nkauj txha moog yuav quas yawg

‘song about how, not being acclimatized to her fate, a young woman married a husband’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 17-18).

- **quav** ‘(classifier *thooj*, *cov*, or no classifier) stool, excrement, waste’ (Xiongs):

has lug thob quav ‘to speak with repetition (said of someone having speech problems)’ (Xiongs) [“to speak as if shoveling dung”].

haw quav ‘to have diarrhea’ (Xiongs).

tso quav ‘to defecate, to pass stool’ (Xiongs).

- **quav** ‘to be so used to take something that can not be left out, to crave’ (Xiongs) (perhaps modelled on Lao *khîi*, which means both ‘excrement’ and ‘to crave’):

tug quav cawv ‘drinker’ (Xiongs).

tug quav yeeb ‘smoker’ (Xiongs).

- **quav** ‘to fold’ (Xiongs).

- **quav** ‘(no classifier) straw, stalks’ (Xiongs):

nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for *tsaug?*] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

‘in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain. The harvest is in this month’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

- **quav nuv** ‘inadvertantly, accidentally, haphazardly’:

Tes Yob ntsuag ntsuag suav suav tuv, Yob nam qau tawm quav nuv. ‘So Yob the orphan searched for lice, and Yob’s penis flopped out’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 54).

- **quav ncaug** ‘(classifier *tawb*) saliva’ (Xiongs):

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then you all spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

I can not find the word *phawb* in any dictionary and am therefore uncertain how much saliva *ib phawb quavncaug* refers to.

- **quav npaab** ‘the fold of one’s arm’:

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **quav ntsej** ‘what is in the ear (collection)’ (Xiongs).

- **quav ntsej** ‘to listen to, to concern about, the have interest in’ (Xiongs):

tsi quav ntsej ‘do not care about, to not bother, to disregard, to not listen to, careless’ (Xiongs).

- **quav nyaab** ‘straw’ (Xiongs):

In one story, it appears that straw shoes are needed to walk in the spirit world. At the beginning of the story, a young woman is scolded and beaten by her older brother, so

leej muam txhaj kuas tug nug ntxawg hab ib nkawm khau quavnyaab rua nwg. Leej muam tau nkawm khau quavnyaab cais nwg txawm tawm moog lawm.

‘the sister then had the younger brother weave a pair of straw shoes for her. The sister got the pair of straw shoes so she then went out.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

The sister does not return and it is eventually learned that

Yog moog yuav ib Yawm Dlaab lawm.

‘It was that she married a Male Spirit.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

The younger brother goes in search of her and finds her footprints:

Nwg taug moog na, nwg tug muam txawm nkaag rua huv ib lub qhov aav.

‘He followed them and, why, his sister had gone into a hole in the ground.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

Finally, he finds his sister, they have a tearful reunion, and then she takes him to her house. On the way, however, they must cross a deep ravine, spanned by only a single plank, impossible for the younger brother to negotiate.

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quavnyaab rua nwg rau. Ob tug txawm taug lawg moog rua saab tim u.

‘So the sister then took off the pair of straw shoes for him to put on. The two of them then proceeded to the other side.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9.)

- **quav poj** ‘burnt area’ (Xiongs).

- **quavsuv** ‘artemisia’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Nwg txawm nqeg moog ua ib lub nyuas tsev nyob rua huv plawv lub nam taj quavsuv.

‘He went down and made a small house in the middle of a field of artemisia’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

Below is a photograph of quavsuv kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **quav txawv** ‘deformed’:

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **quawj** ‘to be washed or used away bit by bit’ (Xiongs). Typo for *qawj*.

- **qw** ‘to shout, to cry out, to scream’ (Xiongs):

Yob Nraug Ntsuag txhaj quaj los quaj, qw los qw hab nti ua vig ua voog. ‘Yob the Orphan yelled and yelled, screamed and screamed, and tossed to and fro’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Ua rua nwg nim quaj los quaj qw los qw ib mos
‘They kept him yelling and yelling, screaming and screaming all night’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

koj nim quaj los quaj, qw los qw ib mos
‘you yelled and screamed all night’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

- **qwb** ‘(classifier *lub* or *phaab*) the uncutting side of a tool’ (Xiongs):

caaj qwb ‘the back of the neck’ (Xiongs).

xub qwb ‘the back of the neck’ (Xiongs).

- **qwj** ‘(classifier *tug*) snail’ (Xiongs).

- **qwj yeeg** ‘(classifier *tug*) snail’ (Xiongs).

- **qws** ‘(classifier *tug*) stick, cane’ (Xiongs):

Nwg xuas ib tug qws ntaus kuv ‘s/he uses a stick to beat me’ (Xiongs).

yog qws rua
‘to scare or frighten someone with a stick, to pretend beating with a stick’ (Xiongs).

- **qws** ‘pestle’:

In a story explaining the origin of making offerings to one’s ancestors, two brothers are frightened when the animals in their house begin to speak, because they believe it to be a bad omen. When the cat speaks, they hit it with a pepper-pestle:

Tes khaws nkaus nam qws tuav hovtxob tuab qws miv, miv quaj miv-auv! nua.
‘Then they whacked the cat with a pestle for pounding pepper, the cat went meow!’
(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

Then a rat says:

Awv! nim naj mo zuv zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev, ua tsaug tej! Txiv tuab qws ua nwg mi-aub nua!
‘Hurrah! Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner. Thank you, father! You got him good with that pestle, making him go meow!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

The brothers try to hit the rat with the pepper-pestle as well but miss. Then even the pestle speaks:

Txha xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag. Nam tsuag tsiv quas loo rua peg qhov tsev lawm. Nam qws hovtxob tseem has tas; “Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le”.

‘Then they tried to give the rat a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat. The rat ran up into a crack in the wall. The pepper-pestle even spoke, saying: “Damn it,

father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot.”
(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

- **qws tshuab** ‘(classifier *tug*) broom’ (Xiongs).
- **qww** ‘to make a sound or to play a leaf (Hmong music)’ (Xiongs).
- **qww** ‘(classifier *tug*) male (mouse, mice)’ (Xiongs).

QH

- **qha** ‘to teach, to tell, to inform, to lead, to advise, to instruct’ (Xiongs):

xwb fwb qha ntawv ‘teacher’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

tug xib fwb qha xaam phaaj ‘the math teacher’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

“*Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?*” “*Ub! tsiv os. Tsiv! kuv tsi qha le ntshai hwv!*” “*Qha maj! qha rua wb tsuav mas.*” “*Aub! tsi qha. Ntshai hwv lawm*”. “*Ab! qha. Qha tsuav peb le suavdlawg tsiv*”.

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” “Oo, fleeing. Fleeing! I can’t tell you, I’m too frightened!” “Tell us! Tell us what it is.” “No, I can’t tell you. I’m too frightened.” “Yes, tell us. Tell us so we all can flee.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

- **qhab** ‘to put down something (money) to hold or reserve’ (Xiongs).
- **qhav** ‘(classifier *ntliv* [sic]) ginger’ (Xiongs) (*ntl* is a rarely used alternative spelling for *ndl*):

tau kua qhav haus ‘to be scolded’ (Xiongs) [“get ginger juice to drink”].

- **qhaa** ‘to dry over a fire’ (Xiongs).
- **qhaa qhuav** ‘to stay having nothing’ (Xiongs).
- **qhaam**: *txiv maj qhaam* ‘tamarind, from Lao *mâak khăam*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **qhais** ‘to carve, to shape, to cut’ (Xiongs):

qhov qhais ‘the neck, the cut’ (Xiongs).

- **qhau** ‘to put down, to wrestle’ (Xiongs):

sib qhau ‘to wrestle’ (Xiongs).

kev sib qhau ‘wrestling’ (Xiongs).

- **qhau hlo hau, qhau dlaag qhau zug** ‘to lay down one’s head, lay down one’s strength and

one's force', i.e. to humble oneself:

Lob Lw le mam qhau hlo hau, qhau dlaag qhau zug taug kev moog nrhav txiv tuam mej koob, txiv tuam mej zeeg, hab le mam rov qaab moog has Muam Nkauj Ntsum.

'Lob Lw then humbled himself and set out on the road to find marriage negotiators, marriage go-betweens, and once more ask to marry Muam Nkauj Ntsum' (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

- **qhauv**: *qhuav* [typo for *qhauv*?] '(no classifier) food, meal, feeding' (Xiongs):

caiv qhauv 'to fast, do not want to eat' (Xiongs).

- **qhawv** 'post verbal intensifier meaning completely' (Xiongs):

qhuav qhawv 'completely dry, all gone' (Xiongs).

- **qhawv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov qhuav qhawv [to make the sound *qhuav qhawv*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **qhe** 'to eat (non formal language)' (Xiongs).

- **qhe** 'servant' (see also *qhev*):

nkauj qhe 'servant girl' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

tubmaab tubqhe 'servants' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

tub qhe 'servant' (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

The form *qhe* (as opposed to *qhev*) normally occurs in compounds such as the above. In the following example, exceptionally, the form *qhe* occurs by itself:

lub nam nroog Suav nraag tes yog Los Xaab cov nam qhe xwb tag.

'The Chinese town down there, in fact, is entirely Los Xaab's servants' (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **qheb** 'to open, to widen, to allow, to permit, to let do' (Xiongs):

num qheb 'job open, work available' (Xiongs).

qheb quas lug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [all opened].

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntxaug the huv tuaj tas;

He opened [the gourd] and, why, the ntxaug spirits "the" from inside saying:

"*Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!*"

"Oh yes! Open us, [we'll] try killing and eating [you]!"

"Ab! thov lau! Thov ca kuv muab rov kaw rua".

"*Oh, please! Please let me shut [you] up again.*" [p. 38]

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.

The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **qheb** 'chestnut tree':

Lug naag tshauv cuaj li nree txhaa caaj qheb.

‘In the light rain it stiffens and becomes as rigid as the core of the branches of a chestnut-tree’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **qheb**: *roob qheb* ‘shin’ (Xiongs):

txhaa roob qheb ‘tibia, shin bone’ (Xiongs).

- **qheb quas plav** ‘open’ (referring to eyes):

In a folktale, a dragon has the characteristic (involving the kind of reversal that is common in Mong folktales) that when his eyes are closed, he is awake, and when his eyes are open, he is asleep:

Thaus nwg pw qe muag nti, cais yog tsi tau tsaug zug. Huas yog ob lub qhovmuag qheb quas plav txhaj yog tsaug zug tag!

‘When he lies with his eyes shut, then he has not fallen asleep. But if his two eyes are open, then it is that he is really asleep!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18.)

Tsi ntev, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Ntxawm ob tug txawm ua ke nyaag nyaag moog saib na tug nam zaaj pw tsaug zug ua qhovmuag qheb quas plav tag lauj!

‘Not long afterward, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Ntxawm crept over together to look and, why, the dragon really was sleeping with his eyes open!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19.)

- **qheb qhov rooj** ‘open the door’ (Xiongs).

- **qhev** ‘(classifier *tug*) servant, helper’ (Xiongs) (see also *qhe*):

Huas yog koj quaj cais koj yuav tau nyob nuav ua peb qhev, hab lug yuav peb tug qhev ntawd.

‘But if you cry out, then you will have to remain here as our slave, and marry that slave of ours over there’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Mo nuav yog kuv pw ib mos ais kuv quaj cais kuv nruj mej nyob hab ua mej qhev moog. Huas yog kuv tsi quaj le cais kuv yuav yuav mej tug qhev nuav hab mej paab qhev ntawm nuav taagnrho nruj kuv moog.

‘Tonight, if during the night I cry out, I will remain with you and become your slave. But if I do not cry out, then I will get this slave of yours here, as well as all your other slaves, to take with me’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

cais nwg txhaj tuav nkaus Yob Nraug Ntsuag teg hab coj suav paab qhev kws nyob ntawd nruj ob tug ua ke lug moog, hab puab coj suav tej cuab yeej toom txem lug taagnrho.

‘Then she took Yob the Orphan by the hand and she and Yob the Orphan took the other slaves that were there with them, and the slaves carried away all of the household goods of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

tej nyuj, tej neeg, tej qhev tawm ndlaag quas nab coob coob huv lub nyuas ceebpov lug.

‘a great crowd of cattle and horses and servants came out from the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Quas tswb nyuj, tswb neeg, qhev mas tamtseeb nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab.

‘Cow bells, horse bells, servants in truth filled the hills and highlands.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Ob tug nim tu hlo ib lub nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj dlaav tuag tau txu neeg nraa hab tau hawm Los Xaab nua tes ua cav lug lug yuav txug tes Ceeb Pov tas;

‘The two of them had decided on a place where they told their servants to prepare an exceedingly broad clearing and had unpacked the horses and had made obeisance to Los Xaab, and as they were about to approach, Ceeb Pov said,

“Los Xaab nis los Xaab! Muab tej nyuj, tej neeg, hab tej qhev kuas puab muab lawv kaw”.

“Los Xaab, oh Los Xaab, take the cattle, the horses and the servants and shut them up.”

Hu quas lawg tes cov qhev lawv kag cov nyuj cov neeg lug txug.

He called loud and long and the servants quickly drove the cattle and horses to him’

(*Ceebpov* p. 13)

Los Xaab nis Los Xaab, has cov qhev es muab nyuj neeg lawv kaw mag.

‘Los xaab, oh, Los Xaab. Tell the servants to shut up the cattle and the horses’ (*Ceebpov* p. 17).

Koj tug miv tub Los Xaab! koj tug miv tub Los Xaab! yuav tsimtxaj twg ne .. txiv. Nkaag moog tes txawm ca le xyum moog ua Suav qhev tes ca le moog nrug Suav nyob.

‘Your little son Los Xaab? Your little son Los Xaab? Of what worth is he, Father? He went in and studied to be the servant of the Chinese. He went to live with the Chinese’

(*Ceebpov* p. 19).

Ntshab hab Ntshaus ob tug le tawm lug ua luas dlaag luas zug, tawm lug ua luas qhev.

‘Ntshab and Ntshaus came out to work for the invaders, came out to be their servants.’

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64.)

- **qhev**: *muvghev*, a kind of bee called máofēng [“hair bee”] in Chinese (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 95 mod khed):

In a story, a young woman wants to make it appear that a dead man is still alive. She puts a *muvghev* inside a gourd and nails the gourd to a flute so that the sound made by the *muvghev* will simulate the sound of a flute and make it appear that the man is alive and is playing the flute:

Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm dlha loo moog nteg kag tuab tug nam muvghev tso plhuav rua huv lub nam taub, hab muab lub taub ntsa nkaus rua ntawm qaab raaj.

‘The Ruler’s youngest daughter than ran and caught a *muvghev* and put it inside the gourd and nailed the gourd to a flute’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **qho** (see also *qhov*): *nub poob qho* ‘sunset’ (*Xiongs*).

- **qho**: *ua ntej qho yim* ‘first’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **qho ntsiv** ‘some’:

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab
 ‘you should save some money too’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov** ‘(classifier *lub*) hole’ (Xiongs) (see also *qho*):

to ib lub qhov ‘to be pierced with a hole’ (Xiongs).

tsag 1/ Raab tsag txaug qhov cug.
 ‘tsag 1/ Cutter for chiseling the hole a in treadmill’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **qhov** ‘thing’:

Qhov kws tseem ceeb tshaaj plawg
 ‘The thing that was most important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **qhov**: *to qhov* ‘everyone knows about that’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov cub** ‘fireplace’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **qhov dlej** ‘water hole’:

Tug nam zaaj, Zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb, nyob huv lub nam qhov dlej
 ‘A dragon, Zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb, who lived in that water hole’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **qhov dlej txhawv** ‘(classifier *lub*) spring (river)’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov muag** ‘(classifier *lub*) eye’ (Xiongs):

av qhov muag ‘(classifier *lub*) eye glasses’ (Xiongs).

ntxi qhov muag ‘open the eyes’ (Xiongs).

qas qhov muag ‘bad looking’ (Xiongs).

qe ib saab qhov muag ‘to close one eye’ (Xiongs).

qhov muag xauj tsi pum ‘cannot see with the eyes’ (Xiongs).

tshaws kuv qhov muag lawm ‘there is something in my eyes’ (Xiongs).

tsi tshaws qhov muag ‘not important, not big’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov muag teev** ‘the scale on the scale, the marks on the balance’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov muag txaij** ‘to have illusion, unable to see clearly’ (Xiongs):

Ab yawd! yog meb pum Suav Los Paav ua luam dlua kev meb qhovmuag txaij meb laam has le.
 ‘Oh, my! When you saw the Chinese merchant going by on business, you must have had a hallucination. You’re pulling my leg’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **qhov nuav** ‘this’:

Kuv xaav kom koj paab ua qhov nuav rua kuv
 ‘I wish you can do this for me’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov ncauj** ‘mouth, source, opening’ (Xiongs):

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **qhovntuj** ‘chasm’:

Cuav Tshoj Tim dlov pobzeb moog txhawg qhovntuj taag lawm
 ‘Cuav Tshoj Tim had rolled stones completely stuffing up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 23).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlob
 ‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **qhov ntsej** ‘ear’ (Xiongs):

mob qhov ntsej ‘ear-ache’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov ntswg** ‘(classifier *lub*) nose’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov qhais** ‘the neck, the cut’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov rais** ‘(classifier *lub*) window, opening’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov rawg** ‘hollow of the knee’ (Lyman p. 95):

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **qhov rooj** ‘(classifier *lub*) door’ (Xiongs):

qheb qhov rooj ‘open the door’ (Xiongs).

xauv qhov rooj ‘lock the door’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov rooj cais** ‘hall door’, the side door of a house as opposed to *qhov rooj taag*, the main door (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **qhov rooj taag** ‘main door’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **qhov seem** ‘(something) left over, remaining, unused’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov sib txuas** ‘knot, connection, join’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov taub** ‘jail’:

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug

lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov twg** ‘where’ (Xiongs) (also written *hov twg*):

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyoob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug.

‘Let me tell you, O elder, where bamboo and trees came from’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?

‘Where Does Mong Traditional Religion Come From?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas*, title).

Koj yuav moog qhov twg? Hab yog ua le caag koj yuav chim ua luaj?

‘Where are you going? And why are you so angry?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

Peb tsi muaj leej twg pum hab paub hastas Ntxwj Nyoog zoo le caag hab nyob rua qhov twg

‘We do not have anyone who sees him or knows what Ntxwj Nyoog is like and where he lives’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81).

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le

‘It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

- **qhov tsev** ‘a crack in the wall of a house’ (Heimbach p. 271):

Txha xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag. Nam tsuag tsiv quas loo rua peg qhov tsev lawm.

‘Then they tried to give it a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat. The rat ran up into a crack in the wall.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

- **qhov tsus** ‘armpit’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov tsua** ‘cave in the rock, also called *qhov zeb*’ (Xiongs). Also written *qhov tsuas*.

- **qhov tsuas** ‘cave’, also written *qhov tsua*:

Tes rooj tsuas quas nkaus. Tes aub! nrug puj dlaab nam ntxhais nyob tsausntuj quas nti huv nam qhov tsuas.

‘The door of the cave closed. And then, do you know what? The young man stayed with the female spirit’s daughter in the darkness of the cave!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **qhov txus** ‘stove/range for a wok’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15):

The large wok is bought first (or two of them), then the stove is built from bricks to fit. Sometimes rammed clay is used instead of bricks, using the same construction technique as rammed earth house walls (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

The location of the *qhov txus* in the floor plan of a house is shown in *Tswv Yim* (p. 15).

- **qhov txhaab** ‘abcess’:

yuav tsum tu hab qhov txhaab xam tsi voog

‘the abcess should be taken care of so as not to get worse’ (Xiongs).

Second syllable from Chinese 疮 *chuāng* ‘sore, running sore’, a relatively early loan, probably predating contact with Southwestern Mandarin.

- **qhov zawj** ‘(classifier *lub*) a depression in the landscape with higher ground rising all around’ (Xiongs).

- **qhov zeb** ‘cave in the rock, also called *qhov tsua*’ (Xiongs).

- **qhua** ‘(classifier *tug*) stranger, guest, people from outside’ (Xiongs) (see also *qhuas*):

moog ua qhua ‘to be a guest, to go to another place to participate in a funeral’ (Xiongs).

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **qhua** ‘Mong clan name’ as opposed to *xeem* ‘Chinese clan name’. The *xeem* and their corresponding *qhua* are as follows (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9):

xeem Faaj (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Haam = *qhua* Taag

xeem Hawj = *qhua* Dluag

xeem Khaab = *qhua* Plua

xeem Koo = *qhua* Xoom

xeem Kwm = *qhua* Nkws

xeem Lauj (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Lis = *qhua* Cai

xeem Muas = *qhua* Zaag

xeem Phaab (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Thoj = *qhua* Dlub

xeem Tsaab = *qhua* Nrig

xeem Tsheej (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Tswb (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Vaaj = *qhua* Vug

xeem Vwj (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Xyooj = qhua Mob

xeem Yaaj = qhua Yawg

- **qhua**, general term for ‘clan’, regardless of whether called by the Mong name or the Chinese name:

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;

these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;

these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;

these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

In these verses, Yaaj and Lauj are Chinese clan names and Dluag and Mob are Mong clan names but both are called *qhua*.

Qhua can also mean ‘clan’ in the broader sense of ‘group’ as when one speaks of the clan of shamanic spirits:

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **qhua** (see also *qhuas*):

mob qhua taum ‘to have smallpox’ (Xiongs).

ua qhua ‘to have measles’ (Xiongs) (see also *qhuas*).

- **qhua**: *cov qhua vaav* ‘the bridegroom’s party’ (Xiongs).

- **qhua**: *cov qhua xeem* ‘clans and surnames’:

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua

‘When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with houses roofed with banana leaves’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **qhua**: *dlaab qhuas* or *dlaab ... qhua* traditional Mong animist religion:

Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?

‘Where Does Mong Traditional Religion Come From?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas*, title).

Thau u, luas tsi yog ua “Dlaab”. Nwg yog ua “Qhua” xwb.

Long ago, it was not that a person did “Dlaab”. It was that he or she did “Qhua” only. (*Dlaab Qhuas*, preface.)

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai Dlaab Qhuas.

‘There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

The literal meaning of *dlaab qhuas* is uncertain, since *qhua* means both ‘clan’ and ‘guest’, and may have other meanings as well. “Spirits of the clan” seems to me to be a more likely interpretation than “guests”, but it is not certain that either interpretation is correct. Xeev Nruag Xyooj’s book *Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?*

‘Where Does the Mong Way of Dlaab Qhuas Come From?’ (Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985) comprises seven chapters, as follows:

- Qhuabke ‘Showing the Way’, which gives the text of the Showing the Way funeral ceremony.
- Moob Tusub ‘The Mong Sever the Sub’, which explains the origin of the ceremony performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar for getting rid of the spirit that causes bloody accidents.
- Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’, which explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.
- Ntawv Xwmkaab ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’, which explains the origin and significance of the sheet of ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house, opposite the main door.
- Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj ‘Doing the Spirit Pig / Door Pig’, which explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.
- Laig Dlaab ‘Offering Food to the Ancestors’, which explains the origin of this important part of Mong traditional religion.
- Moob Xaam Noobnyoog ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’, which lists the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) after whom months and days are named, describes the symbolic significance of these animals, and describes methods for calculating and keeping track of dates.

- **qhua**: *nub qhua txhig* ‘the day of preparation for the dead, the day before the burial, day when relatives bring rice, paper money, etc. as gifts for the deceased’ (Heimbach p. 272 *hnuh ua qhua txws*):

Nub ntawd yog nub qhua txhig.

‘That day was the day before the burial’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **qhua**: *nteeg qhua* ‘funeral guests’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm muab tug nam phubthawj hov tua lug ua nqaj rua nteeg qhua ntawd noj.

‘So the Male Spirit then killed the Kammu woman and prepared meat for the funeral guests to eat’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 12).

- **qhua neeb**, shamans’ ceremonies which are spoken in Mong (as opposed to *qhua suav*) (*Entre* pp. 171-181).

- **qhua suav**, shamans’ ceremonies which are spoken in Chinese (as opposed to *qhua neeb*) (*Entre* pp. 182-189).

- **qhuab** ‘to advise, to teach, to instruct’ (Xiongs).

- **qhuab** ‘to beat, to hit, to knock down’ (Xiongs).

- **Qhuab Ke** ‘Showing the Way’ or **Taw Kev** ‘Pointing Out the Way’, the first performed of the funeral ceremonies, the initial words spoken to the dead person to give them instructions for their journey to retrieve their documents of reincarnation or to meet their ancestors.

Published Mong Leng or Mong Njua versions of the Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev include the Mong texts in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 1-18) and *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 75-81), the Mong text and a French translation, along with analysis and discussion, in *Initiation* (Mong text pp. 119-139, French translation pp. 17-39), and an English translation in Chindarsi (1976:145-148).

The names Qhuab Ke and Taw Kev appear to be synonymous, some sources using one name, some the other:

Dlaab Qhuas: Qhuab Ke.

Cim Xeeb: Qhuab Ke / Taw Kev.

Initiation: “Kr’oua Ke” [= Qhuab Ke].

Chindarsi: “Terjee” [= Taw Kev].

The Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev is one of the great foundational texts of Mong culture. It tells how the dead person must thank the spirits of the different parts of the house, the spirits of the granaries and animal pens, and the tutelary deities (*xeeb*) of the land and the place, all of whom have protected the dead person during his or her life. It tells how the dead person must retrace all the places where they lived, returning to the house where they were born to retrieve their placenta which was buried in the floor of the house. It tells how the dead person must avoid traps and pitfalls during their journey to heaven. They must refuse to let the Chinese sell them a parasol as they climb the steps to the sky. They must tie red thread around their fingers so that when the spirits who peel garlic and onions try to capture them, they can say, “My fingers are bleeding. I cannot peel garlic

and onions with you.” They must carry balls of hemp to “stop up the mouths of dragons and tigers” in order to pass safely through a region of sharp rocks and crevices, and they must wear hemp shoes to walk safely on the backs of stinging hairy caterpillars.

There are many different versions of the Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev. Taken together synoptically they are one of our best sources for Mong beliefs about the cosmos and about death.

Woven into the Qhuab Ke or Taw Kev are myths: the origin of death, which the dead person may recite to the household spirits in explaining to them that he or she has died and must leave the house, the origin of humanity, the origin of the sacrificial rooster that serves as the dead person’s guide on his or her journey, and the origin of the bamboo and trees used to make the dead person’s bier and coffin.

- **qhuas** ‘to encourage verbally, to felicitate’ (Xiongs):

ua qhuas ntxhas ‘to do with pride’ (Xiongs).

- **qhuas**: *dlaab qhuas* or *dlaab ... qhua* traditional Mong animist religion:

Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?

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Thau u, luas tsi yog ua “Dlaab”. Nwg yog ua “Qhua” xwb.

Long ago, it was not that a person did “Dlaab”. It was that he or she did “Qhua” only. (*Dlaab Qhuas*, preface.)

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai Dlaab Qhuas.

‘There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

The literal meaning of *dlaab qhuas* is uncertain, since *qhua* means both ‘clan’ and ‘guest’, and may have other meanings as well. “Spirits of the clan” seems to me to be a more likely interpretation than “guests”, but it is not certain that either interpretation is correct. Xeev Nruag Xyooj’s book *Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?* ‘Where Does the Mong Way of Dlaab Qhuas Come From?’ (Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc., Winfield, Illinois, 1985) comprises seven chapters, as follows:

- Qhuabke ‘Showing the Way’, which gives the text of the Showing the Way funeral ceremony.
- Moob Tusub ‘The Mong Sever the Sub’, which explains the origin of the ceremony performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar for getting rid of the spirit that causes bloody accidents.
- Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’, which explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.
- Ntawv Xwmkaab ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’, which explains the origin and significance of the sheet of ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house, opposite the

main door.

- Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj ‘Doing the Spirit Pig / Door Pig’, which explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.
- Laig Dlaab ‘Offering Food to the Ancestors’, which explains the origin of this important part of Mong traditional religion.
- Moob Xaam Noobnyoog ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’, which lists the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) after whom months and days are named, describes the symbolic significance of these animals, and describes methods for calculating and keeping track of dates.

- **qhuas**: *nyob qhuas npaws* ‘feverish’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 15) (see also *qhua*).

- **qhuas**: *txaaj qhuas* ‘guest bed’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15) (see also *qhua*).

- **qhuav** ‘dry, empty, vacuum’ (Xiongs):

cwj mem qhuav ‘pencil’ (Xiongs).

ib lub laam fwv qhuav ‘an empty bottle’ (Xiongs).

ib tug maum nyuj qhuav ‘a cow with no calf’ (Xiongs).

qhaa qhuav ‘to stay having nothing’ (Xiongs).

tsi qhuav ‘not dry, wet’ (Xiongs).

ua kom qhuav ‘to dry, to make dry’ (Xiongs).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj tawm ntawd lug ntsib kag YOB NRAUG NTSUAG taab tom nyob huv nwg lub tsev qhuavsuv.

‘So Muam Nkauj Ntsum then came out and found Yob the Orphan there in his bare hut’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

- **qhuav** ‘(no classifier) food, meal, feeding’ (Xiongs). Probably a typo for **qhauv**.

- **qhuav qhawv** ‘completely dry, all gone’ (Xiongs).

- **qhuav qhawv**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov qhuav qhawv [to make the sound qhuav qhawv] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **qhws** ‘(classifier *lub*) kettle’ (Xiongs).

- **qhvw** ‘to envelop, to wrap, to cover, to put something around, to encircle’ (Xiongs):

qhvw pob khoom plig ‘to wrap the gift’ (Xiongs).

Cov tub saab qhvw tau puab lawm. ‘The thieves encircled them already’ (Xiongs).

Nuj Yob saib taag cais tug nam Pujntxoog txhaj moog muab dlaim nyuas khaubhlaab qhwv pis zog choj nyuas nyaj hab cov ntim cov khob nqaa lug tso rua huv nam Pujntxoog lub mej loos lawm.

‘When Nuj Yob was finished looking, the Pujntxoog took a rag, wrapped the silver ingot and the bowls and the cups and put them in her storage basket’ (*Lug Nraug Tsuv* p. 85).

- **qhwv**: *zaub qhwv* ‘cabbage’ (Xiongs).

R

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *r* and *ts*. If a word is not found under *r* look under *ts*.

- **rag** ‘(classifier *raab*) knife’ (Xiongs):

twg rag ‘to use a knife to do something’ (Xiongs).

thaab rag ‘to sharpen a knife’ (Xiongs).

“*Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?*” “*Aub, raab rag nuav coj tuaj tua nraug huas*”.

“Why have you brought that knife?” “Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **raab** ‘the, (an article preceding words for tools)’ (Xiongs):

raab rag ‘the knife’ (Xiongs).

raab dlav ‘the spoon’ (Xiongs).

raab rawg ‘the fork’ (Xiongs).

Muab raab txab dlub rua kuv sob ‘Give me the black scissors please’ (Xiongs).

- **raag** ‘to suddenly be aware of, to remember’ (Xiongs):

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **raag** ‘to run away, to split up’ (Xiongs).

- **raag quas tshis** ‘to gallop’:

nam txiv neeg uab dlub hee raag quas tshis ib yeeg tim u ib yeeg tim nua rov rua nplajteb lawm lauj.

‘the crow-black stallion whinnied and galloped one tier yon, one tier hither and returned to the face of the earth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **raaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) flute, long container’ (Xiongs):

tshuab raaj ‘to play or blow the flute’ (Xiongs).

In a story, a young woman wants to make it appear that a dead man is still alive. She puts

a *muvghev* (a kind of bee called *máofēng* [“hair bee”] in Chinese) inside a gourd and nails the gourd to a flute so that the sound made by the *muvghev* will simulate the sound of a flute and make it appear that the man is alive and is playing the flute:

Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm dlha loo moog nteg kag tuab tug nam muvghev tso plhuav rua huv lub nam taub, hab muab lub taub ntsa nkaus rua ntawm qaab raaj.

‘The Ruler’s youngest daughter than ran and caught a *muvghev* and put it inside the gourd and nailed the gourd to a flute’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **raaj**: *naab raajkubsai* ‘cobra’ (Lyman p. 197):

“Es koj ntshai naab raajkubsai tsi ntshai?”

“Then are you afraid of cobras?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **rais**: *qhov rais* ‘(classifier *lub*) window, opening’ (Xiongs).

- **rau** ‘(classifier *tug*) nail’ (Xiongs):

rau taw ‘toenail’ (Xiongs).

rau teg ‘fingernail’ (Xiongs).

- **rau** ‘to put on (shoes)’ (Xiongs).

- **rau** ‘to put in the hole’ (Xiongs), ‘to put in, insert’ (Lyman p. 93). See also *tsau*.

- **rau** ‘to put in a group or pile’ (Xiongs).

- **rau** ‘six, the numeral six’ (Xiongs).

- **rau**: *muab rau txim* ‘to punish’ (Xiongs).

- **rau caum** ‘sixty’ (Xiongs).

- **rau mov** ‘to put food on the table’ (Xiongs).

- **rau sab** ‘to put one’s heart into, to devote one’s self, to do steadfastly’:

rau sab heev zog ntxiv ‘work a little harder’ (Xiongs).

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj

‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

rau sab ntso ua kom tav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to make sure that one is ready].

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **rau taw** ‘toenail’ (Xiongs).

- **rau teg** ‘fingernail’ (Xiongs).

- **raub** ‘to scratch the ground’ (Xiongs) (also written *tsaub*).

- **raub ris** ‘(classifier *tug*) crab’ (Xiongs).

- **raug** ‘to get hurt, to be injured wounded’ (Xiongs):

Tug nam zaaj raug mob lawm

‘The dragon was suffering from his wound’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **raug**, preceding a noun, ‘to be injured by, to have an adverse encounter with’:

Nqai raug phom hab ntoo ntaus tes tug tuag cuab teb le kws has sau nuav. Kuas xaus ib yam le nqai 4 ntaag.

‘In the cantos about being shot and struck by a tree, the dead person begins his or her reply as written here, and ends as in canto 4’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej

‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s axe behind one ear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* page 14).

- **raug** ‘to be (passive voice)’ (Xiongs):

cov raug quab yuam ‘the oppressed people’ (Xiongs).

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs)
[“her/his punishment is to be locked up ...”].

nwg raug maum nyuj tuam ‘s/he was kicked by a cow’ (Xiongs).

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub*?] *zaig zig*

‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev

‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

Txhua tug tu Sub, paub tsi has Sub txiv Sub tub raug muab tua tuag taag lawm tshuav puj Sub xwb.

‘Everyone cuts off the Sub, regardless of the fact that Sub the father and Sub the son were killed and only Mrs. Sub remained’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 34).

Nwg yawm yij nuav raug hu moog ua tshwjkaab kaavxwm.

‘His sister’s husband had been called to be the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies [at the funeral]’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **raug** ‘to strike, to hit the mark’:

In a story explaining the origin of making offerings to one’s ancestors, two brothers are frightened when the animals in their house begin to speak because they believe it to be a bad omen. When a rat speaks, the brothers try to hit it with a pepper-pestle but miss:

Txha xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag.

‘Then they tried to give it a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

Then the pestle speaks:

“*Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le*”.

“Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot.” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

- **raug** ‘to hit the mark, get the right answer’:

Koj xuas tsi raug le ntaag lov? ‘Can’t you get it at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **raug** ‘to come into being, to appear’ (also written *tsaug*):

Lug nruag ntuj tsim teb raug Moob

‘The Mong story of the sky being formed and the earth coming into being’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 22).

Quas tsi raug nraag ntej, yog Nkauj Ab raug nraag ntej.

‘Who appeared first? The Mist Maiden appeared first.

Quas tsi raug nraag hau, yog Nkauj Ab raug nraag hau!

Who appeared in the beginning? The Mist Maiden appeared in the beginning’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

- **raug**, used with numbers:

Ib xyoos xyoos twb yuav muag raug 400 txug 500 kiv qhauv noj. Ib kiv ntsab twb nto ib dlaim txaj lawm.

‘Each year we buy 400 to 500 jin [200 to 250 kilos] of food. One jin [half a kilo] of rice costs one yuan’ (Xyooj Me Choj, *Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 20).

- **raug**: *nam txiv ib txhis raug* ‘naturally fit together as a pair or couple’ (Xiongs).

- **rauj** ‘(classifier *raab*) hammer’ (Xiongs).

- **rauj** ‘winter’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 433 zhoux):

Muaj ib xyoos nim yuav txug dlua lub nam 6 hli ntuj xub yuam rauj

‘One year, it was almost past the sixth month before the press of winter’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

- **raum** ‘(classifier *lub*) kidney’ (Xiongs).

- **raus** ‘to dye, to put into a liquid, to wet’ (Xiongs).

- **rauv** ‘to light a fire, to set a fire’ (Xiongs).

- **rauv** ‘(no classifier) spot, dot, group of designs or figures’ (Xiongs).

- **rauv tawg** ‘to set a fire’ (Xiongs).

- **rauv thee** ‘to light the charcoal’ (Xiongs).

- **rawg** ‘(classifier *raab*) fork’ (Xiongs):

tug rawg tais nqaj noj ‘chop-sticks’ (Xiongs).

- **rawg**: *qhov rawg* ‘hollow of the knee’ (Lyman p. 95):

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj, ob raab rhais huv quav npaab, ob raab rhais nkaus huv qhov rawg.
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths, two razors in the folds of their arms, two razors in the hollows of their knees’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **rawm** ‘to be in a hurry, to want to speed up’ (Xiongs):

xob rawm ua ‘don’t do it’ (Xiongs).

- **raws** ‘to follow, to do accordingly to’ (Xiongs):

raws le ‘according to, following’ (Xiongs).

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws ua neej nyob raws xeem hab raws paab pawg.
 ‘The Mong are are ethnic group who live their lives in accordance with clan and subgroup divisions’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Tab sis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub, puab leeg raws le puab txuj kev xaav hab kwv yees xwb.

‘But the truth is that there is no one who knows. Everyone just follows what they think and suppose’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 80).

- **rawv** or **quas rawv** ‘post verbal intensifier, meaning firmly’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, tightly’ (Xiongs p. 556):

coj rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to manage firmly?]

dlai rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to cling or grasp tightly?]

hai rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to pull firmly].

khi rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to tie tightly].

nqaa rawv (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to carry firmly].

nyob rawv ‘to stay firmly’ (Xiongs, entry for rawv).

tuav rawv ‘to hold firmly’ (Xiongs, entry for rawv and p. 556).

- **re** or **rev** ‘(no classifier) stem (leaves, flower, fruit)’ (Xiongs)

Noog Yaajqawg txawm nqaa pis nroog ib tug ib rev noob zaub
 ‘the Swallows came one after another each carrying a stem of vegetable seeds’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 9).

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then you all spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, huv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **rig** ‘(classifier *lub*) pants, trousers’ (Xiongs) (also written *tsig*):

Nwg txhaj muab nwg tug nqaj nraaj zais nkaus rua huv taug rig hab nyob tsawg ndlua, cais nwg tug nqaj nraaj kub nwg pobtw, nwg txhaj rov qaab sawv tseeg, hab has

‘He then hid his pheasant meat in the seat of his trousers and stayed as he was, and then his pheasant meat burned his buttocks and he jumped back up and said’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

In the following example, it is possible that the writer, Laaj Soobleej Hawj, intends to indicate that *rig* is the White Hmong pronunciation corresponding to Mong Leng *tsig*, but other sources show that Mong Leng also use the pronunciation *rig*:

Moob Dlawb le, quas yawg naav tsig (losyog rig) taug huv (pov taub).

‘Among the White Mong, the men wear trousers – *tsig* (or *rig*) – with a short – *huv (pov taub)* – seat’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **rig** ‘to tie, to bind, to attach’ (Xiongs).

- **rig tsho** ‘clothes, clothing’ (Xiongs):

cev rig tsho nuav xoob lawm ‘this suit is big’ (Xiongs).

khuab rig tsho ‘(classifier *tug*) hanger’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm

‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

Tsi xob zwv koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav

‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

yaug rig tsho ‘to rinse the clothes’ (Xiongs).

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for ntshauv?]. Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **ris** ‘to take the responsibility for, to be responsible for, to carry on the back, to bear’ (Xiongs):

Nam puj dlaab txawm ris ib lub kawm

‘The female spirit then was carrying on her back a basket’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **ris**, a backload, a load carried in a back-basket:

In a folktale, a female spirit fights with two young men, hoping to kill them and bring their meat home in a back-basket for herself and her daughter to eat, but the young men are too much for her and she flees, her basket empty, back to her cave. When she arrives, her daughter says:

Awb! moog saib nam ris nraug nqaj lug oj!
 ‘Hello! Let’s go see the backload of young-man meat!’

and she replies:

Haub-yaub! nam ris nraug nqaj, nam ris nraug nqaj!
 Good grief! Backload of young-man meat, backload of young-man meat!

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **ris**, intensifier:

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,
Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.
 ‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,
 Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle
 your way’ (*Initiation* pp. 129).

- **ris**: *raub ris* ‘(classifier *tug*) crab’ (Xiongs).

- **ris txaj** ‘grateful’ (Xiongs).

- **rob** ‘to revenge, to avenge, to fight back, to ask for the repayment of a debt’ (Xiongs).

- **rob**, classifier for trees, bushes, etc. (also written *tsob*):

nkaaj ‘(classifier *rob*) indigo plant’ (Xiongs).

nroj ‘(classifier *rob*, *cov*, or *re*) herb, weeds, vegetation’ (Xiongs).

- **rog** ‘(adjective) fat’ (Xiongs) (see also *roj*):

nqaj rog ‘fat’ (Xiongs).

- **rog** ‘oil’ (see also *roj*):

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!
 ‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **rog** ‘war’:

Moob Ua Rog Vwm (1919-1921) ‘The Mong Wage the Crazy War (1919-1921)’ (*Rog Vwm*, title).

- **rog**: *kev tsuv rog* ‘war’ (Xiongs).

- **rog**: *tawg rog* ‘to flee out as refugee’ (Xiongs).

- **rog**: *tub rog* ‘(classifier *tug*) soldier; soldier, military’ (Xiongs):

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
 ‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim ‘the soldiers will have to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

- **roj** ‘(noun) fat, oil, gas’ (Xiongs) (see also *rog*):

koom roj ntshaa ‘thoroughbred’ (Xiongs).

nyuv roj maab ‘plastic tube’ (Xiongs).

- **roj naab maas kaj** ‘kerosene, petroleum, from Lao *nànm mán kâat*’ (Tswv Yim p. 4).

- **rov** ‘to return, to go back, to come back to make one feel lost’ (Xiongs).

- **rov qaab** ‘to go or come back’:

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog
rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlob
 ‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 28).

- **rov qaab**, following a verb, ‘back’:

them rov qaab ‘to pay back’ (Xiongs).

Mey [typo for *Mej*?] *yuav tsum them \$10 txhiv rov qaab*
 ‘You should pay \$10 in order to buy it back’ (Xiongs).

- **rov rooj** ‘to return to the door’, to pay the customary visit to the wife’s parents shortly after a couple has been married (see also *fij meej*):

Lob Lw, nub nua wb tub nthua nplej hab ua dlejnum taag lug lawm cais koj xaa kuv rov
qaab moog nrug kuv nam kuv txiv ua maaj ua ntus, xaws rig xaws tsho, hab koj lug rua
koj naav ais wb yuav ‘ROV ROOJ’ moog saib nam saib txiv, saib neej saib tsaav.
 ‘Lob Lw, today the two of us have finished weeding the rice and working so escort me back to weave hemp-cloth and sew clothing with my parents for you to wear and you and I will “RETURN TO THE DOOR” to see my parents and my kinsmen’ (Kwvhuam p. 26).

- **roob** ‘(classifier *lub*) mountain, hill’ (Xiongs):

hauv roob ‘mountain top’ (Xiongs).

peg ncov roob ‘upon the mountain top’ (Xiongs).

pob roob ‘mountain, hill’ (Xiongs).

toj roob ‘mountain, hill’ (Xiongs).

toj roob hauv peg ‘lands and mountains’ (Xiongs).

- **roob qheb** ‘shin’ (Xiongs):

txhaa roob qheb ‘tibia, shin bone’ (Xiongs).

- **roog** ‘to protect, to put shade on, to cover, to hide’ (Xiongs):

kaus roog ‘(classifier *lub*) umbrella’ (Xiongs).

kaus roog tshaav ntuj ‘(classifier *lub*) parasol’ (Xiongs).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **roog** ‘door’ (see also *rooj*): *dlaab roog* ‘spirit of the door’:

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **rooj** ‘(classifier *lub*) table, desk’ (Xiongs):

ceg rooj ‘table leg’ (Xiongs).

hauv rooj ‘the VIP’s seats’ (Xiongs).

qaab rooj ‘under the table, secretly’ (Xiongs).

qaum rooj ‘on the table, openly’ (Xiongs).

rub zog saum [sic] *rooj* ‘to deploy or set right on the table or publicly’ (Xiongs). *Saum* is an unusual spelling for *sau*, possibly reflecting White Hmong influence.

teeb cov rooj ‘to set the tables’ (Xiongs).

muab txawb rua sau rooj ‘stand it on the table’ (Xiongs).

- **rooj** ‘table’: *ceg rooj* ‘table leg’ (Xiongs):

Ntxawm moog nqaa hlo plaub choj nyaj lug xab ceg rooj.

‘Ntxawm brought four ingots of silver to put under the legs of the table’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **rooj** ‘door’ (see also *roog*): *dlaab rooj txaag* ‘spirit of the bedroom door’:

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,
 ‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,
Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.
 Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle
 your way’ (*Initiation* p. 129).

- **rooj** ‘door’ (see also *roog*): *dlaab rooj txus* ‘spirit of the kitchen door’:

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab.

‘The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **rooj** ‘door’ (see also *roog*): *qhov rooj* ‘(classifier *lub*) door, opening’ (Xiongs):

qheb qhov rooj ‘open the door’ (Xiongs).

xauv qhov rooj ‘lock the door’ (Xiongs).

- **rooj** ‘door’ (see also *roog*): *rov rooj* ‘to return to the door’, to pay the customary visit to the wife’s parents shortly after a couple has been married (see also *fij meej*):

Lob Lw, nub nua wb tub nthua nplej hab ua dlejnum taag lug lawm cais koj xaa kuv rov qaab moog nrug kuv nam kuv txiv ua maaj ua ntus, xaws rig xaws tsho, hab coj lug rua koj naav ais wb yuav ‘ROV ROOJ’ moog saib nam saib txiv, saib neej saib tsaav.
 ‘Lob Lw, today the two of us have finished weeding the rice and working so escort me back to weave hemp-cloth and sew clothing with my parents for you to wear and you and I will “RETURN TO THE DOOR” to see my parents and my kinsmen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

- **rooj** ‘door’ (see also *roog*): *ua npua dlaab / npua rooj*, name of a ceremony:

The chapter titled *Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj* ‘Doing the Spirit Pig / Door Pig’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 57-61) explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.

Chindarsi (1976:113-119) devotes seven pages to the ceremony. He calls it “The Ceremony of the Door Spirit” and includes it under the heading “Ceremonies distinguishing sub-clans” in his chapter titled “Ceremonies and Beliefs Affecting Social Cohesion”. Chindarsi includes seven drawings showing how different people divide up the meat of the pig.

- **rooj**, classifier:

loos ‘(classifier *rooj*) trap, pitfall for birds’ (Xiongs).

yej ‘(classifier *rooj*) a trap set with a slab of wood or rock triggered to fall quickly on the animal’ (Xiongs).

- **rooj cais**: *qhov rooj cais* ‘hall door’, the side door of a house as opposed to *qhov rooj taag*, the main door (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **Rooj Ntawv Moob** ‘Mong Volunteer Literacy’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Mong Volunteer Literacy’s logo is a drawing of a clump of bamboo with three birds sitting on one of the branches, surrounded by the words Mong Volunteer Literacy, Inc. – Rooj Ntawv Moob.

- **roojntug** ‘the door of heaven’:

Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ...”

The doorkeeper of the door of heaven cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...” (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **rooj ntخاب** ‘trap’ (Xiongs).

- **rooj nyob** ‘(classifier *lub*) chair’ (Xiongs).

- **rooj qav** ‘meal’ (Xiongs) (also written *qaav*):

Kuv vaam tas koj yuav tuaj koom peb rooj qav hab
‘I hope that you will participate in the feast with us’ (Xiongs).

- **rooj taaj ib** ‘(classifier *lub*) chair’ (Xiongs). From Lao *tāng ìi*.

- **rooj tsuas** ‘the door of a cave’:

Lawv ntug lawv ntug moog txug ntawm rooj tsuas tes nam puj dlaab nkaag plawg huv tsev.

‘They pursued her, hacking away, right up to the door of her cave and the female spirit dashed into her home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **rooj taag**:

qhov rooj taag ‘main door’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors’ garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors’ house.

Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev tshab.

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors' new home.

Roog taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors' garden!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18.)

- **roog tshoob** 'wedding' (Xiongs).

- **roog txaag**: *dlaab roog txaag* 'spirit of the bedroom door' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

- **roog txus**: *dlaab roog txus* 'spirit of the kitchen door' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

- **roov**: *noog roov* '(classifier *tug*) a kind of bird' (Xiongs), 'hornbill' (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

I have not come across hornbills in Mong Volunteer Literacy's Mong Leng texts, but there is a White Hmong story in which a kindly fly magically shrinks the protagonist so that he can crawl into a hornbill's crop and be flown to be reunited with his wife. Below is a photograph of Austen's brown hornbill, *Anorrhinus austeni* (called *noog roov qaib* 'chicken hornbill' in White Hmong) that Michael Johnson sent me:



- **rub** 'to put extra weight or burden on, to overload, to pull, to set' (Xiongs).

- **rub zog saum** [sic] **roog** 'to deploy or set right on the table or publicly' (Xiongs). *Saum* is an unusual spelling for *sau*, possibly reflecting White Hmong influence.

- **rug** '(no classifier) pace, walk' (Xiongs). See also *ruj*.

- **rug**, intensifier:

tes moog txug sau nyaj vaab tuam teem muab plaub txuj saw hlau khi plaub txhais teg taw ua ruam quas rug

'and when they arrived on high, Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem took four iron chains and bound their four limbs rendering them immobile' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **ruj** 'to step on, to walk on' (Xiongs) (see also *rug*) (also written *tsuj*):

rhu ruj ‘to walk, to pace’ (Xiongs).

- **ruv** ‘(classifier *lub*) roof’ (Xiongs).

- **rua** ‘to’ (Xiongs):

has rua ‘talk to, tell someone’ (Xiongs).

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for *teb*] ‘turn the head to the north’ (Xiongs).

nwg tsem rua saab xis lawm ‘s/he turned to the right already’ (Xiongs).

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej
‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.
‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **rua** ‘to give to’:

moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.
‘and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **rua** ‘(to act a particular way) to or toward (someone):

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv; tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.
‘A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents; an animal refuses to obey its master’
(*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **rua** ‘at’:

zuaj phom rua ‘to fire at, to shoot, to pull the trigger at’ (Xiongs).

Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!
‘Why are you going at my wound with such force?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

- **rua** ‘for’:

Kuv xaav kom koj paab ua qhov nuav rua kuv
‘I wish you can do this for me’ (Xiongs).

Txaaj chaw rua tub ntxhais hluas
‘The bed for the younger sons and daughters’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!
‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum.
‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see’ (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4).

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!

‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?

‘Brother-in-law, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

- **rua** ‘in, into’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **rua** ‘in (a particular country)’:

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj

‘among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty [China] to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty [outside of China]’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

Kuv coj ib tug nyuas tub es moog poob tau rua dlaabntxaug teb

‘I brought a boy and fell into the ntxaug spirits country’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **rua** ‘in (heaven), on (earth)’:

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **rua** ‘(to push the door) in’:

thawb lub qhov rooj rua ‘push the door in’ (Xiongs).

- **rua** ‘on’:

Peb zum [typo for zwm] rua lub nroog Milwaukee

‘we rely on Milwaukee; we are in the Milwaukee area or boundary’ (Xiongs).

Milwaukee is the U.S. city where the Xiongs’ dictionary was written.

- **rua** ‘with’:

tug dlej nuav moog tshuam rua dlej Mississippi

‘this river merges with the Mississippi River’ (Xiongs).

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “*Peb yuav tsum sib hlub*”
s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

- **rua** ‘to open, to widen, to spread, to enlarge’ (Xiongs):

Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj
‘Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **rua**: *mob rua* ‘(no classifier) leprosy’ (Xiongs).

- **rua**: *moog rua* ‘to, toward’:

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub
‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **rua**: *muab rua* ‘to give to’ (Xiongs):

Muab raab txab dlub rua kuv sob
‘Give me the black scissors please’ (Xiongs).

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv
‘I will give you real ones to take to use’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

- **rua**: *ntsaws ... rua* ‘to plug up’:

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua
‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **rua**: *ntxim yuav muab ncu rua sab ca* ‘memorable’ (Xiongs).

- **rua**: *nyob huv rua* ‘within’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **rua**: *tso rua* ‘to place, to set down’:

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus hab tua ob tug lauv qab

saam coj moog tso rua peg.

‘Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full, and kill a capon and bring it and leave it up there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **rua:** *ua rua* ‘to cause one to do such-and-such’, ‘to make it so that such-and-such’:

Lub ntuj nuav ua rua kuv ncu txug kuv zaaj npausuav kws kuv tau ua thaus kuv tsheem yau

‘This sky reminds me of a dream I had when I was still small’ (*Ua Npausuav* p. 6).

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le

‘It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **rua:** *xaa ... rua* ‘to send (something) to (someone):

Kuv xaa dlaim dluab nuav tuaj rua koj

‘I send you this photo (or picture)’ (Xiongs).

- **rua:** *yog qws rua* ‘to scare or frighten someone with a stick, to pretend beating with a stick’ (Xiongs).

- **rua hov** ‘there’:

Tes nim muab hlo ib lub zimtxwv nyaj coj lug txawb nkaus rua hov

‘Then she brought a silver chair and set it down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

- **rua huv** ‘in, into’:

cov kua qaub thaws taag rua huv lawm ‘the vinegar soaks in all’ (Xiongs).

nkaag rua huv ‘to get into’ (Xiongs).

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975

‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua, muab

nrum nroog rua huv nam dlej.

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd, and flung it into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **rua huv** ‘onto’:

poob rua huv peg teb ‘to fall to the ground’ (Xiongs).

- **rua huv**: *moog rua huv* ‘to participate’:

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau

‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

- **rua muag** ‘to open the eyes, try to be open minded, to see wider’ (Xiongs).

- **rua ncauj** ‘to open the mouth’ (Xiongs).

- **rua nraag** ‘down at’:

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **rua ntawm** ‘to’:

Muab nwg zag rua ntawm ntoo ‘tie her, him or it to the tree’ (Xiongs).

- **rua sau** ‘on’:

muab txawb rua sau rooj ‘stand it on the table’ (Xiongs).

Muab txawb rua sau txee ‘put it on the shelf’ (Xiongs).

- **rua yeebceeb** “in the yin world” (Chinese *yīnjiān*), i.e. the spirit world, as opposed to *sau yaajceeb* “on the yang world” (Chinese *yángjiān*), i.e. the world of living human beings:

One speaks of being “in the yin world” (*rua yeebceeb*) but “on the yang world” (*sau yaajceeb*).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world, but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **ruag**, intensifier:

Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj

‘Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **ruag** ‘stupid, dumb, unable to speak, illiterate’ (Xiongs).

- **ruag qauj** ‘stupid, not clever, retarded’ (Xiongs).
- **ruaj** ‘firm, enduring, durable, steady, lasting’ (Xiongs).
- **ruaj nreeg** ‘firmly’ (Xiongs).
- **ruam** ‘(no classifier) pace, walk’ (Xiongs). Also written *tsuam*.
- **ruam** ‘immobile’:

tes moog txug sau nyaj vaab tuam teem muab plaub txuj saw hlau khi plaub txhais teg taw ua ruam quas rug

‘and when they arrived on high, Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem took four iron chains and bound their four limbs rendering them immobile’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **ruam** ‘press one thing on top of another’ (also written *tsuam*):

Muaj ib xyoos nim yuav txug dlua lub nam 6 hli ntuj xub yuam rauj

‘One year, it was almost past the sixth month before the press of winter’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

- **ruav**, intensifier (also written *tsuav*):

When a person dies, the household spirits try to prevent him or her from leaving the house:

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘When you go the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart their fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab.

‘The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

- **rwb** ‘(no classifier) cotton, wool’ (Xiongs).
- **rwg** ‘the smallest’ (Xiongs).
- **Rwg**, name of one of the fighters in the Rog Vwm (Crazy War), the Mong rebellion against the French in Indochina from 1919-1921:

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”
 ‘When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!”’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 8).

- **rwg taw** or **rwg ntiv taw** ‘little toe’ (Xiongs).
- **rwg teg** or **rwg ntiv teg** ‘little finger’ (Xiongs).
- **rwj** ‘(classifier *lub*) a boil, an ulcer, an abscess’ (Xiongs). Also written *tswj*.

RH

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *rh* and *tsh*. If a word is not found under *rh* look under *tsh*.

- **rha** ‘a stitch’:

Ib nub chob lawm cuaj phaab tsoog, / Ib koob lawm cuaj rha laug
 ‘In one day she sewed nine pieces of clothing, / With one needle nine stitches of embroidery’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 7).

The corresponding word in White Hmong begins with *nrh*. It is uncertain whether this a genuine difference between the two dialects or whether *rha* is a typographical error for *nrha*.

- **rhab** ‘to feel afraid of, to feel scared of; ticklish’ (Xiongs).
- **rhais** ‘to move, to displace’ (Xiongs).
- **rhais** ‘to tuck in’ (Heimbach p. 283 rhais):

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug txawm muab ob raab chais rhais nkaus huv qhovncauj
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them then tucked two razors in their mouths’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37).

- **rhau** ‘to drill, to pierce, to make a hole’ (Xiongs) (also written *tshau*):

tug rhau ‘the drill’ (Xiongs).

- **rhaub** ‘to warm or heat up again over a fire, to boil’ (Xiongs):

Tug quaspuj rhaub kag yag roj npau quas dlhev
 ‘His wife quickly heated up a wokful of oil until it was at a rolling boil’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **rhaub dlej** ‘to boil the water’ (Xiongs).

- **rhaub zaub** ‘to warm up the food’ (Xiongs).

- **rhaus** ‘to untie, to slip a knot’ (Xiongs).

- **Rhawm Nyaj Rhawm Kub** ‘the Jar of Silver and of Gold’, which holds the tears of the relatives of a sick person who may die (*Entre* pp. 161-162):

Lemoine’s spelling of the word for ‘jar’ as *rhawm* is unusual. Normally the word for ‘jar’ is spelled *rhawv*.

- **rhawv** ‘(classifier *lub*) a large vessal or tub, a big container or tank’ (Xiongs). (See also *Rhawm* [sic] *Nyaj Rhawm Kub*.)

- **rhawv** ‘to originate, to open’ (Xiongs).

- **rhawv**, a kind of bean:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas tev taum qej taum rhawv tes koj tsi tim saib.
‘When you reach the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, pay no attention to those who peel lima beans and *rhawv* beans’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16).

- **rhawv kev** ‘to open a way, to give away’ (Xiongs). Also written *tshawv kev*.

- **rhe** or **quas rhe** or **pis rhe** ‘post verbal intensifier meaning completely’ (Xiongs), ‘typical intensifier, completely separated’ (Xiongs p. 556) (also written *tshe*):

dlua rhe (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to rip apart].

ndlais rhe (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to break off a piece].

ndluag rhe ‘completely torn’ (Xiongs, entry for *rhe*).

pob rhe (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [a landslide].

tawg rhe ‘entirely broken’ (Xiongs, entry for *rhe*).

- **rheeb** ‘to search for, to scratch’ (Xiongs):

qab rheeb kaab ‘the chicken scratches the ground for insects’ (Xiongs).

- **rhij rhuaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov rhij rhuaj [to make the sound *rhij rhuaj*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **rhoob** ‘to cut something with a dull knife’ (Xiongs).

- **rhu** ‘to pull out, to extract’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj
[typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your

needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **rhu nav** ‘to pull out a tooth (or teeth)’ (Xiongs).

- **rhu ruj** ‘to walk, to pace’ (Xiongs).

- **rhu j rhuav**, intensifier:

Huas Muam Paajlig, Yawm Fuabtais tug nam hlub, kuj ua plhu nphob quas zug, hab xuab kutaw rhu j rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But Muam Paajlig, His Majesty’s senior wife grew more and more pale and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **rhuaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov rhij rhuaj [to make the sound rhij rhuaj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **rhuaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov rhuaj [to make the sound rhuaj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **rhuav** ‘to destroy, to dismantle’ (Xiongs).

- **rhuav**: *rhu j rhuav*, intensifier:

hab xuab kutaw rhu j rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **rhuav tshem** ‘to destroy, to abolish’ (Xiongs).

- **rhwv-mim**: *lej-lwg rhwv-mim*, names evoked in marriage songs (*Tswv Yim* pp. 75-76):

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

S

- **sa** ‘(classifier *txuj*) life, strength’ (Xiongs) (see also *sav*):

Nwg tsi txaj [typo for *txawj*?] *txuag nwg txuj sa*

‘s/he doesn’t know how to care for his life’ (Xiongs).

- **sa** ‘to put on the belt’ (Xiongs):

sa txuj hlaab tauv cawm sa ‘put on the safety belt’ (Xiongs).

- **sa**: *caj sa* ‘living, strong, to gain strength, to come to life’ (Xiongs).

- **sa**: *hlaab tauv cawm sa* ‘(classifier *txuj*) safety belt’:

sa txuj hlaab tauv cawm sa ‘put on the safety belt’ (Xiongs).

- **sa:** *muaj sa* ‘living, strong, to gain strength, to come to life’ (Xiongs).

- **sa:** *txhwv txujsa* ‘to be reborn’:

Yog koj moog tuab tuav nkaus nwg xwb tes yuav laaj laaj txhwv txujsa kuas xeev rov lug le hab.

‘If you were to take hold of him, he would have difficulty in being reborn’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **sab** ‘(classifier *lub*) liver’ (Xiongs).

- **sab** ‘liver’, used metaphorically to refer to emotions or personality, similar to ‘heart’ in English:

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj; muab dlaab ntaus dlua haav, muab dlaab le ntshais muag naav.

‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food. They drove the spirits past the valleys. They sold the spirits’ daughters as clothing’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

Caag namtij hab tijlaug ob tug sab tsi zoo. Ob tug muab mov kuam cej mov kuam xua ntse hauvpaug zaubab rua Nuj Yob noj es tsi noj los tshaib, noj los nim ab ab Nuj Yob sab!

‘Sister-in-law’s and elder brother’s hearts are not good. They give steamed buckwheat and steamed rice bran and the stems of bitter greens to Nuj Yob to eat. If he does not eat them he is hungry. If he eats them, how bitter they are to Nuj Yob’s heart!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **sab** ‘high, tall’ (Xiongs):

ib tug tuag neeg sab ‘a tall person’ (Xiongs).

Kuv sab tshaaj koj ‘I am taller than you’ (Xiongs).

Kuv sab zog koj ‘I am a little taller than you’ (Xiongs).

toj sab ‘highland, in the country’ (Xiongs).

tshoom kom sab zog ‘push a little higher’ (Xiongs).

yaa sab heev ‘to fly up high’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *ca sab* ‘to esteem’, ‘to hope’:

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua

qauv tseg. Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model. My hope is that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **sab:** *hauv sab* ‘chest’ (Xiongs):

ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab
‘the two ntxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **sab:** *hum sab* ‘to comply with what one likes, good, acceptable’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *kaaj sab* ‘happily, with no trouble’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *kaug sab* ‘sternum’ (Xiongs, entry for txhaa ‘bone’).

- **sab:** *khua sab* ‘to feel melancholy, wistful, gloomy, mournful, lamentable, deplorable; to be constable because of too much thinking about boyfriend, girlfriend or life in general’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *lab sab* ‘to have a strong desire for’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *mob sab* ‘to share a strong concern about’ (Xiongs):

mob sab ib zaaj ‘one time of grief’ (Xiongs).

Koj pheej nthe nthe le hov tes ib ntsiv puj Sub mob sab tes puj Sub yeej tuaj xwb los maj!
‘Keep on shouting like that and pretty soon Grandma Sub is going to get annoyed and come’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32).

- **sab:** *nkaag sab* ‘to understand, to realize’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *nplooj sab* ‘sweetheart’:

Nwg yog kuv nplooj sab ‘She is my sweetheart’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *ntaus sab yau* ‘pessimistic’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *ntxeev sab* ‘to betray, to turn back to’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *ntxim sab* ‘wholeheartedly, earnestly’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *ntxim yuav muab neu rua sab ca* ‘memorable’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *ntxhuv sab* ‘having trouble or an unsettled mind; to be upset, worried’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *nyuaj sab* ‘to be upset, worried’ (Xiongs).

- **sab:** *poob sab* ‘to be worried that – ’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *pum sab* ‘to be able to read what others’ attitude is’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *puag sab* ‘deceived’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *qaab sab* ‘happy, at ease, satisfied in heart’ (Heimbach p. 255 *qab siab*):

qaab sab ntso ua (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to be intensely happy to do it].

- **sab**: *rau sab* ‘to put one’s heart into, to devote one’s self, to do steadfastly’:

rau sab heev zog ntxiv ‘work a little harder’ (Xiongs).

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj

‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

rau sab ntso ua kom tav (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to make sure that one is ready].

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **sab**: *sim sab* ‘to test the attitude’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *suv sab* ‘to be happy with’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *tu sab* ‘to be deceived’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *tsev tuav sab*:

In a folktale, an orphan who has been blinded by his elder brother gropes his way until he comes to a *tsev tuav sab*, which is glossed parenthetically as *tsev tuam choj* ‘house with a bridge erected’. He rests there and overhears a tiger, a bear, and a wild boar conversing and learns how to heal his blindness (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 131). The accompanying illustration of the *tsev tuav sab* or *tsev tuam choj*, showing three planks laid in a fork in the road forming a Y-shape, with an open pavilion with a gabled roof – like a covered bridge – built above them, looks exactly like Nusit Chindarsi’s drawings (Chindarsi 1976:35-37) of the bridges set up on the road to enable wandering souls to come back home.

Bertrais (1978:467 *tsev*) and *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (p. 38 *duad shab*) say that *tsev tuav sab* is a house with a rammed earth walls. Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that this was probably the original meaning of *tsev tuav sab* in China and that, in Southeast Asia, where the warmer climate makes rammed earth construction unnecessary, the term *tsev tuav sab* may have been applied to prestigious or ritually important structures even if made of wood or lacking walls, such as the *tsev tuav sab* in the folktale.

- **sab**: *txav sab* ‘to decide’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *txaus sab* ‘to satisfy, to be satisfied’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *xu sab* ‘don’t like it’ (Xiongs).

- **sab**: *zoo sab* ‘happy, glad’ (Xiongs):

Thaus kawg, Yog Nraug Ntsuag txhaj zoo sab nrug nwg tijlaug nyob kawm txuj kawm ci.
 ‘Finally, Yob the Orphan was happy to stay to study with his older brother’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Ntuj aw! Hiv hiv! zoo sab tsi zoo!
 ‘By heaven! Hee hee! How happy we are!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Ob tug nim zoo sab tag tag tes ob tug nim tua qab saam qab sis noj.
 ‘The two of them were really happy so they killed capons to eat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **sab**: *zoo sab tog txais* ‘welcome’:

zoo sab tog txais mej suav dlawg tuaj huv rooj qav nuav
 ‘welcome all of you to the meal or banquet’ (Xiongs).

- **sab nqaim** ‘selfish’ (Xiongs).

- **sab nyag** ‘timid, fearful’ (Bertrais p. 392 lub siab nyias):

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm
 ‘Those who were timid fled first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **sab ti** ‘selfish’ (Xiongs).

- **saj** ‘(no classifier) charge’ (Xiongs).

- **sav** ‘ripe, ready for harvest’ (Xiongs).

- **sav** ‘cooked’ (Xiongs).

- **sav** ‘(classifier *txuj*) ‘life’ (Xiongs) (see also *sa*):

Awv, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov.
 ‘Yes, but I’m out of breath. Let me rest a bit first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

In a story about the origin of the ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub Spirit (*Tu Sub*), the eagle is explaining to Siv Yig Muas how to kill Sub Tuam’s son:

Koj muab tug nam laug luj luj lab ploog ntoo sau koj taubhau nawb. Meb rau mov noj txug nraab. Koj muab nam laug hle hlo, koj has tas,
 ‘Take a great big, bright red band of cross-stitch embroidery and wrap it around your head. When the two of you are halfway through the meal, take off the band of embroidery and say,
nej! koj saib maj! Koj tua kuv mas yeej tsi tuag le lauj! Yuav ua caag tuag? Kuv muaj cuaj txuj sav nuav naj!
 ‘Hey! Look! No matter what you do, you can’t kill me! How can I die? I have nine lives!
Txav txuj lab taag, txuj dlawb txuas lawm. Txav txuj nuav taag, txuj tod txuas lawm. Txav txav taag tes tub txuas taag lawm. Kuv tsi yuav laam tuag sai sai le lauj. Kuv tsi tuag le luas muaj.
 Sever the red one, and the white one joins on. Sever this one, and that one joins on.

However many you sever, others have already joined on. I'm not going to just go ahead and die, you know. There is no way that I'm going to die."

Tes nwg yuav npau tawg. Nwg yuav rhu hlo nwg txuj sav lab ploog huv nwg lub plaab nti hlo lug qha koj.

Then he will get angry. He will pull out his bright red life from inside his belly to teach you.

Tes koj ntsab nkaus hlais hlo, ngog kag nawb. Nwg tug ndlaug ndlaug tes koj ngog tau. Grab it and cut it off and swallow the whole thing. His is slippery, so you will be able to swallow it.

Koj tug yog nam laug, nwg chua nta ngog, ngog tsi tau. Dlaig nkaus nwg cejdlaab ob ntuav tsi tau tes koj tuab ntaag taamsim hov.

Yours is the band of cross-stitch embroidery, and when he snatches it to swallow, he will not be able to swallow it. It will catch in his throat and he will not be able to throw it up and then – right away – just one stroke of your sword!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23-24.)

- **sav**: *koj los sav*! 'hello!':

Siv Yig Muas tes moog saablaaj ib tug ntoo rua ib tug ntoo. Saib ib lub qaab zeb rua ib lub qaab zeb. Moog moog tes pum nam dlaav. Dlaav nyob sau ceg ntoo qhuav. Dlaav has tas; "Siv Yig Muas, koj los sav! Koj tuaj dlaabtsi?"

Siv Yig Muas then went to consult with one tree after another. He looked at one cliff after another. He walked and walked and then he saw the eagle. Eagle was sitting on a dry tree branch. Eagle said: "Siv Yig Muas, hello! What brings you here?" (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 22.)

- **sav zoo** 'well cooked' (Xiongs).

- **sas**, intensifier:

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthaav sau ntuj tuaj, cais ob tug txhaj tsaa hlo qhovmuag saib na, ua cav Nuj Sis Loob hab nam Yawm Dlaab sis ntaus sis tua yaa swb sas nrug thooj nam fuab dlob lug.

'the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky, so they lifted their eyes to look, and there were Nuj Sis Loob and the Spirit fighting and gliding down, accompanied by a black cloud' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **saab** '(classifier *txuj*) trace, footprint' (Xiongs).

- **saab** '(no classifier) side, direction' (Xiongs):

nwg tsem rua saab xis lawm 's/he turned to the right already' (Xiongs).

puab khawb tshaab, saab tod laum [typo for *lawm*?]

'they dig through the other side already' (Xiongs).

Nwg raab taus yaa moog ntsa nkaus tug nam zaaj ib saab cejdlaab

'The axe flew through the air and impaled the dragon on one side of his neck' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeeb raug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ib taus ntawm nwg ib saab qa ntsej

'The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had been injured by Txheeb Tshoj Theeb's axe behind one

ear' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

qe ib saab qhov muag 'to close one eye' (Xiongs).

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits.

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,

Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.

'Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,

To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path' (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **saab** '(no classifier) web (of a spider)' (Xiongs):

kaab laug saab '(classifier *tug*) spider' (Xiongs).

Dlej txag ca sis zim, luas tsuj kaab laugsaab caab saab zim rua luas neev.

'Cold water has washed into his tracks. Spiders have strung their threads inside his footprints' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

Dlaab caab saab rua puj Sub tuaj.

'The spirits extended a filament for Grandma Sub to come down upon' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **saab** 'serious, seriously hurt, tired after hard work' (Xiongs). From Chinese *shāng*.

- **saab**: *huas saab ntsej* 'to struggle to hear clearly' (*Ceebpov* p. 14).

- **saab**: *khumsaab* 'traveling salesman, traveling businessman', from Chinese *kèshāng*:

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov "khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!" nua.

The kind [of bell] that traveling salesmen hang from the mules which they bring went "khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!" (*Ceebpov* p. 13.)

- **saab**: *nyob yaaj saab* 'to live in the country' (Xiongs):

Yaaj saab is "probably a loan of 阳山 *yáng shān* which seems to have a primary sense of 'the south side of a mountain which receives direct sunlight'." (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **saab**: *saam saab* 'the burial day' (Xiongs). From Chinese *shàngshān* 'to ascend the mountain'.

- **saab**: *tub saab* '(classifier *tug*) thief, robber' (Xiongs):

tub saab tub nyag '(classifier *tug*) robber' (Xiongs).

ua tub saab 'to rob, to steal' (Xiongs).

Cov tub saab qhwv tau puab lawm.

'The thieves encircled them already' (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev

'the murderer is heavily tortured' (Xiongs).

- **saab huv** ‘in, inside’ (Xiongs).

- **saab laaj** ‘to discuss, to exchange ideas, to talk over with’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shāngliáng*:

Thaus Yob Nruag Ntsuag hab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug ob tug tuag le nuav lawm cais Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm, pug Xeev Txwjlaug, hab nwg paab tubnyaab ntxhaisvaub taagnrho txhaj moog saablaaj ua ke.

‘When Yob the Orphan and the Ruler died, the Ruler died, the Ruler’s youngest daughter, the Ruler’s wife and his group of sons and daughters-in-law and daughters and sons-in-law all came together to discuss’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

Siv Yig Muas tes moog saablaaj ib tug ntoo rua ib tug ntoo. Saib ib lub qaab zeb rua ib lub qaab zeb. Moog moog tes pum nam dlaav. Dlaav nyob sau ceg ntoo qhuav. Dlaav has tas; “Siv Yig Muas, koj los sav! Koj tuaj dlaabtsi?”

Siv Yig Muas then went to consult with one tree after another. He looked at one cliff after another. He walked and walked and then he saw the eagle. Eagle was sitting on a dry tree branch. Eagle said: “Siv Yig Muas, hello! What brings you here?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 22.)

- **saab nub tuaj** ‘east side’ (Xiongs).

- **saab nrau** ‘outside’ (Xiongs).

- **saab nrhoob** ‘leg wrapping’ (Xiongs).

- **saab tom u** ‘the other side’ (Xiongs).

- **saab xis** ‘right side’ (Xiongs).

- **saab xuam phem** ‘left side’ (Xiongs).

- **saaj** ‘to taste, to try, to taste the flavor’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *cháng*.

- **saaj dlua** ‘the middle portion is bent down, overloaded at the middle’ (Xiongs). From dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *sán* ‘to repeatedly move up and down (as the ends of a shoulder beam when carrying water)’.

- **saaj quas nyee** ‘flexible, moveable’ (Xiongs).

- **saam** ‘to castrate’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shàn*:

Ntuj ai! caag koj yuav muaj zoo qab saam ua lauj le hab lauj!

‘By Heaven! How do you come to have such delicious capons?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

Ob tug nim zoo sab tag tag tes ob tug nim tua qab saam qab sis noj.

‘The two of them were really happy so they killed capons to eat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **saam** ‘to accumulate, to add to’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shàng*.

- **saam muas txhov**, pile of leaves covering the remains of a dead person, from Chinese 上马草 *shàng mǎcǎo* ‘to put 马草 *mǎcǎo* (a type of grass) on the pile’:

On the roads that link villages to one another, or on the paths that lead villagers to their fields, one often finds large piles of leaves that they call, in Sino-Hmong, *Chang Moua*

Ts'or (saam muas txhov). This is the site of human remains that are covered up in this way in order that the poor dead man will have a house and have offerings of food. If not, he will fling himself upon the passer-by and devour the contents of his belly, leaving the passer-by wobbly and famished. Each traveler upon seeing the pile of leaves picks up a leaf to add to the pile, saying, “Here is meat, do not come to bother me! You are hungry, here is something to nourish you. Oh, *Chang Moua Ts'or*, let me be free to go and to come back safe and sound! Let me be able to pass without getting illness or fatigue, let me keep my appetite and my health!” (*Entre* p. 103.)

Măcǎo means literally “horse grass”. Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “I imagine that the idea is (or was) that you are feeding his horse rather than the deceased himself – I don’t think Hmong would feed someone with grass. Horses have been buried with rulers in China since the Neolithic – some of this culture could have passed down in the idea that the deceased is not alone but is accompanied by his horse. Perhaps deep down in Guizhou/Yunnan this was influenced by the Qing dynasty soldiers (originally northern nomadic horsetribes) rather than being very early.”

Michael sent me this photograph of a person carrying a load of *măcǎo*:



- **saam neeg** ‘to castrate a horse’ (Xiongs).
- **saam saab** ‘the burial day’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shàngshān* ‘to ascend the mountain’.

- **saam sim** ‘to be going to, still, to be in the process of doing’ (Xiongs). Probably from an unidentified Southwestern Mandarin expression pronounced *shàngshì*.

- **saas** ‘to accelerate, to increase the speed’ (Xiongs):

dlha ib saas ‘a short run’ (Xiongs).

- **saav** ‘to miss, to sprain, to be wrong, to have something wrong with’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shǎn*.

- **saav npaab** ‘twisted arm’ (Xiongs).

- **sai** ‘fast, quickly’ (Xiongs).

- **sai** ‘(classifier *tug*) wild goat, mountain goat’ (Xiongs):

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats,
 bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **sai**: *naab raajkubsai* ‘cobra’ (Lyman p. 197):

“*Es koj ntshai naab raajkubsai tsi ntshai?*”
 “Then are you afraid of cobras?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **saib** ‘to look, to watch, to observe’ (Xiongs):

sim saib ‘to try and see’ (Xiongs).

Mej yaum saib puas tau luag
 ‘You try to get others to join’ (Xiongs) [“You-plural persuade to see whether get companions”].

saib nraim (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to watch frequently, to observe exactly].

Ua Npausuav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb ‘A Dream of Going to See the Country of the Spirits’ (*Ua Npausuav*, title).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlob

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

“Yog le kuv tsua moog ua saib”.

“In that case, I’ll do that and see what happens.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32.)

- **saib** ‘to come to see someone, to visit’:

puab yuav tuaj saib peb ‘they will come to visit us’ (Xiongs).

- **saib**, used before a clause indicating something that one is trying to know about or ascertain:

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb

‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

- **saib**, used at the end of a suggestion, request, or command:

Koj sim tuaj saib ob tug ca nraag saib!

‘Come take a look at the two zebra squirrels down there!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 62.)

Moog saib tuag twg tes muab hlau faus saib!

‘Go and see, and wherever he died, take a mattock and bury him’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!

‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **saib**, used at the end of a threat:

Ca ib ntsiv quav lug kuv sim rhu khaub nplawg tshaav ua nwg tau kev tsiv saib!

‘In a moment, I will pull out my switch and thrash him and drive him away’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

“Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!”

“Oh yes! Open us, [we’ll] try killing and eating [you]!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **saib** ‘if’:

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **saib**: *zoo saib* ‘watchful’ (Xiongs).

- **saib**: *zoo saib* ‘worth watching’ (Xiongs).

- **saib**: *zoo saib* ‘beautiful’ (Xiongs).

- **saib ntsoov** ‘to stare at, to look steadily at’ (Xiongs, entry for saib and p. 555).

- **saib tsi taug** ‘to despise, to disrespect’ (Xiongs).

- **saib yaig** ‘to guess spiritually (by the Mong magician)’ (Xiongs):

The Xiongs here use the word ‘magician’ for what other writers would call a shaman. Graham (1937b, p. 71; 1954, p. 37) also uses ‘magician’ as a synonym for ‘shaman’. Whatever term one uses, the reference is to a *txiv neeb*, a healer who treats illnesses that have a primarily spiritual rather than physical cause and whose practice (*ua neeb* or *neeb yaig*) includes trance states and invoking shamanic spirits (*neeb*).

- **saib zoo** ‘watch or look carefully’ (Xiongs).

- **sau** ‘to write’:

phau ntawv sau ‘writing book’ (Xiongs).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv ‘the two sides wrote up a contract’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Luas tub sau ntawv lu ntawm lub eeb neeg tuabsi tas
‘The contract for the saddle has already been signed’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

Sau zoj ib tsaab ntawv rovqaab rua
‘They quickly wrote a new contract’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.
‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.
‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **sau** ‘above’ (Xiongs):

ntsuag zog sau yaag plaub nti
‘measure four finger-lengths above the joint [of bamboo]’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11).

nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav
‘she went back out above the spot’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **sau** ‘on’:

koj pw sau txaaj ‘you sleep on the bed’ (Xiongs).

muaj ib lub taig lab nyob sau rooj. ‘There is a red bowl on the table’ (Xiongs).

- **sau** ‘to collect, to gather’ (Xiongs):

Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?
‘Brother-in-law, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.

‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth and ran home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **sau:** *nyob sau* ‘over, on top of; on’ (Xiongs):

txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo.

‘and there was a little minivet on a tree’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **sau:** *rua sau* ‘on’:

muab txawb rua sau rooj ‘stand it on the table’ (Xiongs).

Muab txawb rua sau txee ‘put it on the shelf’ (Xiongs).

- **sau ib dlaim ntawv** ‘write a letter’ (Xiongs).

- **sau ib phoo ntawv** ‘write a book’ (Xiongs).

- **sau ntawv quas plag** ‘to write assiduously’:

Nim sau ntawv quas plag, sau ntawv nrawm caj nrawm tuag.

‘She was writing assiduously, writing as fast as life and death’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

Tug nyaab los sau ntawv quas plag, huas tug tub los sau ntawv quas plag.

‘Her daughter-in-law was writing assiduously and her son was writing assiduously’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **sau ntej** ‘further up’ (Xiongs).

- **sau nthwv** ‘to gather together’:

Yawm Nyooglaug paab nam tub txawm sau nthwv lug muab Cuav Tshoj Tim khi kag hab caab tawm lawm.

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s sons all gathered together, tied up Cuav Tshoj Tim and led him out’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Tim* p. 36).

- **sau qaum ntuj** ‘in heaven’:

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

‘The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **sau qoob** ‘to harvest’ (Xiongs).

- **sau rua huv ca** ‘to write down’ (Xiongs).

- **sau se** ‘to collect taxes’ (Xiongs).

- **sau yaaj** or **sau yaajceeb** “on the yang world” (Chinese *yángjiān*), i.e. the world of living

human beings, as opposed to *rua yeebceeb* “in the yin world” (Chinese *yīnjiān*), i.e. the spirit world:

One speaks of being “on the yang world” (*sau yaajceeb*) but “in the yin world” (*rua yeebceeb*).

sau yaaj ‘on earth’ (Xiongs).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world, but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **sau yim** ‘to establish a family’:

In the first story in *Kwvhuam*, a young woman has been instructed by her parents to find a husband and the first creature she meets is a cloud:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

- **saub**:

saub ‘(classifier *tug*) a prophet’ (Xiongs).

yawm saub ‘creator, in the Hmong belief, He is the creator of all things in the world’ (Xiongs).

A being in heaven, the equal of *Ntxwj Nyoog*:

Yawm Saub qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas; Meb yog nplaj quas cai le leej tuabneeg meb tuaj quas tsw? ... Ntxwj Nyoog qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas; Koj yog Nplaj Quas Cai leej tuabneeg koj tuaj quas tsw?

‘Grandfather Saub opened his mouth to speak, gathered his words and roared, “The two of you are from the earth. Why have you come?” ... Ntxwj Nyoog opened his mouth to speak, gathered his words and roared: “You are from the earth. Why have you come?”’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 9-10.)

Saub and *Nyooglaug* (another name for *Ntxwj Nyoog*) are major characters in *Nuj Sis Loob*. They help *Nuj Sis Loob* find his wife, but when *Nuj Sis Loob* betrays his wife, Saub and *Nyooglaug* say that he will be reborn as a dog and will be given the opportunity to redeem himself. Then he will change into a human being and be reunited with his wife, who will also have been reborn. Later in the story, when *Nuj Sis Loob* is in danger, Saub comes to help him:

Yawm Saub txa ua tuab tug nam txiv neeg faubcuas thauj Nuj Sis Loob, hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug yaa tawm plawv huv lub nam qhovntuj dlub ncaajnrain lug tsaws nkaus huv Fuabtais Ntajsua Teb Tomtaug lub xyeemtshaav.

‘Grandfather Saub had transformed himself into a cloud-wind stallion to carry Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov out of the black pit and had deposited them in a site of the King of the Lower Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Saub may be the one who sends a shaman his calling:

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj koj ntawm cov qhua neeb) koj qhua neeb lug ntxooj tug tuabneeg ntawd.

‘First, when a person is going to know how to be a shaman, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends Siv Yig (Siv Yig is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94.)

Saub is also a being on earth to whom people go for advice:

Thaus Yob Nruag Ntsuag hab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug ob tug tuag le nuav lawm cais Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm, pug Xeev Txwjlaug, hab nwg paab tubnyaab ntxhaisvauv taagnrho txhaj moog saablaaj ua ke. Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm has rua puab tas:

When Yob the Orphan and the Ruler had both died, the Ruler’s youngest daughter, the Ruler’s wife and his group of sons and daughters-in-law and daughters and sons-in-law all came together to discuss. The Ruler’s youngest daughter said to them:

“Zagnua, Yob Nruag Ntsuag hab txiv ob tug ib txhij tuag le nuav lawm, cais ca kuv moog cuag Saub saib Saub has le caag, peb ua li ntawd xwb!”

“Now, Yob the Orphan and father are both dead, so let me go to see Saub and see what Saub says and we will do it!”

Nub tomqaab, Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm moog cuag Saub taag, nwg le maam rovqaab moog cuag nwg namtais, hab has rua puab suavdlawg noog tas:

The following day, the Ruler’s youngest daughter went to meet Saub, she then went back to see her mother, and said to everyone:

“Naagmo, kuv moog cuag Saub taag lug lawm. Saub has tas:

“Yesterday I went to see Saub. Saub said:

‘Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug yog ib tug tuabneeg laug, cais kuav suavdlawg ntaus ib lub hleb hlau nyaav nyaav le lug ntim nwg. Huas Yob Nruag Ntsuag cais, nwg tseem yog ib tug tub hlus tshab. Luas kuas suavdlawg txua ib lub hleb cab lug ntim nwg, hab ua ib lub nkuaj lug ntim nwg tug lauvqab tso rua sau lub hleb, cais suavdlawg ua ob lub phuaj lug ntim ob tug, hab muab ob tug tso rua huv nam dlej luj tshoob nqegtaug xwb.’

‘The Ruler was an old man, so have everyone forge a coffin of heavy iron to put him in. But Yob the Orphan, he was still young. He wants everyone to build a coffin of pine to put him in, and to make a coop and put inside his rooster and put it on top of the coffin, and then everyone make two rafts to put the two of them on and put the two of them in the big river to carry them downstream.’

Kuv xaav tas Saub qha rua kuv le hov taag lawm, cais peb ua tau ua le ntawd.”

I want us to do everything that Saub told me.” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, pp. 25-26.)

In another story, a woman whose husband has been abducted by a Pujntxoog and transformed into a tiger, rescues her husband and transforms him back into a human being, but when it appears that he still has memories of being a tiger, she goes to Saub for advice:

Ua rua Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm tsi paub ua le caag zoo, cais nwg txhaj moog ntsib Saub, hab moog nug Saub tas:

It made it that Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm did not know what would be good to do, so she went to see Saub, and asked Saub:

“Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?”

“Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growing in the forest, oh child’, why is that?”

Yawm Saub txhaj has qha rua Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm tas:

Grandfather Saub then explained to Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm that:

“Auj! Yog nyob ntawm nwg hauv sab tseem tshuav ib dlaim tawv tsi tau hle nawj! Koj moog cais tsi txhob muab mivnyuas rua nwg puag. Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab, nwg khawb ua hle hlo lug cais zoo taag lawm lauj!”

“Oh! It is that there still is left on his chest a piece of skin that has not been removed! Go and don’t give him the child to hold in his arms. When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest, he will scratch it off and get well!”
(*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

In a third story, a man goes to Saub for advice about animals that are destroying his crops:

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev tes Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog nug Yawm Saub tas:

But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops and so Yob the orphan went and asked Grandfather Saub:

“Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagnuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?”

“Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?”

“Awb! kuv qha koj es koj moog zuv. Koj zuv es koj lawv qaab moog tes koj tau luas mas”.

“Yes! I will tell you what to do, you go and keep watch. You keep watch and you follow and then you will get them [i.e. whatever being is responsible for the man’s difficulties].”
(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- saum ‘on’:

rub zog saum rooj ‘to deploy or set right on the table or publicly’ (Xiongs, entry for rub).

Saum is an unusual spelling, possibly reflecting White Hmong influence. Elsewhere in the Xiongs’ dictionary, and in my other sources, the word for ‘on’ or ‘above’ is spelled *sau*, for example:

muaj ib lub taig lab nyob sau rooj. ‘There is a red bowl on the table’ (Xiongs, entry for

taig).

- **saus** ‘to dry up, to disappear’ (Xiongs), ‘to shrink (of breast), contract, draw in, sink down/cave in (of ground)’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

qhov saus ‘a natural hole in the ground’ (Xiongs).

- **saus** ‘(classifier *tug*) a small particle that may enter your skin or gets into the eye’ (Xiongs).

- **sauv** or **sauv toj** ‘natural underground blood stream (Hmong believe that good life might result to the descendants of a dead man or woman buried right over a blood stream)’ (Xiongs).

- **saw hlau** ‘(classifier *tug*) chain’ (Xiongs).

- **saw kub** ‘(classifier *tug*) a gold chain’ (Xiongs).

- **sawb** ‘classifier for a rib of meat’ (Heimbach):

Cais puab txhaj moog rhu hlo tau ib sawb nqaj npuas lug hlais kag ci
‘So they then pulled out a rib of pork and cut it up and toasted it’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13).

- **sawb sim** ‘to get prepared, to pack things’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shōushi*:

cais Ntxawm hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug txhaj sawbsim tau tuab pob nam nyaj hab dlaws kag ib nam txiv ntshw caab lug has rua Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug tas:
‘so Ntxawm and Yob the Orphan packed a bundle of silver and untied a male elephant and came leading it and said to the Ruler:’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **sawm** ‘to be worthy, to like, to be appropriate’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shòu*:

Nwg tsi sawm tau zoo ‘s/he is not worthy of having a good time (life)’ (Xiongs).

- **saws** ‘to twist, to spin thread’ (Xiongs), ‘to splice hemp’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

The individual strips of prepared raw hemp are prepared and joined/spliced end-to-end to make a single strip hundreds of meters long. Only once this is accomplished will the hemp be further processed – spun on the spinning wheel, bleached, etc. The strips are spliced by twisting two strands one way and then twisting the whole back the other way (not by tying knots). (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

In a story, a woman who has been transformed into a cow helps her young daughter splice hemp (the girl is speaking to her step-mother, whom she addresses as *nad* ‘mother’):

Kuv moog ces kuv muab ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj taub hau, ib ntshuas dai rua nam nyuj teg nam nyuj taw, tes nam nyuj nrug kuv saws thab. Txhaj le tau ntuag npaum le los mos nad!

‘When I go, I hang a hank on the cow’s head, a hank on the cow’s front hoof and rear hoof, and the cow splices with me. So I get so much hemp fiber, mother!’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 32.)

- **saws** ‘to be used to, to acclimatize’ (Xiongs).

- **saws** ‘to pay’:

A Pujntxoog (a kind of female spirit) is explaining to Nuj Yob that Nuj Yob’s dead father has made arrangements in the spirit world for her to marry Nuj Yob:

Nuj Yob, koj txiv muab tau peb com txaj ntawd saws kuv rua koj nua es
 ‘Nuj Yob, your father paid me these three bundles of money on your behalf’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84).

- **saws ntuaug** ‘to spin hemp’ (Xiongs) , ‘to splice hemp’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

The individual strips of prepared raw hemp are prepared and joined/spliced end-to-end to make a single strip hundreds of meters long. Only once this is accomplished will the hemp be further processed – spun on the spinning wheel, bleached, etc. The strips are spliced by twisting two strands one way and then twisting the whole back the other way (not by tying knots). (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **sawv** ‘to stand up, to get up, to arise’ (Xiongs):

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.
 ‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?
 If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.
 If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.
 If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **sawv**: *zaaj sawv* ‘rainbow’ (Xiongs).

- **sawv cev** ‘to represent’:

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.
 A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

- **sawv dlawg** ‘everybody, everyone’ (Xiongs):

Sawv dlawg is an unusual spelling, possibly reflecting White Hmong influence. Elsewhere in the Xiongs’ dictionary, and in my other sources, the word for ‘everybody’ is spelled *suav dlawg* or *suavdlawg*.

- **sawv hlwv** ‘to have a blister’ (Xiongs).

- **sawv kev** ‘to start, to depart’ (Xiongs):

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab
 ‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **sawv ntsug** ‘to stand up’ (Xiongs).

- **sawv ntxuv** ‘to get up early’ (Xiongs):

thaum sawv ntxuv ‘early in the morning’ (Xiongs).

- **sawv tseeg** ‘to leap up, to arise (e.g. the wind)’:

tug nug hluab saib na cav yog ob tug muam tag, cais nwg ca le sawv tseeg tim kaum tsev lug ntaus los ntaus chua los chua

‘as soon as the older brother saw that it was their sister, he leapt up from the corner and began hitting and grabbing her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15),

Cais thaum kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooглаug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud out from Grandfather Nyooглаug’s two betel-palm poles’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **sawv xov chim** ‘to rebel’ (Djoua Xiong, personal communication):

Tabis tomqaab nuav luas kuj has tas yog luas sawv Xov Chim xwb, vim tas Faabkis yuav txeeb lub tebchaws cais suavdlawg txhaj sawv lug tua tsi pub Faabkis txeeb nkaus xwb.

‘But afterwards it was said that people were only rebelling, because the French were going to take away the land, so everyone rose up and came to fight the French, just to prevent them from taking the land’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 1).

- **se** ‘(no classifier) taxes, tax’ (Xiongs):

sau se ‘to collect taxes’ (Xiongs).

- **se**: *quas puj tub se* ‘wife and children, the whole family’ (Xiongs). See also *sev*.

- **sej** ‘to compete for the most enduring’ (Xiongs).

- **sem** ‘to dry up, to lose volume or weight, to shrink, to lose’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *shé*.

- **sem**: *ua sem sov* ‘undecided’ (Xiongs).

- **sev** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) apron, wife’ (Xiongs). See also *se*.

- **seeb**: *cev taab seeb* ‘not being pregnant’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dānshēn* ‘single, unmarried, without a boyfriend’.

- **seeb**: *khaab seeb* ‘uncluttered, roomy’ (Xiongs). Probably from a Chinese expression no longer used in Chinese but still used in Mong Leng.

- **seeb**: *tswm seeb* ‘to be quiet’ (Xiongs), also written *tswm xeeb*. From Chinese *zhùshēng*.

- **seej** ‘tame, domesticated, docile’ (Xiongs). From a dialectal pronunciation *xún* of Chinese *xùn*.

- **seej heev** ‘very docile’ (Xiongs).

- **seem**, from Chinese *shèng* ‘surplus, remnant’:

qhov seem ‘(something) left over, remaining, unused’ (Xiongs).

Puas muaj zaub mov seem le? ‘Is there any food left at all?’ (Xiongs).

- **seem** ‘to adjust, to turn to fit in; (no classifier) side’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shùn* ‘follow along, arrange’:

nyob ib seem tuab si ‘all on one side’ (Xiongs).

- **sees**, intensifier:

ua zaam quas sees ‘beautifully dressed up’ (Xiongs).

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev.

‘Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes [i.e. burial clothes], in the house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2, addressed to the dead person at the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* [Showing the Way] funeral ceremony).

- **seev** ‘to hum, to sigh, to moan, to express one’s loneliness, to hold a prolonged singing tone or voice, to sing, to make musical voice’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Nyoog Laug tug tub hlub txham le has seev quas yeeg tas

‘Grandfather Nyoog Laug’s eldest son then said with a sigh’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 21).

In stories about Pujntxoog (female spirits connected with tigers) and about Tigers, *seev* refers to the expression of discontent with one’s earthly life that attracts the attention of these spirits:

Cais Nuj Yob txawm seev tas:

Then Nuj Yob sighed and said:

“Num ku quas vuag noj nplooj quas ab haus dlej dlhau sab, caag Nuj Yob es, muaj feem ua los twb tsi muaj feem noj nis.

“Toil is harsh. Leaves are bitter to eat. Water is too much for one’s heart. Why is that Nuj Yob gets a share of the work but not a share of the food?

Ntuj nis puj tsig nis puj dlab! Mej nim noj noj txiv laujtauv toog nkaaj quas ncab es ab mej sab los tsis ab?

By heaven, O female sparrows, O female bulbuls! You eat and eat the lauj tauv fruit, as dark as indigo, are your hearts bitter or not?

Caag namtij hab tijlaug ob tug sab tsi zoo. Ob tug muab mov kuam cej mov kuam xua ntse hauvpaug zaubab rua Nuj Yob noj es tsi noj los tshaib, noj los nim ab ab Nuj Yob sab!”

Sister-in-law’s and elder brother’s hearts are not good. They give steamed buckwheat and steamed rice bran and the stems of bitter greens to Nuj Yob to eat. If he does not eat them he is hungry. If he eats them, how bitter they are to Nuj Yob’s heart!”

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj

The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **seev mem teg** ‘to feel the pulse’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Chinese *shěn* ‘to examine’.

- **si** ‘weakness, continuous decrease in strength’ (Xiongs):

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj koj ntawm cov qhua neeb) koj qhua neeb lug ntsooj tug tuabneeg ntawd. Yog hastas nwg luj loog hum hab txhaab [typo for txhaav] hum, Siv Yig le muab ib nkawm qhua neeb nrug nwg. Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb. Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntsooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le. Nwg muaj mob plaab dlag hau, si hab dlaaj ntseg, tsaug, hab tsi qaab lus noj mov.

‘First, when a person is going to know how to be a shaman, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends Siv Yig (Siv Yig is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person. If his faint voice fits and his bones [?] fit, Siv Yig will give him a pair of shamanic spirits. At this time he will know how to be a shaman. At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all. He will have a stomach ache and a headache, continuous decrease in strength, jaundice, be tired and weak, and have no appetite.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94.)

- **si:** *tuab si* ‘all, every’ (Xiongs):

nyob ib seem tuab si ‘all on one side’ (Xiongs).

ob txhais teg tuab si ‘both hands’ (Xiongs).

tug ntshab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le
‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs) [“this smell overcomes completely the whole group”].

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **si:** *ua si* ‘to play’ (Xiongs):

Moog Uasi Yaav Qaab Teb ‘A Trip to the South’ (title of an article about a vacation trip to various places in the southern United States, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, October 1990, pp. 37-38).

Nwg najnub moog ua si khuj quas khuav nraagqaab tojntxaas ib qho dlhau ib qho xwb.
‘Every day, he would aimlessly wander about from one gravesite to another’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 8).

- **si:** *yos ua si* ‘to go to play, to go for a walk’:

Kuv yos ua si ‘I go to play, for a walk’ (Xiongs).

- **sib** ‘preverbal indicating the reciprocal action’ (Xiongs) (also written *sis*):

sib hlub ‘to love each other’ (Xiongs).

sib koom teg ‘together’ (Xiongs).

sib luag ‘as big as, equal to, similar to’ (Xiongs).

sib nqug ‘to attract each other, to pull each other’ (Xiongs).

sib ntaus ‘to fight each other’ (Xiongs).

sib ntsib ‘to meet each other’:

kev sib ntsib ‘meeting’ (Xiongs).

sib ntxub ‘to hate each other’ (Xiongs).

sib ntshi ‘to whisper to each other’ (Xiongs).

sib nyam ‘to like each other’ (Xiongs).

sib paab ‘to help each other’ (Xiongs).

sib pev ‘to compare with each other’, from Chinese *bǐ*:

coj lug sib tim ‘to compare with each other’ (Xiongs).

kev sib pev ‘comparison’ (Xiongs).

muab sib pev ‘to compare’ (Xiongs).

sib pus tsiv ‘to escape together’ (Xiongs).

sib qhau ‘to wrestle’ (Xiongs):

kev sib qhau ‘wrestling’ (Xiongs).

sib tug or *sib tum* ‘to bite or to fight each other with mouth and teeth’ (Xiongs).

sib tua ‘to kill each other’ (Xiongs).

sib tuav teg ‘to shake hands, to hold hands’ (Xiongs).

sib thaam ‘to talk to each other, to exchange ideas, to discuss’ (Xiongs).

sib tshe ‘to fight each other verbally’:

puab sib tshe ‘they are fighting each other verbally’ (Xiongs).

sib xws ‘to be similar to each other’:

zoo sib xws xwb ‘similar to each other only’ (Xiongs).

sib xyaw ‘to be mixed together’:

sib xyaw taag le lawm ‘all mixed up’ (Xiongs).

- **sib** ‘light, not heavy’ (Xiongs):

ib pob khoom sib ‘a light package’ (Xiongs).

- **sib** ‘spaced apart’ (Xiongs).

- **sib**, rhythmic syllable in poetry:

Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog tej qaab nrau lis caav ‘behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s logs’ (*Cim Xeeb* p.

76).

- **Sib**: *Moob Sib*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **sibhawm** ‘time’ (also written *sij hawm*), from Chinese *shíhou*:

Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntxooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le.

‘At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

- **sib hlub** ‘to love each other’:

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **sib nyam** ‘to like each other’ (Xiongs).

- **sib txauv** ‘to mix, to have to take someone else’s instead of your own’ (Xiongs).

- **sib txeeb** ‘to contest for possession of something, to snatch something from one another’ (Xiongs).

- **sib txig** ‘as tall as, as high rank as (sib is used for comparion)’ (Xiongs):

txu lug kom sib txig ‘to level off’ (Xiongs) [“lower the level so that they are equal”].

- **sib txoj sib law** ‘to follow each other and help each other’ (Xiongs).

- **sib txuas**: *qhov sib txuas* ‘knot, connection, join’ (Xiongs).

- **sib txuas lug** ‘to converse, to talk with, to exchange words’ (Xiongs).

- **sij** (from Chinese *shí* ‘time’): *if sij* ‘repeatedly, continually, often’ (Xiongs). Typo for *ib sij*?

- **sij**: *yum sij* ‘(classifier *tug*) key’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàoshi* (Southwestern Mandarin *yóshí*).

- **sij hawm** ‘(classifier *lub*) time, period of time, occasion’ (Xiongs) (also written *sibhawm*). From Chinese *shíhou*.

- **sim** ‘to try, to test, to taste, to attempt’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shì*:

Nwg ob sim yuav tua, Ntxawm saib ntshai yuav tsi zoo heev, Ntxawm txhaj cheem Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseg.

‘He tried a couple of times to kill it but Ntxawm saw that it might be a very bad idea so she restrained Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?

‘Son-in-law Yob came to try this medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

Yob moog sim tshuaj na, tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!
 ‘Yob went to try the medicine, the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

“*Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!*”
 “Oh yes! Open us, [we’ll] try killing and eating [you]!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **sim**: *lam sim* ‘destroyed, abolished’ (Xiongs).

- **sim**: *saam sim* ‘to be going to, still, to be in the process of doing’ (Xiongs). Probably from an unidentified Southwestern Mandarin expression pronounced *shàngshì*.

- **sim**: *sawb sim* ‘to get prepared, to pack things’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shōushí*:

cais Ntxawm hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug txhaj sawbsim tau tuab pob nam nyaj hab dlaws kag ib nam txiv ntxhw caab lug has rua Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug tas:
 ‘so Ntxawm and Yob the Orphan packed a bundle of silver and untied a male elephant and came leading it and said to the Ruler:’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **sim**: *taam sim*, from Chinese *dāngshì* (non-standard pronunciation *dàngshì*) ‘then, at that time’:

taam sim nuav ‘now, at the present time, actually, today, these days’ (Xiongs).

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.
 ‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **sim**, from Chinese *shì* ‘lifetime, life’:

lwmm sim ‘next life’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *èr shì*.

tshwm sim ‘to be born, to incarnate, to appear’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chūshì*.

- **sim neej** ‘lifetime’ (Xiongs):

taag sim neej ‘to die, to pass away’ (Xiongs).

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.
 ‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs).

- **sim sab** ‘to test the attitude’ (Xiongs).

- **sim saib** ‘to try and see’ (Xiongs).

- **sim tsaav** ‘to try to drive’ (Xiongs).

- **sis** ‘each other’ (also written *sib*):

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hlub
 ‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love,

and lived as friends and companions for a long time' (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

ua cav Nuj Sis Loob hab nam Yawm Dlaab sis ntaus sis tua

'and, why, Nuj Sis Loob and the Spirit were fighting' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Cais cov nam hluas nkauj sau qaum ntuj sis ntshi pis chiv 'The young women of heaven whispered to one another' (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 23).

zagnua yog zag kws wb yuav tau sis paab quas tag.

'now is the time when we will be able to help one another truly' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 13).

Lub caij hov yog lub caij Siv Yig Muas ob tug sis tua

'This time of year is the time of year when Siv Yig Muas [and Sub Tuam] fought' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

Hiv! Hiv! Ob yawm yij yawm dlaab nua ua caag yuav txawj sis thaam ua luaj le ntawd!

'Hee hee! These two brothers-in-law, how they can talk!' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84; spoken in response to ribald wordplay.)

Yawm Nyooglaug ntshais Ntxawm hab Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ob tug pheej sis thaam ua luj quas lawg

'Grandfather Nyooglaug's youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb kept chattering away' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

Ob tug sis thaam sis thaam povkhawv

'The two of them talked and talked to their hearts' content' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

'Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book like this to serve as a model' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **sis**, rhythmic syllable in poetry, often preceding an intensifier:

From the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, referring to the beginning of the world:

Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?

'When the earth was plunged in darkness, who was capable of coming?' (*Initiation* p. 119).

From the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, referring to the coffin:

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab.

'The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

'The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze

maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for laj?] quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11).

- **sis**: *los sis* 'though, even though' (Xiongs). From Chinese *lǎoshì* 'always, very', with change of meaning in Mong Leng.

- **sis**: *qab saam qab sis* 'capons':

Ob tug nim zoo sab tag tag tes ob tug nim tua qab saam qab sis noj.

'The two of them were really happy so they killed capons to eat' (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **sis**: *tab sis* or *tuab sis* 'but' (Xiongs). From Chinese *dànshì*.

- **sis xuas** 'to grope one's way':

Xauj xauj tsausntuj quas nti tes xauj thoob. Tes sis xuas sis xuas rov lug tsev tes tsuas muaj taag lawm.

'They looked until it was quite dark and then had seen them all. Then they groped their way back to the house and so it ended' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

- **siv** 'to use, to make use of' (Xiongs):

kuv tsi paub siv 'I don't know how to use it' (Xiongs).

tug siv 'the user' (Xiongs).

kev siv 'the use of' (Xiongs).

Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!"

'Why are you going at my wound with such force?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv

'I will give you real ones to take to use' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

- **siv**: *yeeg siv* 'magic' (Xiongs).

- **siv**: *yeeg siv* 'play, acting' (Xiongs).

- **siv**: *yumsiv* 'hard plastic' (Xiongs).

- **Siv Yig** or **Nyaj Yig**, the first shaman:

siv yig 'a prophet' (Xiongs).

Chapter 5 of *Entre* (pp. 115-142) is devoted to Siv Yig. The chapter begins:

The mythic origin of the practice of the Hmong shaman is indissociable from Shi Yi, also known as Tsong Yi Lao, Tsong Shi Yi, etc. The tunes of the *kr'eng* [qeej], the mouth

organ of the Hmong, often bring to mind his setbacks and his exploits (*Entre* p. 115).

Siv Yig or Nyaj Yig is regularly invoked or referred to in the chants that call upon the shaman's helper-spirits (*Entre* pp. 173-181). Lemoine understands the shaman to consider himself the embodiment of Siv Yig, and therefore translates the name Siv Yig as 'I'.

Siv Yig is the chief of the *neeb*, the shaman's helper-spirits:

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj koj ntawm cov qhua neeb) koj qhua neeb lug ntsooj tug tuabneeg ntawd.

'First, when a person is going to know how to be a shaman, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends Siv Yig (Siv Yig is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person.' (*Tswv Yim* p. 94.)

Siv Yig, given the surname Muas, appears in a story explaining the origin of the ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub Spirit (*Tu Sub*). The story begins:

Thau u Moob tsi tau muaj vaaj. Muaj ib tug hu ua Lis Sub Tuam. Nwg kaav ib ntsuj teb. Muaj ib tug hu ua Siv Yig Muas. Nwg kaav ib ntug teb.

'Long ago, the Mong did not have a king. Instead there was someone named Lis Sub Tuam who ruled one region and someone named Siv Yig Muas who ruled another area' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 20).

Lis Sub Tuam was a cruel tyrant who terrorized his subjects. When he terrorized one of Siv Yig Muas's subjects, Siv Yig Muas fought him and killed both Lis Sub Tuam and his son. Then, Lis Sub Tuam's widow, Puj Sub, after her death, came down from the sky to avenge her husband and her son. This is the origin of the *sub*, the spirits that cause bloody accidents. The ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub (*Tu Sub*) is performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar to get rid of Puj Sub. The ceremony of Waving Away the Sub (*Lwm Sub*) is performed at the New Year to get rid of Lis Sub Tuam and his son. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-34.)

A great many different stories about Siv Yig have been recorded from members of different Hmong subgroups in China, Laos, Thailand, and the Hmong diaspora outside of Asia. If we read these stories together, it is possible to piece together an account of the arc of Siv Yig's career: how illness and death came into the world, how Siv Yig was sent to earth to heal human beings, how Siv Yig got his powers, implements and spirit-helpers, how in acquiring some of his magic medicines he gratuitously destroyed a dragon's eggs and how the dragon cursed Siv Yig, saying that because she was not able to bring her youngest child back to life, Siv Yig would not be able to bring *his* son back to life, how Siv Yig battled the spirits that cause illness and injury, and, finally, how, in fulfillment of the dragon's curse, hubris led to Siv Yig's downfall, when he was tricked into eating the soul of his own son. In despair, Siv Yig threw his implements to the earth (where they were collected by his successors, the modern earthly shamans) and returned to the sky.

- so 'to wipe, to clean, to dry by wiping' (Xiongs):

phuam so teg ‘(classifier *txuj*) hand towel’ (Xiongs).

- **sob**:

Muab raab txab dlob rua kuv sob ‘Give me the black scissors please’ (Xiongs).

- **sob**: *ua ib sob* ‘all together, jointly’ (Xiongs).

- **soj** ‘to be on watch, to try to get something from a hiding place or secretly’ (Xiongs).

- **sov** ‘a question word’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *xiǎo*:

sov yog le caag ‘what really is’ (Xiongs).

sov puab puas yuav tuaj ‘not quite sure that they will come’ (Xiongs).

sov as! ‘I don’t know’ (Xiongs).

sov koj haus luas pes tsawg dlej

‘you drank I don’t know how much of someone else’s water’ (*Initiation* p. 131).

Pum yaam sov thaus twg le lug tau ib zog nam Suav coob tag tag le.

‘Whenever we looked, we found a village with really a lot of Chinese’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **sov**: *ua sem sov* ‘undecided’ (Xiongs).

- **sov tej** ‘not sure, uncertain, doubtful’ (Xiongs).

- **soo** ‘to catch with a rope loop’ (Xiongs).

- **soob** ‘small, skinny, tiny, high pitch (voice)’ (Xiongs):

ib tug tuab neeg soob ‘a small person’ (Xiongs).

suab soob ‘high sound, high voice’ (Xiongs).

- **su** ‘to stop to get a rest, to stop working to have a vacation’ (Xiongs):

nwg txawm moog qev suav tsev su.

‘he asked the Chinese for permission to use one of their hostels’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16).

- **su** ‘to grow in volume, to get bigger (cake)’ (Xiongs).

- **su** ‘midday’ (see also *sus*):

ntim su ‘to get a lunch bag’ (Xiongs).

pluag su ‘noon meal’ (Xiongs).

taav su ‘noon’ (Xiongs).

taav su dlua ‘afternoon’ (Xiongs).

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog.

‘You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **su**, intensifier (also written *suv*):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **su tog** ‘to stop and wait’ (Xiongs).

- **sub** ‘to warm up, to heat up’ (Xiongs).

- **sub** ‘a question word meaning really’ (Xiongs):

sub koj yuav paab tag le? ‘Will you really help?’ (Xiongs).

- **Sub**, spirit that causes bloody accidents:

At a time when the Mong did not have a king, Lis Sub Tuam ruled one region and Siv Yig Muas ruled another. Lis Sub Tuam was a cruel tyrant who terrorized his subjects. When he terrorized one of Siv Yig Muas’s subjects, Siv Yig Muas fought him and killed both Lis Sub Tuam and his son. Then, Lis Sub Tuam’s widow, Puj Sub, after her death, came down from the sky to avenge her husband and her son. This is the origin of the *sub*, the spirits that cause bloody accidents. The ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub (*Tu Sub*) is performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar to get rid of Puj Sub. The ceremony of Waving Away the Sub (*Lwm Sub*) is performed at the New Year to get rid of the the malign influence (*nywj*) of Lis Sub Tuam and his son. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-34.)

Nwgnuav peb txooj Moob, xyaa hli twg txha yuav tu Sub; Cuaj hli twg txha yuav tu Sub.
Nowadays, we Mong in the seventh month will cut off the Sub and in the ninth month will cut off the Sub.

Huas nwg muab ob ntsuj teb kaav le kws tub has ntawm hauvpaug.

But they [Lis Sub Tuam and Siv Yig Muas] ruled two regions as was said at the beginning [of the story].

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb. Puab lwm xwb.

Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month do not cut. They only wave.

Lub caij hov yog lub caij Siv Yig Muas ob tug sis tua tes Sub Tuam tuag. Puab txha le lwm xwm. Yog muaj tug nywj xwb.

This time of year is the time of year when Siv Yig Muas [and Sub Tuam] fought and Sub Tuam died. They therefore only wave. There is only the *nywj* [malign influence that hovers where someone has died].

Huas cov kws tu tes yog ntsuj teb kws Siv Yig Muas kaav. Txha le tu rua lub cuaj hli hab xyaa hli. Txhua paab pawg tuabneeg txha le ua le ntawd.

But those who cut are of the region that Siv Yig Muas ruled. Therefore they cut in the ninth month and the seventh month. Every lineage therefore does it like that.

Txhua tug tu Sub, paub tsi has Sub txiv Sub tub raug muab tua tuag taag lawm tshuav puj Sub xwb. Yog le noobneej kws muaj nyob hu ua haiv Moob tes tu Sub ha le hu puj Sub xwb.

Everyone cuts off the Sub, regardless of the fact that Sub the father and Sub the son were killed and only Mrs. Sub remained. Where there are human beings who are called Mong, cutting off the Sub refers only to Mrs. Sub. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 33-34.)

Poosu [Puj Sub] is an evil spirit whose body is like that of an eagle. He [sic] is the spirit who causes all kinds of accidents. Any gash from an axe or knife used in clearing and field work, or any other accident is attributed to Poosu. The Hmong say that Poosu is the spirit of fire and blood because most accidents involve these. (Chindarsi 1976:22.)

Every three years each subclan must hold a ceremony to kill an accident spirit called Suter Sublong [Sub Tawg Sub Ploog?]. The subclan members must stop from working on the particular day, and a member of the subclan who knows the long prayer may be assigned to be the head of the ceremony (Chindarsi 1976:53).

POOSU-Suter-Sublong [Puj Sub Sub Tawg Sub Ploog?] is a spirit which causes various accidents to people. Therefore on a particular day of each year, or every three years for one of the Tang [Taag] sub-clan, people must refrain from working and hold a ceremony to trap and beat this spirit to death. On the same day on each of the two following years the ceremonies must be held to burn and drown it. On this day no sub-clan members of either sex must work, and they must exercise care lest they cut themselves and bleed to death. A member of the household, either a first born or last born son who knows the prayer, is chosen to carry out the ceremony.

On the appointed day each household head brings a particular type of grass to the house chosen. The head of the ceremony collects the grass and ties it on a prepared sapling. He prays inside the house to attract Suter Sublong to perch on the grass, then brings it outside where all the sub-clansmen now assemble and are surrounded by a band of white cloth to separate from the spirit and to symbolize their common bond. In front of them are piled all the agricultural implements and all the weapons belonging to the household.

Many times the head of the ceremony circles the ground and the implements, chanting. When the chanting is completed, he cuts the bundle of grass and takes it to a nearby stream and weighs it down with heavy stones to drown Subter Sublong. If any one removes the stones the spirit would escape and cause an accident to someone in the sub-clan. The ceremony may be held in any house belonging to a subclan member.

Each sub-clan has its special day once a year on which all its members must refrain from work and participate in the ceremony. Blaju (tang [Taag]) holds it on 14th August, while Yaitong (tang), who is of a different sub-clan holds it on 14th December. Tungsang (jang [Tsaab]) holds it on 14th of the dark moon of August, but Jusu (jang) holds the ceremony for his sub-clan on 14th of the dark moon of July. The ceremony helps to identify and distinguish the sub-clans and draws them together to exercise their common interests. (Chindarsi 1976:130.)

- **su**j sees, intensifier:

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev.

‘Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes [i.e. burial clothes], in the

house' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2, addressed to the dead person at the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* [Showing the Way] funeral ceremony).

- **sus** (see also *su*): *noj sus* 'to have lunch' (Xiongs).

- **suv** 'warm' (Xiongs):

cua suv 'warm air' (Xiongs).

dlej suv 'warm water' (Xiongs).

tseem suv 'still warm' (Xiongs).

- **suv**, intensifier (also written *su*):

Nplaj quas cai nqhaa quas nrig, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas suv
'The earth is altogether treeless. Heaven has no trees at all' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj tawm ntawd lug ntsib kag YOB NRAUG NTSUAG taab tom nyob huv nwg lub tsev qhuavsuv.
'So Muam Nkauj Ntsum then came out and found Yob the Orphan there in his bare hut' (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **suv**: *quavsuv* 'artemisia' (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Nwg txawm nqeg moog ua ib lub nyuas tsev nyob rua huv plawv lub nam taj quavsuv.
'He went down and made a small house in the middle of a field of artemisia' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

Below is a photograph of *quavsuv* kindly provided by Michael Johnson:



- **suv sab** ‘to be happy with’ (Xiongs).
- **sua** ‘to scratch, to gather in a pile, to pull in together’ (Xiongs).
- **sua** ‘Chinese’ (see also *suav*):

nkauj sua ‘Chinese girl’ (Xiongs).

In stories, the expression *ntuj sua teb* ‘skies of China’ comes to be a general term for ‘realm’ or ‘world’:

Ntuj sua teb thaus u, muaj ob tug kwvnpawg Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, hab Cuav Tshoj Tim.
 ‘In the world of long ago, there were two cousins: Pure One Who Faces Heaven and False One Who Faces Earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.
 ‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog [?] to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog [?!] I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **sua**: *ab au quas sua* ‘mist and fog’ personified:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj,
 ‘O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain
le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj,
 Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain
noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fuv lug puv nplaj.
 so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world.
Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag kev,
 O mist! O fog! Come down to the road.
noob neej noob tsaav nchuav quas nthwv lug puv nplaj teb.
 Let the seeds of kith and of kin come pouring down to fill the earth’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **Sua**: *Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas* ‘the Maiden Sua and the Youth Nplas’, personages invoked in one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant:

Nkauj Sua Nraug Nplas rau khau paaj pum dlej caa nyob qhov zaaj.
 ‘Maiden Sua and Youth Nplas, the two of you put on your embroidered shoes to see the source of the stream in the lair of the dragon’ (*Initiation* p. 120).

- **suab** ‘(classifier *lub*) voice, sound, noise’ (Xiongs):

lub suab thaws qaab ‘the voice bounces back’ (Xiongs).

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim
lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj
 ‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the mountain pass’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthaav sau ntuj tuaj
 ‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Tsi taag le ntawd, Moob muaj ob hom lug: lug Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg. Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv, tabsis lub ntsab lug hab tug ntawv yeej yog ib yaam.

‘Moreover, there are two dialects of Mong: White Hmong and Mong Leng. When they are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different, but the kernel of the language and the letters of the alphabet are the same’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **suab** ‘(classifier *lub*) small iron ball in a cartridge’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shā* ‘sand’.

- **suab** ‘(classifier *tsob*) fern’ (Xiongs):

Nim naav lub nam tsho Suav laug suab quas zaws
 ‘He was wearing a Chinese jacket, embroidered all over with a fern-leaf pattern’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

tes mej nti ib phawb quavncaug rua txujkev es mej luv ib rev nplooj suab nrum rua huv txujkev hab es mej le lug ov.

‘then you all spit a drop (?) of saliva on the road and you all break off a fern leaf and throw it on the road as well, and then you all come back’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

- **suab** ‘great great grandparent’:

puj suab ‘great great grandmother’ (Xiongs), ‘paternal great great grandmother’ (*Village* p. 174)

yawg suab ‘paternal great great grandfather’ (*Village* p. 174).

yawm suab ‘great great grandfather’ (Xiongs).

- **suab**, from Chinese *shā* ‘sand’ (see also *suav*):

taj suab puam ‘dry land’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shābà*.

- **suab**: *txawv suab* ‘off tone, different in tone’ (Xiongs).

- **suab**: *yaav peg suab* ‘in the future’ (Xiongs).

- **suab laug** ‘low voice’ (Xiongs).

- **suab phem** ‘rough voice’ (Xiongs).

- **suab nca** ‘sobbing’ (Xiongs).

- **suab ntxhe** ‘(classifier *lub*) echo’ (Xiongs).

- **suab thaaj** ‘sugar from cane’ (Xiongs) (see also *suav thaaj*). From Chinese *shātáng* ‘granulated sugar’.

- **suaj** ‘to terminate, to put a final end to’, from Chinese 杀 *shā* ‘to kill’:

“Nua tes meb hu tuaj wb sim tua suaj.”

‘Now then the two of you call her to come and the two of us will try to kill and put a final end to her.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **suaj**, intensifier:

plaubhau nim dlub dlub suaj quas nyo suaj quas zaws nraag laujtaws
‘with black hair, falling and tumbling to her heels’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- **suaj**, final particle:

“Yog le nua kuv tsua moog noog suaj!”

‘In that case, I will go and listen!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70.)

“le nua kuv tsua moog suaj!”

‘In that case, I will go!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

- **suam** (no classifier) ‘region, section, area’ (Xiongs):

suam nub poob ‘west region’ (Xiongs).

- **suam**, from Chinese *shà* ‘a very short time, moment, instant’:

naag lug ib suam ‘it rains once’ (Xiongs).

Cav lug ib nyuas suam naag tshaavntuj quas lug

‘Why, there was a rainshower on a sunny day’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

- **suav** ‘to count, to number’ (Xiongs):

Peb Moob suav caijnyoog yog siv tsaj lub npe ua cov cim ntaus caij ntaus nyoog.

We Mong count time by using the names of animals to remember the seasons and the times.

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.

A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months.

Moob siv moog zoo le nuav:

The Mong use them as follows:

HLI – TSAJ HLI

Month – Animal of the Month

1 hlis – luav hli

1st month – month of the rabbit

2 hlis – zaaj hli

2nd month – month of the dragon

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month

4 hlis – neeg hli

4th month – month of the horse

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month

[Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.]

6 hlis – dlev hli

6th month – month of the dog

7 hlis – qab hli

7th month – month of the chicken

8 hlis – lab hli

8th month – month of the monkey

9 hlis – npua hli

9th month – month of the pig

*10 hlis – naag hli****

10th month – month of the rat***

*** *xub sau naag rua lub 10 hli, naag taag huv ib lub xyoos.*

*** if one begins to catch rats in the tenth month, the rats will be gone for a year.

*11 hlis – nyuj hli******

*11th month – month of the ox******

**** *nyuj hli huv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for tsaug?] rua lub hlis nuav.*

**** in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain, the harvest is in this month.

*12 hlis – tsuv hli******

*12th month – month of the tiger******

***** *noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

***** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

- **suav** ‘(classifier *tug*) Chinese’ (Xiongs) (see also *sua*):

haiv neeg suav ‘Chinese’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg suav ‘Chinese’ (Xiongs).

Moob Tuam Tshoj (Suav Teb) ‘The Mong of China’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 14).

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. ... Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thoov: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg

‘We Mong have many Clans. ... Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws. Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries. At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **suav**:

suav naag suav noog lug rua ob tug tau noj

‘to hunt for small game for the two of them to eat’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 13-14).

- **suav**, from Chinese *shā* ‘sand’ (see also *suab*):

Los Xaab, wb rovqaab moog pw nraag nam taj suav ntswm kws nim taj tug quas vuv

lawm nam peb caug taj, taj tug quas vuv lawm naj pebcaug nraag kws teem nkaus npoo ntuj hov.

‘Los Xaab, let us go back and sleep down in the field that is sandy all over, the field that is level for thirty plots, the field that is level for thirty plains, that presses against the edge of the sky’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- suav:

npau suav ‘dream’ (Xiongs).

Ua Npausuav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb ‘A Dream of Going to See the Country of the Spirits’ (*Ua Npausuav*, title).

- suav dlawg ‘every one, everybody’ (Xiongs):

suav dlawg tuaj txhij lawm ‘everyone is here’ (Xiongs).

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab
‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg. ‘the two sides wrote up a contract and had everyone witness it’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

cais suavdlawg txhaj nyob ua zog ua moog rua ntus ntawd.

‘and everyone came to live in villages and towns at that time’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hluv, hab nyob ua npoj ua luag lug lawm ntev.

‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love, and lived as friends and companions for a long time’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hluv yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’
(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **Suavfaaj**: *Moob Suavfaaj*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p.6).

- **suav lab** ‘Chinese communist’ (Xiongs).

- **suav nto peb** ‘to count up to three’ (Xiongs).

- **suav tawg** ‘fire’ (Xiongs):

ua tau suavtawg rovqaab cig pum ke tuaj

‘to make a fire so that once again it was light enough to see’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **Suav Teb** ‘China’:

Moob Tuam Tshoj (Suav Teb) ‘The Mong of China’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 14).

- **suav thaaj** ‘sugar, sweet’ (Xiongs) (see also *suab thaaj*). From Chinese *shātáng* ‘granulated sugar’.

- **suav tsi txheeb** ‘uncountable, too many to count’ (Xiongs).

- **sw** ‘dirty, messy’ (Xiongs).

- **swb** ‘to lose (game, contest), to be defeated’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shǔ*.

- **swb** ‘to move, to displace, to slip, to move along, to move down’ (Xiongs):

*ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthav sau ntuj tuaj, cais ob tug txhaj
tsaa hlo qhovmuag saib na, ua cav Nuj Sis Loob hab nam Yawm Dlaab sis ntaus sis tua
yaa swb sas nrug thoov nam fuab dlob lug.*

‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky, so they
lifted their eyes to look, and there were Nuj Sis Loob and the Spirit fighting and gliding
down, accompanied by a black cloud’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **swm** ‘to really love or like someone or something; to be very familiar to each other’ (Xiongs).
From Chinese *shú* ‘familiar’.

T

- **tab** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) skirt, woman’s dress’ (Xiongs), ‘(classifier *dlaim*) skirt’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145):

ib dlaim tab tshab ‘a new skirt’ (Xiongs).

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dlob ‘My mother dyes her skirt in black’ (Xiongs).

khaws ntse-tab ‘to gather the pleats of a skirt’; the pleats are anchored in the top section
with special stitches; the pleats are held in place with long threads, that are pulled out
each time the skirt is worn. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146.)

nthu tab ‘middle section of the skirt. The base fabric is the *cab* or batik. It’s indigo on
white, or indigo on light blue. There are several designs for the batik pattern, and very

few of the women in the U.S. remember all of them. Most of the designs are called *txaj tab* or ‘skirt mark’. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145.)

taab tab, bottom section of the skirt. Often the cross-stitched and appliqued design of this section repeats or complements the batik and appliqued sections above. The bottom bound edge is the *taab taw*, or foot of the skirt. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146.)

- **tab**: *dlav nraaj tab* ‘batiking knife’:

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.

‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

- **tab sis** or **tuab sis** ‘but’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dànshì*:

Npawg Ntxawg, lub qhov kws kuv nqeg lug nyob sau nuav, tabsis luas dlov pobzeb lug txhawg taag xwb.

‘Cousin Ntxawg, the place where I descended is on top of here, but he has rolled stones and blocked it up’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **tag** ‘true, right, real’ (Xiongs):

kev yog tag ‘the truth’ (Xiongs).

ua tag tag ‘really work hard, really be serious at’ (Xiongs).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua tshaav ntuj quas lug lawm cais, kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb lug lawm tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky has cleared, for my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is truly coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua ntuj kaaj quas lug lawm cais kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tuaj yuav txug tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky is bright and so my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is really coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 31-33).

Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog

‘You say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Koj yuav haus taag nam dlej ab qas tag, nam ncauj le yuav yaug taag, koj le txaj oob txaj ntsim tsis ncu taag nplaj lis teb.

‘When you have drunk the bitter water truly, when your mouth is completely rinsed, you will forget all that you treasured on the face of the earth’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

Ob tug dlha dlha xauj na has, ub! puj Los Xaab mas cav yog tug nam kws naag ob tug pum quas tag.

‘The two of them ran to take a peek and, why, oh my!, Mrs. Los Xaab was indeed the one they had seen the previous day’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

Noj tsi taug los ua tag noj. Haus tsi taug los ua tag haus.

‘If you cannot eat you must nonetheless eat. If you cannot drink you must nonetheless drink’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuij ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **tag** ‘to hold, to cover the bottom, to support’ (Xiongs).

- **tag**: *tub yuav pib tuab tag* ‘almost begin, open’ (Xiongs).

- **tag**: *ua tag* ‘nonetheless’:

yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

Noj tsi taug los ua tag noj. Haus tsi taug los ua tag haus.

‘If you cannot eat you must nonetheless eat. If you cannot drink you must nonetheless drink’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

- **tag**: *yog tag* ‘it is right, correct’ (Xiongs).

- **tag tag mas** ‘in reality, actually’ (Xiongs).

- **taj** ‘flat, smooth; (classifier *lub*) plain, field, flat land’ (Xiongs):

Los Xaab, wb rovqaab moog pw nraag nam taj suav ntswm kws nim taj tug quas vuv lawm nam peb caug taj, taj tug quas vuv lawm naj pebcaug nraag kws teem nkaus npoo ntuj hov.

‘Los Xaab, let us go back and sleep down in the field that is sandy all over, the field that is level for thirty plots, the field that is level for thirty plains, that presses against the edge of the sky’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Los Xaab txawm maub hau quas toog rovqaab rua nraag qub qaab, nraag lub nam taj ua lawm.

‘So Los Xaab groped his way in the dark down to the place where he had been, down to that field’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21)

Ua tau tej nam tsev zeb tsev tsua ua yig quas qaag rua nraag nam taj dlej hluv lawm le.

‘There are houses of stone and of limestone in making households all over the place down in a large river plain’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22)

Nuj Sis Loob nyob tsawg ntawm lub nam tojntxaas tog ib nub yuavlaug tsausntuj txug lub nub taj quas lag

‘Nuj Sis Loob remained sitting on the grave all day until nightfall, when the sun was just level with the horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9)

- **taj** ‘to pay back to engagement’ (Xiongs).

- **taj laj** ‘market, from Lao *tàlàat*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **taj nraag** ‘plain’ (Xiongs).
- **taj suab puam** ‘dry land’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shābà*.
- **taj xuab zeb** ‘beach’ (Xiongs).
- **tam** ‘to invite someone for a meal as a recognition of services offered’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dài*.
- **tam** ‘(no classifier) a generation, a lifetime’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dài*:

plaub tam taag lug ‘four generations ago’ (Xiongs).

- **tamtseeb** ‘in truth’, ‘Damn it!’, from Chinese *dàngzhēn* ‘really’:

Quas tswb nyuj, tswb neeg, qhev mas tamtseeb nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab.

‘Cow bells, horse bells, servants in truth filled the hills and highlands.’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Tamtseeb aj! Koj nyuas Siv Yig Muas kod koj txawm siv muab kuv tub Tuam tua tuag lawm tag.

‘Damn it! You little Siv Yig Muas you, you really *have* killed my son Tuam’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

- **tas** ‘(classifier *lub*) birthmark’ (Xiongs).

- **tas** ‘that’ (Xiongs):

Kuv vaam tas koj yuav tuaj koom peb rooj qav hab

‘I hope that you will participate in the feast with us’ (Xiongs).

Peb xaav tas yuav tsi yog lawm ‘We think that it will not be right’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

The phrase *has tas*, or simply *tas* by itself, means ‘to say that’ or ‘to say’, followed by a direct or indirect quotation:

puab has tas – ‘they say that – ’ (Xiongs).

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “*Peb yuav tsum sib hlub*”

s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

Koj has tas koj xaiv tau koj chaw lawm nua es ... Zagnua zoo los nyob, tsi zoo los nyob xwb!

‘You said that you’ve chosen the one you really want. Now you’ve got to stay with him whether it’s good or not!’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua

tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (Tswv Yim p. 141).

Muaj ib nub tes puj Siv Yig Muas tsi ca le huas puj Siv Yig Muas tas ...

‘But one day Siv Yig Muas’s wife did not leave well enough alone, and said ...’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 31).

cais nwg tug muam txhaj has rua tug nug ntxawg tas

‘the sister then said to her younger brother’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 9).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 101.)

The phrase *yog has tas* or *yog tas* means ‘if’:

yog has tas ‘if, whether’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg p. 16).

Ab yog tas koj tsi kheev los thov txav cov plaubhau rua kuv lauj!

‘Very well, if you won’t [give me the head], then please cut off the hair for me!’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 31.)

- **tas:** *vim tas* ‘because’:

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev ‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm

‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

- **tav** ‘ready, finished, accomplished; to fully grow, to get ready, to be’ (Xiongs):

ua tav or *npaaj tav* ‘to be ready’ (Xiongs).

rau sab ntso ua kom tav ‘made sure to be ready’ (Xiongs p. 555).

ua tav taag ‘completely done’ (Xiongs).

cais koj nrug kuv ua dlej ua num hab kawm txuj kawm ci peb lub hlis kuas tav

‘so you work with me and study for three months so that you are ready’ (Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg p. 29).

Nwg hlub tav txiv lawm

‘He is a grown up man now’; ‘He is fully grown up to be a man now’ (Xiongs).

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntshais kawm txuj kawm ci, hab kawm laajlim tegtaw thaus yau lug tav hluas taagnrho.

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm and studied magic and martial arts from the time they were small till the time they came of age’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

- **taab** ‘(classifier *tug*) support, rib, leg’ (Xiongs).

- **taab** ‘to be able to stand, can take care’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dāng*.

- **taab** ‘moment’ (Xiongs):

puag taab ‘a moment or a while ago’ (Xiongs).

- **taab**: *cev taab seeb* ‘not being pregnant’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dānshēn* ‘single, unmarried, without a boyfriend’.

- **taab cuab taug** ‘to be able to support the family, to self support’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dāngjiā*.

- **taab tab**, bottom section of the skirt. Often the cross-stitched and appliqued design of this section repeats or complements the batik and appliqued sections above. The bottom bound edge is the *taab taw*, or foot of the skirt. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146.)

- **taab taw**, the bottom bound edge of a skirt (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146):

tswv taab taw ‘foot of the skirt’; bound bottom edge of the skirt (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).

- **taab tom** ‘to be going to, to be in the process of doing something’ (Xiongs):

cov dlau taab tom yaaj ‘the snow is melting’ (Xiongs).

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas theem rua huv Plawv nroog.
‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs, entry for *ua*).

Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntsooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le.

‘At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj tawm ntawd lug ntsib kag YOB NRAUG NTSUAG taab tom nyob huv nwg lub tsev qhuavsu.

‘So Muam Nkauj Ntsum then came out and found Yob the Orphan there in his bare hut’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

ua cav Lob Lw, nwg tug quasyawg taabtom ci ib tug nqaj nraaj dlawb ua npau roj ua

txhe huv qhov cub.

‘and, why, Lob Lw, her husband, was toasting the meat of a white pheasant, boiling the fat and letting it drip into the fire’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab, nwg khawb ua hle hlo lug cais zoo taag lawm lauj!

‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest, he will scratch it off and get well!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Thaus Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseem taabtom phua tawg nyo quas nyog, nwg txawm nov ib lub suab nrov nroo quas ntwg peb kem pobtsuas lug.

‘While Txheeb Tshoj Theeb was still bent over splitting firewood, he heard a rumbling sound coming from far up on the cliff’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 9).

- **taag** ‘to finish, to run out, to use up; completely, entirely, fully, thoroughly’ (Xiongs):

puv taag ‘entirely full’ (Xiongs).

sib xyaw taag le lawm ‘all mixed up’ (Xiongs).

them taag lawm ‘to pay off’ (Xiongs).

ua tav taag ‘completely done’ (Xiongs).

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs).

Puab nyob txum chaw taag lawm ‘They completely resettle’ (Xiongs).

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm ‘they already sorted out the quality meat’ (Xiongs).

Luas yeej paub txug suav txuj kev limham ntawd taag lawm

‘She knew all about the cruelty of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab, nwg khawb ua hle hlo lug cais zoo taag lawm lauj!”

‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest, he will scratch it off and get well!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Txav txav taag tes tub txuas taag lawm.

‘However many you sever, others have already joined on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Txhua tug tu Sub, paub tsi has Sub txiv Sub tub raug muab tua tuag taag lawm tshuav puj Sub xwb.

‘Everyone cuts off the Sub, regardless of the fact that Sub the father and Sub the son were killed and only Mrs. Sub remained’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 34).

Ob tug muab cov nam nplej cua cua taag ob tug le hluv.

‘When they had chewed up the stock of rice they were fully grown’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64).

*Koj tug npawg Cuav Tshoj Tim twb dlha lug has rua peb paub taag lawm tas pobzeb
ndlog moog txhub kuv tub mej tuag rua huv qhovntuj lawm es*

‘Your cousin False One Who Faces Earth ran here and told us that stones had rolled and entombed my son so that he died in the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 30).

Kuv xaav tas Saub qha rua kuv le hov taag lawm, cais peb ua tau ua le ntawd.

‘I want us to do everything that Saub told me’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, p. 26).

Peb le peb tsi khwv los peb yeej muaj noj muaj haus tsi paub taag.

‘Without toil we have an unending supply of food and drink’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

*“Npab! tsaug zug taag npaug! sim pw ib plag kuas zoo sab zog le mam sawv kev moog
ntxiv!”*

‘Npab! how sleepy I am! I’ll try lying down for a moment so that I’ll feel good to get up and go further!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17.)

*Lug txug ncua nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag huas nam naab hab tsuv muab noj
taag.*

‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once and the snake and the tiger ate him up’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **taag** ‘main’, in expressions referring to the ritually important parts of a house:

hauv taag ‘(classifier *lub*) the main area of a traditional Mong house where most of the ceremonies or ancestor worship were conducted’ (*Xiongs, Tswv Yim* p. 15).

qhov rooj taag ‘main door’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

*Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv
dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.*

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors’ garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors’ house.

*Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev
tshab.*

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors’ new home.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors’ garden!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18.)

Suavdlawg nkaag moog huv tsev tes pua chaw ntawm hauvtaag.

‘Everyone came into the house and then [the spirits] laid out bedding in the main room’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **Taag**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Haam** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **taag**: *muaj taag lawm* ‘it is finished’, used at the end of a story (see also *taag lawm*):

Tes sis xuas sis xuas rov lug tsev tes tsuas muaj taag lawm.

‘They groped their way back to the house, and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **taag**: *Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Nxtawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **taag**: *ua taag* ‘nonetheless’:

koj yuav ua taag tev lawm naj peb lub
 ‘you must nonetheless peel three’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 77).

- **taag**: *ua taag ua tab* [typo for *thab*] ‘do again and again’ (Xiongs).

- **taag**: *yaav taag lug* ‘in the past’ (Xiongs).

- **taag kee** ‘no more chance or opportunity’ (Xiongs).

- **taag kig** ‘morning’:

naag mo taag kig ‘yesterday morning’ (Xiongs).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub
 ‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

- **taag lawm** ‘it is finished’, used at the end of a story (see also *muaj taag*):

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev tes taag lawm lauj.
 ‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **taag nrho** ‘completely finished’ (Xiongs):

thaum tshaav ntuj te taag nrho ‘when the sunlight covers all’ (Xiongs).

- **taag sim neej** ‘to die, to pass away’ (Xiongs).

- **taaj ib**: *rooj taaj ib* ‘(classifier *lub*) chair’ (Xiongs). From Lao *tāng ìi*.

- **taam**, from Chinese *dàng* ‘treat as, regard as’:

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hluv koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
 ‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

- **taam**: *cuab yeej cuab taam* ‘household things’ (Xiongs).

- **taam sim**, from Chinese *dāngshì* (non-standard pronunciation *dàngshì*) ‘then, at that time’:

taam sim nuav ‘now, at the present time, actually, today, these days’ (Xiongs).

Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **taav** ‘(classifier *tug*) rib’ (Xiongs):

luv taav ‘to break a rib’ (Xiongs).

ntoos taav ‘(no classifier) rib’ (Xiongs).

- **taav** ‘flat, leveled off (way, road, passage)’ (Xiongs).

- **taav** ‘to stop, to prevent from going any further’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dǎng*.

- **taav**: *phaab taav* ‘the side’ (Xiongs):

A man throws a pestle at a rat and misses, whereupon the pestle says:

Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le.

‘Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **taav caij**:

Taav caij moog kawm ntawv lawm. ‘It is time to go school’ (Xiongs).

- **taav le caag** ‘when, what time’ (Xiongs).

- **taav luv** ‘broken rib’ (Xiongs).

- **taav nuav** ‘presently, now; to be time to’ (Xiongs):

Peb coj mej ntxhais ntxawm moog txug taavnuav dlag es, nubnua peb yuav tuaj fij meej ntawm nuav.

‘We have taken your youngest daughter up to now, today we want to come to return to the door here’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 120; the speaker is a man paying the customary visit to the wife’s parents shortly after the wedding).

- **taav su** ‘noon’ (Xiongs):

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm

caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **taav su dlua** ‘afternoon’ (Xiongs).

- **taav twg** ‘when, at what time’ (Xiongs):

Taav twg koj le yuav rov lug? ‘When will you come back?’ (Xiongs.)

- **taig** ‘(classifier *lub*) bowl’ (Xiongs):

muaj ib lub taig lab nyob sau rooj. ‘There is a red bowl on the table’ (Xiongs).

ib taig mov ‘a bowl of rice’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **taig: taiv taig** ‘basin’:

ib cov nam pob zeb ua tej lub taiv taig ‘a group of stones that form a basin’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 14).

- **taig hov txob** ‘mortar’ (Xiongs).

- **taij** ‘to inquire, to ask for, to demand, to propose’ (Xiongs):

koj yuav tsum taij saib puab puas pum zoo ‘you must ask to see if they agree’ (Xiongs).

Thaus nwg lug txug, nwg kuj taij nwg tug muam yuav rovqaab lug tsev.

‘When he arrived, he then asked his sister if he might return home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 13).

- **tais** ‘to squeeze, to put in between, to press, to pinch, to weigh down, to put pressure on’ (Xiongs):

tug rawg tais nqaj noj ‘chop-sticks’ (Xiongs).

pob tais ‘between the legs’ (Xiongs).

- **tais** ‘(classifier *tug* or no classifier) grandmother-in-law’ (Xiongs), ‘maternal grandmother’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **tais: fuabtais** ‘king, queen, ruler’:

Referring to a male ruler:

NTU NTAWD, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nyob ua Fuabtais kaav Ntujsua Teb Tompeg.

‘AT THAT TIME, His Majesty was King over the Upper Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16).

Cais Yawm Fuabtais txhaj moog tau Nkauj Nubqub lug ua nwg tug nam yau ntxiv hab.

‘So the King took, in addition, Star Maiden as his junior wife’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 16).

Referring to a married couple ruling jointly as king and queen:

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

hab tsaa Txheej Tshoj Theeb ua fuabtais nyob rua tog qaabteb hov. Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooглаug ntxhais Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv pujoyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaab hab hab ua fuabtais kaav tebchaws

‘he set Pure One Who Faces Heaven up to reign over the south. Pure One Who Faces Heaven and Grandfather Nyooглаug’s Youngest Daughter brought Pure One Who Face Heaven’s parents to live with them in the south and rule over the country’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

Nuj Sis Loob, hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug txhaj sawv lug ua fuabtais

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab became king and queen’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **tais:** *fuabtais vaajntxwv* ‘king, queen, ruler’:

Referring to a male ruler:

Ab! peb foom kuas nwg tau moog ua fuabtais vaajntxwv lauj!

Ah! Let us bestow a blessing on him that he shall become king’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

Referring to a married couple ruling jointly as king and queen:

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **tais:** *nam tais* ‘mother-in-law’ (Xiongs), ‘wife’s mother’ (*Village* p. 175):

Nub tomqaab, Xeev Txwjlaug ntxhais ntxawm moog cuag Saub taag, nwg le maam rovqaab moog cuag nwg namtais

‘The following day, the Ruler’s youngest daughter went to meet Saub, she then went back to see her mother’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

Ob tug moog txug na, ob namtais yawmtxiv tseem nyav ua npua rooj taag.

‘When the two of them arrived, [Muam Paajqawm’s] parents had just finished sacrificing a pig to the door spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 18).

Taub Qaub, meb muab tug laagnpua nuav tu kuas zoo zoo es pegkig kuv xaa meb moog fij meej lawm meb namtais puab.

‘Taub Qaub, the two of prepare this pig well and tomorrow I will escort the two of you to pay the customary visit to your wife’s mother’ (*Lug Nraug Tsuv* p. 119).

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

‘[Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] mother and [Muam Nkauj Ntsum’s] father, THE RULER, reigned in heaven, but Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **tais:** *pug fuabtais* ‘the wife of a king’:

Tabsis, Pug Fuabtais ca le tshev

‘But the Queen scolded him’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

Thaus kawg, Yawm Txivyaig ca le foom lawv le Pug Fuabtais xaav lawm.

‘Finally, Grandfather Txivyaig decreed as the Queen wished’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

pub rau Yawm Fuabtais, Pug Fuabtais Hlub, hab Pug Fuabtais Yau puab noog [typo for *moog?*] *taagnrho.*

‘they allowed the King, the Senior Queen [senior wife of the king], and the Junior Queen [junior wife of the king] all to go’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **tais dlaab** ‘wife’s brother’s wife, brother’s wife (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **tais hluas** ‘sister’ (Xiongs), ‘mother’s younger sister, wife’s younger sister, younger sister (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **tais laug** ‘mother’s older sister, wife’s older sister, older sister (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **taiv taig** ‘basin’:

ib cov nam pob zeb ua tej lub taiv taig ‘a group of stones that form a basin’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 14).

- **tau** ‘to have, to get, to have got’ (Xiongs):

Kuv tau ib lub tsho tshab ‘I got a new shirt’ (Xiongs).

kuv tau tsib lub tsho ‘I have five shirts’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug tau tsawg tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who gets the least’ (Xiongs).

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj

‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

Mej yaum saib puas tau luag

‘You try to get others to join’ (Xiongs) [“You-plural persuade to see whether get companions”].

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo

‘to be among good friends’ (Xiongs) [“go mix get good friends”]

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyooob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

‘The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Ub! Siv Yig Muas, koj nim txawj txawj ua neeb, tau tau nqaj noj.

‘Say, Siv Yig Muas, you know how to perform shamanic rites, so you are able to get meat to eat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

kuv tau ntawm nam puj dlaab paug.

‘I got them from the female paug spirit’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev

‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **tau** ‘auxiliary verb to change a verb into the past tense’ (Xiongs):

tau noj ‘ate’, *tau noj dlua (taag) lawm* ‘have/has eaten’ (Xiongs, p. 548).

tau haus ‘drank’, *tau haus dlua lawm* ‘have/has drunk’ (Xiongs p. 548).

tau moog ‘went’, *tau moog dlua lawm* ‘have/has gone’ (Xiongs p. 548).

Cov tub saab qhwv tau puab lawm ‘The thieves encircled them already’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975

‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

cov thee tsi tau kub txaus ‘the charcoal is not hot enough’ (Xiongs) [“has not gotten hot enough”].

Kuv nyav yuav tau lub tsho nuav ‘I have just bought this shirt’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi tau noj tshais ‘I have had breakfast’ [typo for ‘I have not had breakfast’] (Xiongs).

kub [typo for *kuv*] *tsi tau pum dlua lug le* ‘I have never seen it before’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi tau yuam koj ua nawb. ‘I did not force you to do it’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau teb tuaj ‘They did not answer yet’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau txais dlaim ntawv le ‘They did not receive the letter yet’ (Xiongs).

Auj! Yog nyob ntawm nwg hauv sab tseem tshuav ib dlaim tawv tsi tau hle nawj!

‘Oh! It is that there still is left on his chest a piece of skin that has not been removed!’

(*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Peb tsi tau caiv dlhau.

‘We’re not yet past the period of prohibition’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.

‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

- **tau** ‘for (such and such a period of time)’:

cev xeeb tub tau ob hli lug lawm ‘being pregnant for two months already’ (Xiongs).

- **tau** ‘to have to’:

yuav tau pw ib plag tsaiv ‘to have to sleep for a short while before all’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim ‘the soldiers will have to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

mej yuav tau moog theem tom puab tsev ib plag

‘you will have to stop at their house for a while’ (Xiongs).

- **tau** ‘to be able’, preceding a verb:

kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!

‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog: MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB

‘The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two large groups: the Mong Leng and the White Hmong’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

Ub! Siv Yig Muas, koj nim txawj txawj ua neeb, tau tau nqaj noj.

‘Say, Siv Yig Muas, you know how to perform shamanic rites, so you are able to get meat to eat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see’ (*Xeev Nruag Xyooj, Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4).

- **tau** ‘to be able’, following a verb:

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? ‘Can you find my new shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo

‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs) [“in order to be able to learn well”].

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*

‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb ‘s/he can only do up to there’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau

‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

puab tib mej ua tau ‘It is good that you can do it’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab lug hwv lawm

‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

tsuav mej ua tau ‘if you can do it’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj

‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

nwg chua nta ngog, ngog tsi tau.

‘when he snatches it to swallow, he will not be able to swallow it’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **tau** ‘to be able’, not adjacent to a verb:

Yog le tsi tau, ca peb fib mej quas tsug.

‘If we have lost the contest, let us return to you for a rematch after a time’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 3).

Siv Yig Muas, av! koj txawmpeeb tog lawm los tsi tau?

‘Hey, Siv Yig Muas, are you ready to fight?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

Ub! tau lawm hab kuas lug noj mov tsuav!

‘Hey, I’m ready, but come and eat first!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

Wb! tau hab huas!

‘Yes, indeed!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **tau**, used between a transitive verb and its object:

coj ‘bring’:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuij ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

khaws ‘pick up’:

Khaws tau pawg nyaj hov ntawm na muaj ib nam lauv qab hov.

‘When he picked up the pile of silver, he found that there was also a rooster there’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

muab ‘pick up, take’:

Muab tau nam lauv qab tes coj nyaj hab nam lauv qab lug tsev lawm.

‘He picked up the rooster and brought the silver and the rooster home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab*).

p. 27).

luv ‘break off’:

Moog ua zoj ua zig rov lug tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, luv tau ib rev nplooj suab tso huv txuj kev.

‘They came running round and round and spat a glob of saliva in the road, and broke off a fern frond and left it in the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

tshawb ‘find’:

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

txav ‘cut off’:

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

ua ‘make’:

Puab nyav ua tau ib yaam txawv txawv

‘They have just made something very strange’ (Xiongs).

Examples such as the above may be different from cases where *tau* changes the meaning of the verb, e.g.

caum ‘to chase’, *caum tau* ‘to catch’

yos ‘to search for’, *yos tau* ‘to find’

- **tau**: *caum tau* ‘to catch’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *dlaab tsi los tau* ‘anything’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *kev tau zoo nyob* ‘health’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *leej twg los tau* ‘anybody’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *nreeg tau* [typo for *taum*?] ‘(classifier *tug*) bean pole’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *poob tau* ‘to come to be (in a particular place):

Kuv coj ib tug nyuas tub es moog poob tau rua dlaabntxaug teb

‘I brought a boy and fell into the ntxaug spirits country’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **tau**: *tub tsi tau* ... ‘not ... yet’:

tub tsi tau ua tau ‘not done yet’ (Xiongs).

- **tau**: *tug kawm tau qeeb* ‘slow learner’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *ua tau txaus ntxub* ‘stink’ (Xiongs).
- **tau**: *yos ... tau* ‘to find’:

Koj yos puas tau koj lub tsho dhub? ‘Do you find your black shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

- **tau**: *yuav tau* ‘to get’:

Tes lug txug tes muaj ib tug tsua tas; “Ua caag koj yuav tau nyaj?”

When he arrived, there was someone who said: “How did you get silver?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

- **tau kua qhav haus** ‘to be scolded’ (Xiongs) [“to get ginger juice to drink”].

- **taub** ‘gourd’ (see also *toob*):

hau taub ‘to boil squash or pumpkin’ (Xiongs).

Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd

‘If you want to escape, flee into that gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug muab lub nam taub ntsaws pis kag rua

‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm the two of them quickly plugged up the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob nqeg taug lawm lau.

‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

“Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?”

“Good grief! What’s this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **taub**, sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.

there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”

Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **taub**: *fwbtaub* ‘(classifier *lub*) gourd dipper’ (Lyman p. 116):

Nam puj dlaab txawm ris ib lub kawm, coj ib raab rag hab ib lub fwbtaub.

‘The female spirit then carried on her back a basket, and had brought a knife and a gourd

dipper' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

"*Coj lub fwbtaub tuaj ua dlaabtsi?*" "*Lub fwbtaub nuav, coj tuaj cug nraug ntshaav*".
 "Why did you bring the gourd dipper?" "This gourd dipper, I brought it to catch young men's blood." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **taub**: *qhov taub* 'jail':

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

'They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people' (Xiongs).

- **taub**: *to taub* 'to understand' (Xiongs).

- **taub**: *tshuajtaub*, word of uncertain meaning in the following example:

Tes cov nam txiv dluaj sav sav Tes Los Tuam nim dlha quas loo moog dle kag tau tej nam tshuajtaub tes muab faib hlo Los Tuam ib tshuajtaub, Los Lwm ib tshuajtaub, Los Xaab ib tshuajtaub.

'Now the peaches were ripe and Los Tuam ran over and picked some tshuajtaub and divided them up, giving one tshuajtaub to himself, one tshuajtaub to Los Lwm and one tshuajtaub to Los Xaab' (*Ceebpov* p.15).

In the United Bible Society's Mong Leng translation of the Bible, *tshuajtaub* is used to mean 'water-scooper' (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **taub ab** 'gourd' (Xiongs) , 'the bitter gourd (used to make dippers)' (Lyman p. 315).

- **taub dlaag** '(classifier *lub*) pumpkin' (Xiongs).

- **taub hau** '(classifier *lub*) head' (Xiongs):

plhw taub hau 'touch gently on the head' (Xiongs).

tsam taub hau 'to bump by the head' (Xiongs).

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for *teb*] 'turn the head to the north' (Xiongs).

tsaa taubhau kuv muab lub tog nuav rau koj ncoo os!

'lift your head and I will give you this stool as a pillow' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Ntxawm muab lub nam tog lug tso xab taubhau taag

'Ntxawm put the stool under his head' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

nwg aub tuab lub nam taubhau zaaj ua qaug dlaab qaug dle

'he staggered along carrying on his back the dragon-head' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

Nwg dlha dlha moog aub hlo lub nam taubhau zaaj, hab muab raab taus ntsa kag, cais kwv loog moog. 'He ran along carrying on his back the dragon-head. He stuck his axe into it so that he could carry it on his shoulder' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 31; the illustration on page 32 shows that he carries the axe handle on his shoulder, and the dragon's head is attached to the blade of the axe).

Koj muab tug nam laug luj luj lab ploog ntoo sau koj taubhau nawb.

‘Take a great big, bright red band of cross-stitch embroidery and wrap it around your head’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Nam Sib Tuam ob fuas ob fuas tsi tau taubhau lug txawb txuas rua le

‘Sub Tuam snatched about and snatched about but could not find his head to join it back on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

tshuav nam txhaa taubhau dlawb paug, khuav nceev tid e!

‘all that’s left is the gleaming white skull, wedged in over there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **taub hau** ‘(classifier *thooj*) a piece of boiled squash’ (Xiongs).

- **taub hau**: *txhaa taub hau* ‘skull’ (Xiongs).

- **taub nqaa dlej** ‘gourd’ (Xiongs) [“gourd to carry water”]

- **taub ntsuab** ‘(classifier *lub*) squash’ (Xiongs).

- **taub qaab** ‘(classifier *lub*) buttock, the behind’ (Xiongs).

- **taub qaab** ‘short’ (Xiongs).

- **taubyaaj** ‘Duānyáng’, a festival, often called the Dragon Boat Festival in English, celebrated by both Hmong and Chinese on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar (Graham 1954:87-88; Tsab 1988:81):

In explaining why the fifth month of the lunar calendar is the month of the sheep, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says:

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.

- **taug** ‘to follow, to go along with, to investigate’ (Xiongs):

Nwg taug taug neev ntshw moog rua peg kaumhaav

‘He followed the trail of the elephants up to a corner of the valley’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 43).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab nwg tug dlev taug kev lug txug ntawd ib ntog kev, ua cav txawm muaj ib twv fuab dlawb yaa lug quas luag.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum and her dog followed the road to that place partway along the road, and, why, there was a white cloud flying lug quas luag’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 9).

Nwg nrhav moog rua qhov u los tsi pum,

He searched far but did not see her,

nrhav lug rua qhov nua los tsi pum hlo le.

he searched near but did not see her at all.

Nwg txawm taug kev moog rua peg luagteb,

He then followed the road up to the upper part of the swidden field,
na txawm pum nwg tug muam tug neevta tuaj moog lawm.
 why, then he saw his sister's footprints coming and going. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

- **taug** 'to be able to stand, to stand, to have the ability to do, to be able to' (Xiongs):

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm
 'S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore', 'S/he, perplexed, remains in silence'
 (Xiongs).

taab cuab taug 'to be able to support the family, to self support' (Xiongs).

tiv tsi taug lawm 'cannot resist anymore' (Xiongs).

them tsi taug 'cannot afford' (Xiongs).

yuav thev tsi taug lawm 'cannot endure any more' (Xiongs).

Ua tsi taug hlo le. 'Cannot do at all.' (Xiongs p. 554.)

Ces peb kuj muag tsi taug kag, tsuas siv tseemfwv le xwb.
 'We cannot afford to buy [a TV]; we have to use the one provided by the government'
 (Seev Yom Too, *Txooj Moob* No. 5 p. 23).

Noj tsi taug los ua tag noj. Haus tsi taug los ua tag haus.
 'If you cannot eat you must nonetheless eat. If you cannot drink you must nonetheless drink' (*Initiation* p. 119).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug.
 'At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble' (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev
 'They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home'
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **taug** 'untight, not fully pulled, not severe, not much pressure, pretty much at ease' (Xiongs).

- **taug** 'venom' (Xiongs).

- **taug** 'to fall unconscious':

taug ib tsig 'to fall unconscious once' (Xiongs).

- **taug**: *nqe taug* 'downstream':

Luas kuas suavdlawg txua ib lub hleb cab lug ntim nwg, hab ua ib lub nkuaj lug ntim nwg
tug lauvqab tso rua sau lub hleb, cais suavdlawg ua ob lub phuaj lug ntim ob tug, hab
muab ob tug tso rua huv nam dlej luj tshoob nqegtaug xwb.
 'He wants everyone to build a coffin of pine to put him in, and to make a coop and put
 inside his rooster and put it on top of the coffin, and then everyone make two rafts to put
 the two of them on and put the two of them in the big river to carry them downstream'
 (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob nqeg taug lawm lau.

‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **taug**: *nqeg taug teg* ‘to be brave to start first’ (Xiongs).

- **taug**: *qaabvaag tsitaug* ‘area around the house’:

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug’s house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **taug**: *quaj taug* ‘easily cry, to cry often’ (Xiongs).

- **taug**: *saib tsi taug* ‘to despise, to disrespect’ (Xiongs).

- **taug**: *tom peg tom taug* ‘everywhere (in the city, in the country)’ (Xiongs).

- **taug**: *tuaj taug* ‘to be not afraid to take any action’ (Xiongs).

- **taug**: *tsitaug* ‘area downhill from house’:

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug’s house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Tes le muab ua pis nta rua nraag qaab tsitaug lawm.

‘So he left them by the downhill side of the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33).

- **taug**: *tsi taug teg* ‘could not gainsay’:

In a folktale, a man and his son, on their way to visit their kinsmen, come to the home of a ntxaug spirit and the ntxaug spirit invites the man and the boy to spend the night. During the night, the ntxaug spirit’s daughters kill the boy and the man flees in terror. He meets two people named Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm who tell him not to be afraid and insist that he go back with them to where the ntxaug spirits live:

Nam yawm tsi taug teg tes nam yawm coj Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug rov moog lau.

‘The man could not gainsay them so the man went back bringing Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **taug dlej nqeg taug** ‘downstream’ (Xiongs).

- **taugkev** ‘to continue on one’s way’:

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke

‘The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there’ (*Lug*

Nruag Tsuv p. 80).

- **taug lawg** ‘to proceed’:

Ob tug txawm taug lawg moog rua saab tim u.

‘The two of them then proceeded to the other side’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **taug quaj** ‘to wail and weep’:

Ob tug nyag taug nyag quaj taag

‘The two of them each wailed and each wept thoroughly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8).

- **taug rig** ‘the seat of one’s trousers’:

Nwg txhaj muab nwg tug nqaj nraaj zais nkaus rua huv taug rig hab nyob tsawg ndlua, cais nwg tug nqaj nraaj kub nwg pobtw, nwg txhaj rov qaab sawv tseeg, hab has

‘He then hid his pheasant meat in the seat of his trousers and stayed as he was, and then his pheasant meat burned his buttocks and he jumped back up and said’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

- **taug xaiv** ‘to gossip, to stereotype’ (Xiongs).

- **tauj** ‘(classifier *tsob*) kind of plant’ (Xiongs), ‘reed’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.
‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“*Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;*
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;
cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **tauj** ‘slave’:

Nwg moog lom moog tua tug muajtxag npuanuj [typo for *npluanuj*?], *hab yuam luas tej tuabneeg lug ua tauj ua qhev.*

‘He poisoned and killed a wealthy person and compelled their family to be slaves’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

- **tau**j, phonetic intensifier:

nrov tauj [to make the sound tauj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **tau**j-**laub**-**laug**, sound of a bird:

Huas tej nam taujvaub los nim quaj: "Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!" ntshu quas au rua tim tej haavzoov
 'But the blue-throated barbets cried: "Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug! Tauj-laub-laug!", making a great noise in the forest' (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

- **tau**j**vaub** 'the Indian blue-throated barbet, *Megalaima asiatica asiatica*' (Lyman p. 316):

Lug lug nto sau nam roob zoo tes naag tshauv naag sua nim zig quas zoj, taujvaub abhau nim quaj ntshoo quas qeeg tes nim khua khua nwg sab.
 'He traveled until he came to the top of a forested mountain, whereupon it began to drizzle, the blue-throated barbets and great barbets sang continuously, and so he became very melancholy' (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

- **taum** '(no classifier) bean' (Xiongs):

nreeg tau [typo for *taum*?] '(classifier *tug*) bean pole' (Xiongs).

pluav taum 'whole piece of bean' (Xiongs).

- **taum**:

lug taum 'old folk songs, ballads' (Xiongs).

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev. Yog koj los tsi yog? Yog koj tig ndlag quas lag moog xib dlaab, tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev, hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog.

'Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes [i.e. burial clothes], in the house. Was it you? If it was you, then, as you turn toward the spirits, lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave, for I am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2, addressed to the dead person at the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* [Showing the Way] funeral ceremony).

- **taum**:

mob qhua taum 'to have smallpox' (Xiongs).

cog taum 'to immunize against smallpox' (Xiongs).

- **taum laag** 'green bean; long beans' (Xiongs).

- **taum mog** 'peas' (Xiongs).

- **taum pauv** 'soybeans' (Xiongs).

- **taum qej** 'lima beans' (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 77 douf ghenx; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 32 douf ghex):

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas tev taum qej taum rhawv tes koj tsi tim saib.

‘When you reach the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, pay no attention to those who peel lima beans and rhawv beans.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

- **taus** ‘(classifier *raab*) axe’ (Xiongs):

Nwg raab taus yaa moog ntsa nkaus tug nam zaaj ib saab cejdlaab
 ‘The axe flew through the air and impaled the dragon on one side of his neck’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

nwg raab taus phua tawg kws nwg laim moog ntsa nam zaaj cejdlaab
 ‘his axe for splitting firewood which he had flung and impaled the dragon’s neck’
 (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laj*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11; from the *Qhuab Ke* [Showing the Way] funeral ceremony; the dead person’s ‘house’ is the coffin).

- **taus**:

ib taus ‘the width of one fist’ (Xiongs).

Taus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab

‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44)

- **taus nplooj** ‘leaf which has been folded up into a cone, used for holding cooked rice or for scooping water to drink’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 32 douk nblongx):

“I have seen this done in Thailand. A fairly large long leaf is selected to make the cone. Left to my own devices I would just use my hand, but the Hmong in Thailand like to take their time and drink from a mountain stream out of the leaf cone in a dignified manner (find a leaf, wash it, fold it, rinse it, scoop water, check it very carefully, drink it) – I guess that way you ensure you are not about to swallow a critter or dirt” (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

Cais tug nam Pujntxoog txawm moog cug kag tau peb taus nplooj dlej ab dlej dlaw
 ‘So the Pujntxoog then quickly dipped out three leaf-fuls of bitter and salty water’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 17).

- **tauv** ‘to stop, to plug, to dam, to hold back’ (Xiongs):

paag dlej tauv ‘dam pool’ (Xiongs).

sa txuj hlaab tauv cawm sa ‘put on the safety belt’ (Xiongs).

- **tauv** ‘(no classifier) bunch, cluster’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *duǒ*:

ib tauv fuab ‘a cluster of clouds’ (Xiongs).

ib tauv txiv ‘a bunch of fruit’ (Xiongs).

- **tauv**: *hlaab tauv cawm sa* ‘(classifier *txuj*) safety belt’:

sa txuj hlaab tauv cawm sa ‘put on the safety belt’ (Xiongs).

- **tauv kua muag** ‘to hold back tears’ (Xiongs).

- **taw** ‘to point at, to indicate, to lead, to show’ (Xiongs):

raab xub taw phaab nub poob ‘the arrow points to the west’ (Xiongs).

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls:

Kawg kag rhu ntim nyaj ntim kub lug taw.

Quick, pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate.

Tes puj dlaab nam ntshais moog rhu hlo ntim nyaj ntim kub lug tes;

So the female spirit’s daughter pulled out silver bowls and gold bowls:

“*Caj luas mas nam! tes caj*”.

“*Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag*”.

“*Caj luas mas nam! tes caj*”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

Plawg moog tes;

Plawg went then:

“*Kuv paab, kuv paab koj!*”

“*Caj luas mas nam! tes caj*”.

“*Tuag luas mas nam! Tuag le lauj nam lauj!*”

“If I can help, I will help you!”

“If you are to live, mother, you will live.”

“If you are to die, mother, you will die.”

Tes nam puj dlaab tuag le lauj.

Then the female spirit died.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 21-22.)

Then the female spirit’s daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is

repeated. The female spirit's daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

“Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj”.

“If you are to live, Little Kaub [man's name] and Little Mais [woman's name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live.”

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **taw** ‘uncastrated (animals)’ (Xiongs).

- **taw** ‘pertaining to the foot’ (see also *taws*).

- **taw**: *cos taw* ‘ankle’ (Xiongs).

- **taw**: *hle teg hle taw* ‘to thrust out one's hands and feet, to make boastful, arrogant gestures’:

Cuav Tshoj Tim nim khaav ua hle teg hle taw tas yog nwg nqeg moog paab Ntxawm
‘Cuav Tshoj Tim boasted, thrusting out his hands and feet, that it was he who had gone down to help Ntxawm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 34).

- **taw**: *kua taw* or *kutaw* ‘foot’ (see also *taws*):

kua taw ‘(classifier *txhais*) foot, bottom part’ (Xiongs).

plaub txhais kua taw ‘four legs’ (Xiongs).

moog kua taw ‘by foot’ (Xiongs).

nplaam kua taw ‘to slip’ (Xiongs).

xuab kua taw ‘to drag the feet’ (Xiongs).

hab xuab kutaw rhuj rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **taw**: *lauj taw* ‘(classifier *lub*) heel; to kick with the heel’ (Xiongs). Also written *laujtaws*.
- **taw**: *ncaws taw* ‘to kick’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *nchaas taw* ‘on tip toe’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *ntiv taw* ‘toe’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *pob qej taw* ‘ankle’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).
- **taw**: *qaum taw* ‘the top part of the foot’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *rau taw* ‘toenail’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *rwg taw* or *rwg ntiv taw* ‘little toe’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *taab taw*, the bottom bound edge of a skirt (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).
- **taw**: *tswv taab taw* ‘foot of the skirt’; bound bottom edge of the skirt (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).
- **taw**: *ua kutaw nqaa hlo* ‘to lift off the ground’:

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.

‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting him off the ground’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10)

- **taw**: *ua nchaas taw* ‘on tip toe’ (Xiongs).
- **taw**: *xib taw* ‘the soul of the foot’ (Xiongs).
- **taw kev** ‘to lead, to show the way’ (Xiongs).
- **Taw Kev** ‘Pointing Out the Way’ or **Qhuab Ke** ‘Showing the Way’, the first performed of the funeral ceremonies, the initial words spoken to the dead person to give them instructions for their journey to retrieve their documents of reincarnation or to meet their ancestors.

Published Mong Leng or Mong Njua versions of the Taw Kev or Qhuab Ke include the Mong texts in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 1-18) and *Cim Xeeb* (pp. 75-81), the Mong text and a French translation, along with analysis and discussion, in *Initiation* (Mong text pp. 119-139, French translation pp. 17-39), and an English translation in Chindarsi (1976:145-148).

The names Taw Kev or Qhuab Ke appear to be synonymous, some sources using one name, some the other:

Dlaab Qhuas: Qhuab Ke.

Cim Xeeb: Qhuab Ke / Taw Kev.

Initiation: “Kr’oua Ke” [= Qhuab Ke].

Chindarsi: “Terjee” [= Taw Kev].

The Taw Kev or Qhuab Ke is one of the great foundational texts of Mong culture. It tells

how the dead person must thank the spirits of the different parts of the house, the spirits of the granaries and animal pens, and the tutelary deities (*xeeb*) of the land and the place, all of whom have protected the dead person during his or her life. It tells how the dead person must retrace all the places where they lived, returning to the house where they were born to retrieve their placenta which was buried in the floor of the house. It tells how the dead person must avoid traps and pitfalls during their journey to heaven. They must refuse to let the Chinese sell them a parasol as they climb the steps to the sky. They must tie red thread around their fingers so that when the spirits who peel garlic and onions try to capture them, they can say, “My fingers are bleeding. I cannot peel garlic and onions with you.” They must carry balls of hemp to “stop up the mouths of dragons and tigers” in order to pass safely through a region of sharp rocks and crevices, and they must wear hemp shoes to walk safely on the backs of stinging hairy caterpillars.

There are many different versions of the Taw Ke or Qhuab Ke. Taken together synoptically they are one of our best sources for Mong beliefs about the cosmos and about death. Woven into the Taw Ke or Qhuab Ke are myths: the origin of death, which the dead person may recite to the household spirits in explaining to them that he or she has died and must leave the house, the origin of humanity, the origin of the sacrificial rooster that serves as the dead person’s guide on his or her journey, and the origin of the bamboo and trees used to make the dead person’s bier and coffin.

- **taw teg** ‘to point with a finger; to point, to show’ (Xiongs).

- **tawteg** or **tegtaw** ‘martial arts’:

taw teg ‘martial art’ (Xiongs).

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntshais kawm txuj kawm ci, hab kawm laajlim tegtaw thaus yau lug tav hluas taagnrho.

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm and studied magic and martial arts from the time they were small till the time they came of age’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntug nrov pis ntshas rua.

‘Striking and slashing with martial art skill, the two of them cut and chopped with a great clamor at her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **tawb** ‘(classifier *lub*) basket, cage’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dōu*.

- **tawb** ‘to play with, to joke, to fool around’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dōu*.

- **tawb** ‘(no classifier) a piece of something, a passing out (urine, stool, –)’ (Xiongs).

- **tawb**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov tawb [to make the sound tawb] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **tawb quav ncaug** ‘saliva’ (Xiongs).

- **tawg** ‘to break, to crack, to burst, to blow up (bomb), to break up’ (Xiongs):

lub zaig tawg lawm ‘the balloon broke’ (Xiongs).

pobzeb txawm yaa tawg pis txua ‘rocks flew to bits’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **tawg** ‘to divide up, to spread out (a group of people)’ (Xiongs).

- **tawg** ‘to open (flowers)’ (Xiongs).

- **tawg** ‘to crash’ (Xiongs).

- **tawg** ‘wood (for fire)’ (Xiongs):

ib cub tawg ‘a fire’ (Xiongs).

npau tawg ‘to get angry; to be angry’ (Xiongs).

nre tawg ‘to warm oneself by the fire’ (Xiongs).

ntsaub tawg ‘to intensify the fire’ (Xiongs).

rauv tawg ‘to set a fire’ (Xiongs).

suav tawg ‘fire’ (Xiongs).

ua tau suavtawg rovqaab cig pum ke tuaj

‘to make a fire so that once again it was light enough to see’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntug povtseg!

‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

- **tawg** ‘to spin around’ (Xiongs).

- **tawg**, intensifier:

Yuav tsausntuj tuab tag Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug nim pav twb quas tawg hab cov nam qhev puab nim pav twb quas tawg

‘When it was truly nightfall, Los Tuam and Los Lwm began to mutter and the servants also began to mutter’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 17-18).

Nim pav twb quas tawg le hov taug kev.

‘They kept muttering in that fashion all along the road’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

Tshev quas tawg le hov, tshev tshev Los Xaab quaj quaj kuamuag poob dlawb quas vog nrauzoov

‘He berated him in this fashion until the tears rained from Los Xaab’s eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj tsaa hlo qhovmuag saib, hab ywg quas tawg tas:

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then lifted his eyes to look and muttered’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb*

p. 33).

- **tawg**: *txhwb tawg* ‘a piece of firewood’ (Lyman p. 111):

In a story explaining the origin of making offerings to one’s ancestors, two brothers are frightened when the animals in their house begin to speak because they believe it to be a bad omen. When the dog speaks, they hit it with a piece of firewood:

Tes khaws nkaus txhwb tawg tuab nam txhwb tawg nam dlev

‘Then they grabbed a piece of firewood and gave a sharp blow with the piece of firewood to the dog’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **tawg pleb** ‘to crack’ (Xiongs).
- **tawg rog** ‘to flee out as refugee’ (Xiongs).
- **tawg rhe** ‘entirely broken’ (Xiongs).
- **tawj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov tawj [to make the sound tawj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **tawm** ‘to go out, to come out’ (Xiongs):

txaav tawm ‘to move out, to emerge’ (Xiongs).

txhuav cov dlej tawm ‘pump the water out’ (Xiongs).

Ncauj ke tawm ‘The way out’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **tawm** ‘to leave (home)’ (Xiongs):

cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj

‘the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty [China] to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty [outside of China]’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **tawm** ‘to run away’:

tsiv tawm ‘to run away, to escape’ (Xiongs).

Nwg txawm dlha ceev ceev tawm ‘s/he then quickly runs away’ (Xiongs).

- **tawm** ‘(no classifier) times (in comparison), stretch’ (Xiongs):

ntev tshaaj ob tawm ‘twice as long’ (Xiongs).

muaj pis tsawg tawm kev ‘How many stretches of road are there?’ (Xiongs.)

- **tawm** ‘-thirty’, in telling time:

thov paab tsaa kuv thaum ob teev tawm ‘please wake me up at two thirty’ (Xiongs).

- **tawm**: *ncau tawm* ‘to make divisions’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **tawm**: *ncauj tawm* ‘canker sores, thrush mouth’ (Xiongs).

- **tawm fws** ‘to perspire’ (Xiongs).

- **tawm hlwv** ‘to cause blister’ (Xiongs).

- **tawm ndlaag quas nab** ‘to come out in a great crowd’:

tej nyuj, tej neeg, tej qhev tawm ndlaag quas nab coob coob huv lub nyuas ceebpov lug.

‘a great crowd of cattle and horses and servants came out from the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12)

Los Xaab hu quas lawg cov qhev tes tawm ndlaag quas nab lauj

‘Los Xaab called loud and long, and out came the servants in a great crowd’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

- **tawm plawg** ‘completely out, completely gone’ (Xiongs).

- **tawm thawj** ‘at that same time, to take advantage of’ (Xiongs):

Probably a calque on Chinese *chūtóu* ‘to raise one’s head, free oneself from misery’, literally “to go or come out the head”.

- **taws** ‘to light, to burn’ (Xiongs):

Leejtxiv taws teeb hlo sawv tseeg moog

‘The father lit a lamp and got up to look’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **taws** ‘(no classifier) pace, footpace’ (Xiongs).

- **taws**: *lauj taws* ‘heel (see taw)’ (Xiongs). Also written *lauj taw*.

plaubhau nim dlub dlub suaj quas nyo suaj quas zaws nraag laujtaws

‘with black hair falling and tumbling to her heels’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8)

- **taws kooj** (classifier *tug*) ‘trigger’ (Xiongs).

- **tawv** ‘hard, difficult, tough, stiff; toughly, with tough order’ (Xiongs):

nwg ua tawv tawv yuav kom koj moog xwb

‘s/he toughly ordered that you must go’ (Xiongs).

ntoo tawv ‘hard wood’ (Xiongs).

tawv le pob zeb ‘hard like a stone, rock’ (Xiongs).

tuab neeg tawv ‘tough man’ (Xiongs).

- **tawv** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) skin, cover, shell’ (Xiongs):

dlaim tawv naab ‘the snake skin’ (Xiongs).

plhis tawv ‘to change form (snake)’ (Xiongs).

- **tawv** ‘to refuse to do, to be careless, to disregard’ (Xiongs).

- **tawv**: *poob tawv* ‘to fall’:

cais nam zaaj tuab ncus cev ua nwg Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm ib saab khau paaj poob tawv lug rua ntawm nwg.

‘Then the old dragon trembled, knocking off one of the embroidered shoes of Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter so that it fell off and landed near Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

nwg rhu hlo ntaaj tuab ntaag ua nwg txuj hlua neeg poob tawv rua huv qhovntuj
‘he took out his sword and severed his horse-rope so that it fell into the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 21).

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

‘Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

- **tawv**: *tsi txob nwg tawv le* ‘it doesn’t threaten him (her, it) at all, it doesn’t make him (her, it) any difference at all’ (Xiongs) [“does not make his/her/its skin itch at all”].

- **tawv nyuj** ‘oxhide’:

muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw

‘we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **te** ‘(no classifier) frost’ (Xiongs).

- **te** ‘to shine over, to be covered with light’ (Xiongs):

thaum tshaav ntuj te taag nrho ‘when the sunlight covers all’ (Xiongs).

- **te**, typographic error or variant spelling for *tes* ‘then, so’:

ua ntaaj hlau te ib ntaag txuas nkaus ntaag txuas nkaus

‘if we make swords of iron, each time we cut her she will join right back together’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **teb** ‘to answer, to reply, to respond, to answer back’ (Xiongs):

lu lug teb ‘the answer’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau teb tuaj ‘They did not answer yet’ (Xiongs).

Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws teb lis nqhawv qaab cim zeb tuaj

‘Nplooj Lwg the Toad replied at once from under the stone’ (*Initiation* p. 123).

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj

‘The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **teb** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) rice field, gardening field; (no classifier) earth, ground’ (Xiongs):

tug dlaav yuj ncig peb dlaim teb ‘the hawk is flying around our farm’ (Xiongs).

nplaj teb ‘the earth’ (Xiongs, *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 7, 16; *Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96).

nplajteb nuav ‘on earth’, ‘here on earth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

peg qaum teb ‘to the north’ (Xiongs).

pej kum teb ‘abroad’ (Xiongs).

poob rua huv peg teb ‘to fall to the ground’ (Xiongs).

qaab teb ‘south’ (Xiongs, *Kwvhuam* p. 10, *Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

qaum teb ‘north’ (Xiongs, *Kwvhuam* p. 10, *Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

yaav qaab teb ‘south’ (Xiongs).

yaav qaum teb ‘north’ (Xiongs).

- **teb**: *Dlaab Teb* ‘the Country of the Spirits’:

Ua Npausuav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb ‘A Dream of Going to See the Country of the Spirits’ (*Ua Npausuav*, title).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **teb**: *Faab kis teb* ‘France’:

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”].

- **teb**: *luagteb* ‘the upper part of the swidden field’ (Bertrais):

Nwg nrhav moog rua qhov u los tsi pum,

He searched far but did not see her,

nrhav lug rua qhov nua los tsi pum hlo le.

he searched near but did not see her at all.

Nwg txawm taug kev moog rua peg luagteb,

He then followed the road up to the upper part of the swidden field,

na txawm pum nwg tug muam tug neevtaw tuaj moog lawm.

why, then he saw his sister’s footprints coming and going. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7.)

- **teb**: *luaj teb* ‘to cut down tree to make a rice or corn field’ (Xiongs).

- **teb**: *mob teb* ‘to have pains from giving birth’ (Xiongs).

- **teb**: *npuateb* ‘wild pig’:

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,
 ‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,
quas lab quas cuam
 monkeys and gibbons,
quas ntsooj quas tsuag,
 rats and mice,
quas naag quas noog,
 rodents and birds,
miv kaab miv ntsaum
 and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **teb:** *nplaj teb* ‘the earth’ (Xiongs):

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas nug koj has tas; Koj yog nplajteb leej tuabneeg, koj yuav lug ua dlaabtsi?

When you reach the wall at the top of the stairway to heaven, they will ask you: “You are a human being of the earth. Why have you come here?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

Ub! nyaj le tom peb nplajteb nyaj kuamuag, tsaj le yog peb nplajteb tsaj rau ncoo, kuv tsi yuav.

‘As for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 96).

Moob nplajteb lug ntshai dlej ntub, ntshai aav lu.

‘The people on the face of the earth are afraid of getting wet, afraid of getting muddy’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **teb:** *ntuj ... teb* ‘with great intensity; with all one’s strength’:

thaub ntuj thaub teb ‘hacked with all his might and main’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **teb:** *qaab teb* ‘south’ (Xiongs):

yaav qaab teb ‘south’ (Xiongs).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for *qaum*?] *teb dlhau qaab teb.*

‘The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

‘As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj muab nwg lub tebchaws tu rua nwg tug vaav hab nwg paab tub tau kaav. Nwg muab tog qaabteb pub rua nwg tug ntshais ntxawm has Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, cais muab tog qaumteb faib rua nwg cov tub.

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then divided his kingdom for his son-in-law and his sons to rule.

He gave the southern part to his youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, and he divided the northern part among his sons' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

- **teb:** *qaum teb* 'north' (Xiongs):

yaav qaum teb 'north' (Xiongs).

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for *teb*] 'turn the head to the north' (Xiongs).

Cua muab kuv ntsawj peg qaum ntuj dlhau nraag qaab ntug; quam [typo for *qaum*?] *teb dlhau qaab teb.*

'The wind blows me from east to west and from north to south' (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is a cloud).

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau. Tabsis roob tseem muaj zug dlua kuv.

'As for me, I am strong and can fly from east to west and from north to south. But the mountain is still stronger than I am' (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj muab nwg lub tebchaws tu rua nwg tug vauv hab nwg paab tub tau kaav. Nwg muab tog qaabteb pub rua nwg tug ntxhais ntxawm has Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, cais muab tog qaumteb faib rua nwg cov tub.

'Grandfather Nyooglaug then divided his kingdom for his son-in-law and his sons to rule. He gave the southern part to his youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, and he divided the northern part among his sons' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

- **teb:** *Suav Teb* 'China':

Moob Tuam Tshoj (Suav Teb) 'The Mong of China' (*Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 14).

- **teb:** *Thaib teb* 'Thailand (the country)' (Xiongs).

- **teb:** *tsev teb* 'farm':

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav

'We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too' (Xiongs).

- **teb chaws** '(classifier *lub*) country, state' (Xiongs):

thoob teb chaws 'the whole country' (Xiongs).

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws. Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

'First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries. At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America' (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua

tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’
(*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

In quadrasyllabic expressions, *tebchaws* is split into *teb ... chaw*:

tsiv teb tsaws chaw ‘to flee out, to emigrate, to move’ (Xiongs).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw,

‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation’
(*Kwvhuam* p. 21)

ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘these became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **teb chaws**: *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **teb nplej** ‘(classifier *thaaj*) rice field’:

ib thaaj teb nplej ‘a rice field’ (Xiongs).

- **teg** ‘(classifier *txhais*) hand’ (Xiongs):

mob teg ‘to hurt the hand’ (Xiongs).

ntxuaj teg ‘to wave the hand’ (Xiongs).

ntxuav teg ‘to wash the hands’ (Xiongs).

ob txhais teg ‘two hands’ (Xiongs).

ob txhais teg tuab si ‘both hands’ (Xiongs).

tsaa teg ‘to raise hands’ (Xiongs).

xuab teg ‘to rub the hands’ (Xiongs).

xuas teg ua ‘by hand’ (Xiongs).

xuas teg ua paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to make embroidery by hand].

- **teg** ‘handful’:

ob phoo teg ‘two times the containing of two open hands joined; two handfuls’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**, classifier for number of times:

ib teg ‘once (beating, blowing up –)’ (Xiongs).

ob teg ‘twice’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *cev teg* ‘to stretch out one’s hand to do something’:

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **teg**: *hle teg hle taw* ‘to thrust out one’s hands and feet, to make boastful, arrogant gestures’:

Cuav Tshoj Tim nim khaav ua hle teg hle taw tas yog nwg nqeg moog paab Ntxawm
‘Cuav Tshoj Tim boasted, thrusting out his hands and feet, that it was he who had gone down to help Ntxawm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 34).

- **teg**: *mem teg* ‘pulse’ (Xiongs):

seev mem teg ‘to feel the pulse’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *nqeg teg* ‘to start, to begin, to commence’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *nqeg taug teg* ‘to be brave to start first’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *ntaus teg* ‘to guess future events by examining the palm lines of a hand’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *ntiv teg* ‘finger(s)’ (Xiongs):

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *pob qej tsg* [typo for *teg*] ‘wrist’ (Xiongs, entry for *txhaa* ‘bone’).

- **teg**: *poob luas teg* ‘to fall under their control, to be in their hands’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *phuam so teg* ‘(classifier *txuj*) hand towel’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *qes teg* ‘sprained wrist’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *qub txeeg qub teg* ‘heritage, antiques, old things, old articles’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug lug txug tsev, cais nwg pheej najnub xaav tuab quas ywv has tas:
“*Ab! Yuav ua caag txhaj tua tau Yob Nraug Ntsuag, hab txhaj txeeg tau nwg tej qubtxeeg qubteg ntawd lug ua yug tug!*”

When the Ruler arrived home, he every day kept thinking quietly: “Ah! How to get to kill Yob the Orphan and then seize his inheritance as one’s own!” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

- **teg**: *rau teg* ‘fingernail’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *rwg teg* or *rwg ntiv teg* ‘little finger’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *sib koom teg* ‘together’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *sib tuav teg* ‘to shake hands, to hold hands’ (Xiongs).

- **teg**: *taub teg* ‘thumb’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *taw teg* ‘to point with a finger; to point, to show’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *tu teg* ‘to be mutilated’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *thau teg* ‘to withdraw’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *tsi taug teg* ‘could not gainsay’:

In a folktale, a man and his son, on their way to visit their kinsmen, come to the home of a ntxaug spirit and the ntxaug spirit invites the man and the boy to spend the night. During the night, the ntxaug spirit’s daughters kill the boy and the man flees in terror. He meets two people named Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm who tell him not to be afraid and insist that he go back with them to where the ntxaug spirits live:

Nam yawm tsi taug teg tes nam yawm coj Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug rov moog lau.

‘The man could not gainsay them so the man went back bringing Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **teg**: *xauv teg* ‘(classifier *lub*) handcuff’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *xib teg* ‘palm of the hand’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *xoob teg* ‘to begin to be afraid of’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *yeem teg* ‘(classifier *lub*) fingerprint’ (Xiongs).
- **teg**: *zoo zoo nkauj teg* ‘very beautiful’:

Muaj ob namtxiv Suav muaj ib tug ntxais lub npe hu ua Ceeb Pov nua es zoo zoo nkauj teg

‘There was a Chinese couple who had a daughter named Ceeb Pov, who was very beautiful’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- **tegtaw** or **tawteg** ‘martial arts’:

taw teg ‘martial art’ (Xiongs).

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntxhais kawm txuj kawm ci, hab kawm laajlim tegtaw thaus yau lug tav hluas taagnrho.

‘Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm and studied magic and martial arts from the time they were small till the time they came of age’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntxug nrov pis ntxhas rua.

‘Striking and slashing with martial art skill, the two of them cut and chopped with a great

clamor at her' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **teg tsau** 'torch' (Xiongs).

- **tej** 'some' (Xiongs):

muaj tej tug – 'there are some – ' (Xiongs).

nraag tej nroog luj 'in some big cities' (Xiongs).

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

'Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttles, to eat' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

'Oh, those bellows. What's wrong with them?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

'He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon's bowls and spoons' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

'How can there be all those kinds of writing?' (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

'Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong' (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

'The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

Another word of similar meaning is *cov*. It appears that, at least in some contexts, *tej* and *cov* may be used interchangeably:

Los Tuam and Los Lwm were taking care of a place where their servants (*cov qhev*) had prepared an exceedingly broad clearing and had unpacked the horses and had made obeisance to Los Xaab, and as they were about to approach, Ceeb Pov said, "Los Xaab, oh Los Xaab, take the cattle, the horses and the servants (*tej qhev*) and shut them up." He called loud and long and the servants (*cov qhev*) quickly drove the cattle and horses to him (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects
(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **tej**, used at the end of a list:

koj moov zoo es koj nim tau kaum-ob tug lujtxwv hab peb puas txaj dlawb hab nyuas tshwjtjom noj tej.

‘your luck was good and you acquired twelve mules and three hundred silver coins and a little stove to make food’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

- **tej**: *ntawm tej* ‘somewhere there’ (Xiongs).

- **tej**: *sov tej* ‘not sure, uncertain, doubtful’ (Xiongs).

- **tej tog caag**, expression of uncertain meaning in the following:

lub ntuj dlaav xws tej tog caag,

Neej moog los nyob tsi puv,

Dlaab moog los nyob tsi taag

‘the sky is as wide as tej tog caag

If human beings go to dwell, it will not be filled,

If spirits go to dwell, it will not be finished’ (*Initiation* p. 124).

- **tej zag** ‘maybe, perhaps, sometimes’ (Xiongs).

- **tes** ‘then, so, therefore, thus’ (Xiongs) (see also *te*):

tes yog koj xwb ‘then it is you’ (Xiongs).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

- **tes**: *thau tes* ‘then’:

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **tes tsuas** ‘and so’:

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **tev** ‘to peel, to remove the skin’ (Xiongs).

- **tev qai** ‘to peel an egg’ (Xiongs).

- **teeb** ‘to pile up, to group, to make a pile’ (Xiongs):

ca le nqaa cuaj lub rooj moog teeb ua cuaj tshooj

‘bring nine tables and stack them up in nine tiers’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38).

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **teeb** ‘to place in order, to set’ (Xiongs).

- **teeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) lamp, light’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dēng*:

taws teeb ‘to light the lamp’ (Xiongs).

tua teeb le moog pw ‘turn off the light before going to bed’ (Xiongs).

tsom teeb ‘to shine the flashlight at’ (Xiongs). *Tsom* is from Chinese *zhào* ‘to shine’ and *teeb* is from Chinese *dēng* ‘lamp’ but the word order of the two elements is Mong not Chinese.

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

Leejtxiv taws teeb hlo sawv tseeg moog saib

‘The father lit a lamp and got up to look’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **teeb** ‘to fully grow up’ (Xiongs).

- **teeb cov rooj** ‘to set the tables’ (Xiongs).

- **teeb khoo** ‘lamp, from Lao *khóom*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4). *Teeb* is from Chinese *dēng* ‘lamp’ and *khoo* is from Lao *khóom* ‘lamp’.

- **teeb tsom** ‘lamp’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4). *Teeb* is from Chinese *dēng* ‘lamp’ and *tsom* is from Chinese *zhào* ‘to shine’ but the word order of the two elements is Mong not Chinese.

- **teeb xeeb** ‘(classifier *tug*) lampwick’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dēngxīn*.

- **teeg** ‘to cry, to weep with great sorrow’ (Xiongs).

- **teem** ‘to squeeze, to press against, to put pressure on’ (Xiongs):

Los Xaab, wb rovqaab moog pw nraag nam taj suav ntswm kws nim taj tug quas vuv lawm nam peb caug taj, taj tug quas vuv lawm naj pebcaug nraag kws teem nkaus npoo ntuj hov.

‘Los Xaab, let us go back and sleep down in the field that is sandy all over, the field that is level for thirty plots, the field that is level for thirty plains, that presses against the edge of the sky’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **teem** ‘to set up time, to schedule’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dìng*.

- **teem** ‘short, not tall’ (Xiongs).

- **teem**: *Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem* or *Nyawj Vaab Tuam Teem*, the celestial being who judges the

dead and gives out documents of reincarnation: see **Nyaj Vaab**.

- **teem txim** ‘to declare somebody guilty’, from Chinese *dìngzuì*:

Tuag moog txug sau tes Nyaj vab tuam teem muab teem txim
 ‘When they died and arrived on high, then Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem found them guilty’
 (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **tees** ‘to rob, to rape, to steal, to threaten’ (Xiongs).

- **tees**: *luv tees* ‘(classifier *lub*) bicycle’ (Xiongs), from Lao *lōt thíp*.

- **teev** ‘to worship, to pray, to believe in’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese *děng* ‘to wait for’:

tsev teev ntuj ‘church’ (Xiongs).

Moob muaj ob paab: cov Moob kws teev txuj kev cai Yexus hab cov kws teev txuj kev cai
Dlaab Qhuas.

‘There are two groups of Mong: the Mong who are Christian and those who are animist’
 (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Tswv Yim Ntseeg hab Teev ‘Ideas about Belief and Worship’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 79, chapter title).

- **teev** ‘(classifier *raab*) scale, balance’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *děng*:

qhov muag teev ‘the scale on the scale, the marks on the balance’ (Xiongs).

- **teev** ‘to accumulate (liquid)’ (Xiongs):

Nim zoo zoo nkauj kaim muag quas zoj, dlej muag teev quas mag.
 ‘She had long beautiful eyelashes and her eyes were moist’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- **teev** ‘hour’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *diǎn*:

thov paab tsaa kuv thaum ob teev tawm ‘please wake me up at two thirty’ (Xiongs).

- **ti** ‘close to, near, not far from’ (Xiongs).

sab ti ‘selfish’ (Xiongs) [“close liver”]

- **ti ti** ‘very close to, right next to each other’ (Xiongs).

- **tib** ‘to pile up, to make a pile, to group’ (Xiongs).

- **tib** ‘to blame’ (Xiongs):

tsi xob tib peb nawb ‘don’t blame us’ (Xiongs).

- **tib**: *puab tib mej ua tau* ‘It is good that you can do it’ (Xiongs).

- **tib-taub**, sound of bells:

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!” nua los muaj.
 there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!”
Huas nim nrov: “deeb! deeb!” nua los muaj.

And there were some that went “deeb! deeb!”

Huas tej tug nim “tib-taub! tib-taub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “tib-taub! tib-taub!”

Huas tej tug “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!” nua los muaj.

And there were those that went “khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” nua.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **tid** ‘there, over there’ (Xiongs) (see also *tim*):

tshuav nam txhaa taubhau dlawb paug, khuav nceev tid e!

‘all that’s left is the gleaming white skull, wedged in over there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

- **tig** ‘to turn, to spin around; (no classifier) turn, round’ (Xiongs).

- **tig ib neig** [typo for *ncig*?] **cob nkaus** ‘make a complete turn’ (Xiongs).

- **tig toog**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov tig toog [to make the sound *tig toog*] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **tij** ‘(no classifier) older brother, older person’ (Xiongs):

nam tij ‘brother’s wife’ (Xiongs), *nam tij* ‘older brother’s wife’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **tij**: *kwv tij* ‘relatives’ (Xiongs):

The expression *kwvtij*, literally ‘younger brother and older brother’, refers both to brothers and to cousins who are the sons of brothers and other male relatives of one’s own patrilineal clan.

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlab yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog.

‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

Noob caaj thaus u av ... Muaj ob tug txivtub tes moog saib kwvtij.

‘In ancient times, long long ago ... There was a father and son who went to see their kinsmen’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **tij laug** ‘(classifier *tug*) older brother’ (Xiongs); ‘elder brother’ (*Village* p. 175).
- **tij laug hlub hlo** ‘(classifier *tug*) oldest brother’ (Xiongs).
- **tij nraab** ‘middle elder brother’ (*Village* p. 175).
- **tij yau** ‘elder brother right ahead of me’ (*Village* p. 175).
- **tim** ‘because of; to compare, to face with each other; exactly’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *duì*:

yog tim koj ‘it is because of you’ (Xiongs).

coj lug sib tim ‘to compare with each other’ (Xiongs).

tim nkaus xyaa xyoo ‘exactly seven years’ (Xiongs).

- **tim** ‘at’ (Xiongs) (see also *tid*):

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

- **tim**, Chinese *dì*, ‘the earth’:

Ntuj sua teb thaus u, muaj ob tug kwvnpawg Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, hab Cuav Tshoj Tim.

‘In the world of long ago, there were two cousins: Pure One Who Faces Heaven and False One Who Faces Earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

- **tim**: *cuab tim* ‘to realize what is going on’ (Xiongs).
- **tim**: *faaj tim* ‘emperor’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *huángdì*.
- **tim**: *txum tim* ‘native’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zuòdì* ‘to sit on the ground’.
- **tim**: *xwb tim* ‘to do on purpose’ (Xiongs).
- **tim khawv** ‘to witness’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *duì kǒu* ‘having to do with the mouth’:
tug tim khawv ‘the witness’ (Xiongs).
- **tim lim** ‘effective, goodworking’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *duì lì* ‘having to do with power’.
- **tim fwb** ‘(classifier *tug*) assistant teacher’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *duì fù* ‘to pair with a teacher’.
- **tim nua** ‘here’: see **tim u ... tim nua** ‘yon and hither’.
- **tim nkaus xyoo** ‘exactly one year long’ (Xiongs).
- **tim u** ‘over there, there, far away there’ (Xiongs).
- **tim u ... tim nua** ‘yon and hither’:

nam txiv neeg uab dlub hee raag quas tshis ib yeeg tim u ib yeeg tim nua rov rua nplajteb lawm lauj.

‘the crow-black stallion whinnied and galloped one tier yon, one tier hither and returned to the face of the earth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Nwg nim muaj nyuj muaj twm, muaj neeg muaj zaag, muaj dlev muaj npua, muaj qab muaj us, hab muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw noj zaub puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

‘It had cattle and it had buffaloes, it had horses and it had mules, it had dogs and it had pigs, it had chickens and it had ducks, and it had ntshuav and it had elephants grazing and filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

- **tim xyoob** ‘(classifier *tug*) officer’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese *dìxiōng* ‘brothers, soldiers’:

tuam tim xyoob ‘(classifier *tug*) head officer, captain’ (Xiongs).

tsaa ib tug timxyoob ‘to appoint an official’ (Xiongs).

- **tis** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) wing; (classifier *tug*) feather’ (Xiongs):

kooj tis ‘wing’ (Xiongs).

ntxuaj tis ‘to flap the wing’ (Xiongs).

yaa ib tis ‘to make a flight’ (Xiongs).

- **tis** ‘to name, to give a title to’ (Xiongs).

- **tis** ‘to sew a figure on clothing’ (Xiongs).

- **Tis**: *Tub Tis Tuj* and *Tub Tis Nplug*, the first human children (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7).

- **tis ua** ‘very, really’:

Tshaav ntuj lawm nam peb nub tis ua kub, noob xyoob caj tsis nyog ntshoo xyoob hlob.

‘For three days the weather was hot. The seeds of bamboo could not live long enough for bamboo branches to grow’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 76-77).

- **tiv** ‘to resist, to oppose, to stand against’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dǐ*.

- **tiv tua** ‘to fight against’ (Xiongs).

- **tiv tsi taug lawm** ‘cannot resist anymore’ (Xiongs).

- **tiv tshaav tiv naag** ‘to work hard under sunlight (heat) and rain’ (Xiongs).

- **to** ‘pierced, having a hole through’ (Xiongs):

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **to**: *thoob tsib to nrog* ‘enlightened, having insight, wise, understanding of matters’:

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **to ib lub qhov** ‘to be pierced with a hole’ (Xiongs).

- **to kev lug ua** ‘legally right, legitimate lawfully’ (Xiongs).

- **to qhov** ‘everyone knows about that’ (Xiongs).

- **to taub** ‘to understand’ (Xiongs).

- **tob**: *Leejtob*, part of the name of a dragon in a story:

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.

‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog [?] to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog [?!] I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **tod** ‘that, there’ (see also *tom*):

puab khawb tshaab, saab tod laum [typo for *lawm*?]

‘they dig through the other side already’ (Xiongs).

Txav txuj lab taag, txuj dlawb txuas lawm. Txav txuj nuav taag, txuj tod txuas lawm.

‘Sever the red one, and the white one joins on. Sever this one, and that one joins on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23.)

Nwg txhaj taug kem zeb ntawm moog rua tod.

‘He then followed a crevice in the rock to there’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

- **tog** ‘to wait’ (Xiongs):

tog ib plag ‘wait for a while, a moment’ (Xiongs).

tog ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to wait].

Koj tog ca nwg tuaj txug ncua tsaiv, koj ntaag ua nwg tuag kag tes koj yeej los mas.

‘Wait for her to arrive, and then kill her with a blow of your sword and you will have won’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32).

Nwg tsi tog kuas ca txawb nkaus huv peg teb le tua tes yeej lawm luas huas, tseem txij nkaus le hauvcaug tsi tau ti peg teb

‘He did not wait for her to land on the ground to attack her but caught up with her while

she was still hanging by her knees and had not yet come near the ground' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 33).

- **tog** 'to sink' (Xiongs).

- **tog** 'period of time' (Xiongs).

- **tog** 'portion' (Xiongs):

ib tog kev 'halfway, somewhere along the line' (Xiongs).

- **tog** 'used to precede nouns that are a long or cylindrical piece of something' (Xiongs):

ib tog hlau 'a piece of metal or steel' (Xiongs).

Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. Kuv kwv ib xubpwg mas tseev kuas tau cuaj tog. ... kuv moog kwv ib xubpwg tau peb tog xwb
'As Sub Tuam was leaving, he told me to stay here, and I was to carry logs for the fire. I was to carry them on my shoulder until I had nine. ... I have been able to carry on my shoulder only three' (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21).

Moog txav kag tau tuab tog nam fuabtxhib lug phua kag ua ob raab ntaaj.
'They went and cut off a length of Chinese sumac and split it into two swords' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

- **tog** '(classifier *lub*) chair, stool' (Xiongs):

Cais Ntxawm txhaj dlha loo moog nqaa hlo ib lub nam tog lug xab nam zaaj lub cejdlaab.

'Then Ntxawm ran and fetched a stool and put it under the dragon's neck' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

tsaa taubhau kuv muab lub tog nuav rau koj ncoo os!
'lift your head and I will give you this stool as a pillow' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

- **tog** '(no classifier) end':

muaj ib tog lab 'one end is red' (Xiongs).

Le nyob cuaj tshooj vaag yim tshooj tsev es tsev vuag luaj vuag av ci nraa quas ab rua qaaj [typo for *nqaaj*] *tog tej ntug txaj.*

'They dwelt in nine stories of gardens and eight stories of houses, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass gleaming brightly from the coins at the edges of the end beams' (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **tog** 'side in a conflict', 'party to an agreement':

cais ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv 'the two sides wrote up a contract' (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **tog** 'if':

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*
'if I am hurt you will be the same' (Xiongs) ["if the ox falls, the stake will lean over too"]

- **Tog**, part of the names of two dragons in a story:

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.

‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog [?] to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog [?!] I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **tog**: *nplajtog qaumpeg* ‘anyone in the world’:

Koj tsi txhob nrug kuv sau yim. Koj moog nrug nplajtog qaumpeg sau yim.

‘Don’t marry me. Marry anyone in the world’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

- **tog**: *quas tog ploog*, syllables of uncertain meaning in the following examples:

Koj moog ntuj sua teb tom taug tes koj paab moog has rua kuv quas yawm Tog yawm Leejtob quas tog ploog tso tub maab tub qhe tuaj paab kuv ua vaaj ua tsev.

‘When you go to the lower realm, please tell my grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob quas tog ploog to send servants to help me make a garden and a house’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 92).

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **tog**: *tej tog caag*, expression of uncertain meaning in the following:

lub ntuj dlaav xws tej tog caag,

Neej moog los nyob tsi puv,

Dlaab moog los nyob tsi taag

‘the sky is as wide as tej tog caag

If human beings go to dwell, it will not be filled,

If spirits go to dwell, it will not be finished’ (*Initiation* p. 124).

- **tog**: *zoo sab tog txais* ‘welcome’:

zoo sab tog txais mej suav dlawg tuaj huv rooj qav nuav

‘welcome all of you to the meal or banquet’ (Xiongs).

- **tog ub** ‘that side’, an expression used in marriage songs to refer to the bridegroom’s party:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill. Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **toj**:

ib kaab tojpob ‘a landslide’ (Xiongs).

mem toj ‘natural underground bloodstream (in the Hmong belief)’ (Xiongs).

nce toj ‘to climb a hill, uphill, steep’ (Xiongs).

phaab toj ‘hill, incline’ (Xiongs).

plaag toj ‘hill, incline’ (Xiongs).

sauv or *sauv toj* ‘natural underground blood stream (Hmong believe that good life might result to the descendants of a dead man or woman buried right over a blood stream)’ (Xiongs).

- **toj ntxaas** ‘graveyard’ (Xiongs).

- **toj roob** ‘mountain, hill’ (Xiongs).

- **toj roob hauv peg** ‘lands and mountains’ (Xiongs).

- **toj rua lu ... zeb rua ruag** ‘gaping hills ... stones with their mouths open wide’, hazards which a dead person encounters on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj. Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj

‘Go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven. Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **toj sab** ‘highland, in the country’ (Xiongs).

- **tom** ‘there, over there; at’ (Xiongs) (see also *tod*):

saab tom u ‘the other side’ (Xiongs).

tuaj tom nrob qaum tuaj ‘from behind or from the back’ (Xiongs).

yaav tom ntej nua ‘in the future, following’ (Xiongs).

yaav tom ntej u ‘in the past, previous times’ (Xiongs).

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav

‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm

‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

- **tom** ‘(no classifier) times’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 道 *dào*, classifier for orders or questions,

courses of a meal, or perhaps from Chinese 到 *dào* ‘arrive, reach, up, until’:

ib tom ‘once, one time’ (Xiongs).

ob tom ‘twice, two times’ (Xiongs).

- **tom**: *taab tom* ‘to be going to, to be in the process of doing something’ (Xiongs):

cov dlau taab tom yaaj ‘the snow is melting’ (Xiongs).

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas theem rua huv Plawv nroog.
‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs, entry for *ua*).

Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntsooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le.

‘At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj tawm ntawd lug ntsib kag YOB NRAUG NTSUAG taab tom nyob huv nwg lub tsev qhuavsuv.

‘So Muam Nkauj Ntsum then came out and found Yob the Orphan there in his bare hut’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

ua cav Lob Lw, nwg tug quasyawg taabtóm ci ib tug nqaj nraaj dlawb ua npau roj ua txhe huv qhov cub.

‘and, why, Lob Lw, her husband, was toasting the meat of a white pheasant, boiling the fat and letting it drip into the fire’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

Thaus nwg taabtóm has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab, nwg khawb ua hle hlo lug cais zoo taag lawm lauj!

‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest, he will scratch it off and get well!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtóm kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

Thaus Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tseem taabtóm phua tawg nyo quas nyog, nwg txawm nov ib lub suab nrov nroo quas ntwg peb kem pobtsuas lug.

‘While Txheeb Tshoj Theeb was still bent over splitting firewood, he heard a rumbling sound coming from far up on the cliff’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 9).

- **tom hauv ntej** ‘in front’ (Xiongs).

- **tom nuav** ‘at present’:

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **tom ntej zog** ‘a little further’ (Xiongs):

thov txaav tom ntej zog ‘move over a little’ (Xiongs).

- **tom peg tom taug** ‘everywhere (in the city, in the country)’ (Xiongs).

- **tom puab tsev** ‘at their houses’ (Xiongs).

- **tom qaab** ‘after, below’ (Xiongs):

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

wb coj ib leeg ib saab nyaj nuav tseg ca ua puavpheej rua yaav tomqaab.

‘each of us will keep half of the coin as proof for the future’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **tom thawj** ‘with the advantage that; fortunately, taking advantage of’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese *dào tóu* ‘to reach the end, to come to an end’.

- **tom u** ‘over here, there, far away there’ (Xiongs).

- **tov** ‘to mix up, to add in’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dǎo*:

muab tov dlej ‘to mix with water’ (Xiongs).

- **too** ‘to bend down’ (Xiongs).

- **toob** ‘fat’ (Xiongs).

- **toob** ‘forgetful, simple minded’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dōng*.

- **toob** ‘gourd’ (see also *taub*):

Tes tsiv tsiv lug tes nrug ob nam hluasnkauj ua ua neej tes muaj ob mivnyuas. Ib tug nyuas tub, tug nyuas ntхай, kuas ob tug nam dlo cwj quas cuas le ob lub toob.

‘Then they fled and then the young man and the young woman made a life together and had two children. A little boy and a little girl, but they were smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

- **toob**: *zeb toob txuab* ‘soft, accumulating rock; accumulating soft rock’ (Xiongs).

- **toobfaab** ‘east’, from Chinese *dōngfāng*:

Ib tug tsiv rua lajfaab ib tug tsiv rua toobfaab.

‘One fled to the south, one fled to the east’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 64).

- **toog**, intensifier:

Los Xaab txawm maub hau quas toog rovqaab rua nraag qub qaab

‘So Los Xaab groped his way in the dark down to the place where he had been’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **toog**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov tig toog [to make the sound tig toog] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

- **toog**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov toog [to make the sound toog] (*Xiongs* p. 553).

- **tooj** ‘maleable light-colored metal, e.g. copper, brass, bronze’ (*Lyman* p. 323).

- **tooj**: *xuv tooj* ‘(classifier *lub*) telephone, walky talky’:

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*

‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (*Xiongs*).

- **tooj**: *xuv tooj cua* ‘(classifier *lub*) radio’ (*Xiongs*, *Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **tooj dlaag** ‘brass’ (*Xiongs*).

- **tooj lab** ‘copper’ (*Xiongs*).

- **tooj quas tsa** ‘glittering (eyes)’:

Qhovmuag ntsais quas tsa, qhovmuag tooj quas tsa ‘Blinking eyes, glittering eyes’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1)

Referring to a dragon whose eyes are closed when awake and open when asleep:

tug nam zaaj tsaug zug ua qhovmuag tooj quas tsa

‘the dragon was asleep with his eyes glittering’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

- **toom**: *ceeptom* ‘to inform, to advise, to prevent, to forestall’ (*Xiongs*). From Chinese *jīngdòng*.

- **toom**: *cuabyeej toom txeem* ‘household goods’:

cov cuabyeej toom txeem ‘the household goods’ (*Xiongs*).

hab puab coj suav tej cuab yeej toom txeem lug taagnrho.

‘and they carried away all of the household goods of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **toos** ‘bag’ (from Lao *thǒng*?):

Huas nim muab hlo tuab nam toos nyaj rua leejnam ris

‘She also gave her mother-in-law a bag of silver to carry on her back’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

- **tu** ‘to take care of’ (*Xiongs*):

yuav tsum tu hab qhov txhaab xam tsi voog

‘the abscess should be taken care of so as not to get worse’ (*Xiongs*).

- **tu** ‘to prepare’:

Ob tug nim tu hlo ib lub nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj dlaav tuag

‘The two of them had decided on a place where they told their servants to prepare an exceedingly broad clearing’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

- **tu** ‘to end, to cut off, to separate’ (Xiongs):

tu nrho (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to cut off completely].

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj muab nwg lub tebchaws tu

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then divided his kingdom’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

- **tu**, intensifier:

‘Pw pw ib chim ntsag quas tu, nam yawm dlaabntxaug taws teeb quas lug moog saib.

‘When they had been sleeping for a while and there was no sound, the male ntxaug spirit lit a lamp and went to look’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **tu ceg** ‘to be mutilated’ (Xiongs) [have one’s leg cut off].

- **tu ib vaag** ‘cut out a small portion’ (Xiongs).

- **tu moo** ‘to make an end of, to stop seeing’ (Xiongs).

- **tu ncu** ‘to stop having or receiving’ (Xiongs).

- **tu miv nyuas** ‘to give birth, to raise children’ (Xiongs).

- **tu plaub** ‘to judge’ (Xiongs):

- **tu plaub**: *tsev tu plaub* ‘courthouse’ (Xiongs):

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub

‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs) [“I prefer to go and speak immediately in the courthouse”].

- **tu plaub txhab vog** ‘to grow hair or feathers fairly well’ (Xiongs).

- **tu sab** ‘to be deceived’ (Xiongs).

- **Tu Sub** ‘Cutting Off the Sub’, a ceremony performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar to get rid of the spirit that causes bloody accidents.

At a time when the Mong did not have a king, Lis Sub Tuam ruled one region and Siv Yig Muas ruled another. Lis Sub Tuam was a cruel tyrant who terrorized his subjects. When he terrorized one of Siv Yig Muas’s subjects, Siv Yig Muas fought him and killed both Lis Sub Tuam and his son. Then, Lis Sub Tuam’s widow, Puj Sub, after her death, came down from the sky to avenge her husband and her son. This is the origin of the *sub*, the spirits that cause bloody accidents. The ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub (*Tu Sub*) is performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar to get rid of Puj Sub. The ceremony of Waving Away the Sub (*Lwm Sub*) is performed at the New Year to get rid of the the malign influence (*nywj*) of Lis Sub Tuam and his son. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-34.)

Nwgnuav peb txooj Moob, xyaa hli twg txha yuav tu Sub; Cuaj hli twg txha yuav tu Sub.
Nowadays, we Mong in the seventh month will cut off the Sub and in the ninth month will cut off the Sub.

Huas nwg muab ob ntsuj teb kaav le kws tub has ntawm hauvpaug.

But they [Lis Sub Tuam and Siv Yig Muas] ruled two regions as was said at the beginning [of the story].

Cov kws yog Sub Tuam caajceg ntsug teb nwg kaav nua tes txug lub kaum-ob hlis puab tsi tu nawb. Puab lwm xwb.

Those whose ancestors are from the region where Sub Tuam ruled when it gets to be the twelfth month do not cut. They only wave.

Lub caij hov yog lub caij Siv Yig Muas ob tug sis tua tes Sub Tuam tuag. Puab txha le lwm xwm. Yog muaj tug nywj xwb.

This time of year is the time of year when Siv Yig Muas [and Sub Tuam] fought and Sub Tuam died. They therefore only wave. There is only the nywj [malign influence that hovers where someone has died].

Huas cov kws tu tes yog ntsuj teb kws Siv Yig Muas kaav. Txha le tu rua lub cuaj hli hab xyaa hli. Txhua paab pawg tuabneeg txha le ua le ntawd.

But those who cut are of the region that Siv Yig Muas ruled. Therefore they cut in the ninth month and the seventh month. Every lineage therefore does it like that.

Txhua tug tu Sub, paub tsi has Sub txiv Sub tub raug muab tua tuag taag lawm tshuav puj Sub xwb. Yog le noobneeg kws muaj nyob hu ua haiv Moob tes tu Sub ha le hu puj Sub xwb.

Everyone cuts off the Sub, regardless of the fact that Sub the father and Sub the son were killed and only Mrs. Sub remained. Where there are human beings who are called Mong, cutting off the Sub refers only to Mrs. Sub. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 33-34.)

Poosu [Puj Sub] is an evil spirit whose body is like that of an eagle. He [sic] is the spirit who causes all kinds of accidents. Any gash from an axe or knife used in clearing and field work, or any other accident is attributed to Poosu. The Hmong say that Poosu is the spirit of fire and blood because most accidents involve these. (Chindarsi 1976:22.)

Every three years each subclan must hold a ceremony to kill an accident spirit called Suter Sublong [Sub Tawg Sub Ploog?]. The subclan members must stop from working on the particular day, and a member of the subclan who knows the long prayer may be assigned to be the head of the ceremony (Chindarsi 1976:53).

POOSU-Suter-Sublong [Puj Sub Sub Tawg Sub Ploog?] is a spirit which causes various accidents to people. Therefore on a particular day of each year, or every three years for one of the Tang [Taag] sub-clan, people must refrain from working and hold a ceremony to trap and beat this spirit to death. On the same day on each of the two following years the ceremonies must be held to burn and drown it. On this day no subclan members of either sex must work, and they must exercise care lest they cut themselves and bleed to death. A member of the household, either a first born or last born son who knows the prayer, is chosen to carry out the ceremony.

On the appointed day each household head brings a particular type of grass to the house chosen. The head of the ceremony collects the grass and ties it on a prepared sapling. He prays inside the house to attract Suter Sublong to perch on the grass, then brings it outside where all the sub-clansmen now assemble and are surrounded by a band

of white cloth to separate from the spirit and to symbolize their common bond. In front of them are piled all the agricultural implements and all the weapons belonging to the household.

Many times the head of the ceremony circles the ground and the implements, chanting. When the chanting is completed, he cuts the bundle of grass and takes it to a nearby stream and weighs it down with heavy stones to drown Subter Sublong. If any one removes the stones the spirit would escape and cause an accident to someone in the sub-clan. The ceremony may be held in any house belonging to a subclan member.

Each sub-clan has its special day once a year on which all its members must refrain from work and participate in the ceremony. Blaju (tang [Taag]) holds it on 14th August, while Yaitong (tang), who is of a different sub-clan holds it on 14th December. Tungsang (jang [Tsaab]) holds it on 14th of the dark moon of August, but Jusu (jang) holds the ceremony for his sub-clan on 14th of the dark moon of July. The ceremony helps to identify and distinguish the sub-clans and draws them together to exercise their common interests. (Chindarsi 1976:130.)

- **tu teg** ‘to be mutilated’ (Xiongs) [“have one’s hand cut off”].

- **tu tubki** or **tu tub tu kiv**:

tu tub tu kiv ‘to give birth, to raise children’ (Xiongs).

The chapter titled *Tu Tubki Pw Peb Taagkig Peg Hauvcub* ‘Lying On the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 35-52) explains the origin of the custom referred to in the title.

- **tub** ‘(classifier *tug* or *leej*) ‘son’ (Xiongs); ‘son’ (*Village* p. 176):

nyuas tub ‘boy’ (Xiongs).

quas puj tub se ‘wife and children, the whole family’ (Xiongs).

tu tub tu kiv ‘to give birth, to raise children’ (Xiongs).

tuab tug tub xwb ‘only one son’ (Xiongs).

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv
‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (Xiongs).

Txig tub nyaab hlub pw chaav nuav
‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Txaaj chaw rua tub ntxhais hluas ‘The bed for the younger sons and daughters’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.
‘all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Tub is polite address for a young man, especially an unmarried young man. In *Nuj Sis Loob*, page 47, Nuj Sis Loob’s father’s servants, reporting that Nuj Sis Loob is going to ask for the daughter of the King of the Lower Realm in marriage, switch from calling him

Tub Nuj Sis Loob to Txiv Nub Sis Loob.

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the dead person may be addressed as *leej tub tuag*:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **tub** ‘already’:

tub moog lawm ‘already gone’ (Xiongs).

- **tub**, placed before a verb for emphasis:

puab tub nov suab tswbnyuj tswbneeg

‘they heard the sound of ox bells and horse bells’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

kuv tub tsi nyos nwg, nwg teem nyos kuv oj!

‘I didn’t mock them, but now they’re mocking me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

Yob moog sim tshuaj na, tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

‘Yob went to try the medicine, the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **tub** ‘almost’, ‘about to’:

tub yuav pib tuab tag ‘almost begin, open’ (Xiongs).

Lob Lw, koj tub xaa kuv lug txug nuav, hab tub yuav txug kuv nam kuv txiv tsev

‘Lob Lw, you’ve escorted me this far and we are about to arrive at my parents’ house’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

- **tub** ‘to touch in a liquid’ (Xiongs).

- **tub** ‘(classifier *lub*) case, shelf’ (Xiongs). From Lao *tùu*.

- **tub** ‘deep, not shallow, difficult to understand poetic’ (Xiongs):

muaj ib tug twm laag tuam hlaa ib lub nyuas haav tub tub moog rua tim ua.

‘there was a single rail spanning a deep ravine to go to the other side’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 8-9).

- **tub**: *cev xeeb tub* ‘to be pregnant’:

cev xeeb tub tau ob hli lug lawm ‘being pregnant for two months already’ (Xiongs).

- **tub**: *plov tub hauv caug* ‘(classifier *lub*) kneecap’ (Xiongs).

- **tub**: *quas puj tub se* ‘wife and children, the whole family’ (Xiongs).

- **tub ki** or **tub ... kiv** ‘children, descendants’:

tub ki ‘children, descendants’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg

yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv

kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.
 ‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos**, name of a boy whom Siv Yig Muas rescues from Sub Tuam, the tyrant who, after death, becomes the spirit that causes bloody accidents:

Siv Yig Muas txha nug nwg tas; “koj quaj dlaabtsi Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos?” Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos has tas: “Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. Kuv kwv ib xubpwg mas tseev kuas tau cuaj tog. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug pobtseg! kuv moog kwv ib xubpwg tau peb tog xwb mas kuv txhawj, kuv txha le quaj”.

Siv Yig Muas asked him: “Why are you crying, Tub Kwm Ntsos?” Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos answered: “Alas! Sub Tuam, when he was leaving, told to stay here, and I was to carry logs for the fire. I am to carry them on my shoulder until I have brought nine. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up! If have only been able to three on my shoulder, so I’m worried and that’s why I’m crying.” (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21).

- **tub khaiv** ‘servant, messenger’ (Xiongs).
- **tub laag tub luam** ‘merchant, prospect, trader’ (Xiongs).
- **tub ... lug lawm** ‘already’ (Xiongs).
- **tub ... lug nuav lawm** ‘already’:

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

- **tubmaab tubqhe** ‘servants’:

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **tub ntsoj** ‘orphan’ (Xiongs).
- **tub ntsuag** ‘orphan’ (Xiongs).
- **tub ntxawg** ‘youngest son’:

Nyob nyob, muaj ib nub, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj tso nwg tug tub ntxawg dlha tuaj moog has rua Yob Nraug Ntsuag tas: “Yawm yij! Txiv has tas ...”

Time passed, and one day, the Ruler sent his youngest son to run and say to Yob the Orphan: “Sister’s husband! Father says that ...” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **tub puag** ‘adopted son or boy; adopted child, adopted son’ (Xiongs).
- **tub qhe** ‘servant’:

Es muab cov tub qhe rhu lug es cov tub qhe tso nyuj tso neeg noj zaub mag.

‘And let us pull out the servants so that the servants can set the cattle and horses out to pasture’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

- **tub rog** ‘(classifier *tug*) soldier; soldier, military’ (Xiongs):

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975

‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim ‘the soldiers will have to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

- **tub saab** ‘(classifier *tug*) thief, robber’ (Xiongs):

tub saab tub nyag ‘(classifier *tug*) robber’ (Xiongs).

ua tub saab ‘to rob, to steal’ (Xiongs).

Cov tub saab qhwv tau puab lawm.

‘The thieves encircled them already’ (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev

‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

- **Tub Tis Tuj** and **Tub Tis Nplug**, the first human children (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7).

- **tub twm zeej** ‘unique child, only son’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dú rén* ‘sole person’.

- **tub tsi tau ...** ‘not ... yet’:

tub tsi tau ua tau ‘not done yet’ (Xiongs).

- **tub txib** ‘servant, messenger’ (Xiongs).

- **tub xeeb ntxwv** ‘(classifier *tug*) nephew’ (Xiongs), ‘grandson’ (*Village* p. 176). From Chinese *sūnzi* ‘grandson’.

- **tub yug yaaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) shepherd’ (Xiongs).

- **tub zuv roojntug** ‘doorkeeper of the door of heaven’:

Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ...”

The doorkeeper of the door of heaven cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...” (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **tug** ‘flat, leveled off’ (Xiongs):

Los Xaab, wb rovqaab moog pw nraag nam taj suav ntswm kws nim taj tug quas vuv lawm nam peb caug taj, taj tug quas vuv lawm naj pebcaug nraag

‘Los Xaab, let us go back and sleep down in the field that is sandy all over, the field that is level for thirty plots, the field that is level for thirty plains’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Nam dlej ndlwg quas tsaws ndlwg tug quas vaws

‘The river flows calmly and evenly’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **tug** ‘the (definite article)’ (Xiongs):

Used to mean ‘the one who’:

tug kawm tau qeeb ‘slow learner’ (Xiongs) [“one who learns slowly”].

tug quav cawv ‘drinker’ (Xiongs) [“one who craves alcohol”].

tug twb ‘contact’ [person] (Xiongs) [“one whom one contacts”].

tug zuv ‘guard’ (Xiongs) [“one who guards”].

Oo, tug ntxim hlub. ‘Ong, my sweetheart’ (Xiongs) [“the one who is valued and loved”].

Kuv yog tug xub ua tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who does it first’ (Xiongs).

Koj yog tug kuv tshua ‘you are the one I think of’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug tau tsawg tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who gets the least’ (Xiongs).

xaiv tug koj nyam ‘choose the one you like’ (Xiongs).

Preceded by a numeral:

ib tug phaws twm luj ‘a big male buffalo’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj
‘Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101).

Used in a possessive construction:

Koj tug hluas nkauj puas txij koj? ‘Is your girlfriend as tall as you?’ (Xiongs.)

ntxig koj tug ntiv teg rua huv ‘insert your finger in’ (Xiongs).

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv
‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (Xiongs).

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

Used with a demonstrative:

tug dlej nuav moog tshuam rua dlej Mississippi
‘this river merges with the Mississippi River’ (Xiongs).

- **tug** ‘to bite, to fight’ (Xiongs) (see also *tum*):

sib tug or *sib tum* ‘to fight each other with mouth and teeth’ (Xiongs).

- **tug**: *tuab tug* ‘alone, by oneself’:

Dlha tuab tug hawb zawg le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he ran alone, wheezing].

- **tug**: *ua tug dlaabtsi* ‘why?’:

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi?
 ‘Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

- **tug kws** ‘the one who’:

tug kws ua noj ‘the cook’ (Xiongs) [“the one who makes food”].
tug nam kws naag ob tug pum
 ‘the one the two of them had seen the previous day’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **tug puav** ‘some people, some’ (Xiongs).

- **tug twg** ‘who (singular)’ (Xiongs):

Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd.
 ‘If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).
Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug yuav tso tug twg moog los khauvxxwm.
 ‘Whoever His Majesty the ruler would send [to be eaten by the Spirit], too bad for them!’
 (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 32.)

Tug twg, tsev twg tas yog koj nua tes luas txha ntshai.
 ‘Any person, any household that is yours, they fear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

- **tug yeeg** ‘completely settled, at rest, peaceful, immovable, motionless’ (Xiongs).

- **Tuj**: *Tub Tis Tuj* and *Tub Tis Nplug*, the first human children (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 6-7).

- **tum** ‘to bite, to fight’ (Xiongs) (see also *tug*):

sib tum ‘to bite or to fight each other with mouth and teeth’ (Xiongs).
nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm puav yaa moog txais tum cov nkawj hab muv ntawd ua
nwg tuag taagnrho lawm ib yaam nkaus.
 ‘and she released her pair of bats, who flew about catching catching and biting the wasps
 and bees until they too were all dead’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **tum** ‘to kill’, referring to an animal that kills by biting:

Lug txug ncuu nraag tes nam tsuv muab tum pis kag
 ‘As soon as he got down there, the tiger killed him at once’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **tum** ‘(no classifier) pile, stack; to pile, to stack’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *duò*:

muab cov phoo ntawv tum zoo zoo ca ‘pile the books well in order’ (Xiongs).

- **tum quas nkhoob** ‘to bark’:

Nwg moog txug hov tes dlev tum quas nkhoob, tug quaspj tawm plawg tuaj saib.
 ‘When he arrived, the dogs started barking, and his wife came out to take a look’ (*Yob*
Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 12).

- **tuv** ‘(classifier *tug*) louse, lice, bug’ (Xiongs):

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for ntshauv?]. Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **tua** ‘to kill, to shoot, to eliminate, to erase; to turn off, to fire, to murder’ (Xiongs):

sib tua ‘to kill each other’ (Xiongs).

tiv tua ‘to fight against’ (Xiongs).

tua teeb le moog pw ‘turn off the light before going to bed’ (Xiongs).

tua tuab neeg ‘to murder, to kill people’ (Xiongs).

tua phom ‘to fire a gun’ (Xiongs).

xuas phom tua ‘to kill with a gun’ (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev
‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

Puab tuab [typo for *tua*?] *qab txi xeeb*

‘They sacrifice a chicken for the most important tree in the village (The Mong believed that in doing so, spirits brought them protection and good hopes)’ (Xiongs).

Tamtseeb aj! Koj nyuas Siv Yig Muas kod koj txawm siv muab kuv tub Tuam tua tuag lawm tag.

‘Damn it! You little Siv Yig Muas you, you really *have* killed my son Tuam’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

Suav tuaj Suav muab kuv txiv tua lawm huas Suav muab kuv caab moog ua qhev lawm.

‘When the Chinese came, the Chinese killed my husband but the Chinese led me away to be a slave’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 70).

- **tua**: *tshuaj tua kaab* ‘insecticide’:

txuam tshuaj tua kaab ‘to spray insecticide’ (Xiongs).

- **tua yeej** ‘to win in arm fighting’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab** ‘thick (dimension)’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab** ‘only’ (Xiongs):

tuab tug tub xwb ‘only one son’ (Xiongs).

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

‘Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

- **tuab tug** ‘alone, by oneself’:

Dlha tuab tug hawb zawg le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he ran alone, wheezing].

- **tuab** ‘suddenly, all of a sudden’ (Xiongs):

tuab moog ‘to make a sudden move, to suddenly go’ (Xiongs).

cais nam zaaj tuab ncus cev ua nwg Yawm Nyooglaug ntshais Ntxawm ib saab khau paaj
‘then the dragon trembled, knocking off one Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter’s embroidered shoes’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

Tes khaws nkaus txhwb tawg tuab nam txhwb tawg nam dlev
‘Then they grabbed a piece of firewood and gave a sharp blow with the piece of firewood to the dog’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for *taub*] *hai lug*.
‘The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **tuab**, indicating intensity or completeness:

yawm laug muab tua es Sub tub Sub txiv tuag taag es nam puj Sub nim quaj tuab nam qas quas ntsuav yeeg quas yi
‘my husband killed the Sub’s, both son and father, and now Mrs. Sub is crying her eyes out’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

luas tub muab paab nam hluasnkauj kws lug has nwg ntawd khi taag, hab kaw ua tuab khuaj puv nkaus.
‘the young women who had spoken to him had been tied up, and imprisoned, completely filling the pillory’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 15).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.
‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **tuab**, typo for *tua* ‘to kill’?

Puab tuab [typo for *tua*?] *qab txi xeeb*
‘They sacrifice a chicken for the most important tree in the village (The Mong believed that in doing so, spirits brought them protection and good hopes)’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab**: *nyob tuab ywv* ‘be quiet, keep quiet, don’t move’ (Xiongs). See also *nyob twb ywv*.

- **tuab**: *tub yuav pib tuab tag* ‘almost begin, open’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab**: *tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo* ‘at any moment’:

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

- **tuab:** *ua tuab zoo* ‘be careful, watch out for; be careful, carefully’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab neeg** ‘human being, people, person’ (Xiongs):

cov tuab neeg pluag ‘poor people’ (Xiongs).

ib pawg tuab neeg ‘a group of people’ (Xiongs).

tua tuab neeg ‘to murder, to kill people’ (Xiongs).

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev
‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem

‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **tuab neeg:** *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **tuab neeg:** *ib yig tuab neeg* ‘a family’:

ua tsheej ib yig tuab neeg

‘to be able to manage the family, to become a family’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab neeg:** *tsev tuab neeg* ‘family, household’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab neeg suav** ‘Chinese’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab neeg tawv** ‘tough man’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab neeg thov khawv** ‘the beggar’ (Xiongs).

- **tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog** ‘people of insight’:

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **tuab neeg txawj ntawv** ‘literate people’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab neeg txawj xwv pov** ‘people that know how to save money’ (Xiongs).

- **tuab si** ‘all, every’ (Xiongs):

nyob ib seem tuab si ‘all on one side’ (Xiongs).

ob txhais teg tuab si ‘both hands’ (Xiongs).

tug nttxhab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le

‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs) [“this smell overcomes completely the whole group”].

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **tuab sis** or **tab sis** ‘but’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dànshì*:

Npawg Ntxawg, lub qhov kws kuv nqeg lug nyob sau nuav, tabsis luas dlov pobzeb lug txhawg taag xwb.

‘Cousin Ntxawg, the place where I descended is on top of here, but he has rolled stones and blocked it up’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **tuag** ‘to die, to pass away, to die down; dead, badly down’ (Xiongs):

kev tuag ‘death’ (Xiongs).

nub tuag ‘the death day, the end of life’ (Xiongs).

Tuam tuag tseb nua ‘Toua died last year’ (Xiongs).

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs).

tuag ndlo (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to die].

Tes puj dlaab nam nttxhais moog rhu hlo ntim nyaj ntim kub lug tes; “Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”. “Tuag luas mas nam! tes tuag”. “Caj luas mas nam! tes caj”

Then the female spirit’s daughter pulled out the silver and golden bowls: “If she is to live, she’ll live. If she is to die, she’ll die. If she is to live, she’ll live” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg

lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

*Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,
Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.*

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

Consider the following sentences from a folktale involving the intensifier *kag*, which the Xiongs translate as ‘completely, entirely’, and the intensifier *ndlo*, which the Xiongs translate as ‘bodily’ and which Lyman (p. 253) translates as ‘extremely; surely, definitely; completely; to the uttermost end’. The ruler puts a drop of poison in a cow’s mouth

cais ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘so then she died *kag*.’

But the ruler’s daughter Ntxawm makes the cow appear to be alive. Then the ruler puts a drop of poison in a sow’s mouth

cais ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘so then she died *kag*.’

But Ntxawm makes the sow appear to be alive. Then the ruler puts a drop of poison in the mouth of Ntxawm’s husband Yob

hab ca le tuag kag lawm.

‘and then he died *kag*.’

But Ntxawm makes Yob appear to be alive. Then the ruler, wondering why his poison isn’t working, puts a drop in his own mouth

ca le tuag ndlo lawm lauj!

‘then he died *ndlo*!’

Now it is final. When the ruler’s wife and his sons and his son’s wives see that he is dead they weep continuously. And the ruler’s daughter Ntxawm mourns Yob as well. And all of the villagers run to look, and see that Yob is dead as well (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* pp. 21-

25).

- **tuag:** *caj ... tuag* ‘intensely; to a huge extent’:

Ob tug nim tu hlo ib lub nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj dlaav tuag

‘The two of them had decided on a place where they told their servants to prepare an exceedingly broad clearing’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

Coob caj coob tuag lug ndlaug toj ndlaug peg.

‘Their vast multitudes filled the hills and the highlands’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

Tau nyaj ntau caj ntau tuag mas puab aub tsi taug lug tsev.

‘They got such an incredible amount of silver that they were unable to carry it home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **tuag:** *nteeg tuag* ‘the funeral’ (Xiongs).

- **tuag:** *ntshaav tuag* ‘congealed blood’ (Xiongs).

- **tuag:** *paag tuag* ‘still-water pond’:

Muaj ib nub, ob tug kwvnpawg tau ua ke moog nuv ntseg nraag lub nam paag tuag.

‘One day, the two cousins went fishing together in a still-water pond’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* page 5 and illustration on page 4).

- **tuag:** *paam tuag* ‘to perform a funeral’:

kev paamtuag ‘funeral rites’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14, chapter title).

tsev paam tuag ‘funeral home’ (Xiongs).

- **tuag:** *paub tuag* ‘to know death, to die’:

tsi paub tuag le ‘everlasting, to live forever’ (Xiongs).

- **tuag:** *tshev dlaab tshev tuag* ‘to scold severely’:

“Ntuj nis kuv miv nyaab es tub Los Xeeb nim lawv lawv sab, kuv tsi paub kuv nim tshev dlaab tshev tuag ntshai kuv tug miv nyaab nim tu tu sab”.

“By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law, my son Los Xaab followed his heart. I did not know, and I said terrible things to you. I’m afraid that my dear daughter-in-law must think very ill of me” (*Ceebpov* p. 25).

- **tuag:** *txawj tuag* ‘to die’:

Nyuas laublaig nis laublaig! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo nkauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little minivet oh minivet! You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear and and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nrauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel oh little zebra squirrel! You had mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

- **tuag**: *txhigtuag* ‘to attend a funeral’:

Dlaab ntxawg, koj tuaj txug ko cais pigkig koj nrug kuv moog txhigtuag ib nub ais koj le rov moog tsev.

‘Brother-in-law, since you’re here, tomorrow you and I can spend the day at a funeral together before you go back home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Yawm Dlaab, nwg tug yawm yij, moog hloov tau khaubdluag los cais ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab txawm moog txhigtuag lawm.

‘When the Spirit, the man’s brother-in-law, had changed his clothes, the two brothers-in-law then went to the funeral’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

The corresponding forms in other Hmong dialects (Heimbach p. 327 *tuag*; Bertrais *txws*; *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* *zul*) suggest that *txhigtuag* is a variant spelling of *txigtuag*, but I have not yet seen *txigtuag* in the Mong Leng materials I have looked at.

There is another possibility, which was brought to my attention by Nathan White. Nathan has seen, for example in a Mong Leng Gospel reading on Facebook, a form *txhij tuag* meaning ‘to attend a funeral’, from *txhij* ‘assemble people’ + *tuag* ‘to die’. This might also be a source for *txhigtuag*.

- **tuag nthi** ‘stick hundred percent to’ (Xiongs, entry for *nthi* and p. 555).

- **tuag tshaav** ‘to wither, feeble, weak, slow, without vigor’ (Xiongs).

- **tuag tshaib** ‘die of hunger’ (Xiongs):

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16).

- **tuag xeb** ‘that cannot be any better cooked’ (Xiongs).

- **tuaj** ‘to come’ (Xiongs):

puab yuav tuaj saib peb ‘they will come to visit us’ (Xiongs).

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum ob tug kwvtij tuaj plhob hab cuab naag cuab noog. Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?”

Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers came by, hunting, and trapping rodents and birds. The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg, cais kuj tuaj nceb nrauj nstaum txug ntawd hab.

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil

dried up and the plants died, and toadstools came up there' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111; the illustration on page 110 shows toadstools in an otherwise barren landscape).

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?

'Son-in-law Yob came to try the medicine, was the medicine effective?' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

"Tuaj peb sis ntaus los puj?" "Awv, tuaj los tuaj lau!"

"Shall we come and fight each other?" "Yes, let us come!" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

- **tuaj**, following another verb:

has ... lug tuaj 'say, tell':

has koj zaaj lug tuaj 'give your idea or your point of view' (Xiongs).

xaa ... tuaj 'send':

Kuv xaa dlaim dluab nuav tuaj rua koj 'I send you this photo (or picture)' (Xiongs).

xaa ... tuaj 'accompany':

Koj yuav xaa kuv tuaj tsi xaa

'Will you accompany me back or not? (Mong song)' (Xiongs).

- **tuaj**: *koj tuaj lov?* or *koj tuaj los* (speaking to one person) or *mej tuaj lov?* or *mej tuaj los* (speaking to more than one person), "Have you come?", customary expression in greeting someone who arrives at one's house:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

'Sir, welcome to both of you.' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35, speaking to a man and his son)

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

'Ho ho! Welcome!' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, speaking to three people.)

- **tuaj**: *nub tuaj* 'sunrise; east' (Xiongs).

phaab nub tuaj 'east' (Xiongs).

saab nub tuaj 'east side' (Xiongs).

- **tuaj nto** 'to come up to the level of the ground (planting), to put forth, to sprout' (Xiongs).

- **tuaj quas tsug** 'to laugh' (Xiongs):

lug tuaj quas tsug 'joke, funny words' (Xiongs).

- **tuaj taug** 'to be not afraid to take any action' (Xiongs).

- **tuaj tom nrob qaum tuaj** 'from behind or from the back' (Xiongs).

- **tuaj txug** 'to arrive' (Xiongs):

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov

'I arrive when you are still eating' (Xiongs).

Nwg nkaag hawb zawg tuaj txug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he arrived creeping wheezingly].

Koj tog ca nwg tuaj txug ncua tsaiv
 ‘Wait for her to arrive’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32).

luas tuaj txug tsi pum koj tes luas ua phem rua peb le.
 ‘if they arrive and do not see you, then they do harm to us’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

Nam aws! Muaj ib nam yawm Moob laug laug tuaj txug ntawd
 ‘Mama! An old man has come’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 76).

- **tuam** ‘to kick backwards; (no classifier) kick backward’ (Xiongs):

nwg raug maum nyuj tuam ‘s/he was kicked by a cow’ (Xiongs).

- **tuam** ‘to build a bridge or some kind of link between two points’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dā*.

- **tuam** ‘the most important, the biggest’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dà*:

los tuam ‘the eldest son’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *lǎo dà*. *Los Tuam*, the eldest of three brothers, is one of the main characters in *Ceebpov*.

- **Tuam**: *Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem* or *Nyawj Vaab Tuam Teem*, the celestial being who judges the dead and gives out documents of reincarnation: See **Nyaj Vaab**.

- **Tuam**: *Sub Tuam*, a tyrant who, after death, became the spirit that causes bloody accidents (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 19-34): see **Sub**.

- **Tuam Caiv**, name of one of the fighters in the Rog Vwm (Crazy War), the Mong rebellion against the French in Indochina from 1919-1921:

Taus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”
 When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!” (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

- **tuam choj** ‘to build a bridge’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dā qiáo*:

In a folktale, an orphan who has been blinded by his elder brother gropes his way until he comes to a *tsev tuav sab*, which is glossed parenthetically as *tsev tuam choj* ‘house with a bridge erected’. He rests there and overhears a tiger, a bear, and a wild boar conversing and learns how to heal his blindness (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 131). The accompanying illustration of the *tsev tuav sab* or *tsev tuam choj*, showing three planks laid in a fork in the road forming a Y-shape, with an open pavilion with a gabled roof – like a covered bridge – built above them, looks exactly like Nusit Chindarsi’s drawings (Chindarsi 1976:35-37) of the bridges set up on the road to enable wandering souls to come back home.

- **tuam nroog** ‘(classifier *lub*) capital’ (Xiongs):

ib lub teb chaws nyob Asia, lub tuam nroog yog Tokyo (teb chaws Nyij Pooj) ‘a country in Asia, the capital is Tokyo (the country of Japan)’ (Xiongs, entry for *Japan*).

- **tuam phom** ‘cannon, huge gun’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dàpào*:

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **tuam tim xyoob** ‘(classifier *tug*) head officer, captain’ (Xiongs).

- **Tuam Tshoj**, from Chinese *dà cháo* ‘greater dynasty’ = China, as opposed to *Xov Tshoj*, Chinese *xiǎo cháo* ‘lesser dynasty’ = places outside of China where Mong live:

tuam tshoj ‘mainland’ (Xiongs).

Moob Tuam Tshoj (Suav Teb) ‘The Mong of China’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 14).

Moob Suav, Tuam Tshoj ‘Mong in China’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141, chapter title).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who went left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **tuam vaab** ‘widely open or spread out’ (Xiongs).

- **tuam yij**, from Chinese *dà yé*, a man of high rank or status:

wb muab nwg tsaa ua ib tug tuam yij rua hov ntawd saib cov nam txwm zeej.

‘we must elevate him to the position of tuam yij who watches over the criminals’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **tuav** ‘to hold, to grasp, to catch’ (Xiongs):

sib tuav teg ‘to shake hands, to hold hands’ (Xiongs).

thov koj paab kuv tuav ib plag ‘help me hold it for a while please’ (Xiongs).

Luas tsuas caav koj yawm yij Nkaaj / teg ncaaj teg tuav ntaaj, / teg nceeg teg tuav neev.

‘People just spread the fame of your brother-in-law Nkaaj: / With a straight arm he wields a sword. / With a steady hand he wields a crossbow’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 75).

Yog koj moog tuab tuav nkaus nwg xwb tes yuav laaj laaj txhvw txujsa kuas xeev rov lug le hab.

‘If you were to take hold of him, he would have difficulty in being reborn’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Nws quaj dlaa quaj dlaa los tuav tsi tau tug kwv txhais teg

‘He kept weeping but he could not take hold of his younger brother’s hand’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.

‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting him off the ground’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

Nwg naj nub ncu txug Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab nyem teg quas ntseeg tsi pub leej twg tuav hab kov nwg hlo le.

‘Every day she missed Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and kept her fist clenched and wouldn’t let anyone hold her or touch her at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

- **tuav** ‘to pound on, to make powder’ (Xiongs):

ob tug yuav muab tuav hovtxob noj

‘the two of them were about to pound pepper for their meal’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

kuv tas wb muab nam noog hov tua tuav hovtxob noj pebcaug

‘I said that we would kill this bird and pound some pepper and eat the New Year feast’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

- **tuav**: *tsev tuav sab*:

In a folktale, an orphan who has been blinded by his elder brother gropes his way until he comes to a *tsev tuav sab*, which is glossed parenthetically as *tsev tuam choj* ‘house with a bridge erected’. He rests there and overhears a tiger, a bear, and a wild boar conversing and learns how to heal his blindness (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 131). The accompanying illustration of the *tsev tuav sab* or *tsev tuam choj*, showing three planks laid in a fork in the road forming a Y-shape, with an open pavilion with a gabled roof – like a covered bridge – built above them, looks exactly like Nusit Chindarsi’s drawings (Chindarsi 1976:35-37) of the bridges set up on the road to enable wandering souls to come back home.

Bertrais (1978:467 *tsev*) and *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (p. 38 *duad shab*) say that *tsev tuav sab* is a house with a rammed earth walls. Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that this was probably the original meaning of *tsev tuav sab* in China and that, in Southeast Asia, where the warmer climate makes rammed earth construction unnecessary, the term *tsev tuav sab* may have been applied to prestigious or ritually important structures even if made of wood or lacking walls, such as the *tsev tuav sab* in the folktale.

- **tuav ca** ‘to keep’ (Xiongs).

- **tuav cug** ‘to work a treadmill’ (Heimbach p. 329 *tuav cos*):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **tuav rawv** ‘to hold firmly’ (Xiongs).

- **tw** '(classifier *tug*) end, tail, relative to the end' (Xiongs) (see also *twv*):

kua tw neeg '(classifier *tug*) horse tail' (Xiongs).

pob tw '(classifier *lub*) buttocks' (Xiongs).

- **tw yaaj pob kws** 'corn tassels' (Xiongs).

- **tw**: *sib tw* 'to compete with each other' (Xiongs).

- **twb** 'to touch, to slightly contact' (Xiongs):

tug twb 'contact' [person] (Xiongs).

- **twb** 'to copy or get as a model' (Xiongs).

- **twb**: *nyob twb ywv* 'to be quiet' (Xiongs) (see also *nyob tuab ywv*):

Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog.

'You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **twb**: *pav twb quas tawg* 'to mutter':

Yuav tsausntuj tuab tag Los Tuam hab Los Lwm ob tug nim pav twb quas tawg hab cov nam qhev puab nim pav twb quas tawg

'When it was truly nightfall, Los Tuam and Los Lwm began to mutter and the servants also began to mutter' (*Ceebpov* pp. 17-18).

Nim pav twb quas tawg le hov taug kev.

'They kept muttering in that fashion all along the road' (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **twb nkaus le ntaag** 'to really touch it' (Xiongs).

- **twg** 'a combination for question words' (Xiongs):

cov twg 'who (plural)' (Xiongs).

hov twg 'where' (Xiongs). Also written *qhov twg*.

leej twg 'who (singular)' (Xiongs).

leej twg los tau 'anybody' (Xiongs).

nub twg? 'what day?':

Koj lub nub yug yog nub twg? 'What is your birth date?' (Xiongs.)

npaum twg 'how many, how much' (Xiongs).

paab twg 'which group' (Xiongs).

pawg twg 'which group' (Xiongs).

qhov twg 'where' (Xiongs). Also written *hov twg*.

taav twg 'when, at what time' (Xiongs).

tug twg ‘who (singular)’ (Xiongs).

thaum twg ‘when, at what time’ (Xiongs). Also written *thaus twg* (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

xyoo twg ‘which year, what year’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav moog twg? ‘Where will you go?’ (Xiongs.)

Taav twg koj le yuav rov lug? ‘When will you come back?’ (Xiongs.)

Tsi muaj leej twg mam dlhau txuj kev tuag ‘No one can avoid death’ (Xiongs, entry for *tuag*).

Moog saib tuag twg tes muab hlau faus saib!

‘Go and see, and wherever he died, take a mattock and bury him’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Pum yaam sov thaus twg le lug tau ib zog nam Suav coob tag tag le.

‘Whenever we looked, we found a village with really a lot of Chinese’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

Tab sis qhov tseeb tsi muaj leej twg paub

‘But the truth is that there is no one who knows’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 80).

Peb tsi muaj leej twg pum hab paub hastas Ntxwj Nyoog zoo le caag hab nyob rua qhov twg

‘We do not have anyone who sees him or knows what Ntxwj Nyoog is like and where he lives’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81).

Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab, cais Muam Paajqawm ua lwj ua lam, npaum twg yuav nrug puab rovqaab hab.

‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home, whereupon Muam Paajqawm insisted at all costs on going back with them’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyooob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug.

‘Let me tell you, O elder, where bamboo and trees came from’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

Moob Kev Dlaab Qhuas Txawm Qhov Twg Lug?

‘Where Does Mong Traditional Religion Come From?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas*, title).

Koj yuav moog qhov twg? Hab yog ua le caag koj yuav chim ua luaj?

‘Where are you going? And why are you so angry?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le

‘It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd.

‘If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug yuav tso tug twg moog los khauvxxwm.

‘Whoever His Majesty the ruler would send [to be eaten by the Spirit], too bad for them!’
(*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 32.)

Tug twg, tsev twg tas yog koj nua tes luas txha ntshai.

‘Any person, any household that is yours, they fear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg

‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **twg** ‘buffalo’ (see also *twm*):

Txhua naj txhua nub kuv pum luas nkuam nyuj twg quas luag tuaj nruab ke

‘Day in and day out, I see people driving cattle and buffaloes down the middle of the road’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **twg** ‘short’ (Xiongs).

- **twg** ‘dull, not sharp’ (Xiongs).

- **twg** ‘to use, to utilize’ (Xiongs).

- **twg**:

kev twg ‘dead end (street, way)’ (Xiongs).

nyuv twg ‘appendix’ (Xiongs).

- **twg kev** ‘to have nowhere to go, to come to an end’ (Xiongs):

kev twg ‘dead end (street, way)’ (Xiongs).

- **twg rag** ‘to use a knife to do something’ (Xiongs).

- **twm** ‘(classifier *tug*) water buffalo’ (Xiongs) (see also *twg*):

ib tug phaws twm luj ‘a big male buffalo’ (Xiongs).

- **twm** ‘single, alone’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dú*.

- **twm** ‘to challenge, to defy, to compete’ (Xiongs), from Southwestern Mandarin *dù* ‘to instigate, to incite, to provoke’:

tsi xob ua twm kuv nawb ‘don’t challenge me’ (Xiongs).

- **twmkum** ‘rhinoceros’, from Chinese *dú jiǎo* ‘single horn’:

Tug nam txiv twmkum nyav moog dlhau plhawv xwb

‘A male rhinoceros came galloping up’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 18).

- **twm tswb** ‘single wild boar, a single male wild pig’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dú zhū* ‘sole pig’.

- **twm xeeb** ‘unique’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *dú shēn* ‘sole self’.

- **twm xeeb** ‘untempered mind; short tempered’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *dú xīn*

‘poisonous heart’.

- **twm zeej** ‘one person alone, only one alone’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dú rén* ‘sole person’:

tub twm zeej ‘unique child, only son’ (Xiongs).

- **twv** ‘to guess, to challenge, to defy, to compete’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dǔ*:

Puab nyob lug tsi tau ntev, Yawm Nyooglaug, ob tug yawvtxiv [sic] txawm hu Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moog, lub twv cav tas: “Vauv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb! Koj has tas koj yog kuv vauv tag nua koj sim ua kuas kuv ob tug ncej fuab qaag pluj plag moog ...”

When they had been living together for not very long, Grandfather Nyooglaug, the couple’s father-in-law [i.e. the wife’s father, the husband’s father-in-law], summoned Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and issued him a challenge: “Son-in-law Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, you say that you are truly my son-in-law. See if you can make my two betel-palm posts disappear. ...” (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

- **twv**: *ib twv fuab* ‘a cloud’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dǔ*.

- **twv**: *kua twv* ‘tail’ (Xiongs) (see also *tw*).

- **twv pov** ‘to play a game of chance’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dǔbǎo*.

TH

- **thab** ‘to support, to help lift, to hold’ (Xiongs).

- **thab** ‘to supply, to serve food, to fill up the bowl or plate’ (Xiongs).

- **thab**, Chinese *tāi* ‘fetus, embryo’, ‘birth’:

nruab thab ‘the unborn state’ (Xiongs).

moog thawj thab ‘to reincarnate, to be born in another life’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tóu tāi* ‘to submit to birth, to be reincarnated’.

Rua cuaj ceg kab es muaj ntawv moog thawj thab, / lug rua ceg kws es muaj ntawv moog thawj thws.

‘Where the street branches into nine were documents of reincarnation. / At the intersection were documents of rebirth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv

‘The two of them then went to prepare the documents for him to be reborn as a high official’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **thab**: *ua taag ua tab* [typo for *thab*] ‘do again and again’ (Xiongs).

- **thaj** ‘to support, to lift, to carry, to honor, to consider important, to help’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tái*.

- **thaj**: *ua ib thaj npaws* ‘to have a fever’ (Xiongs).

- **thaj cuab tsiv** ‘to move out with the whole family’ (Xiongs).

- **thaab** ‘to excite, to cause trouble, to make trouble (thaab plaub)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tān*.

- **thaab** ‘not’, with a nuance of a clear decision (Bertrais thab):

In a folktale, a young woman whose older brother scolds and beats her leaves home and marries a spirit. When her kind younger brother visits her, she tells him how to behave properly with the spirits. When her cruel older brother visits her, she tells him nothing, and, as a result, the older brother is killed and eaten by his sister’s spirit-husband:

Tug muam kuj thaab has le caag hlo le.

‘The sister then did not say anything at all’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15).

Thaus taagkig sawvntxuv, Yawm Dlaab moog hloov rigtsho lawm, los tug muam kuj thaab qha dlaabtsi rua tug nug hlob hlo le.

‘Early in the morning, the Spirit went and changed his clothes, but the sister did not explain anything to the older brother at all’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) tells me that the White Hmong form, *thab*, is currently developing into a slang word for ‘not’ in Laos and Thailand, alongside another slang word for ‘not’, *pawv*, which might be due to Lao influence.

- **thaab muag khoom** ‘to introduce to sell a product’ (Xiongs):

The first syllable, *thaab*, is from Chinese 摊 *tān* ‘to spread something out, to lay out; stand, stall or table where goods are exhibited and sold’.

- **thaab plaub** ‘to try to cause trouble’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that the first syllable, *thaab*, might be from Chinese 摊 *tān* ‘to spread something out, to lay out; stand, stall or table where good are exhibited and sold’, in the sense of “taking certain matters into your hand and spreading them out / exhibiting them in public – asking for trouble.”

- **thaab rag** ‘to sharpen a knife’ (Xiongs).

- **thaaj** ‘(no classifier) region, area, piece of land’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tuán* ‘sphere’:

ib thaaj teb nplej ‘a rice field’ (Xiongs).

- **thaaj** ‘French’ (Xiongs).

- **thaaj**, Chinese *táng* ‘sugar’:

pem thaaj ‘sugar’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *báitáng* ‘white sugar’.

suab thaaj ‘sugar from cane’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *shātáng* ‘granulated sugar’.

suav thaaj ‘sugar, sweet’ (Xiongs).

- **thaaj**, Chinese *tán* ‘altar’:

thaaj neeb ‘the shamanic altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door (*Tswv Yim* p.15).

thaaj xim kaab ‘the xim kaab altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

thaaj yum vaaj ‘the medicine-king altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door’ (Tswv Yim p. 15).

- **thaaj**: *viv thaaj nyuj* ‘radio, from Lao *vī thā nyū*’ (Tswv Yim p.4).

- **thaaj**: *zaub thaaj* ‘(classifier *lub*) cabbage’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tuán* ‘sphere’. Calling cabbage “sphere vegetable” appears to be a Mong innovation. Michael Johnson checked on the Chinese online search engine Baidu and found no sign of any such expression as * 团菜 *tuáncài* “sphere vegetable”.

- **thaaj tsaam** ‘period of time’:

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700
‘During the 1700’s’ (Tswv Yim p. 144).

- **thaam** ‘to chat, to date, to talk, to tell, to say’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tán* (Southwestern Mandarin *tàn*):

puab thaam txug dlej nyaab ‘They talk about the flood’ (Xiongs).

sib thaam ‘to talk to each other, to exchange ideas, to discuss’ (Xiongs) (also written *sis thaam*).

Hiv! Hiv! Ob yawm yij yawm dlaab nua ua caag yuav txawj sis thaam ua luaj le ntawd!
‘Hee hee! These two brothers-in-law, how they can talk!’ (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 84;
spoken in response to ribald wordplay.)

Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm hab Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ob tug pheej sis thaam ua luaj quas lawg
‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb kept chattering away’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 17).

Ob tug sis thaam sis thaam povkhawv
‘The two of them talked and talked to their hearts’ content’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 17).

- **thaav** ‘young female (cow)’ (Xiongs):

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes, koj moog moog txug peg toj kaab ntswg dlawm kaab no.

‘Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst. Go until you get up to the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab no. *Kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj thaav yaaj, koj ncu ntsoov koj nkawm khau maaj. Koj txug peg toj kaab ntswg ndlwg luag luaj le thaav npua, koj ncu ntsoov nkawm khau ntuag.* The caterpillars come in swarms. They’re big as young ewes. Don’t forget your shoes of hemp! The caterpillars swarm over the hill. They’re big as young sows. Don’t forget your hempen shoes!’ (Dlaab Qhuas p.16.)

- **thai** ‘full grown, big, adult’ (Xiongs):

tug txiv thai lab ‘a big male monkey’ (Xiongs).

- **thaib** ‘Thai’ (Xiongs):

Thaib teb ‘Thailand (the country)’ (Xiongs).

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws. Taam sim nuav muaj Moob nyob tebchaws Suav, Nyab Laaj, Nplog, Thaib, Phab Mab, Nyij Pooj, Australia, Faabkis, Canada, Germany, hab Asmesleskas.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries. At the present time there are Mong living in the countries of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Germany, and America’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **thaiv** ‘to protect, to stand against, to oppose, to stop, to bar, to bar up, to block up, to fence up, to obstruct, to prevent, to hinder, to cross off, to thwart’ (Xiongs):

The *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant speaks of the household spirits trying to prevent the dead person from leaving the house by spreading out their arms and by running their outspread fingers along the dead person’s arm:

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘When you go, the spirits of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

- **thaiv** ‘(classifier *lub*) the anvil (of a blacksmith)’ (Xiongs).

- **thau** ‘to withdraw, to pull back, to take out, to pull out’ (Xiongs).

- **thau dluab** ‘to take a picture’ (Xiongs).

- **thau teg** ‘to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

- **thau tes** ‘then’:

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **thau u** ‘once upon a time, a long time ago’ (Xiongs) (also written *thau ub* and *thaus u*):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **thau ub** ‘long ago’ (also written *thau u* and *thaus u*):

Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub, qom tsi sawv tsim noob neej,

‘Long ago, who arose to create the seeds of humankind?’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

- **thaub** ‘to go backward, to shift to reverse to move back, to withdraw, to pull back, to step back, to stand back, to retreat, to back up, to back out’ (Xiongs).

- **thaubqaab** ‘backward’ (Xiongs):

koj dlha thaubqaab ‘you run backward’ (Xiongs).

- **thauj** ‘to carry, to transport (said of animals, vehicles)’, from Chinese *tuó*:

tug neeg thauj pob kws ‘the horse transports corn’ (Xiongs).

- **thauj**: *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **thaujkhoom** ‘to transport things (as a dowry)’:

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab’s parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **thaum** ‘when, the time that, the moment when, while’ (Xiongs) (also written *thau* and *thaus*):

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).

thov paab tsaa kuv thaum ob teev tawm
‘please wake me up at two thirty’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug.
‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700
‘During the 1700’s’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **thaum sawv ntxuv** ‘early in the morning’ (Xiongs).

- **thaum twg** ‘when, at what time’ (Xiongs) (also written *thaus twg*).

- **thaus** ‘when, while’ (Xiongs) (also written *thau* and *thaum*):

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm
‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

- **thaus ub** ‘long time ago, once upon a time’ (Xiongs) (also written *thau u* and *thau ub*).

- **thaus twg** (also written *thaum twg*):

Pum yaam sov thaus twg le lug tau ib zog nam Suav coob tag tag le.

‘Whenever we looked, we found a village with really a lot of Chinese’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **thaus taavsu quas lug** ‘right at noon’:

Muaj ib nub, thaus taavsu quas lug, Tub Ceeb Pov hab Nkauj Fuab puab taabtom kawm tawteg ua ke huv plawv taj

‘One day, right at noon, Tub Ceeb Pov and Nkauj Fuab and the others were studying martial arts together in the middle of a level area’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **thauv** ‘not tight, hanging’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *tuǒ* (Southeastern Mandarin pronunciation of *duǒ*) ‘dangling down’.

- **thauv** ‘(classifier *lub*) small bottle, container’ (Xiongs):

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **thauv** ‘to store liquid by a dam’ (Xiongs) (see also *thoov*).

- **thauv vaiv** ‘hanging’ (Xiongs).

- **thawb** ‘to push, to shove’ (Xiongs):

thawb lub qhov rooj rua ‘push the door in’ (Xiongs).

- **thawj** ‘to reincarnate in another life’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tóu (tāi)* ‘to submit to (birth), to be reincarnated’:

lug thawj ‘to come close to, to incarnate’ (Xiongs).

moog thawj thab ‘to reincarnate, to be born in another life’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tóu tāi*.

ntshai koj moog thawj dlev, ceb laaj zuv luas tsev.

‘Now if you are reborn as a dog, you will have the hardship of guarding someone else’s house’ (*Initiation* p. 138).

Rua cuaj ceg kab es muaj ntawv moog thawj thab, / lug rua ceg kws es muaj ntawv moog thawj thws.

‘Where the street branches into nine were documents of reincarnation. / At the intersection were documents of rebirth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv

‘The two of them then went to prepare the documents for him to be reborn as a high

official' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **thawj** 'chief, leading, important, first' (Xiongs), from Chinese *tóu*:

ntaus thawj 'to go ahead, to lead, to go first' (Xiongs).

Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw.

'People say that older brothers rule the country' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

tug thawj coj 'the leader, the guide' (Xiongs).

thawj lub tsev 'the first house' (Xiongs).

thawj tug hluas nkauj 'the first girl' (Xiongs).

xub thawj 'first' (Xiongs).

- **thawj**: *caam thawj* 'indocile' (Xiongs).

- **thawj**: *dlev dlub thawj* 'a dog that knows not its master, one that wanders about seeking food from one and all, also used figuratively of persons in serious scolding or cursing' (Heimbach 1979:35):

In my Mong Leng materials, specifically in *Ceebpov*, the expression *dlev dlub thawj* is used only in its figurative sense, referring to a human being:

koj tsi yoom qheb qhovrooj tug dlev dlub thawj dlev cis nkeeg hov lug tsev le huas.

'I forbid you to open the door to that shiftless cur' (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

Ab! yog le tug dlev dlub thawj naagmo naag lug es tsiv moog nte tawg nraag Suav

'Oh, so what happened was that ill-omened mutt last night when it was raining ran away to find a fire to warm himself down with the Chinese' (*Ceebpov* pp. 22-23).

- **thawj**: *paam thawj* 'a wooden mallet' (Xiongs).

- **thawj**: *pov thawj* '(classifier *tug*) witness, guarantor' (Xiongs), from Chinese *bǎo* 'to guarantee, ensure':

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj moog hu kev txwj quas laug lug nrug ua povthawj zoo zoo tseg.

'and so the Maiden Ntsum called upon the elders to be witnesses' (*Kwmhuam* p. 19).

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg.

'the two sides wrote up a contract and had everyone witness it' (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Coj txiv tuam mej koob moog ua hau has, hab ua povthawj.

'He brought marriage negotiators to be the head speaker, and to be the guarantor' (*Kwvhuam* pp. 31-32).

- **thawj**: *phubthawj* 'Kammu', from Lao *Phûu Tháəng* 'Hillside People':

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm muab tug nam puj phubthawj hov tua lug ua nqaj rua nteeg qhua ntawd noj.

'So the Spirit then killed the Kammu woman and prepared meat for the funeral guests to

eat' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 12).

- **thawj**: *tawm thawj* 'at that same time, to take advantage of' (Xiongs):

Probably a calque on Chinese *chūtóu* 'to raise one's head, free oneself from misery', literally "to go or come out the head".

- **thawj**: *tom thawj* 'with the advantage that; fortunately, taking advantage of' (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese *dào tóu* 'to reach the end, to come to an end'.

- **thawj**: *xub thawj* 'first of all, before all' (Xiongs).

- **thawv**, intensifier:

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj,
 'O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain
le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj,
 Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain
noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.
 so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **thaws** 'to soak' (Xiongs):

cov kua qaub thaws taag rua huv lawm 'the vinegar soaks in all' (Xiongs).

- **thaws** 'to bounce back, to rebound, to reflect, to come back' (Xiongs):

lub suab thaws qaab 'the voice bounces back' (Xiongs).

- **thaws**:

thaws naj 'lifelong, all one's life' (Xiongs).

thaws nub 'all day' (Xiongs).

thaws xyoo 'for a year, year long, all year' (Xiongs).

- **thawv** 'box, bag, luggage' (Xiongs).

- **thawv** 'to shake, to bounce up and down; unsteadily, bouncing' (Xiongs). From Chinese *dǒu* (Southwestern Mandarin *tǒu*).

- **the**, meaning uncertain in the following:

Muab qheb hlo na dlaabntxaug the huv tuaj tas;
 'He opened it and, why, the ntxaug spirits *the* from inside saying:' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

The Xiongs (p. 553) list the expression *nrov the tho* 'to make the sound *the tho*', so one possibility is that *the* is the sound that the spirits make.

- **the tho**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov the tho [to make the sound 'the tho'] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **them** ‘to pay, to repay’ (Xiongs):

Mey [typo for *Mej*?] *yuav tsum them \$10 txhiv rov qaab*
 ‘You should pay \$10 in order to buy it back’ (Xiongs).

Them ‘to pay’ is probably from Chinese *tiē* as in *tiēběn* ‘to lose one’s capital, lose money’, which may have developed the more general sense ‘outward flow of money’ in Southwestern Mandarin.

- **them**: *yaaj them* ‘tin, galvanized iron’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yángtiě*.
- **them nqe** ‘to pay a debt’ (Xiongs).
- **them nyaj ntawv** ‘to pay cash’ (Xiongs).
- **them rov qaab** ‘to pay back’ (Xiongs).
- **them taag lawm** ‘to pay off’ (Xiongs).
- **them tsi taug** ‘cannot afford’ (Xiongs).
- **them tshoob them kug** ‘to pay a brideprice’ (topic of the story in *Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32).
- **thev** ‘to endure, to undergo, to bear’ (Xiongs):

yuav thev tsi taug lawm ‘cannot endure any more’ (Xiongs).

- **thev** ‘to last, to live’ (Xiongs):

tsi thev ntev ‘do not last long’ (Xiongs).

yuav thev nto plaub xyoo ‘will last for four years’ (Xiongs).

- **thev** ‘to hit on something to loosen it’ (Xiongs).
- **thev** ‘shaky, jumping, trembling’ (Xiongs).
- **thee** ‘(no classifier) charcoal’ (Xiongs).

cov thee tsi tau kub txaus ‘the charcoal is not hot enough’ (Xiongs).

rauv thee ‘to light the charcoal’ (Xiongs).

- **theeb** ‘to take or to eat just a little bit’ (Xiongs).
- **theeb**, Chinese *tiān* ‘sky, heaven’:

Ntuj sua teb thaus u, muaj ob tug kwvnpawg Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, hab Cuav Tshoj Tim.
 ‘In the world of long ago, there were two cousins: Pure One Who Faces Heaven and False One Who Faces Earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

- **theej** ‘to replace, to take the place or position of another, to displace something out into another place’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tián*:

muab lub thoob lab lug theej thoob dlub ‘replace the red pail with the black one’ (Xiongs).

- **theej**: *kav theej* ‘(classifier *txuj* or *tsob*) rattan’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *téng*.

- **theej**: *Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub* ‘In the beginning long ago’:

Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub, qom tsi sawv tsim noob neej
‘In the beginning long ago, who arose to create the seeds of humankind?’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

- **theej txhoj** ‘to take the place of, to replace, to be in the place of’ (Xiongs):

“This is probably an idiom like 填 *tián* ‘to fill in/up a gap/hole’ + 槽 *cáo* ‘manger; trough from which livestock feeds; ditch; trench; canal’ (to fill someone's ditch).” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **them** (no classifier) ‘step, level, layer, story’ (Xiongs), from colloquial Southwestern Mandarin *tèng*:

ib lub tsev plaub them ‘a four story house’ (Xiongs).

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas them rua huv Plawv nroog.
‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs, entry for *ua*).

tseem tshuav ob them ntxiv ‘there are two more steps’ (Xiongs).

The sky is sometimes spoken of as having several levels or steps:

Lub nam nub txawm poob nroog ib them lug zab Yawm Nyooglaug lub tebchaws.
‘The sun came down one step and dried up Grandfather Nyooglaug’s country’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **them** ‘to stop, to delay, to pause’ (Xiongs), from colloquial Southwestern Mandarin *tèng*:

mej yuav tau moog them tom puab tsev ib plag
‘you will have to stop at their house for a while’ (Xiongs).

- **thi** ‘(classifier *lub*) belt, holding ring’ (Xiongs):

thi qeej ‘holding ring of the qeej’ (Xiongs).

thi tshuab ‘belt of a machine’ (Xiongs).

- **thib ib puas** ‘hundredth’ (Xiongs).

- **thij** ‘(no classifier) stem’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese *tí* ‘to carry in the hand’:

ib thij txiv tsawb ‘a whole stem of bananas’ (Xiongs).

- **thim** ‘to return, to turn back, to go back, to withdraw, to retreat, to back up, to reverse, to bounce back, to kick back (gun), to take back’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tùi*:

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim ‘the soldiers will have to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

- **thim** ‘fading, losing color’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tùi* (*sè*).

- **thim**: *xevthim plaab* ‘to give up one’s old body and be reincarnated’:

saib quas ntsoov tug kwv moog thawj hlo nam xevthim plaab.

‘watched carefully as his younger brother was reborn, abandoning his old body’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

The expression *xevthim plaab* may mean literally “to slough off one’s belly”, from Chinese *shě* ‘to give up, abandon’ + Chinese *tui* ‘to slough off’ + Mong *plaab* ‘belly’. But Michael Johnson is doubtful about my idea that the first syllable, *xev*, represents Chinese 舍 *shě* ‘to give up, abandon’. Mong *x*, pronounced “s”, does sometimes correspond to Chinese *sh*, so the idea that *xev* could come from 舍 *shě* is not implausible. But in White Hmong, 舍 *shě* is *sev*, with *s*, pronounced “sh”, and in the dialect represented in *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet*, which uses the official Chinese orthography, 舍 *shě* is *shed*, again with *sh*. The Mong Leng form *xev*, therefore, is anomalous vis-à-vis the way 舍 *shě* is pronounced in other closely related Hmong dialects, and may therefore have a different source, something other than 舍 *shě*.

- **this** ‘on behalf of, instead of, in the place of’ (Xiongs).

- **thiv** ‘to insert a piece of cloth in another large piece of clothing’ (Xiongs).

- **tho** ‘to piece [typo for pierce?], to make a hole, to find a way’ (Xiongs):

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **tho**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov the tho [to make the sound ‘the tho’] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **thob** ‘to sweep, to clean, to rack away, to shovel’ (Xiongs), from Southwestern Mandarin *tāo*:

thob dlau ‘to shovel away snow’ (Xiongs).

has lug thob quav ‘to speak with repetition (said of someone having speech problems)’ (Xiongs) [“to speak as if shoveling dung”].

- **Thoj** ‘Mong last name’ (Xiongs), a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Dlub** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Táo*.

- **thoj**: *txiv cuab thoj* ‘(classifier *lub*) the guava (fruit)’ (Xiongs). Probably from a Chinese compound *jiā táo* ‘household peach’ which has survived in Mong but not in Chinese.

- **thoj plaab** ‘diarrhea; to have diarrhea, loose stool’ (Xiongs). The word *thoj* is probably from Chinese *táo* ‘to rinse’, but the expression *thoj plaab* is probably modeled on the Chinese expression *xiè dùzi* ‘to have diarrhea’, literally “pour-down/drain-off belly”.

- **thom** ‘to put blankets one on top of the other’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tào*.

- **thom** ‘to ask, to investigate, to question’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *tào* ‘to draw out the truth’.

- **thom khwm** ‘(classifier *txhais*) sock’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tào kù* ‘a pair of leggings held up by string, worn over trousers as an extra protection against rain, wind, or cold’:

txhais thom khwm ‘one sock’ (Xiongs).

nkawm thom khwm ‘a pair of socks’ (Xiongs).

- **thov** ‘to beg, to ask for, to request, to apply for, to wish’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tǎo*:

thov kom ‘to wish that’ (Xiongs).

thov khawv ‘to beg’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tǎo* ‘to beg’ + *kǒu* ‘mouth’.

tuab neeg thov khawv ‘the beggar’ (Xiongs).

thov ntuj ‘to pray’ (Xiongs) [“to entreat heaven”].

thov txim ‘to ask for an excuse’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tǎo zuì* ‘to ask for blame’.

thov koj paab kuv tuav ib plag ‘help me hold it for a while please’ (Xiongs, entry for *tuav*).

thov paab tsaa kuv thaum ob teev tawm ‘please wake me up at two thirty’ (Xiongs).

thov paab txheem kom tsi xob poob ‘Help me hold it from falling, please’ (Xiongs).

thov txaav tom ntej zog ‘move over a little’ (Xiongs).

Ab yog tas koj tsi kheev los thov txav cov plaubhau rua kuv lauj!

‘Very well, if you won’t [give me the head], then please cut off the hair for me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31.)

- **thoob** ‘(classifier *lub*) pail, container, tank’ (Xiongs):

muab lub thoob lab lug theej thoob dlob ‘replace the red pail with the black one’ (Xiongs).

- **thoob** ‘through, completely; whole, all, every, complete’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tōng*:

thoob teb chaws ‘the whole country’ (Xiongs).

kuv paub thoob lawm ‘I know it completely, I know it all’ (Xiongs).

thoob plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [completely, to the end].

The Xiongs do not translate *thoob plawg*. The translation ‘completely, to the end’ comes from Heimbach (p. 341 *thoob plaws*)

- **thoob**: *phom lug thoob* ‘rifle’ (Xiongs).

- **thoobpuab** ‘shoulder-bag’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication):

In *Ceebpov*, the title character, Ceeb Pov ‘Gold Amulet’, who is the daughter of a Chinese couple, has the power to make herself small so that she can fit into a gold amulet

(whence her name) and also to make other things small so that they can fit into the amulet or into a shoulder bag. When she marries Los Xaab and brings him prosperity, she knows that Los Xaab's brothers will try to take her from him, so she uses her power to hide herself and to hide her and Los Xaab's horses and cattle from Los Xaab's brothers.

Ib ntsiv quav tes Los Xaab dlhau plhawv tes nwg txa ntshis ua ib tug yoov yaa ceev ceev moog tsaws nkaus rua ntawm Los Xaab lub naab thoobpuab.

'The instant that Los Xaab was gone, the old Chinese man's daughter transformed herself into a fly and flew at top speed and landed on Los Xaab's shoulder-bag' (Ceebpov p. 11).

Hu quas lawg tes cov qhev lawv kag cov nyuj cov neeg lug txug. Tug dlha quas loo lug txug ncuab thoobpuab, quas plhaw pluj plag rua huv lawm

'She called loud and long and the servants quickly herded the cattle and horses. Each ran right to the shoulder-bag and disappeared inside' (Ceebpov p. 13).

ob tug muab lawv kag rua naab thoobpuab

'the two of them quickly put their [horses] in the shoulder-bag' (Ceebpov pp. 14).

Kuv yuav moog nyob huv hab es, koj khuam lub naab thoobpuab xwb.

'I am going to go inside as well, and you will just hang the shoulder-bag on your shoulder' (Ceebpov p. 14).

Tes Ceeb Pov txawm nkaag kag rua huv naab thoobpuab lawm hab lauj.

'So Ceeb Pov went inside the shoulder-bag as well' (Ceebpov p. 14).

Nwg lug txug hov nwg khuam quas nyo nam naab thoobpuab txug hov. 'Then Los Xaab hung the shoulder-bag on his shoulder' (Ceebpov p. 14).

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!

'Los Xaab, all you've got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?' (Ceebpov p. 16.)

Los Xaab nqeg hab Ceeb Pov nqeg tes ob tug lujtxwv dlha quas loo rua thoobpuab nkaag plawg rua huv pluj plag lawm hab.

'Los Xaab dismounted and Ceeb Pov dismounted and their mules ran into the shoulder-bag and disappeared as well' (Ceebpov p. 17).

Nwg khuam lub naab thoobpuab lug txug ntawm qaab-tsi-taug

'Los Xaab slung the shoulder-bag over his shoulders and reached the area just below the house on the downhill side' (Ceebpov p. 17).

Nreg tug quas paas qaug dlaab qaug dle, ib lub naab thoobpuab khuam dlaaj quas nyo.

'He hobbles along supporting himself with a cane with a shoulder-bag hanging from his shoulder, pale and sickly' (Ceebpov p. 19).

Ceeb Pov txawm has huv lub nam thoobpuab tuaj tas

'Then Ceeb Pov spoke from inside the shoulder-bag' (Ceebpov p. 20).

- **thoob tsib to nrog** 'enlightened, having insight, wise, understanding of matters':

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua

tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **thoob tshaaj** ‘to have hernia’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tōng cháng* ‘the intestine goes through’.

- **thooj** ‘to be alike, to be equal, to be like’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tóng*:

nwg tsi thooj le peb ‘s/he is not like us’ (Xiongs).

The word *thooj* is used in expressions such as *zoo thooj* (placed before a list) and *nrug thooj* ‘accompanied by’:

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. ... Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thooj: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg

‘We Mong have many Clans. ... Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

- **thooj** ‘(no classifier) piece, part, section’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tǒng* (Southwestern Mandarin *tóng*):

ib thooj ntoo ‘a piece of wood’ (Xiongs).

ib thooj nqaj ‘a piece of meat’ (Xiongs).

ua cav Nuj Sis Loob hab nam Yawm Dlaab sis ntaus sis tua yaa swb sas nrug thooj nam fuab dlub lug.

‘and, why, there were Nuj Sis Loob and the Spirit fighting and gliding down, accompanied by a black cloud’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

The Xiongs frequently write *thooj* in parentheses at the beginning of their glosses for nouns:

kub n. (thooj, cov) gold

nqaj n. (thooj, co, cov) meat, flesh, prey.

qos n. (thooj, cov) potato (in general).

quav n. (thooj, cov,-) stool, excrement, waste.

The Xiongs also write *thooj* in parentheses to distinguish two meanings of *taub hau*:

-(lub) *taub hau*, head.

-(thooj) *taub hau*, a piece of boiled squash.

In other words, if I understand correctly, one can say such things as *ib thooj kub* ‘a piece of gold’, *ib thooj ntoo* ‘a piece of wood’, *ib thooj nqaj* ‘a piece of meat’, *ib thooj qos* ‘a piece of potato’, *ib thooj quav* ‘a piece of feces’, and *ib thooj taub hau* ‘a piece of boiled squash’. Moreover, *ib thooj taub hau* would mean ‘a piece of boiled squash’ but *ib lub thaub hau* would mean ‘a head’.

- **Thoos**: *Xaas Thoos* ‘Sam Thong [a town in northern Laos], from Lao *Sám Thóng*’ (Tswv Yim p. 4).

- **thoov** ‘to accumulate, to stop water or to keep it by a dam’ (Xiongs) (see also *thauv*). Probably from Chinese *tǒng*, which in Southwestern Mandarin has the sense of ‘to hold something in one’s hitched up apron, e.g. salt or rice’.

- **thoov** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) skirt, lady’s dress’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *tǒngqūn* ‘tube skirt’.

- **thum** ‘to break off the habit of doing something, to stop doing something’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *tuō*.

- **thuv** ‘(classifier *tsob*) pine tree, pine’ (Xiongs):

ntoo thuv ‘pine tree, pine’ (Xiongs).

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laj*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.11; the dead person’s ‘home’ is the coffin, which may be made of any hard, decay resistant wood).

Thuv refers to conifers of the genus *Pinus*, but exactly which species may vary from place to place and dictionary glosses of *thuv* may not always be accurate. *Cab* definitely also means some type of conifer but not only which species but also which genus may vary from place to place and, again, dictionary glosses of *cab* (and its cognates in other Hmong dialects) may not always be accurate. The original meaning of *cab*, still common in Hmong dialects in northwestern Guizhou (the original locus of Mong Leng and closely related dialects), was probably China fir (*Cunninghamia*). Michael Johnson, in *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*, suggests that in Laos, where there is a much reduced variety of conifers compared to northwestern Guizhou, people may have begun to confuse the terms *thuv* and *cab* and may have extended them to trees other than those to which they referred in northwestern Guizhou.

- **thuv** ‘to seek help or support from’ (Xiongs).

- **thuj** ‘to laugh at, to make fun of, to criticize, to ridicule, to deride, to disregard’ (Xiongs), from Southwestern Mandarin *táxué* ‘deliberately belittle’:

kev thuj khu ‘constructive criticism’ (Xiongs).

- **thuum**: *pemthuum* ‘(classifier *tug*) a tower, structure, a station’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tǎ*.

- **thuas**: *khaub thuas* ‘to catch a cold, to get a light general sickness; common cold, small sickness’ (Xiongs).

- **thuav** or **quas thuav** ‘typical intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 556):

xoob thuav (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [not tight, not severe, at ease, ample, big, roomy].

- **thwj** ‘(classifier *lub*) stamp, mark, seal’ (Xiongs) (from Chinese *tú* ‘picture?’):

ntaus thwj ‘to seal, to certify with a seal’ (Xiongs).

- **thws** ‘to discover, to show off, to open, to clear or disengage any obstruction’ (Xiongs).

- **thws**, syllable of uncertain meaning in the poetic expression *thawj thab ... thawj thws* ‘to be reincarnated’. The phrase *thawj thab* comes from Chinese *tóu tāi* ‘to be reincarnated’, literally “to submit to birth”. One possibility might be that *thawj thws* comes from Chinese *tóu tǔ*, ‘to submit to the earth’, i.e. to submit to being reborn on earth:

Rua cuaj ceg kab es muaj ntawv moog thawj thab, / lug rua ceg kws es muaj ntawv moog thawj thws.

‘Where the street branches into nine were documents of reincarnation. / At the intersection were documents of rebirth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **thwsxas** ‘to behave in a certain way’, probably from Lao *thǐ sǎa* ‘to mind, to care’:

Tej kws moog thwsxas hammeem es tua tua tuabneeg

‘Those who behave wickedly and commit murder’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

TS

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *ts* and *r*. If a word is not found under *ts* look under *r*.

- **tsa**, intensifier:

Qhovmuag ntsais quas tsa, qhovmuag tooj quas tsa ‘Blinking eyes, glittering eyes’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **tsab** ‘to bother’ (Xiongs).

- **tsab**: *nojtsab* or *nojtsab nojtxhu* ‘to celebrate the New Year’:

wb moog ncig saib luas nojtsab taag, wb yuav rovqaab lug coj moog saib nwg, hab le maam paab cuam has nwg rua koj!

‘After we have gone round and seen how people are celebrating the New Year, we will come back and take you to see her, and we will speak to her for you!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

Nuj Sis Loob, ua caag koj yuav tsi moog nrug luas nojtsab nojtxhu?

‘Nuj Sis Loob, why are you not celebrating the New Year with the others?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **tsag** ‘(classifier *raab*) cutter’ (Xiongs):

Raab tsag txaug qhov cug.

‘Cutter for chiseling the hole a in treadmill’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **tsag**, intensifier:

Nwg ob tig cev ua nwg tsag lig xub yaa lab pis vog rua huv aav cais dlej ca le npau pis dlaam tawm lug, hab ndlwg quas tsag moog rua ntxawm Txheeb Tshoj Theeb.

‘He turned himself round twice so that he emitted red flashes of lightning flying into the soil and then water boiled out and then flowed to Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 26).

Tes aub yaub! nam puj dlaab nam ntxhais tuag pis tsag lawm lauj.

‘Then, oh my!, the female spirit’s daughter died instantly’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

- **tsag**: *puj tsag* ‘mother (used only in the Mong marriage custom word)’ (Xiongs).

- **tsag**: *ua tsag* ‘to throw a tantrum, to refuse to obey’:

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv; tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

‘A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents; an animal refuses to obey its master’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **tsag**: *yawm tsag* ‘father (used only in the Mong marriage custom word)’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) animal’ (Xiongs) (see also *txag*):

tsaj nyeg ‘domestic animal’ (Xiongs).

tsaj qus ‘wild, untamed animal’ (Xiongs).

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

- **tsaj**: *kaum-ob tug tsaj* ‘the twelve animals’, used to reckon time:

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 77-86), Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals:

Peb Moob suav caijnyoog yog siv tsaj lub npe ua cov cim ntaus caij ntaus nyoog.

We Mong count time by using the names of animals to remember the seasons and the times.

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.

A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months.

Moob siv moog zoo le nuav:

The Mong use them as follows:

HLI – TSAJ HLI

Month – Animal of the Month

1 hlis – luav hli

1st month – month of the rabbit

2 hlis – zaaj hli

2nd month – month of the dragon

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month

4 hlis – neeg hli

4th month – month of the horse

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month

[Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.]

6 hlis – dlev hli

6th month – month of the dog

7 hlis – qab hli

7th month – month of the chicken

8 hlis – lab hli

8th month – month of the monkey

9 hlis – npua hli

9th month – month of the pig

*10 hlis – naag hli****

10th month – month of the rat***

*** *xub sau naag rua lub 10 hli, naag taag huv ib lub xyoos.*

*** if one begins to catch rats in the tenth month, the rats will be gone for a year.

*11 hlis – nyuj hli*****

11th month – month of the ox****

**** *nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for tsaug?] rua lub hlis nuav.*

**** in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain, the harvest is in this month.

*12 hlis – tsuv hli******

12th month – month of the tiger*****

***** *noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

***** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that khib months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with khub months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig

and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:
 ‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with khib months and khub months as follows.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). The list begins:

luav hli – naab xab 1 ‘month of the rabbit – snake day 1’
luav hli – neeg xab 2 ‘month of the rabbit – horse day 2’
luav hli – yaaj xab 3 ‘month of the rabbit – sheep day 3’
luav hli – dlev xab 4 ‘month of the rabbit – dog day 4’
luav hli – qab xab 5 ‘month of the rabbit – chicken day 5’
luav hli – lab xab 6 ‘month of the rabbit – monkey day 6’
luav hli – npua xab 7 ‘month of the rabbit – pig day 7’
luav hli – naag xab 8 ‘month of the rabbit – rat day 8’
luav hli – nyuj xab 9 ‘month of the rabbit – ox day 9’
luav hli – tsuv xab 10 ‘month of the rabbit – tiger day 10’
luav hli – luav xab 11 ‘month of the rabbit – rabbit day 11’
luav hli – zaaj xab 12 ‘month of the rabbit – dragon day 12’

The list then continues through the remaining days of the month of the rabbit (the first month of the year) and then on through the thirty days of the month of the dragon (the second month of the year) and ends with

zaaj hli – zaaj xab 30 ‘month of the dragon – dragon day 30’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 81-83.)

Later in the chapter, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj speaks of auspicious days on which to marry:

1. Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd. Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

1. Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day. For younger brothers, good for the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

Then Xauv Yeeb Xyooj speaks of auspicious and inauspicious days on which to be born:

2. Tej laug puv 120 xyoo: Zoo rua luav nub. Luav le kaw huv nkuaj xwb ha le zoo. Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv. Neeg nub tsi zoo, neeg tshooj neeg lawm tsi zoo. Yog ua li ntawd nwg tsevneeg kheev muaj tshooj xaab (tuag ob leeg peb leeg ua tuab txhij). Nyuj nub yog nplajteb tuabneeg yuav muab tsaj muab txhuv tua rua tug tuag caab moog tsi zoo.

2. Old people living to be 120 years old: Good for the day of the rabbit. A rabbit locked up in a pen is good. As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring [the

month of the snake is the beginning of Spring], so one will be a little cold. The day of the horse is not good, horses stacked upon horses is not good. [The funeral bier is called the dead person's horse.] The household is likely to have a stack of coffins (two or three people will die at the same time). As for the day of the ox, on earth people sacrifice animals to accompany the dead person, so it is not good. For a human being to be comparable to an ox that is going to be bound and killed is not good. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85.)

- **tsaj**: *plaub tsaj* 'fur' (Xiongs).

- **tsaj ntawv** 'letter of the alphabet':

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

'Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book like this to serve as a model' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

The use of *tsaj* 'animal' to refer to letters of the alphabet may be modeled on Thai and Lao, where *tua*, the classifier for, among other things, animals, also means 'letter of the alphabet'.

- **tsaj txag** 'a cold-blooded animal':

Yawm Dlaab hab Nuj Sis Loob ob tug txa ... ua txhua yaam tsaj nyeg tsaj qus, tsaj txag tsaj dleg, tsaj yaa tsaj ndlaug

'The Spirit and Nuj Sis Loob transformed themselves ... into all manner of tame and wild animals, cold-blooded animals and water animals, flying animals and crawling animals' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 40).

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

- **tsaj txhu** or **tsaj ... txhuv** 'animal, livestock' (see also *noob txag noob txhu*):

tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

'an animal refuses to obey its master' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

'The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **tsam** 'to hit, to bump with' (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *zhuài*, which in Southwestern Mandarin has senses of 'to hit, to throw'

- **tsam taub hau** 'to bump by the head' (Xiongs).

- **tsam pum** 'there is no trace of':

Txiv aw, wb tub nrhav nrhav txhua tog vaaj tog tsev tsam pum Los Xaab sas.

‘Father, we have searched throughout the house and garden, but there is no trace of Los Xaab’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

wb moog saib nraag tsam pum le.

‘We looked down there but there was no trace of him’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **tsav** ‘(classifier *tug*) lizard’ (Xiongs).

- **tsav**: *khauj tsav* ‘knuckle, to hit with the knuckle’ (Xiongs).

- **tsav**: *tsaus tsav* ‘phosphorescent’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaa** ‘to wake up, to raise up, to erect, to lift, to appoint, to establish, to name’ (Xiongs):

tsaa ib tug timxyoob ‘to appoint an official’ (Xiongs).

tsaa teg ‘to raise hands’ (Xiongs).

tsaa tsev ‘to build or erect a house’ (Xiongs).

thov paab tsaa kuv thaum ob teev tawm ‘please wake me up at two thirty’ (Xiongs).

tsaa taubhau kuv muab lub tog nuav rau koj ncoo os!

‘lift your head and I will give you this stool as a pillow’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19).

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev. Yog koj los tsi yog? Yog koj tig ndlag quas lag moog xib dlaab, tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev, hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog.

‘Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes [i.e. burial clothes], in the house. Was it you? If it was you, then, as you turn toward the spirits, lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave, for I am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2, addressed to the dead person at the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* [Showing the Way] funeral ceremony).

- **tsaa** ‘(no classifier) type, sort, kind’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsaav*):

Muaj pis tsawg tsaa? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

- **tsaa**: *neej tsaa* or *neej ... tsaav* ‘relatives of wife’:

neej tsaa ‘relatives of wife’ (Xiongs).

kwv tij neej tsaa ‘all relatives and friends’ (Xiongs).

Mo hov tes Los Xaab, luas neej luas tsaav, luas nam luas txiv nim tuaj cuaj pwg neeg yim pwg nraa tuaj ua vaaj ua tsev rau Los Xaab hab Ceeb Pov ob tug nyob.

‘That night, Los Xaab’s wife’s family, her mother and her father, came with nine shoulder-loads on horses and eight shoulder-loads of bundles to make a house and garden for Los Xaab and Ceeb Pov to live in’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think

about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy' (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **tsaa hlo** 'to tilt up':

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

'The rat wriggled out of the cat's grasp and the cat tilted up and, plo!, into the river' (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

- **Tsaab** 'a Mong last name' (Xiongs), a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Nrig** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Zhāng*.

- **tsaab**: *ntaus nyuj kub tsaab* 'to jump and turn up and down' (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhuāng* 'to pretend'?

- **tsaag** '(classifier *lub*) cliff, fall' (Xiongs):

dlej tsaws tsaag 'waterfall' (Xiongs).

poob tsaag 'to fall off a cliff, to make an important mistake in life' (Xiongs).

- **tsaaj** 'to put weight on an arm to make an up and down motion' (Xiongs).

- **tsaaj** '(classifier *tsob*) Manila hemp' (Xiongs), 'ramie grass, reha grass, *Boehmeria nivea* Gaud (type used for making gunny sacks)' (Lyman p. 75).

The precise botanical identification of *tsaaj* is uncertain. Different dictionaries of Hmong translate *tsaaj* variously as 'Manila hemp', 'ramie', 'sisal', and 'jute'. These plants are unrelated botanically but they are similar in appearance and they all provide fibers that can be used for making gunny sacks.

- **tsaam** 'full of air (stomach)' (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhàng*.

- **tsaam** '(no classifier) instant, a certain period of time, while' (Xiongs):

- **taav**: *phaab taav* 'the side' (Xiongs):

A man throws a pestle at a rat and misses, whereupon the pestle says:

Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le.

'Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **tsaam** 'to profit, to get interest on' (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhuàn*.

- **tsaam** 'lest':

"Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv".

"Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **tsaam**: *ca ib tsaam* ‘in a moment’, ‘later’:

ca ib tsaam kuv hu peb rooj Nkauj Kub peb rooj Nkauj Kaws tuaj nrug koj caam.
 ‘in a moment I will summon three tables of Wart Girls and three tables of Toad Girls to argue with you’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!
 ‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj
 [typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*
 ‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **tsaam**: *ib tsaam* ‘later, later on’ (Xiongs):

Aub nyob ib tsaam tes cov nam dlaab ua zoj ua zig moog lug txug tes dlaab ua zoj ua zig lug tsev lawm.
 ‘Well, in a little while the spirits had been running round and round long enough so the spirits ran round and round and came home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **tsaam**: *ib tsaam* ‘as soon as’:

ib tsaam peb caiv dlhau meb le mam lug tsev.
 ‘as soon as we’re past the period of prohibition you can come into the house’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 19).

Tes ib tsaam tsausntuj cov nyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj.
 ‘Then as soon as it was dark, the spirit children, running round and round, came’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

“Mej moog nua tes ib tsaam mej yuav lug nua tes mej muab dlev lab muag khi ntawm ntug kev, mej muab ib tug paas tso rua huv txuj kev os”.
 “When you go, as soon as you’re ready to come back, tie a red-eyed dog by the side of the road and leave a stick in the road.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

- **tsaam**: *ntshai tsaam* ‘to worry that’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaam**: *thaaj tsaam* ‘period of time’:

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700
 ‘During the 1700’s’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **tsaam nuav** ‘by now, by this time’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaam ntsiv** ‘moment’:

nam dlej hov luj dlag tsaam ntsiv kuv nplaam kuataw tes nam poob dleg hab saib yuav ua caag moj.
 ‘the river is wide, and my paws will slip and in a moment our mistress will fall in the water, and then what will we do?’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 28-29).

koj khaub khaubhlaab le koj muaj muaj kauv tes koj noj nraag qaab dlej es wb noj peg hauv dlej tsaam ntsiv qas qas wb.

‘You’re dressed in rags and you’re scaly and filthy, so you eat downstream, and we’ll eat upstream, in a moment you’re going to disgust us’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 69).

- **tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo** ‘at any moment’:

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **tsaas** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of bird’ (Xiongs), ‘pie-grièche [type of magpie]’ (Bertrais 1978:362 ras), ‘mǎ bānjiū [horse dove], a kind of bird the size of a thrush’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 80 drangt).

- **tsaav** ‘to drive, to ride’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese *zhuǎn*, which includes senses of ‘to relay; to carry in a cart; to change position; to move; to change direction; to turn’:

tsaav tsheb nqaaj ‘to drive a train’ (Xiongs).

sim tsaav ‘to try to drive’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaav** ‘to guide, to lead’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhǎng*.

- **tsaav** ‘type, sort, kind’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsaa*):

le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj, noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fwv lug puv nplaj.

‘take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain, so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

Nwg ua rog txug tsaav neeg dlaabtsi los kov tsi yeej le.

‘Whatever nation he waged war upon, they could not touch him’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

Tes hu ua tsaav tuabneeg twg tsi pum Vaajkaav tug dluab nua tes luas yuav tsum caab moog ua tauj ua qhev.

‘So if people of any nation did not see Vaajkaav’s picture, they were certain to come and carry you into slavery’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog: MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB

‘The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two large groups: the Mong Leng and the White Hmong’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg

‘the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **tsaav** ‘to move’, from Chinese *zhuǎn*, which includes senses of ‘to relay; to carry in a cart; to change position; to move; to change direction; to turn’, or from Chinese *zhǎn*, which in Southwestern Mandarin has senses of ‘to move, to shift’ (see also *txaav*):

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tsaav zog rua tom kem pobzeb lawm

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moved away into a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **tsaav** ‘(classifier *lub*) balcony’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaav**: *cuabtsaav*, one of the funeral officiants:

The chapter titled Kev paamtug (Funeral Rites) in *Kawm Ntawv 2* describes the duties of the *cuabtsaav* as follows:

TUG CUABTSAAV: Yog tug muab dlejcaawv nqajmov lug ntawg rua tug tuag tau nqaa moog noj taugkev. Nwg siv ib txwm txheej ntawg lug ntawg.

‘The *cuabtsaav* is the one who brings water and liquor, meat and rice, to the divination ceremony for the dead person to eat on the way. He uses a pair of divinatory rods to divine’ (*Kawm Ntawv 2* p. 14).

- **tsaav**: *neej ... tsaav* ‘relatives of wife’ (see also *neej tsaa*):

Mo hov tes Los Xaab, luas neej luas tsaav, luas nam luas txiv nim tuaj cuaj pwg neeg yim pwg nraa tuaj ua vaaj ua tsev rau Los Xaab hab Ceeb Pov ob tug nyob.

‘That night, Los Xaab’s wife’s family, her mother and her father, came with nine shoulder-loads on horses and eight shoulder-loads of bundles to make a house and garden for Los Xaab and Ceeb Pov to live in’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **tsaav**: *paaj ntaub puas yaam tsaav* ‘embroidery’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaig**:

kauj tsaig ‘(classifier *lub*) chin’ (Xiongs).

pob tsaig ‘inferior jaw, lower jaw’ (Xiongs).

pob tsaig nav ‘denture’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaiv** ‘before all, first’ (Xiongs):

yuav tau pw ib plag tsaiv ‘to have to sleep for a short while before all’ (Xiongs).

- **tsau** ‘full (eating)’ (Xiongs).

- **tsau** ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of animal that can fly only if he climbs onto a tree and lets go’ (Xiongs), ‘flying squirrel (*Hylopetes* and *Petaurista*)’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **tsau** ‘(classifier *tug*) torch’ (Xiongs):

teg tsau ‘torch’ (Xiongs).

- **tsau** ‘to put in, insert’ (see also *rau*):

taagkig nam puj dlaab tsua [typo for *tsau*?] *ib kawm, ib raab rag, ib lub fwb taub tuaj.*
 ‘the next morning the female spirit put into a basket a knife and a gourd-dipper and came’
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

- **tsaub** ‘to scratch something for food or insects’ (Xiongs) (also written *raub*).

- **tsaub** ‘illegitimate, out of wedlock’ (Xiongs):

ib tug miv nyuas tsaub ‘an illegitimate child’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaug** ‘weak, tired, feeble, sickly’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaug** ‘(classifier *tug*) porcupine, hedgehog’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaug** ‘to rinse, to wash quickly in a liquid’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaug** ‘to come into being’ (also written *raug*):

Thaum lub ntuj tsaug hab lub teb tsim.

‘When the sky came into being and the earth was formed’ (*Tswv Yim*, unnumbered page following page 98).

nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for *tsaug*?] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

‘in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain. The harvest is in this month’
 (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

- **tsaug**: *ib tsaug* ‘all together at once’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaug leeg** ‘weak, tired’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaug zug** ‘to sleep, sleepy’ (Xiongs):

tsaug ib tsig zug ‘to fall asleep once’ (Xiongs).

Thaus nwg pw qe muag nti, cais yog tsi tau tsaug zug. Huas yog ob lub qhovmuag qheb quas plav txhaj yog tsaug zug tag!

‘When he lies with his eyes shut, then he has not fallen asleep. But if his two eyes are open, then it is that he is really asleep!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18.)

Tsi ntev, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Ntxawm ob tug txawm ua ke nyaag nyaag moog saib na tug nam zaaj pw tsaug zug ua qhovmuag qheb quas plav tag lauj!

‘Not long afterward, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Ntxawm crept over together to look and, why, the dragon really was sleeping with his eyes open!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19.)

- **tsauj** ‘to coo’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaus** ‘to enforce’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaus** ‘to get dark’ (Xiongs):

tsaus ndlais (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [dark].

- **tsaus ntuj** ‘dark, darkness, to get dark’ (Xiongs):

Nwg maaj maam xuas tsaus ntuj nti

‘He carefully groped his way through the pitch darkness’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

ntuj tsaus fuab quas nti ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyoos

‘the sky had been completely overcast and it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

txug tsaus ntuj, nwg txhaj moog qev lub tsev kws Yob Ntsuag nyob ntawd pw.

‘when night fell she asked permission to sleep in the house where Yob the Orphan was’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Ob tug taug kev moog ib nub yuav laug tsaus ntuj txhaj moog txug huv ib lub nam zog luj. Lub zog nuav yog ib lub nam nroog.

‘The two traveled all day and into the night and arrived at a large settlement. This settlement was a town’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 26).

Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoog, tsaus tau quas tsi cev lug txoog? / Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?

‘When the sky was dark, who was able to come? / When the earth was plunged in darkness, who was capable of coming?’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

Tes aub! nrug puj dlaab nam ntshais nyob tsausntuj quas nti huv nam qhov tsuas.

‘And then, do you know what? He stayed with the female spirit’s daughter in the darkness of the cave!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **tsaus ntuj**: *naag mo tsaus ntuj* ‘yesterday night or last night’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaus tsav** ‘phosphorescent’ (Xiongs).

- **tsawb** ‘(classifier *tsob*) banana tree’ (Xiongs).

txiv tsawb ‘banana (fruit)’ (Xiongs).

ib ntxuam txiv tsawb ‘a pack of bananas’ (Xiongs).

ib thij txiv tsawb ‘a whole stem of bananas’ (Xiongs).

- **tsawg** ‘few, some, little, not much, small’ (Xiongs):

Kuv yog tug tau tsawg tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who gets the least’ (Xiongs).

- **tsawg** ‘a step’:

moog ob tsawg taw ob saab npoo ‘took two steps on the two sides of the chasm’, i.e. one step on each side – or ‘stood astride the chasm, one foot on each side’? (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28.)

- **tsawg**: *pis tsawg* ‘how much, how many’ (Xiongs):

Muaj pis tsawg tsaa? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muaj pis tsawg yaam? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Muag [typo for *muaj*?] *pis tsawg txheeb*? ‘How many thousands are there?’ (Xiongs.)

- **tsawg kawg nkaus** ‘at least’:

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

- **tsawm** ‘to grumble, to rumble, to curse, to scold’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhòu*.

- **tsaws** ‘to land, to perch’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaws** ‘to lift, to hand to, to give’ (Xiongs):

tsaws hlo yawm Suav nrum nroog rua huv yag roj.
‘lifted and flung the Chinese [merchant] into the wok of oil’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

- **tsaws**, intensifier:

Nam dlej ndlwg quas tsaws ndlwg tug quas vaws es wb moog pw nraag mav.
‘The river flows calmly and evenly so let us go to sleep down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **tsaws**: *dlej tsaws tsaag* ‘waterfall’ (Xiongs).

- **tsaws**: *tsiv teb tsaws chaw* ‘to flee out, to emigrate, to move’ (Xiongs).

- **tsawv** ‘to guess (by Mong magician)’ (Xiongs).

- **tsawv** ‘bent down’ (Xiongs).

- **tse** ‘relative to house, family’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsev*):

ncej tse ‘(classifier *tug*) housepost’ (Xiongs).

nyob ib tse ‘to live in the same family’ (Xiongs).

- **tseb** ‘to sow, to spread, to scatter seeds’ (Xiongs).

- **tseb** ‘used as a compound for color’ (Xiongs), ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 557):

lab tseb or *lab quas tseb* ‘light red’ (Xiongs p. 557).

- **tseb nua** ‘last year’:

Tuam tuag tseb nua ‘Toua died last year’ (Xiongs).

- **tseg** ‘to leave, to leave behind, to stop, to give up, to cast away, to abandon, to yield, to reject, to set aside, to eliminate’ (Xiongs):

khaws tseg ca ‘to put aside’ (Xiongs).

muab pov tseg ‘to throw away’ (Xiongs).

muab tseg ca ‘to reserve, to set aside’ (Xiongs).

muab tshwj tseg ‘to sort away, to put away, to throw away’ (Xiongs).

tseg ca kom rov tau siv tom qaab ‘to put aside in order to return to use later’ (Xiongs).

tso tseg ‘to give up’ (Xiongs).

xob tso kuv tseg ‘don’t forget me’ (Xiongs).

laim nta (tseg) (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to throw away].

ua nta (tseg) (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to leave behind].

ob tog txhaj lug sau ntaub ntawv hab kuas suavdlawg nrug ua povthawj tseg.
‘the two sides wrote up a contract had everyone witness it’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19)

Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!
‘If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 21.)

mej ntaus cim le caag tseg?
‘what sign will you give us to remember you by?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 61).

tes yog qhov kws peb sis cog tseg.
‘and so it will be as we promised one another’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 61).

Koj yawmtxiv tsi cav koj los tseg
‘If your father-in-law does not impose tests on you, well and good’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.
‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **tseg**: *muab pov tseg* ‘to throw away’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav toum [typo for *tsum*] *txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hww*
‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

- **tseg ca ua tshuaj** ‘keep as something special, worthy, or effective’ (Xiongs).

- **tsej** ‘to bark, to bay’ (Xiongs):

tug dlev dlub tsej ‘the black dog barks’ (Xiongs).

- **tsem** ‘(no classifier) turn; to turn, to deviate’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhé*:

nwg tsem rua saab xis lawm ‘s/he turned to the right already’ (Xiongs).

- **tsem** ‘(no classifier) fold, corner’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhé*:

muaj xyaa tsem ‘there are seven folds’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev** ‘(classifier *lub*) house, dwelling, home, building’ (Xiongs) (see also *tse*):

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
 ‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’
 (Xiongs).

tug dlev zuv tsev zoo heev ‘the dog watches the house very well’ (Xiongs).

Nam txiv losyog tug tswv tsev lub txaaj ‘The bed of the mother and father or of the head of the household’ (Tswv Yim p. 15).

- **tsev**: *chaav tsev* ‘room of a house’:

hab Ntxawm txhaj yuam pis ntag nwg tawm moog rua lwm chaav tsev lawm.
 ‘Then Ntxawm pushed him out into another room of the house’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 15).

- **tsev**: *chaav tsev hauv taag* ‘main room’ (Tswv Yim p. 15).

- **tsev**: *chaav tsev ua noj* ‘kitchen’ (Tswv Yim p. 15).

- **tsev**: *hauv mum tsev* ‘gable’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev**: *qev ... tsev* ‘to ask for permission to sleep in someone’s house, to ask for lodging’:

nwg txawm moog qev suav tsev su.
 ‘he asked the Chinese for permission to use one of their hostels’ (Kwvhuam p. 16).

txug tsaus ntuj, nwg txhaj moog qev lub tsev kws Yob Ntsuag nyob ntawd pw.
 ‘when night fell she asked permission to sleep in the house where Yob the Orphan was’
 (Kwvhuam p. 18).

“Puj aw, peb lug qev koj tsev pw ib mos”.
 “Grandmother, I’ve come to ask for permission to sleep in your house for one night.”
 (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 28.)

- **tsev**: *qhov tsev* ‘a crack in the wall of a house’ (Heimbach p. 271):

Txa xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag. Nam tsuag tsiv quas loo rua peg qhov tsev lawm.
 ‘Then they tried to give it a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat. The rat ran up into a crack in the wall.’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67.)

- **tsev**: *tsaa tsev* ‘to build or erect a house’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev**: *tom puab tsev* ‘at their houses’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev caij tsheb nqaaj** ‘train station’:

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm
 ‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev fuabtais** ‘royal palace’:

Ob tug ua tau tuab lub nam tsev cuaj cegkub yim cegkaug lug ua tsev fuabtais pub rua ob tug, hab ob tug nam txiv, Yawm Xeev Tswjlaug hab Nkauj Nubqub, puab tau nyob.

‘The two of them built a building with nine “horns” and eight “fangs” to be a royal palace for the two of them and for Nuj Sis Loob’s parents, His Majesty the Ruler and Nkauj Nubqub, to live in’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **tsev kab** ‘store, shopping center’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *jiē* ‘street, thoroughfare’.

- **tsev kawm ntawv** ‘school’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev khu mob** ‘hospital, clinic’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev khu tsheb** ‘garage’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev khw** ‘store, shopping center’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug txha nyob tsev tshab tsev khw, tsev vuag luaj vuag av, cuaj tshooj teb yim tshooj ntug.

‘They lived in a new house, a house like that of a merchant, a house with tiles of earthenware and of glass, nine stories of earth and eight stories of heaven’ (*Ceebpov* p. 31).

- **tsev loj faaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) jail, prison’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *láo fāng* ‘jail house’.

- **tsev ntaub** ‘(classifier *lub*) tent’:

yaws lub tsev ntaub ‘to take down the tent’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev paam tuag** ‘funeral home’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev plhob** ‘bathroom, water closet’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev su** ‘hostel’:

nwg txawm moog qev suav tsev su.

‘he asked the Chinese for permission to use one of their hostels’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16).

- **tsev teb** ‘farm’:

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav

‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev teev ntuj** ‘church’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev tu plaub** ‘courthouse’ (Xiongs):

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub

‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs) [“I prefer to go and speak immediately in the courthouse”].

- **tsev tuab neeg** ‘family, household’ (Xiongs).

- **tsev tuam choj**: See **tsev tuav sab**.

- **tsev tuav sab**:

In a folktale, an orphan who has been blinded by his elder brother gropes his way until he comes to a *tsev tuav sab*, which is glossed parenthetically as *tsev tuam choj* ‘house with a

bridge erected'. He rests there and overhears a tiger, a bear, and a wild boar conversing and learns how to heal his blindness (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 131). The accompanying illustration of the *tsev tuav sab* or *tsev tuam choj*, showing three planks laid in a fork in the road forming a Y-shape, with an open pavilion with a gabled roof – like a covered bridge – built above them, looks exactly like Nusit Chindarsi's drawings (Chindarsi 1976:35-37) of the bridges set up on the road to enable wandering souls to come back home.

Bertrais (1978:467 *tsev*) and *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* (p. 38 *duad shab*) say that *tsev tuav sab* is a house with a rammed earth walls. Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that this was probably the original meaning of *tsev tuav sab* in China and that, in Southeast Asia, where the warmer climate makes rammed earth construction unnecessary, the term *tsev tuav sab* may have been applied to prestigious or ritually important structures even if made of wood or lacking walls, such as the *tsev tuav sab* in the folktale.

- **tsev txhaab nyaj** 'bank' (Xiongs).

- **tseeb** 'true, just, right, exact' (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhēn*:

muaj tseeb 'it is true' (Xiongs).

tamtseeb 'in truth', 'Damn it!', from Chinese *dàngzhēn* 'really':

Quas tswb nyuj, tswb neeg, qhev mas tamtseeb nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ndlaag quas nab.

'Cow bells, horse bells, servants in truth filled the hills and highlands.' (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

Tamtseeb aj! Koj nyuas Siv Yig Muas kod koj txawm siv muab kuv tub Tuam tua tuag lawm tag.

'Damn it! You little Siv Yig Muas you, you really *have* killed my son Tuam' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

- **tseeg** 'to quake, to shake' (Xiongs):

aav tseeg quas nkawg 'the earth quaked' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **tseeg**: *sawv tseeg* 'to leap up, to arise (e.g. the wind)':

tug nug hlub saib na cav yog ob tug muam tag, cais nwg ca le sawv tseeg tim kaum tsev lug ntaus los ntaus chua los chua

'as soon as the older brother saw that it was their sister, he leapt up from the corner and began hitting and grabbing her' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15),

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

'Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud out from Grandfather Nyooglaug's two betel-palm poles' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,
Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.
 ‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?
 If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.
 If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.
 If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **tseej** ‘a small bird that has a curved red bill, a blue back and tail, and a yellow breast’ (Graham 1954:266):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.
 Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless.
Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.
 The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.
Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.
 So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.
Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.
 The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

- **tseem** ‘true, real, natural’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhèng*:

tseem noob ‘thoroughbred’ (Xiongs).
tseem ntoo ‘real wood’ (Xiongs).
kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!
 ‘I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

- **tseem** ‘still’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhèng*:

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
 ‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).
puab tseem nyob ‘they still stay’ (Xiongs).
tseem suv ‘still warm’ (Xiongs).
tseem tshuav ob theem ntxiv ‘there are two more steps’ (Xiongs).
hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.
 ‘and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).
Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.
 ‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’

(*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog,

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **tseem** ‘despite what one is asking’:

Koj tseem yuav yig hab lov? ‘Will you try to refuse?’ (Xiongs).

- **tseem** ‘full’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhèng*:

tsib nub tseem ‘five full days’ (Xiongs).

- **tseem ceeb** ‘important, worthwhile, worthy’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhèngjīng*:

Kev lis kev cai yog ib yaam kws tseem ceeb heev

‘Tradition is something which is very important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Qhov kws tseem ceeb tshaaj plawg

‘The thing that was most important’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **tseem noob** ‘thoroughbred’ (Xiongs).

- **tseem ntoo** ‘real wood’ (Xiongs).

- **tseev** ‘to clean, to open, to draw (poultry), to gut (fish)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhěng*.

- **tseev** ‘to allow, to accept only, to permit only’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhǔn*:

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau

‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tseev le ‘They don’t accept or agree at all’ (Xiongs).

- **tseev**: *noog tseev* ‘(classifier *tug*) a kind of bird’ (Xiongs), ‘wren’ (Bertrais 1978:181).

- **tseev zaam** ‘to dress up, to dress up beautifully’ (Xiongs):

At the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, the chanter asks the dead person, “Is it you who I have seen laid out, dressed in burial clothes?”

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev. Yog koj los tsi yog?

‘Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes, in the house. Was it you?’

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **tsi** ‘not (to negate a verb in general)’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsis*):

cov thee tsi tau kub txaus ‘the charcoal is not hot enough’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi txawj ua ‘I don’t know how to do it’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi xaav moog ‘I don’t want to go’ (Xiongs).

lub mom nuav tsi yoj kuv ‘this hat doesn’t fit me’ (Xiongs).

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*
‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

nwg tsi thooj le peb ‘s/he is not like us’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm
‘S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore’, ‘S/he, perplexed, remains in silence’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv
‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tau txais dlaim ntawv le ‘They did not receive the letter yet’ (Xiongs).

Puab tsi tseev le ‘They don’t accept or agree at all’ (Xiongs).

tiv tsi taug lawm ‘cannot resist anymore’ (Xiongs).

tub tsi tau ua tau ‘not done yet’ (Xiongs).

them tsi taug ‘cannot afford’ (Xiongs).

tsi thev ntev ‘do not last long’ (Xiongs).

tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb ‘not only that’ (Xiongs).

Txaus lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntxiv lawm ‘enough! I don’t need anymore’ (Xiongs).

ua tsi tsheej ‘don’t know what to proceed, to cancel an action to be taken’ (Xiongs).

yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

yuav thev tsi taug lawm ‘cannot endure any more’ (Xiongs).

Ua tsi taug hlo le. ‘Cannot do at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Tsi luj hlo le. ‘Not big at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.
‘The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!
‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **tsi**: Verb + *tsi* + Verb, to form a yes-no question:

Koj yuav xaa kuv tuaj tsi xaa
‘Will you accompany me back or not? (Mong song)’ (Xiongs).

- **tsi**: Verb₁ + *tsi* + Verb₂:

qhov muag xauj tsi pum ‘cannot see with the eyes’ (Xiongs) [“watch but not see”].

Koj xuas tsi raug le ntaag lov? ‘Can’t you get it at all?’ (Xiongs) [“grope but not hit the mark”].

Koj zawv tsi huv ‘You don’t wash it well’ (Xiongs) [“wash but not be clean”].

- **tsi:** *dlaab tsi* ‘what’ (Xiongs):

‘what?’

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb
‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

Luas has tas, ‘koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?’ nua cais koj teb has tas, ‘yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb’ nua nawb!
‘When he says, “What would you like to eat?”, then you answer that if he has some dry planks, then all you want is a bit of dry plank together with rice in cold water’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

‘why?’

“Coj raab rag ko tuaj dlaabtsi?” “Aub, raab rag nuav koj tuaj tua nraug huas”.
“Why have you brought that knife?” “Oh, this knife I brought to kill young men.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

Los Xaab! tsi muaj dlaab quas tsi es ib lub quas naab thoobpuab ko xwb tes ndluj ndlawv le ko xwb tes ca le moog uantej mas, tog wb dlaabtsi naj!
‘Los Xaab, all you’ve got is that shoulder-bag which is so tattered so you go on ahead, what are you waiting for us for?’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16.)

Siv Yig Muas txha nug nwg tas; “koj quaj dlaabtsi Tub Kwm Moos Ntsos?”
Siv Yig Muas asked him: “Why are you crying, Tub Kwm Ntsos?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 20).

‘anything’

dlaab tsi ntxiv hab? ‘anything else?’ (Xiongs).

nam ntxaa dlu quas dlav dlaabtsi tsi muaj le
‘the grave was empty’ (*Yob Hlub has Yob Yau* p. 11) [“the grave was bare, there wasn’t anything”]

Tsi caiv dlaabtsi, xijpeem noj xijpeem haus.
‘There is no tabu [“one does not prohibit anything”]. You may eat and drink what you like’ (*Lyman* p. 337).

‘any’

puas muaj xwm dlaab tsi? ‘Is there something happening [“any occurrence”]? Is there any news?’ (Xiongs.)

tsaav neeg dlaabtsi ‘any nation’:
Nwg ua rog txug tsaav neeg dlaabtsi los kov tsi yeej le.
‘Whatever nation [“any nation”] he waged war upon, they could not touch him.’ (*Dlaab*

Qhuas p. 54.)

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb aws, *tsi yog ua npug dlaabtsi le, hab tsi txhob ntshai!*

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, it’s not a bad omen [“any bad omen”] at all, and don’t be afraid!’

(*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

- **tsi:** *dlaab tsi los tau* ‘anything’ (Xiongs).
- **tsi:** *ib yaam dlaab tsi* ‘something’ (Xiongs).
- **tsi:** *saib tsi taug* ‘to despise, to disrespect’ (Xiongs).
- **tsi:** *suav tsi txheeb* ‘uncountable, too many to count’ (Xiongs).
- **tsi:** *ua dlaab tsi* ‘why?’:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas nug koj has tas; Koj yog nplajteb leej tuabneeg, koj yuav lug ua dlaabtsi?

‘When you reach the wall at the top of the stairway to heaven, they will ask you: You are a human being of the earth. Why have you come here?’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

- **tsi:** *ua tug dlaabtsi* ‘why?’:

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi?

‘Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

- **tsi:** *yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le* ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsi** *kaav* ‘even if’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsi** *muaj plhus* ‘to lose respect, to be afraid facing some situation’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsi** *ntau* or **tsi** *tshua ntau* ‘not too much, not too many’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsi** *ntshai* ‘fearless, courageous’ (Xiongs):
- ua yaam tsi ntshai le* ‘fearlessly, courageously’ (Xiongs).
- **tsi** *paub tuag le* ‘everlasting, to live forever’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsi** *quav ntsej* ‘do not care about, to not bother, to disregard, to not listen to, careless’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsi** *qhuav* ‘not dry, wet’ (Xiongs).
 - **tsitaug** ‘area downhill from house’:

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug’s house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Tes le muab ua pis nta rua nraag qaab tsitaug lawm.

‘So he left them by the downhill side of the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33).

- **tsi taug teg** ‘could not gainsay’:

In a folktale, a man and his son, on their way to visit their kinsmen, come to the home of a ntxaug spirit and the ntxaug spirit invites the man and the boy to spend the night. During the night, the ntxaug spirit’s daughters kill the boy and the man flees in terror. He meets two people named Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm who tell him not to be afraid and insist that he go back with them to where the ntxaug spirits live:

Nam yawm tsi taug teg tes nam yawm coj Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug rov moog lau.

‘The man could not gainsay them so the man went back bringing Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

- **tsi tsimtxaj** ‘not of value’:

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

‘Oh, those bellows, why are they worthless like that?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **tsi tshaws qhov muag** ‘not important, not big’ (Xiongs).

- **tsi tshua ntau**: *tsi ntau* or *tsi tshua ntau* ‘not too much, not too many’ (Xiongs).

- **tsi txhob** ‘don’t!’ (negative imperative) (also written *tsi xob*), from Chinese *xiāo* as in *bù xiāo* ‘do not need’:

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb aws, tsi yog ua npug dlaabtsi le, hab tsi txhob ntshai!

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, it’s not a bad omen at all, and don’t be afraid!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

Koj tsi txhob nrug kuv sau yim. Koj moog nrug nplajtog qaumpeg sau yim.

‘Don’t marry me. Marry anyone in the world’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

koj yuav moog ntsib suav lai nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav lai nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb

‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

- **tsi ... ua le caag le** ‘none whatsoever’:

Tabsis tsi pum tuaj tshwm ua le caag le. ‘But they didn’t see anyone come out whatsoever’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **Tsi yog** ‘No, it is not’ (Xiongs).

- **tsi xob** or **xob** ‘don’t!’ (negative imperative) (also written *tsi txhob*), from Chinese *xiāo* as in *bù xiāo* ‘do not need’:

xob tso kuv tseg ‘don’t forget me’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob haus luam yeeb ‘do not smoke’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob kov ‘don’t touch’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob muab sib txuam ‘Do not mix them up’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob tib peb nawb ‘don’t blame us’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob ua twm kuv nawb ‘don’t challenge me’ (Xiongs).

Tsi xob zwb koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav
‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it any more’ (Xiongs).

thov paab txheem kom tsi xob poob ‘Help me hold it from falling, please’ (Xiongs).

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “*Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!*”

When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!” (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

Txiv! Tsi xob kov dlaim nyuas ko! Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.
‘Father! Don’t bother with that! It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’
(*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb** ‘not only that’ (Xiongs).

- **tsib** ‘five, the number five’ (Xiongs).

tsib caug ‘fifty’ (Xiongs).

tsib nub tseem ‘five full days’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

- **tsib** ‘(classifier *lub*) gall bladder’ (Xiongs):

kua tsib ‘bile’ (Xiongs).

- **tsib** ‘(classifier *lub*) the main idea, the important part, the theme, the central idea’ (Xiongs).

- **tsib**: *Cobtsib* ‘(classifier *leej*) the Vietnamese’ (Djoua Xiong personal communication). From Chinese *Jiāozhǐ*, an ancient state in what is now Vietnam.

- **tsib**: *thoob tsib to nrog* ‘enlightened, having insight, wise, understanding of matters’:

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’
(*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **tsig** ‘to attach, to tie, to bind, to connect, to bound, to link’ (Xiongs).

- **tsig** ‘(no classifier) times’ (Xiongs):

taug ib tsig ‘to fall unconscious once’ (Xiongs).

tsaug ib tsig zug ‘to fall asleep once’ (Xiongs).

- **tsig** ‘trousers’, also written *rig*:

In the following example, it is possible that the writer, Laaj Soobleej Hawj, intends to indicate that *rig* is the White Hmong pronunciation corresponding to Mong Leng *tsig*, but other sources show that Mong Leng also use the pronunciation *rig*:

Moob Dlawb le, quas yawg naav tsig (losyog rig) taug luv (pov taub).

‘Among the White Mong, the men wear trousers – *tsig* (or *rig*) – with a short – *luv* (*pov taub*) – seat’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **tsig**, sparrow or small sparrow-like bird, exact species undetermined, ‘sparrow’ (Bertrais 1978:469 *tsig*), ‘huángdòu què [soybean sparrow]’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* pp. 281 nongs zhik, p. 431 zhik; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 128 nongs zhis, p. 197 zhis) (also written *tswg*):

Ntuj nis puj tsig nis puj dlab! Mej nim noj noj txiv laujtauv toog nkaaj quas ncab es ab mej sab los tsis ab?

‘By heaven, O female sparrows, O female bulbuls! You eat and eat the lauj tauv fruit, as dark as indigo, are your hearts bitter or not?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74.)

- **tsij** ‘to push, to put pressure on’ (Xiongs).

- **tsim** ‘to awake, to wake up, to be revived’ (Xiongs).

- **tsim** ‘to punish, to oppress, to torture, to beat to punish’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhì*:

tug tub saab tua tuab neeg raug tsim nyaav heev
‘the murderer is heavily tortured’ (Xiongs).

- **tsim** ‘to create’, from Chinese *zhì*:

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog.
‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **tsim nuj** ‘worthy, important’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Chinese *zhí* (Southwestern Mandarin *zhì*).

- **tsimtxaj**: *tsi tsimtxaj* ‘not of value’:

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!
‘Oh, those bellows, why are they worthless like that?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

The first syllable of *tsimtxaj* is from Chinese *zhí* (Southwestern Mandarin *zhì*).

- **tsis**: Variant pronunciation of *tsi* ‘not’, appearing throughout the songs and stories in *Cim Xeeb*.

- **tsiv** ‘to quit, to escape, to go away, to leave, to get away from to hide’ (Xiongs):

sib pus tsiv ‘to escape together’ (Xiongs).

- **tsiv** ‘to run off with something which one has stolen’:

tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.
‘along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag*

Dlaab p. 31).

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.

‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth and ran home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **tsiv** ‘to flee’:

Leejtxiv ntshai tes leejtxiv tsiv lau.

‘The father was frightened and so the father fled’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

Mej yuav kuas mej dlim mas mej tsiv nkaag tuabsi nam taub ntawd

‘If you want to escape, flee into that gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **tsiv** ‘to move, to migrate’:

thaj cuab tsiv ‘to move out with the whole family’ (Xiongs).

muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **tsiv** ‘wicked, malicious, spiteful’ (Xiongs).

- **tsiv nraim** ‘to hide oneself’ (Xiongs).

- **tsiv tawm** ‘to run away, to escape’ (Xiongs).

- **tsiv teb tsaws chaw** ‘to flee out, to emigrate, to move’ (Xiongs).

- **tso** ‘to release, to free, to set free, to abandon, to relinquish, to allow, to permit, to let, to place, to let go, to leave’ (Xiongs):

xob tso kuv tseg ‘don’t forget me’ (Xiongs).

Tso tej tug nam kaabntsig luaj raab nam nqog lug noj.

‘Then he set them out for the stinging hairy caterpillars, who are as big as loom-shuttles, to eat’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

‘So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **tso ca** ‘to leave’ (Xiongs).

- **tso dlaag** ‘to joke, to have fun, to tease’ (Xiongs).

- **tso luag** ‘to joke, to have fun, to tease’ (Xiongs).

- **tso paa** ‘to let the air out, to exhale’ (Xiongs).

- **tso plig** ‘a belief in the Hmong culture to release the dead’s soul before he can go to heaven or reincarnation’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a young woman marries a spirit. When her younger brother visits her, the spirit, who has been asked to be a funeral officiant, invites the younger brother to accompany him to the funeral. When, some time later, the older brother visits, the spirit invites the older brother to accompany him to the *tso plig* ceremony:

“Txiv dlaab! nubnua koj tuaj saib wb cais, piskig kuv yuav tau rovqaab moog khee kuv tej qub num, los yog moog tso plig ais koj nrug kuv moog tso plig ib nub.”

“Wife’s older brother! today you’ve come to see us so, tomorrow I will have to go back to finish my old work, or go to release the soul so you go with me to spend the day releasing the soul.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16.)

- **tso plhuav** ‘to leave completely, to release all, to completely let go’ (Xiongs):

Suav txawm tso plhuav suav paab tsuag coob coob ntawd lug tum nwg, nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm tshws moog tum.

‘When the Chinese released their pack of rats to bite her, she released her pair of cats to bite the rats’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm puav yaa moog txais tum cov nkawj hab muv ntawd ua nwg tuag taagnrho lawm ib yaam nkaus.

‘and she released her pair of bats, who flew about catching and biting the wasps and bees until they too were dead’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

Nyaj vaab tuam teem ha muab tso plhuav. Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv

‘Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem then released him and the two of them then went to prepare the documents for him to be reborn as a high official’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **tso quav** ‘to defecate, to pass stool’ (Xiongs).

- **tso rua** ‘to place, to set down’:

Tes ntu ib phawb quavncaug huv txuj kev, huv ib rev nplooj suab tso rua.

‘Then they spat a drop (?) of saliva in the road, broke off a fern leaf and set it down’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27).

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus hab tua ob tug lauv qab saam coj moog tso rua peg.

‘Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full, and kill a capon and bring it and leave it up there’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **tso tseg** ‘to give up’ (Xiongs).

- **tso xuv** ‘to send a message’:

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **tso zaab** ‘to lie, to pretend’ (Xiongs).

- **tso zig** ‘to pass urine, to urinate’ (Xiongs).

- **tsob** ‘an article used for trees, bushes, etc. – ’ (Xiongs) (also written *rob*):

kav theej ‘(classifier *txuj* or *tsob*) rattan’ (Xiongs).

qej ‘(classifier *lub* or *tsob*) garlic’ (Xiongs).

qoov ‘(classifier *tsob*) asparagus’ (Xiongs).

suab ‘(classifier *tsob*) fern’ (Xiongs).

tauj ‘(classifier *tsob*) kind of plant’ (Xiongs).

thuv ‘(classifier *tsob*) pine tree, pine’ (Xiongs).

tsaaj ‘(classifier *tsob*) Manila hemp’ (Xiongs).

tsawb ‘(classifier *tsob*) banana tree’ (Xiongs).

xyoob ‘(classifier *tsob* or *tug*) bamboo’ (Xiongs).

yeeb ‘(classifier *tsob*, *tug*, or no classifier) opium’ (Xiongs).

tsob ntoo txiv dluaj ‘peach’ (Xiongs) [peach tree].

- **tsob** ‘to bother’ (Xiongs).

- **tsoj** ‘(classifier *lub*) fish net, net’ (Xiongs).

- **tsom** ‘to aim at, to refer to, to point at’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhào*.

- **tsom** ‘to sight through a telescope or viewer, to squint’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhào*.

- **tsom**: *teeb tsom* ‘lamp’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4). *Teeb* is from Chinese *dēng* ‘lamp’ and *tsom* is from Chinese *zhào* ‘to shine’ but the word order of the two elements is Mong not Chinese.

- **tsom av** ‘to look at oneself in the mirror’ (Xiongs) (first syllable from Chinese *zhào*):

lub tsom av ‘the mirror’ (Xiongs).

- **tsom teeb** ‘to shine the flashlight at’ (Xiongs). *Tsom* is from Chinese *zhào* ‘to shine’ and *teeb* is from Chinese *dēng* ‘lamp’ but the word order of the two elements is Mong not Chinese.

- **tsoo** ‘to break, to strike, to knock, to beat’ (Xiongs):

cais nwg txhaj muab taus tsoo kem nam pobzeb.

‘So then he took his axe and he struck the crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

- **tsoo** ‘to thrash about’:

Nwg txhaj sawv tseeg lug tsoo ua vig ua voog.

‘He rose up and began to thrash about’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **tsoob** ‘to have sexual intercourse’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 435 zhongb; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 199 zhongb; Heimbach 1979:356):

In my Mong Leng sources, I have not found this word in its literal meaning, but only in expressions connoting contempt or anger, similar to the use of words for ‘to have sexual intercourse’ in English:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.

‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **tsoog** ‘(classifier *cev*) clothes, dresses, suit’ (Xiongs):

Ib nub chob lawm cuaj phaab tsoog, / Ib koob lawm cuaj rha laug

‘In one day she sewed nine pieces of clothing, / With one needle nine stitches of embroidery’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 7).

- **tsoogtsho** ‘clothing’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **tsoom** ‘all, whole’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhòng*:

tsoom phooj ywg ‘all friends, friends’ (Xiongs).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **tsoom**: *zeej tsoom* ‘all people’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 众人 *zhòngrén* ‘everybody, everyone; normal people; ordinary people; commoner’, literally “many person”, but with the order of the elements reversed: *rénzhòng* “person many” > *zeej tsoom*. The reversed word order may be a Hmong innovation. There is no entry for a Chinese expression * 人众 *rénzhòng* “person many” in the online multilingual dictionary Wiktionary.

- **tsoov** ‘to win now’ (Xiongs).

- **tsu** ‘(classifier *lub*) wooden tube-like apparatus (at times jar-like) for steaming rice’ (Lyman pp. 82, 96):

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob “ndlawv-ndlawv” tau nyuas yag nqaj.

‘Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it “ndlawv-ndlawv” and got a wok full of meat.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **Tsu**: *Neej Tsu*, a man’s name, the name of the dead person for whom the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) ceremony described in *Initiation* is performed:

Neej Tsu as koj nyob Phuaj Hoos nua teb le chaw, sov koj haus luas pes tsawg dlej, tsaub luas pes tsawg le tawg, muab ib com nyaj nuav rua koj koj moog them luas nqe dlej nqe tawg koj le tau kev moog tov Neej Tsu!

‘O Neej Tsu ... when you lived here in the area of Phou Hong [a mountain in Laos], you drank I don’t know how much of someone else’s water, burned I don’t know how much of someone else’s firewood. Take this bundle of money with you to pay them for the cost of the water and the firewood and you will be able to go on your way, Neej Tsu!’ (*Initiation* p. 131).

- **tsu**: *zaaj tsu lu* “dragon and tiger mouths”, situation of great peril (see also *tsuv*):

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog koj tau txiv meb quaspui ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!

‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **tsub** ‘to overload, to put more weight on’ (Xiongs).

- **tsug** ‘(no classifier) period of time, a period of thirteen days (used only to indicate the first 13 days after someone dies)’ (Xiongs):

puv ib tsug kaum peb nub ‘for a complete period of thirteen days’ (Xiongs).

The days are named for the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) – Day of the Rabbit, Day of the Dragon, and so forth – but the Mong reckon the cycle as containing thirteen days because they include the day on which one returns to the animal with which one started.

One version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant says that the stairway to heaven has thirteen steps so that, climbing one step each day, it takes a cycle of thirteen days to climb it:

Ib nub nce ib qeb, ob nub nce ob qeb. Suav ib tsug kaumpeb nub nce kaumpeb qeb. Tes koj le nce nto Ntxwj Nyoog tug ntaiv ntuj.

‘In one day you will go one step. In two days you will go two steps. When you have counted a cycle of thirteen days you will have gone thirteen steps. Then you will have climbed to the top of Ntxwj Nyoog’s stairway to heaven’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 15).

However, in the following example, from earlier in the same version of the *Qhuab Ke*, where the chanter explains how spirits came to be more powerful than human beings, it is not clear whether *tsug* means specifically thirteen days or simply a period of time:

Yog le tsi tau, ca peb fib mej quas tsug. ... Yog le ca peb fib mej quas cais.

‘If we have lost the contest, let us return to you for a rematch after a time. ... Let us return to you after a while’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 3).

- **tsug**:

tuaj quas tsug ‘to laugh’ (Xiongs):

lug tuaj quas tsug ‘joke, funny words’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuj** ‘to step on; (no classifier) pace, walk’ (Xiongs) (also written *ruj*):

tsuj nthi (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to step firmly].

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty’ (Tswv Yim p. 75).

- **tsuj** ‘silk’ (Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian p. 438 zhox; Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet p. 200 zhox):

Hmong-Chinese dictionaries translate *tsuj* as ‘silk’ and *npuag* as ‘satin’. Bertrais’s dictionary, which is based on the speech of Laos, reverses things, translating *tsuj* as ‘satin’ and *npuag* as ‘silk’. Other dictionaries that are based on the speech of Laos and Thailand either translate both *tsuj* and *npuag* simply as ‘a kind of expensive cloth’ (Heimbach) or omit both words altogether (Xiongs, Lyman). The Xiongs give an entirely different word for ‘silk’: *tshwb kaab*. In texts, *tsuj* occurs in the pairing *tsuj ... npuag* ‘silk and satin’ (or ‘satin and silk’ if we adopt Bertrais’s glosses):

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to nyob txug Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of silk and you will have children.”

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to yum cev Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them.”

(Initiation p. 122.)

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncu ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’

(Ceebpov p. 24).

- **tsuj**: *tsho tsuj tsho npuag* ‘shirt of silk and satin’, i.e. the placenta, which is buried in the floor of the house when a person is born and which a dead person must retrieve before they can continue on their way to meet their ancestors:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag coj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and bring it to wear’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **tsum** ‘(classifier *lub*) dining table’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhuō*.

- **tsum** ‘to stop, to cease, to come to an end’ (Xiongs):

tsum os! ‘enough!’ (Xiongs.)

- **tsum** ‘to get caught’ (Xiongs). From a Southwestern Mandarin pronunciation of *zhuó* ‘to touch’.

- **tsum**: *yuav tsum* ‘must’ (Xiongs):

The second syllable of *yuav tsum* is from a Southwestern Mandarin pronunciation of *zhuó* ‘to touch’ but the phrase *yuav tsum* is a Hmong innovation.

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim ‘the soldiers will have to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*

‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab

‘you should save some money too’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo

‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs).

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag

‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub

‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb

‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

Huas yog koj quaj, cais koj yuav tsum nrug peb nyob, ua peb qhev ntawm nuav.

‘But if you cry out, then you must remain with us, and become our slave’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Suav ... tsi pub Moob muaj ntaub ntawv. ... yuav tsum siv Suav le taag nrho.

‘The Chinese ... did not allow the Mong to have a writing system. ... they had to use that of the Chinese’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 1).

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nqe hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.

‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that necessarily can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

Tes hu ua tsaav tuabneeg twg tsi pum Vaajkaav tug dluab nua tes luas yuav tsum caab moog ua tauj ua qhev. Luas yuav tsum muab tshoob muaj tsimtxom le.

‘So if people of any nation did not see Vaajkaav’s picture, they were certain to come and carry you into slavery. They were certain to carry you off to a life of oppression and suffering’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

- **tsus** ‘(classifier *lub*) color, taste, flavor’ (Xiongs):

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dluab ‘My mother dyes her skirt in black’ (Xiongs).

- **tsus**: *qhov tsus* ‘armpit’ (Xiongs).

- **tsus dluab** ‘black’:

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dluab ‘My mother dyes her skirt in black’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuv** ‘(classifier *tug*) tiger’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsu*):

maum tsuv ‘tigress’ (Xiongs).

Tigers are both a kind of spirit and a kind of animal. *Lug Nruag Tsuv* (Tiger Stories) begins at the spirit end of the spectrum with “Nug Xyu and Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm”, in which a woman’s husband falls under a Pujntxoog’s spell and changes into a tiger, and “Nuj Nplhaib and Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm”, in which a tiger carries off a man’s wife and transforms her into a tigress, and ends at the animal end with “The Animals Converse”, in which an orphan who has been blinded by his older brother overhears a tiger, a bear, and a wild boar conversing and learns how to heal his blindness, and “Grandfather Laj the Tiger-Killer”, in which a man who has gained renown as a slayer of tigers ends up helping a tiger and making peace with tigers.

The tiger is also one of the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) for whom months and days

are named. In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The twelfth month of the year is the month of the tiger.

*12 hlis – tsuv hli******

*12th month – month of the tiger******

****** noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

****** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (Dlaab Qhuas p. 79.)*

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the tenth day of the first month is

luav hli – tsuv xab 10 ‘month of the hare – tiger day 10’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

- **tsuv**: *kev tsuv rog* ‘war’ (Xiongs).
- **tsuv dlob** ‘panther’ (Xiongs).
- **tsuv ntshuav** ‘lion’ (Xiongs).
- **tsuv txaij** ‘leopard’ (Xiongs).
- **tsua** ‘rocky mountain’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsuas*).
- **tsua** or **tsua has**, progressive marker (see also *rua*):

Muaj ib yawm tsua ua ib dlaim nam teb nraag haav. ‘There was a man making a field down in the valley’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

Meb tsua moog ua teb es wb nkeeg hwv lawm, wb tsua lug zuv mivnyuas ib nub lauj. ‘The two of you have been going to farm and we’re tired of it, the two of us watching the children all day’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **tsua**, future marker:

“le nua kuv tsua moog muaj!”

‘In that case, I’ll go and have some!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28.)

“Ab, mej moog es nwg nua kuv muaj qhua nyob huv tsev tes lwm mo peb tsua moog”.

“No, you all go; at this time I have a guest in the house and the next evening we will go.”
(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29.)

- **tsua**, preverbal marker of uncertain meaning in the following examples:

Tes lug txug tes muaj ib tug tsua tas; “Ua caag koj yuav tau nyaj?”
When he arrived, there was someone who said: “How did you get silver?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

Nyob nyob ib tug tsua tuaj pum.
Some time later someone came and saw. (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32.)

“Yog le kuv tsua moog ua saib”.
“In that case, I’ll do that and see what happens.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32.)

- **tsua**, probably a typo for *tsau* ‘to put into’:

taagkig nam puj dlaab tsua [typo for tsau?] ib kawm, ib raab rag, ib lub fwb taub tuaj.
‘the next morning the female spirit put into a basket a knife and a gourd-dipper and came’
(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

- **tsua**: *dlawmtsua* ‘mountain pass’:

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.
‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj
‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the mountain pass’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

- **tsua**: *pob tsua* ‘cliff, rocky mountain’ (Xiongs). Also written *pobtsuas*.
- **tsua**: *qhov tsua* ‘cave in the rock, also called *qhov zeb*’ (Xiongs). Also written *qhov tsuas*.
- **tsua has**, progressive marker:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.
‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **tsuab** ‘to take something with the fingers’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhuā*.
- **tsuab zoj** ‘to sprinkle with the fingers’:

koj haus tsis taug nua tes koj tsuab zoj nam peb teg le nphoo zog tuaj tom ntej
‘if you are not able to drink it then sprinkle three handfuls in front of you’ (*Cim Xeeb* p.

79).

- **tsuag** ‘saltless, flavorless, no taste, with no vigor’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuag** ‘(classifier *tug*) mouse, mice’ (Xiongs):

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.

‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

Nam tsuag nti tes mlob tsaa hlo nrov pluaj rua huv nam haavdlej.

‘The rat wriggled out of the cat’s grasp and the cat tilted up and, plop!, into the river’ (Ceebpov p. 29).

Tej tsaj luj tsaj miv: nyujqus, npuateb, kauv, muaslwj, sai, dlais,

‘Big and small animals: wild oxen, wild pigs, barking deer, sambar deer, mountain goats, bears,

quas lab quas cuam

monkeys and gibbons,

quas ntsooj quas tsuag,

rats and mice,

quas naag quas noog,

rodents and birds,

miv kaab miv ntsaum

and little insects and ants’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 20).

“Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagnuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?”

“Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

Michael Johnson (personal communication) explains the referents of *naag*, *tsuag*, and *ntsooj* as follows:

naag – generic rodent – covers almost every genera of rodent but excludes the porcupines. Time will tell whether the New World giant members (beaver and capybara) will be included or excluded.

tsuag – vermin rodents – rats and mice around the house.

ntsooj – very large edible rats from several genera, live in the forest in underground tunnels, all edible and hunted.

- **tsuag** ‘to spray’ (Xiongs), ‘to forcibly expel (a liquid) from the mouth in a spray’ (Lyman):

tsuag cawv ‘to expel whisky from the mouth (when making medicine)’ (Lyman).

tsuag dlej ‘to forcibly expel water from the mouth (usually done by the shaman)’ (Lyman).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag namtij txhaj moog rhu pis hlo kuab muajtsuag lug tsuag quas lawg

Yob Nraug Ntsuag lub cev.

‘Yob the Orphan’s older brother’s wife then pulled out muajtsuag medicine and sprayed it on Yob the Orphan’s body’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

- **tsuag** ‘bush’:

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.

‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;

these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;

these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;

these got caught on the top of a reed (tau), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **tsuag**, intensifier:

Yawm Dlaab, nwg leej muam tug quasyawg, txawm yaa plawg tim qaab lug tsaws nkaus sau qhovmuag tsev ua qhovncauj lab pistsuag.

‘the Male Spirit, his sister’s husband, then came flying in from the horizon [or ‘from the west’] and perched on the gable, with his mouth all red’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **tsuag** ‘to take place’ (possibly a typo for *tsaug*):

nyuj hli luv quav qoob. Qoob tsuag [typo for *tsaug*?] *rua lub hlis nuav.*

‘in the month of the ox one breaks the stalks of grain. The harvest is in this month’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

- **tsuag** (see also *tsuam*): *ib tsuag* ‘one step’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab ib tsuag tim u, ua cav tau kag nwg txiv lug.

‘So the Male Spirit one step way over there, why he [the Spirit] had brought his [the young man’s] father’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **tsuag**: *kuab muajtsuag*, a medicinal plant, *Ranunculus sceleratus*, administered orally to treat arthritis-like ailments of the elderly and to treat impotence and problems urinating in men (Pake 1986, p. 109, Nos. 79, 80).

In shamanic belief and in folklore, *kuab muajtsuag* has the power to restore broken objects and to revive the dead:

I have given here only one story [about Shi Yi, the first shaman]. In fact, there exists in the oral tradition of the Hmong a whole cycle of the legend of Shi Yi and of his heroic combats against the demons and the monsters ... One sees him discover the properties of the magical remedy *koua moua tchoua* [kuab muaj tsuag], one day when he broke the eggs of a female dragon. She used the plant to put her eggs back together. Then Shi Yi stole the plant to use it in the exercise of his art (*Entre* p. 121).

A folktale describes vividly how kuab muajtsuag is used to bring a dead man back to life:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag namtij txhaj moog rhu pis hlo kuab muajtsuag lug tsuag quas lawg Yob Nraug Ntsuag lub cev. Cais puab rovqaab muab dlaim txivtxag lug npug nkaus le qub, hab has kuas suavdlawg tuaj paab zuv. ... Puab txawm nov khob khob huv lub hleb tuaj, cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug moog cem hlo dlaim nam txivtxag saib, Yob Nraug Ntsuag pw ua ib ce ntxig fws quas zaum. Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug txha cev loo teg moog tsaa hlo Yob Nraug Ntsuag sawv lug.

‘Yob the Orphan’s older brother’s wife then pulled out muajtsuag medicine and sprayed it on Yob the Orphan’s body. Then they covered him again with the lid of the coffin as before, and had everyone help keep watch. ... They then heard knocking from inside the coffin, and Yob the Orphan’s older brother lifted the lid of the coffin to look, and, why, Yob the Orphan was lying there his whole body perspiring slightly. Yob the Orphan’s older brother then stretched out his hand and lifted Yob the Orphan to his feet’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

Kuab means ‘medicine’ and is the first element in the names of many medicinal plants but *kuab muajtsuag* is the only one I have seen in my Mong Leng materials. Below is a photograph of *muajtsuag* kindly provided by Michael Johnson.



- **tsuag**: *nroj tsuag* ‘herbs, weeds’ (Xiongs):

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
 ‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil
 dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **tsuag moj ntxeb** ‘mouse’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuam** ‘to overload, to put on more weight than necessary’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhà*.

- **tsuam** ‘press one thing on top of another’ (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140) (also written *ruam*).
 From Chinese *zhà*.

- **tsuam** ‘(no classifier) foot step, pace, walk’ (Xiongs) (also written *ruam*) (see also *tsuag*):

kauj tsuam ‘foot step, pace, walk’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuam**: *tswv tsuam*:

In a needlework square (*noob-ncoos*), one strip of fabric crossing another
 (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140).

On a skirt, one appliqued band that crosses over another (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145).

- **tsuas** ‘to spot, to stain, to contaminate, to put dirt or something bad on another thing, to

influence, to bring bad things in, to color unintentionally' (Xiongs).

- **tsuas** '(classifier *tug*) splitting wedge' (Xiongs).

- **tsuas** 'only' (Xiongs):

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb 's/he can only do up to there' (Xiongs).

- **Tsuas**: *Los Tsuas* 'Laos', from Chinese *Lǎozhuā*:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws. 'First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries' (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **tsuas** (see also *tsua*): *pobtsuas* 'mountain':

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub
'That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **tsuas** (see also *tsua*): *qaab tsuas* '(classifier *lub*) cliff' (Xiongs).

Tug nam Pujntxoog txawm teb ndlais tim qaabtsuas ntaab tuaj
'The Pujntxoog then replied unseen from the base of a bee-cliff' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

The expression *qaabtsuas ntaab* apparently means 'the base of a cliff where bees have built nests'. *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* has *ntaab* 'yán fēng [cliff bee]' (p. 106 ndangb) and *tsua ntaab* 'là fēng yán [wax bee cliff]' (p. 201 zhuat ndangb).

- **tsuas** (see also *tsua*): *rooj tsuas* 'the door of a cave':

Lawv ntug lawv ntug moog txug ntawm rooj tsuas tes nam puj dlaab nkaag plawg huv tsev.

'They pursued her, hacking away, right up to the door of her cave and the female spirit dashed into her home' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **tsuas** (see also *tsua*): *qhov tsuas* 'cave', also written *qhov tsua*:

Tes rooj tsuas quas nkaus. Tes aub! nrug puj dlaab nam ntchais nyob tsausntuj quas nti huv nam qhov tsuas.

'The door of the cave closed. And then, do you know what? The young man stayed with the female spirit's daughter in the darkness of the cave!' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **tsuas**: *tes tsuas* 'and so':

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntchas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.

'He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **tsuav** 'to cut, to chop, to cut in very small pieces' (Xiongs):

In the following example the verbs *peg* ‘to hit, to beat, to strike’, *luaj* ‘to cut down vegetation with a bush-knife’, *tsuav* ‘to cut, to chop, to cut in very small pieces’, and *ntxug* ‘to chop up’ are used together to convey the motions of two young men fighting with a spirit; ‘with hands and with feet’ is an idiom referring to martial arts skill:

Peg luaj teg peg luaj taw tuaj tes ob leeg tsuav ntxug nrov pis ntxhas rua.

‘Striking and slashing with hands and with feet, the two of them cut and chopped with a great clamor at her’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

- **tsuav** ‘if’ (Xiongs):

tsuav mej ua tau ‘if you can do it’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuav** ‘(classifier *lub*) a shelf for hanging and drying things over the fire’ (Xiongs).

- **tsuav** ‘first, before doing something else’:

Awv, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov.

‘Yes, but I’m out of breath. Let me rest a bit first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

Kuv yeej tub tas txug tsev tsuav, koj tas yuav tuag nqhes nua luas muaj.

‘I told you to wait till we got home, but you said you were dying of hunger’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

Ub! tau lawm hab kuas lug noj mov tsuav!

‘Hey, I’m ready, but come and eat first!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28).

“*Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?*” “*Ub! tsiv os. Tsiv! kuv tsi qha le ntshai hwv!*” “*Qha maj! qha rua wb tsuav mas.*” “*Aub! tsi qha. Ntshai hwv lawm*”. “*Ab! qha. Qha tsuav peb le suavdlawg tsiv*”.

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” “Oo, fleeing. Fleeing! I can’t tell you, I’m too frightened!”

“Tell us! Tell us what it is.” “No, I can’t tell you. I’m too frightened.” “Yes, tell us.

Tell us so we all can flee.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

- **tsuav**, intensifier (also written *ruav*):

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **tsw** ‘to smell, to give off odor’.

- **tsw** ‘relative to the owner’ (Xiongs) (see also *tswv*):

muaj tsw ‘owned, having an owner’ (Xiongs).

- **tsw ntxhab** ‘smell bad, stink’ (Xiongs).

- **tsw phem** ‘stink, smell bad’ (Xiongs).

- **tsw qas** ‘smell bad, stink’ (Xiongs).

- **tsw qaab** ‘fragrant, smell good’ (Xiongs).

- **tswb** ‘(classifier *lub*) ‘bell’ (Xiongs):

lub tswb nrov ‘the bell rings’ (Xiongs).

khob tswb or *ntaus tswb* ‘to ring the bell’ (Xiongs).

quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov; “*Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!*” *nua los muaj*.
there were some cow bells and horse bells that went “*Ndlib-ndleeb; ndlib-ndleeb!*”

Huas nim nrov: “*deeb! deeb!*” *nua los muaj*.

And there were some that went “*deeb! deeb!*”

Huas tej tug nim “*tib-taub! tib-taub!*” *nua los muaj*.

And there were those that went “*tib-taub! tib-taub!*”

Huas tej tug “*khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!*” *nua los muaj*.

And there were those that went “*khib-kaub-laub! khib-kaub-laub!*”

Huas cov nam khumsaab kws dlai rua tej lujtxwv coj le kws luas has nim nrov “*khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!*” *nua*.

And the ones that traveling salesmen hang on their mules that people say go “*khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob, khib-koob-loob!*” (*Ceebpov* pp. 12-13.)

- **Tswb**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name), for which there is no corresponding *qhua* (Mong clan name) (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Zhū*.

- **tswb**: *twm tswb* ‘single wild boar, a single male wild pig’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *dú zhū* ‘sole pig’.

- **tswg** ‘(classifier *tug*) stake, pole’ (Xiongs):

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, the stake will lean over too”]

- **tswg**, sparrow or small sparrow-like bird, exact species undetermined, ‘sparrow’ (Bertrais 1978:469 tsig), ‘huángdòu què [soybean sparrow]’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* pp. 281 nongs zhik, p. 431 zhik; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 128 nongs zhis, p. 197 zhis) (also written *tsig*):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless.

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

- **tswj** ‘to watch, to lead, to manage, to guide’ (Xiongs):

ca koj ua tug tswj ‘let you be the leader’ (Xiongs).

The divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo, used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits may be referred as *tug tswj* ‘that which guides’.

*Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,
Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.*

‘Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,

To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path’ (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **tswj** ‘(classifier *lub*) an abcess’ (Xiongs) (also written *rwj*):

mob tswj ‘to have an abcess’ (Xiongs).

- **tswm** ‘to pound on, to press down, to tap, to strike on’ (Xiongs).

From Chinese 筑 *zhù*, which probably originally meant ‘to ram (as in building rammed earth walls)’, from which developed the modern Chinese meaning ‘to build, to construct’.

- **tswm** ‘to stop, to come to an end, to end’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 住 *zhù*.

- **tswm**, classifier:

xyaab ‘(classifier *tswm* or *tug*) incense’ (Xiongs).

Perhaps from Chinese 柱 *zhù* ‘pillar, post’ or perhaps from Chinese 烛 *zhú* ‘candle’.

- **tswmcab paajntoos** ‘votive candle’:

The first syllable of *tswmcab* is from Chinese *zhú* ‘candle’.

muaj ib lub nam phuaj ntim tswmcab paajntoos cig ci ntsaag quas ab

‘there was a raft filled with votive candles, burning brightly’ (*Yob has Noog Yaajyawg* p. 27).

- **tswm seeb** or **tswm xeeb** ‘to be quiet’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *zhùshēng*.

- **tswv** ‘(classifier *tug*) owner, proprietor’ (Xiongs) (see also *tsw*), from Chinese *zhǔ*:

Nam txiv losyog tug tswv tsev lub txaaj

‘The bed of the mother and father or of the head of the household’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Kuv yog tug tswv phoo ntawv nuav

‘I am the owner of this book’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsi yog tug tswv

‘S/he is not the owner’ (Xiongs).

- **tswv** or **ntswv** (varying in the same sentence) ‘thin stripe’:

Tab Moob Leeg yog tab toog nkaaj, muaj tswv lab tswv ntsuab tswv yag, hab ntsuw nkhaus.

‘Mong Leng skirts are of a deep indigo color, and have thin red and green stripes, both straight and crooked’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

cab tswv nkhaus, on a skirt, a zig-zag line in the batik, where fabric will later be sewn (*Grandmother's Path* p. 145).

ntaub tswv nkhaus, the zig-zag line of appliqued fabric in a baby-carrier (*Grandmother's Path* p. 133).

xuv tswv nkhaus, in a skirt, zig-zag line made of cross-stitch (*Grandmother's Path* p. 146).

- **tswv**: *num ... tswv* 'lords and officials' (see also *nom*):

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi? Nkauj Mim See yog nam nkauj qhe huas! Koj yuav Nkauj Mim See, cais koj yuav tau moog kwv kutaus kutxuas txhaj le tau noj. Koj nrug peb moog! Peb le, peb yog nkaunum nkaujtswv, hab nkauj nyobnoj nyobhaus. Peb le peb tsi khwv los peb yeej muaj noj muaj haus tsi paub taag.

'Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See? Nkauj Mim See is a servant-girl! If you marry Nkauj Mim See, you will have to bear an axe and a brush-knife to get your food. Come with us! We are the daughters of lords and officials. We live in the midst of plenty. Without toil we have an unending supply of food and drink' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

Puab has tas, puab yog nkaunum nkaujtswv

'They said that they were the daughters of lords and officials' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 14).

- **tswv nas**, in a needlework square (*noob-ncoos*), appliqued bands of material sewn one on top of the other, so that the edges of the bottom piece are visible (*Grandmother's Path* p. 140), in a skirt, one band sewn on top of another, so the edges of the bottom piece are visible (*Grandmother's Path* p. 146).

- **tswv taab taw** 'foot of the skirt'; bound bottom edge of the skirt (*Grandmother's Path* p. 146).

- **tswv tsuam**, in a needlework square (*noob-ncoos*), one strip of fabric crossing another (*Grandmother's Path* p. 140), on a skirt, one appliqued band that crosses over another (*Grandmother's Path* p. 145).

- **tswv xyaab** or **tswv yas**, appliqued bands of fabric running the length of the skirt piece. They are often done by machine now, but before they were always sewn by hand, as is everything else on the skirt. (*Grandmother's Path* p. 145.)

- **tswv yim** 'idea' (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhǐyì*:

Tswv Yim Moob 'Mong Ideas' (*Tswv Yim*, title).

Ob tug tau siv ob tug tej laajlim tswvyim thaus ob tug moog kawm ntawd lug paab lub teb lub chaw.

'The two of them used their magic and ideas from the time when they been in school to help the country' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

TSH

Some Mong Leng speakers have variation between *tsh* and *rh*. If a word is not found under *tsh* look under *rh*.

- **tsha** 'to blow in, to sprinkle in' (Xiongs).

- **tsha:**

noob-ncoos-tsha, needlework square with more pieces of applique; the square's red center is covered with squares and bands of applique. The traditional colors used are red, bright pink, white, yellow, green, black. (*Grandmother's Path* p. 140.)

'*tsha*' may mean 'more' (*Grandmother's Path* p. 140).

- **tshab** 'new, just come out' (Xiongs):

ib dlaim tab tshab 'a new skirt' (Xiongs).

Kuv tau ib lub tsho tshab 'I got a new shirt' (Xiongs).

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? 'Can you find my new shirt?' (Xiongs.)

Nwg muaj tuab pawg nam ntaaj pheb ua lu ntshaav dlob quas ncab nyob nraag qaabcub, hab nwg muaj dlua ib raab tshab tshab nyob sau lub rooj noj mov. Cais nwg txhaj khaws nkaus raab ntaaj tshab nuav luv ntho ua ob yaa
'There was a pile of swords leaning, caked with pitch-black blood, down by the fireplace, and there was also a fresh one on top of the dining table. He broke the fresh sword into two pieces' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 36).

- **tshab** 'Spring' (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 32 chab; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 12 chab):

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

- **tshab:** *nam tshab* 'stepmother' (Xiongs).

- **tshav** 'to rub, to polish, to scrub' (Xiongs).

- **tshaab** 'to diffuse' (Xiongs).

- **tshaab** 'to review' (Xiongs).

- **tshaab** 'through' (Xiongs), from Chinese *chuān* 'to bore a hole':

puab khawb tshaab, saab tod laum [typo for *lawm*?]

'they dig through the other side already' (Xiongs).

tshaab plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [suddenly pierced through].

The Xiongs do translate *tshaab plawg*. The translation 'suddenly pierced through' comes from Heimbach (p. 362 *tshab plaws*).

- **tshaaj** 'over' (Xiongs).

- **tshaaj** 'to convey a message, to diffuse, to announce, to send a message' (Xiongs), from Chinese *chuán*:

ntawv tshaaj xu 'notice, news, information' (Xiongs).

- **tshaaj** ‘than’ (Xiongs):

Kuv sab tshaaj koj ‘I am taller than you’ (Xiongs).

Mej coob tshaaj peb ‘you are more than us’ (Xiongs).

ntev tshaaj ob tawm ‘twice as long’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaaj plawg** ‘-est’ (marks the superlative):

Kuv yog tug tau tsawg tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who gets the least’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug xub ua tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who does it first’ (Xiongs).

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs).

luj tshaaj plawg ‘the biggest, the greatest’ (Xiongs).

zoo tshaaj plawg ‘best, most beautiful’ (Xiongs).

Qhov kws tseem ceeb tshaaj plawg

‘The thing that was most important’ (Tswv Yim, preface).

- **tshaaj plawg**: *ua ntej tshaaj plawg* ‘first’:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws.
‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries’ (Tswv Yim, preface).

- **tshaaj**, Chinese *cháng* ‘intestine’:

thoob tshaaj ‘to have hernia’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tōng cháng* ‘the intestine goes through’.

- **tshaam** ‘to visit, to hunt’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chuàn* ‘to go from place to place’:

yawm fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug hab nam fuabtais ob tug yuav tawm rooj caij neeg fuab neeg cua moog tshaam tebchaws

‘the king and queen [of heaven] would go out the door and mount their cloud and wind horses to go and inspect their domain’ (Kwvhuam p. 7).

pigkig kuv coj koj es wb tshaam kab ov. Wb moog saib cov nam txwmzeej os.

‘Tomorrow, I will take you with me and we will visit the market. We will go to look at the criminals’ (Yob Hlub Hab Yob Yau p. 16).

- **tshaam** ‘line, something attached or placed along the belt’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chuàn* ‘to string together; string, cluster’.

- **tshaam**: *dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws* ‘(classifier *lub*) passenger airbus’:

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog
Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs) [“the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ...”].

- **tshaav** ‘to touch’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *chuǎng* ‘to force one’s way in or out’.

- **tshaav** ‘to shine, to light’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaav** ‘to beat’, probably from Chinese *chuǎng* ‘to force one’s way in or out’:

Ca ib ntsiv quav lug kuv sim rhu khaub nplawg tshaav ua nwg tau kev tsiv saib!

‘In a moment, I will pull out my switch and thrash him and drive him away’ (*Ceebpov* p. 19).

- **tshaav**, from Chinese *chǎng* ‘site, spot’: *hem tshaav* ‘clearing’:

Ob tug nim tu hlo nam chaw kuas ob tug cov qhev tu hlo ib lub hem tshaav dlaav caj
dlaav tuag

‘The two of them were taking care of a place where their servants had prepared an exceedingly broad clearing’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

- **tshaav**: *tiv tshaav tiv naag* ‘to work hard under sunlight (heat) and rain’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaav**: *tuag tshaav* ‘to wither, feeble, weak, slow, without vigor’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaav**: *xyeem tshaav*, Chinese *xiànchǎng* ‘scene of an accident or crime; site, spot’:

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog
rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Thaus moog ncig saib taag, puab txawm rovqaab lug su ntawm lub nam xyeemtshaav kws
yuav nkaag rua huv haavzoov

‘When they had looked all round the valley, they returned to rest in a spot on the way into the forest’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

Koj nyob tuab quas ywv huv lub xyeemtshaav nua tog.

‘Stay here and wait for us in this spot’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 11).

Yawm Saub txa ua tuab tug nam txiv neeg faubcuas thauj Nuj Sis Loob, hab Tub Ceeb
Pov ob tug yaa tawm plawv huv lub nam qhovntuj dlub ncaajnrain lug tsaws nkaus huv
Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug lub xyeemtshaav.

‘Grandfather Saub had transformed himself into a cloud-wind stallion to carry Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov out of the black pit and had deposited them in a site of the King of the Lower Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Sometimes *xyeemtshaav* has an anaphoric meaning: ‘the previously referenced site or spot’, ‘the agreed upon site or spot’:

Cais ob tug txhaj coj Nkauj Mim See cob rua Nuj Sis Loob, hab yuav xaa rovqaab lug ua
neej rua nplajteb nuav na, ua cav tsi pum Nuj Sis Loob nyob ntawm xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But when they brought her to present her to Nuj Sis Loob, and to send them back to married on Earth once more, Nuj Sis Loob was not in the place where they had told him to wait’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 13).

Taag ntawd, ob tug txhaj tig loo rov lug rua sau lub xyeemtshaav.

‘This done, Grandfather Nyooglaug and Grandfather Saub sent back up to the spot where they had originally told Nuj Sis Loob to wait’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 14).

Puab najnub nce moog nyob sau puab lub xyeemtshaav noog, hab saib puas pum lug txug twg.

‘Every day, they went up to the agreed upon place to listen and to see whether they could see them coming’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

Huas Muam Paajlig, Yawm Fuabtais tug nam hlub, kuj ua plhu nphob quas zug, hab xuab kutaw rhuj rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But Muam Paajlig, His Majesty’s senior wife grew more and more pale and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **tshaav**: *zab tshaav* ‘to be under the sun’s heat’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaav**: *zab tshaav kom hav* ‘to get tanned under the sun’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaav ntuj** ‘to shine (sun)’ (Xiongs):

kaus roog tshaav ntuj ‘(classifier *lub*) parasol’ (Xiongs).

muaj tshaav ntuj ‘shiny’ (Xiongs).

thaum tshaav ntuj te taag nrho ‘when the sunlight covers all’ (Xiongs).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

Tshaav ntuj lawm nam peb nub tis ua kub, noob xyooob caj tsis nyog ntxhoo xyooob hlub.

‘For three days the weather was hot. The seeds of bamboo could not live long enough for bamboo branches to grow’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 76-77).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua tshaav ntuj quas lug lawm cais, kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb lug lawm tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky has cleared, for my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is truly coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

- **tshaib** ‘to be hungry, to have a desire to eat’ (Xiongs):

tuag tshaib ‘die of hunger’ (Xiongs).

yoo tshaib ‘to fast, to go on a diet’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug muab mov kuam cej mov kuam xua ntse hauvpaug zaubab rua Nuj Yob noj es tsi noj los tshaib, noj los nim ab ab Nuj Yob sab!

‘They give steamed buckwheat and steamed rice bran and the stems of bitter greens to

Nuj Yob to eat; if he does not eat them he is hungry, if he eats them, how bitter they are to Nuj Yob's heart!' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74.)

Koj moog txug toj tuag tshaib teb tuag nqhes

'Go until you reach the hills of death from hunger, the lands of death from thirst' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p.16).

- **tshaib plaab** 'hungry' (Xiongs).

- **tshais** 'breakfast':

pluag tshais 'breakfast' (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi tau noj tshais 'I have had breakfast' [typo for 'I have not had breakfast'] (Xiongs).

- **tshau** 'to drill, to bore, to make a hole, to pierce' (Xiongs) (also written *rhau*):

kev tshau 'drilling' (Xiongs).

muv tshau hlau '(classifier *tug*) drill' (Xiongs).

- **tshau** 'to sieve, to sift' (Xiongs) (see also *tshaus*):

Ab au quas sua tuaj nraag taj,

'O mist! O fog! Come down to the plain

le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj,

Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain

noob neej noob tsaav ntshu quas fvw lug puv nplaj.

so that the seeds of kith and of kin come with a great noise to fill the world' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

- **tshau:** *muv tshau hlau* '(classifier *tug*) drill' (Xiongs).

- **tshau xua** 'to sift out the chaff' (Xiongs).

- **tshaum** 'to strike, to excite, to push, to urge, to bring attention to, to make a remark' (Xiongs). Perhaps from Chinese *chuō* 'jab, poke, thrust'.

- **tshaus** '(classifier *lub*) sieve' (Xiongs) (see also *tshau*):

le muab tshaus tooj tshaus hlau tshau quas thawv peb tshaus rua nraag taj,

'Take a sieve of copper and of iron and sift three sieves full down onto the plain' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 7).

Wb los kuj tsi paub tsi pum le hab kuas, muaj ib nyuas ntshais pheej tuaj qev vaab qev tshaus. Nwg nyav qev vaab lawm. Wb sim hu kuas nwg xaa vaab tuaj, koj saib puas yog nwg!

'We do not know [if she's your sister], but there's a young woman who keeps coming to borrow sifting tray and sifters. She has just borrowed a sifting-tray. We'll try calling her to bring the tray, you can see if it is her!' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

Thov xaa peb vaab peb tshaus tuaj, peb yuav siv ho!

‘Please bring our sifting-trays and our sifters, we want to use them!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

A *tshaus* or *vaab tshaus* is one type of *vaab*. Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes that the primary purpose of a *vaab* is removing bran, chaff, or grit from husked rice:

This is done by gyrating the rice in the tray (*zig txhuv*) – swirling the tray round and round in horizontal position so that the chaff/grit collects together, and by winnowing – flip the rice up into the air then quickly pull down on the tray creating a suction which sucks off the bran, then quickly bring the tray into position to catch the rice as it falls back to earth – repeat maybe a dozen times and then gyrate again. Of course, the *vaab* is also a general purpose tray – for example when making pounded rice cakes eggs a boiled and the egg yolk is spread on the *vaab* so that the cakes will not stick to it as they are being molded into shape.

tshaus or *vaab tshaus* – same as a *vaab*, typically a bit smaller and probably mostly with a taller rim, but woven less tight so that there are holes in it. The holes can be coarse (*tshaus ntshib*) or fine (*tshaus mog*) which suit different materials to be sieved. It is used as a sieve for foodstuffs, e.g. flour, corngrits.

vaab loog – similar to *vaab* but very large and with reinforcement to the base, used primarily for drying foodstuff in the sun.

sob cib – nice fresh ones are used like a colander – for draining cooking water from rice/vegetables etc. Tatty ones are used as dustpans - the open mouth lets you use a brush or stick with it to push garbage into the tray.

Michael sent me a number of photographs, including this photograph of a *vaab tshaus*:



- **tshauv** ‘(no classifier) ashes, powder’ (Xiongs):

yog koj yuav tua kuas tuag nua cais koj muab tshauv lug leem hab puab koj raab taus
 ‘If you want to kill him, you must mold a coating of ashes on your axe’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18).

Thaus nwg taabtom has le hov koj yawm kag ib taus nam tshauv kub hliv hlo rua nwg lub hauv sab
 ‘When he’s speaking like that scoop up a handful of hot ashes and dump them on his chest’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44).

- **tshauv** ‘grey’ (Xiongs).

- **tshauv**: *moov tshauv* ‘ashes, powder’ (Xiongs).

- **tshauv**: *naag tshauv* ‘drizzle, light rain’:

Lug naag tshauv cuaj li nree txhaa caaj qheb.
 ‘In the light rain it stiffens and becomes as rigid as the core of the branches of a chestnut-tree’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

dlub lug cais txawm cuab tsaus fuab ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj
 ‘it began to get overcast and it began to drizzle’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

ntuj tsaus fuab quas nti ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyoos
 ‘the sky had been completely overcast and it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Lug lug nto sau nam roob zoo tes naag tshauv naag sua nim zig quas zoj
 ‘He traveled until he came to the top of a forested mountain, whereupon it began to drizzle’ (*Ceebpov* p. 9).

- **tshauv**: *plauv tshauv* ‘dust’ (Xiongs). Also written *plawv tshauv*.

- **tshauv**: *plawv tshauv* ‘dust’ (also written *plauv tshauv*):

Tshaav ntuj kub kub lug zab tau peb hlis ua aav qhuav nkig quas nkuav tawm plawv tshauv quas tog.
 ‘The hot sun dried everything for three months, making the soil brittle and turning it to dust’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag
 ‘Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud out from Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm poles’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **tshauv**: *txho tshauv* ‘having an ashy colored coating’ (Xiongs).

- **tshawb** ‘to look for, to seek, to hunt for, to search, to find’ (Xiongs):

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? ‘Can you find my new shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav
 ‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **tshaws** ‘to have something bothering in the eyes or mind’ (Xiongs):

tshaws kuv qhov muag lawm ‘there is something in my eyes’ (Xiongs).

tsi tshaws qhov muag ‘not important, not big’ (Xiongs).

- **tshaws**, intensifier:

plaub qab nrug yaa lis tshaws ‘chicken feathers are flying about all over’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

- **tshawv** ‘to make a way, to create’ (Xiongs).

- **tshawv kev** ‘to open a way, to create the way’ (also written *rhawv kev*):

Puab ua cov tshawv kev ‘They are the ones who create the way’ (Xiongs).

- **tshe** ‘to scold, to dispute, to argue, to fight verbally’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chě* (see also *tshev*):

puab sib tshe ‘they are fighting each other verbally’ (Xiongs).

- **tshe**, intensifier (also written *rhe*):

Dlaab has tas; Tsi tau, dlaab ha dlua quas tshe neej quas tub quas ntxhais.
 ‘The spirits said, “No, you may not,” and ripped apart the human beings’ sons and daughters’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 3).

- **tsheb** ‘(classifier *lub*) car, automobile, vehicle’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chē*:

Kuv txas [typo for *txais*] *nyaj yuav tsheb*

‘I borrow money to buy a car, I get a loan to buy a car’ (Xiongs).

lub tsheb dlha ceev ‘the car runs fast’ (Xiongs).

qub tsheb ‘used car’ (Xiongs).

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheb** ‘to carve, to enlarge a hole’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheb** ‘to go around, to avoid’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheb**: *tsev khu tsheb* ‘garage’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheb nqaaj** ‘train’ (Xiongs):

ttaav tsheb nqaaj ‘to drive a train’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheb nqaaj**: *tsev caij tsheb nqaaj* ‘train station’:

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm

‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheem** ‘to displace, to take away, to move something out of the way’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chè*.

- **tsheem**: *rhuav tshem* ‘to destroy, to abolish’ (Xiongs).

- **tshev** ‘to scold, to find fault angrily, to chide or rebuke severely’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chě* (see also *tshe*):

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv ‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (Xiongs).

Ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le ca meb ua ntej, meb moov zoo es ca meb uantej. Kuv maav uaqaab, kuv ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le.

‘I’m afraid that Father will scold me, so you two go on ahead. Your luck was good, so you two go on ahead. I will follow slowly after, for I am very afraid that Father will scold me’ (Ceebpov pp. 18-19).

Tshev quas tawg le hov, tshev tshev Los Xaab quaj quaj kuamuag poob dlawb quas vog nrau zoov

‘He berated him in this fashion until the tears rained from Los Xaab’s eyes’ (Ceebpov p. 20).

“Ntuj nis kuv miv nyaab es tub Los Xeeb nim lawv lawv sab, kuv tsi paub kuv nim tshev dlaab tshev tuag ntshai kuv tug miv nyaab nim tu tu sab”.

“By heaven, my dear daughter-in-law, my son Los Xaab followed his heart. I did not know, and I said terrible things to you. I’m afraid that my dear daughter-in-law must think very ill of me” (Ceebpov p. 25).

Tabsis, Pug Fuabtais ca le tshev

‘But the Queen scolded him’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 20).

Yuav noj tes moog tshev tshev luas tau ib nyuas pluag xwb muaj!

‘When they want to eat they just go and yell at people to get a little meal!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30.)

- **tshee** ‘to tremble, to shake, to shiver’ (Xiongs):

tshee tshee ‘shaky, shaking, trembling’ (Xiongs).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug.

‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **tsheej** ‘to become, to completely change into’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chéng*:

ua tsheej ib yig tuab neeg ‘to be able to manage the family, to become a family’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheej** ‘to know what to do’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chéng*:

ua tsi tsheej ‘don’t know what to proceed, to cancel an action to be taken’ (Xiongs).

- **tsheej**: *ceeb tsheej* ‘heaven, paradise’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jīngchéng* ‘capital city of a country’:

ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heaven’ (Xiongs).

lub ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heaven’ (Xiongs).

ntsig txug ntuj ceeb tsheej ‘heavenly’ (Xiongs).

This City is nothing other than the totality of the beyond. The use of this Chinese term is an expression of the influence of the Chinese Hell, conceived of as a citadel (*Initiation* p. 100).

Of all the shamans that I know, there are hardly any other than Chong Tchor, Tsa Seu, Tchang Ying, and myself who are able to cross the Kong Tong bridge, which leads to the City (*Tiing Tch’eng*, *ceeb tsheej*). When one arrives at the entrance of the bridge, there is a crowd. As for me, I get down from my horse, I leave my horse there. I say that I’m going to the other side and I ask to be given a permit, and to be lent a mount. I borrow a horse of the dead, a wooden horse (a bier made of sticks) to pass to the other side. There, there is another huge lake, where Ngo A [Nkauj Ab] is. If, once there, I learn that the soul has already been washed, this signifies that the sick person has died. There is nothing left for me to do but go back. For one begins to wash the face at the home of Ngao [sic] A before beginning the rites of washing and dressing in this world. In this case, I have barely returned from my shamanic journey when it is announced to me that the sick person has died! (*Entre* pp. 160-161.)

- **Tsheej**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) for which there is no corresponding *qhua* (Mong clan name) (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Chén*.

- **tshib** ‘to thin out, to cut away some’ (Xiongs):

tshib plaub hau ‘to thin the hair’ (Xiongs).

- **tshib**, intensifier:

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncu ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (Ceebpov p. 24).

- **tshib**: *lauj tshib* ‘(classifier *lub*) elbow, bend, angle’ (Xiongs).

- **tshis** ‘(classifier *tug*) goat’ (Xiongs):

tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj

‘old people eat taubyaaj [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 79).

Quas nyuj, quas neeg, quas yaaj quas tshis mas nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ua quas tauj quas tsuag luv quas ntho.

‘Cattle, horses, sheep and goats filled the hills and highlands and cropped the weeds and shrubs to a stubble’ (Ceebpov p. 12).

huas cov nam qhev mas nim lawv paab nam yaaj, nam tshis, lujtxwv, nyuj neeg

‘and servants were herding a flock of sheep and goats and mules and cattle and horses’ (Ceebpov p. 14).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones’ (Initiation p. 135).

- **tshis**, intensifier:

nam txiv neeg uab dlub hee raag quas tshis ib yeeg tim u ib yeeg tim nua rov rua nplajteb lawm lauj.

‘the crow-black stallion whinnied and galloped one tier yon, one tier hither and returned to the face of the earth’ (Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 17).

- **tsho** ‘(classifier *lub*) shirt’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas nyam lub tsho lab? ‘Do you like the red shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj tshawb puas tau kuv lub tsho tshab? ‘Can you find my new shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Koj yos puas tau koj lub tsho dlub? ‘Do you find your black shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

Kuv tau ib lub tsho tshab ‘I got a new shirt’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tau tsib lub tsho ‘I have five shirts’ (Xiongs).

qub tsho ‘used shirt’ (Xiongs).

- **tsho**: *nqaws tsho* ‘front shirt’ (Xiongs), ‘the bottom part of the shirt front that can be hitched up to form a pouch to carry things in’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **tsho**: *rig tsho* ‘clothes, clothing’ (Xiongs):

cev rig tsho nuav xoob lawm ‘this suit is big’ (Xiongs).

khuab rig tsho ‘(classifier *tug*) hanger’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’ (Xiongs).

yaug rig tsho ‘to rinse the clothes’ (Xiongs).

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for *ntshauv*?]. *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.*

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **tsho**: *tsoogtsho* ‘clothing’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **tsho tsuj tsho npuag** ‘shirt of silk and satin’, i.e. the placenta, which is buried in the floor of the house when a person is born and which a dead person must retrieve before they can continue on their way to meet their ancestors:

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. Koj moog fawb koj tsho tsuj tsho npuag coj lug naav.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and put it on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

- **tshob** ‘to scold, to find fault angrily’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chāo*.

- **tshoj** ‘to turn, to pivot, to move around’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *cháo* ‘facing, towards’:

Muab lub taub hau tshoj rua qaum te [typo for *teb*] ‘turn the head to the north’ (Xiongs).

Ntuj sua teb thaum u, muaj ob tug kwvnpawg Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, hab Cuav Tshoj Tim.
 ‘In the world of long ago, there were two cousins: Pure One Who Faces Heaven and False One Who Faces Earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

- **tshoj**, Chinese *cháo* ‘dynasty’, in *Tuam Tshoj*, Chinese *dà cháo* ‘greater dynasty’ = China, and *Xov Tshoj*, Chinese *xiǎo cháo* ‘lesser dynasty’ = places outside of China where Mong live:

tuam tshoj ‘mainland’ (Xiongs).

Moob Tuam Tshoj (Suav Teb) ‘The Mong of China’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 4, page 14).

Moob Suav, Tuam Tshoj ‘Mong in China’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141, chapter title).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebhaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebhaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **tshom** ‘to search for, to dig with the nose (speaking of pigs), to dig (tractor)’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin *cào* ‘to plow’.

- **tshov** ‘to insist asking, to bother (children to their parents)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chǎo* ‘to disturb’.

- **tshoob** ‘pertaining to marriage’:

has zaaj tshoob ‘sing customary and wedding ceremony songs’ (Xiongs).

Kaab tshoob kev kug ‘marriage of wedding traditions’ (Xiongs).

tshoob or *rooj tshoob* ‘wedding; marriage or wedding ceremony’ (Xiongs).

tshoob kug ‘marriage or wedding’ (Xiongs).

Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug ‘Tales of Marriage Customs’ (*Kwvhuam*, title).

them tshoob them kug ‘to pay a brideprice’ (topic of the story in *Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32).

- **tshoob** ‘to sweep, carry, or blow away’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chōng*:

khaub lig cua muab tshoob lawm ‘the tornado blows away’ (Xiongs).

Luas kuas suavdlawg txua ib lub hleb cab lug ntim nwg, hab ua ib lub nkuaj lug ntim nwg tug lauvqab tso rua sau lub hleb, cais suavdlawg ua ob lub phuaj lug ntim ob tug, hab muab ob tug tso rua huv nam dlej luj tshoob nqegtaug xwb.

‘He wants everyone to build a coffin of pine to put him in, and to make a coop and put inside his rooster and put it on top of the coffin, and then everyone make two rafts to put the two of them on and put the two of them in the big river to carry them downstream’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Dlej muab nam taub tshoob nqeg taug lawm lau.

‘The river carried the gourd downstream’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **tshoob** ‘to fire in the air’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chōng*.

- **tshoob kug** or **tshoob ... kug**:

tshoob kug ‘marriage or wedding’ (Xiongs).

Kaab tshoob kev kug ‘marriage of wedding traditions’ (Xiongs).

Kwvhuam Kevlis Kevcai Kaabtshoob Kevkug ‘Tales of Marriage Customs’ (*Kwvhuam*, title).

them tshoob them kug ‘to pay a brideprice’ (topic of the story in *Kwvhuam* pp. 23-32).

- **tshoob phom** ‘fire in the air’ (Xiongs).

- **tshooj** ‘(no classifier) level, layer, story; to put one on top of another, to lay one on top of the other as layers’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chóng*:

ob tshooj ‘double layers’ (Xiongs).

puab zuv peb tshooj qhov rooj ‘they guard the door in three levels’ (Xiongs).

Tug nam fuabtais kws luas has nyob ntawm cuaj tshooj ntuj yim tshooj teb.

‘The king was said to dwell in nine levels of heaven and eight levels of earth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

ca le nqaa cuaj lub rooj moog teeb ua cuaj tshooj

‘bring nine tables and stack them up in nine tiers’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

- **tshooj**, Chinese *chóng* ‘insect, worm’: *kaab laug tshooj* ‘(classifier *tug*) centipede’ (Xiongs).

- **tshoom** ‘to put forth, to grow forth, to emerge, to appear, to show up, to come up to the level’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chòng*.

- **tshoom** ‘to make, to forge’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chòng*.

- **tshoom** ‘to push, to extend’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chòng*:

tshoom kom sab zog ‘push a little higher’ (Xiongs).

- **tshoom** ‘to go up’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chòng*:

tshoom kub lub ntuj ‘to go straight up into the sky’ (Xiongs).

- **tshua** ‘to like to think of, to admire’ (Xiongs):

Koj yog tug kuv tshua ‘you are the one I think of’ (Xiongs).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **tshua**: *tsi ntau* or *tsi tshua ntau* ‘not too much, not too many’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab** ‘to blow (the wind), to play (an instrument)’:

tshuab raaj ‘to play or blow the flute’ (Xiongs).

mo nua cua tshuab muaj ceem heev ‘tonight the wind blows very hard’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab** ‘(classifier *lub*) machine, various kinds of machines depending on the combination after the word tshuab’ (Xiongs):

thi tshuab ‘belt of a machine’ (Xiongs).

tshuab luam ntawv ‘copying machine’ (Xiongs).

tshuab xaws khaub dluag ‘sewing machine’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab**: *Moob Yobtshuab*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **tshuab**: *phuam tshuab ntswg* ‘(classifier *txuj*) handkerchief’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab**: *qws tshuab* ‘(classifier *tug*) broom’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab luam ntawv** ‘copying machine’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab raaj** ‘to play or blow the flute’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuab xaws khaub dluag** ‘sewing machine’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuaj** ‘(classifier *lub*, *ntsas*, or no classifier) tablet of medicine, medication, chemical’ (Xiongs), ‘medicine, drug; tea’ (Lyman p. 89), from Chinese *chá* ‘tea’:

qaug tshuaj ‘to be poisoned’ (Xiongs).

tshuaj ntshais ‘the medicine stings’ (Xiongs).

tshuaj ntshim zoo ‘effective medicine’ (Xiongs).

txhaaj tshuaj qoob ‘measles immunization’ (Xiongs).

zoo tshuaj ‘effective, curative medicine’ (Xiongs).

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?

‘Son-in-law Yob came to try this medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

Yob moog sim tshuaj na, tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!

‘Yob went to try the medicine, the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog*

Yaajqawg p. 24.)

- **tshuaj** ‘gunpowder’:

Puab lug dlha le caag los muaj; Tej tug nqaa tau phom, nqaa tsi tau tshuaj; tej tug nqaa tau tshuaj, nqaa tsi tau phom.

‘They ran with whatever they had. Those who were able to bring guns were not able to bring gunpowder. Those who were able to bring gunpowder were not able to bring guns’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **tshuaj** ‘to verify, to check, to examine’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chá*:

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **tshuaj**: *tseg ca ua tshuaj* ‘keep as something special, worthy, or effective’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuaj qaug** ‘dangerous medicine, poisonous medicine’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuajtaub**, word of uncertain meaning in the following example:

Tes cov nam txiv dluaj sav sav Tes Los Tuam nim dlha quas loo moog dle kag tau tej nam tshuajtaub tes muab faib hlo Los Tuam ib tshuajtaub, Los Lwm ib tshuajtaub, Los Xaab ib tshuajtaub.

‘Now the peaches were ripe and Los Tuam ran over and picked some tshuajtaub and divided them up, giving one tshuajtaub to himself, one tshuajtaub to Los Lwm and one tshuajtaub to Los Xaab’ (*Ceebpov* p.15).

In the United Bible Society’s Mong Leng translation of the Bible, *tshuajtaub* is used to mean ‘water-scooper’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **tshuaj tua kaab** ‘insecticide’:

txuam tshuaj tua kaab ‘to spray insecticide’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuaj txob** ‘itching medicine’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuam** ‘to meet, to join, to get together, to come together, to merge with’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chà* ‘branch off, fork’ as in *sān chà lù kǒu* ‘a junction of three roads’:

kev sib tshuam or *kev tshuam* ‘merge, merging ways’ (Xiongs).

tug dlej nuav moog tshuam rua dlej Mississippi

‘this river merges with the Mississippi River’ (Xiongs).

- **tshuav** ‘to have left, to come short of’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chā*:

According to the usual rules of pronunciation for Chinese loanwords, *chā* ought to be pronounced *tshuab*, which is indeed the way it is pronounced in certain Hmong dialects in China. It is unclear how Mong Leng and other Hmong dialects came to have the

pronunciation *tshuav*.

tseem tshuav ob theem ntxiv ‘there are two more steps’ (Xiongs).

tshuav peb nub nkaus xwb ‘only three more days left’ (Xiongs).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (Tswv Yim p. 141).

- **tshuav nuj nqe** ‘in debt, to be in debt’ (Xiongs).

- **tshwb** ‘to expend, to use money’ (Xiongs).

- **tshwb kaab** ‘silk’ (Xiongs).

- **tshwj** ‘to sort out, to select, to take out’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chú*:

muab tshwj tseg ‘to sort away, to put away, to throw away’ (Xiongs).

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm ‘they already sorted out the quality meat’ (Xiongs).

Probably from Chinese *chú* ‘to get rid of, discard, remove’ but in Mong, *tshwj* means both to discard the bad and to select the good.

- **tshwjkaab** ‘the man in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables for the feast at a funeral’ (Heimbach p. 327 tuag), from Chinese 厨 *chú* ‘kitchen’ + 官 *guān* ‘official’:

Nwg yawm yij nuav raug hu moog ua tshwjkaab kaavxwm.

‘His sister’s husband had been called to be the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 10).

“Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?”

‘How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 11.)

- **tshwjtxom** ‘stove’, from Chinese *chú zào*:

koj moov zoo es koj nim tau kaum-ob tug lujtxwv hab peb puas txaj dlawb hab nyuas tshwjtxom noj tej.

‘your luck was good and you acquired twelve mules and three hundred silver coins and a little stove to make food’ (Ceebpov p. 16).

- **tshwm** ‘to show up, to be present, to appear, to come out’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chū*:

Tabsis tsi pum tuaj tshwm ua le caag le.

‘But they didn’t see anyone whatsoever come out at all’ (Rog Vwm p. 3).

- **tshwm sim** ‘to be born, to incarnate, to appear’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *chūshì*.

- **tshws** ‘(classifier *tug*) cat’ (Xiongs):

*Nwg twb cov [typo for *coj*?] tau ib nkawm tshws hab ib nkawm puav*
 ‘She had brought with her a pair of cats and a pair of bats’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

Suav txawm tso plhuav suav paab tsuag coob coob ntawd lug tum nwg, nwg txhaj tso
plhuav nwg nkawm tshws moog tum.
 ‘When the Chinese released their pack of rats to bite her, she released her pair of cats to bite the rats’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **tshws miv** ‘cat’ (Xiongs).

- **tshwsmllob** or **tshwsmllov** ‘cat’:

tshws mlob ‘cat’ (Xiongs).

Tes Los Lwm dlha quas loo moog saib nyuas tshwsmllob caws qa tim, ib nyuas paaj
pawg, quaj mi-aub. Ua le le ntawd tes Los Lwm nim dlha quas loo moog tas; “Los Tuam
av! mi-aub sas! yog nam miv mi-aub os”.

But when Los Lwm ran to look, he saw a little cat hopping about there. It gave a little jump and cried “Miau”. So Los Lwm ran back and said, “Oh, Los Tuam, it’s just a pussycat, a little bitty pussycat!” (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

Nam tsuag tho tho mejloos to plhuav tes nam tsuag dlha quas loo moog kwv hlo nyuas
ceebpov tawm plawg rua tshws mlob.

‘In the meantime, the rat had gnawed a hole in the storage basket and had removed the gold amulet and given it to the cat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

tshuav tuab nam dlev pw caws ceeg ntawm ntug qhovcub huas tshwsmllov pw caws ceeg
peg qhovtxus quaj; “mi-aub! mi-aub!”

All that remained was a dog curled up by the fire and a cat curled up on top of the stove crying, “Miau! Miau!” (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

TX

- **txa** ‘to transmute, to transform, to change form’ (Xiongs):

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
 ‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

There a whole book of *Lug Nruag Txa (Yeeg)* ‘Stories About (Magical) Transformations’, and transformations occur in other stories, e.g. in *Nuj Sis Loob*:

Nuj Sis Loob ran out from under the rock and went to stand on top of the rock to look around. Why, there was a black cloud flying straight from the horizon. When it reached him, it transformed itself into an ox-eating eagle (*Nwg txawm txa ntshis ua tuab tug nam dlaav nojnyuj*) and perched just below the building. When it had landed, it transformed itself into an elderly man (*nwg kuj txa ua tuab yawm tuabneeg laug*) and entered the building. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 38.)

Nuj Sis Loob uses his magical powers to transform himself in his battle with the Spirit:

Grandfather Spirit entered and searched and quickly looked at the place where His

Majesty the Ruler brought people, but there was no one there at all. Then he entered his dining room and lo and behold his sword was broken in two pieces. Thereupon he became very angry. The Spirit then opened the door in the temple and went outside and searched all round the building two times but could not find anyone all. Then Nuj Sis Loob flew from the area above the drainage ditch and drew near the Spirit and asked him, “Cousin, where are you going and why are you so angry?”

The Spirit replied, “Ah, dear boy, who are you? Why do you come here and call me cousin? I have no cousin who looks like you. Who are you calling?”

Nuj Sis Loob responded, “Do you say that you have no cousins at all who look like me? In that case, I must be the one whom His Majesty the Ruler sent to kill you.”

When Nuj Sis Loob had said all this, Grandfather Spirit became angrier than ever. He laughed loudly and said angrily, “Ha! Ha! Ha! You are the one whom His Majesty the Ruler sent for me to eat! Why did you break my sword and run about boasting to me that you are the one who has come to kill me?”

Nuj Sis Loob responded, “If you think that I cannot kill you, why don’t you come here and see?”

When Nuj Sis Loob had issued this challenge, Grandfather Spirit transformed himself into a dog (*txa ntshis ua tuab tug nam dlev*) and was about to bite Nuj Sis Loob but Nuj Sis Loob transformed himself into a wolf (*txa ntshis ua tuab tug nam maa*) and fought with Grandfather Spirit. The two of them fought back and forth without anyone winning or losing, so Grandfather Spirit just transformed himself into a tigress [*txa ntshis ua kag tuab tug nam tsuv*] to attack Nuj Sis Loob. But Nuj Sis Loob transformed himself at once into a male tiger (*txa ntshis ua kag taub tug txiv tug*) to fight with Grandfather Spirit.

Grandfather Spirit and Nuj Sis Loob transformed themselves into (*txa ua*) dogs and wolves, into tigers and bears, into *ntxhuav* and elephants, into cattle and horses, into frogs and fish, into snakes and dragons, into insects and grasshopper, into moths and ants and into all manner of tame and wild animals, cold-blooded animals and water animals, flying animals and crawling animals, trying to swallow one another and peck one another and kick one another without anyone winning or losing.

The two of them fought all day and all night. The Temple was completely demolished because of their battle. Finally, the two of them changed back into human beings (*rovqaab txa ua tuabneeg*) to fight with each other. (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 39-40.)

- **txa** ‘to seep, to leak out slowly, to ooze, to give forth, to exude (fluid)’ (Xiongs):

dlej txa ‘leaking water’ (Xiongs).

- **txa** ‘(classifier *lub*) goiter’ (Xiongs).

- **txa**: *o txa* ‘to be very angry, very unhappy’ (Xiongs).

- **txa dlej** ‘untight, poorly done, fragile, easily broken’ (Xiongs).

- **txa yeeb** ‘the Adam’s apple’ (Xiongs).

- **txab** ‘(classifier *raab*) scissors’ (Xiongs):

Muab raab txab dlub rua kuv sob ‘Give me the black scissors please’ (Xiongs).

- **txag** ‘cold’ (Xiongs):

Dlej txag ca sis zim, luas tsuj kaab laugsaab caab saab zim rua luas neev.

‘Cold water has washed into his tracks. Spiders have strung their threads inside his footprints’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

Naab nub yog tsaj qheb tshab zoo hab kuas txag miv ntsiv.

‘As for the day of the snake, it is the animal that begins Spring, so one [who is born on the day of the snake] will be a little cold’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

Luas has tas, ‘koj yuav noj dlaabtsi?’ nua cais koj teb has tas, ‘yog muaj ntsaa qhuav cais, koj noj ib nyuas qhov ntsaa qhuav ntxuag mov dlej txag xwb’ nua nawb!

‘When he says, “What would you like to eat?”, then you answer that if he has some dry planks, then all you want is a bit of dry plank together with rice in cold water’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

- **txag** ‘to have sex or intercourse’ (Xiongs).

- **txag** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) plank, board’ (Xiongs):

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus. Taus sis ntsawv tawg sis plhawv ua plaubfaab. Nkauj pab nrug txawj pab, pab sis nthawv nraug laj quas kho le txag cab lug ua koj leej tub tuag le vaaj tsev tshab.

‘The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four parts. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of fir, O dead person, to make your new home.

Nkauj taus nrug txawj taus, taus sis ntsawv ua plaub txaug. Nkauj pab sis txawj pab, pab sis ndlawv nraug la [typo (or variant form) for *laj*?] *quas kho le txag thuv ua koj leej tub tuag lub moog tsev ruv.*

The axe maiden knew how to chop. She chopped the log into four sections. The adze maiden knew how to cleave. She split off a plank of pine, O dead person, to make the roof of your house’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11; the dead person’s ‘home’ is the coffin, which may be made of any hard, decay resistant wood).

- **txag** (see also *txaj*):

muaj txag ‘rich, wealthy’ (Xiongs).

nyaj txag ‘money’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntaw rua koj coj moog them se dlej se tawg, se teb se chaw pis xeeb

‘When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax, the tax of the land and of the place of the guardian spirit’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.

‘It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **txag**: *noob txag noob txhu* ‘animals, livestock’ (see also *tsaj*):

yuav txhua yaam noob txag noob txhu lug yug
 ‘bought all kinds of animals to raise’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 13).

- **txag**: *txivtxag* ‘the lid of a coffin’:

Cais puab rovqaab muab dlaim txivtxag lug npug nkaus le qub, hab has kuas suavdlawg tuaj paab zuv.

‘Then they covered him again with the lid of the coffin as before, and had everyone help keep watch’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug moog cem hlo dlaim nam txivtxag saib
 ‘then Yob the Orphan’s older brother lifted the lid of the coffin to look’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

- **txag**: *tsaj txag* ‘a cold-blooded animal’:

Yawm Dlaab hab Nuj Sis Loob ob tug txa ... ua txhua yaam tsaj nyeg tsaj qus, tsaj txag tsaj dleg, tsaj yaa tsaj ndlaug

‘The Spirit and Nuj Sis Loob transformed themselves ... into all manner of tame and wild animals, cold-blooded animals and water animals, flying animals and crawling animals’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 40).

*3 hlis – naab hli**

3rd month – month of the snake*

* *tsaj txag, xub qheb tshab lub 3 hlis ntuj*

* a cold-blooded animal; Spring begins in the 3rd month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

- **txaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) coin (money)’ (Xiongs) (see also *txag*).

- **txaj** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) paper money, yuan (Chinese unit of currency)’ (see also *txag*):

Ib kiv ntsab twb nto ib dlaim txaj lawm.

‘One jin [half a kilo] of rice costs one yuan’ (Xyooj Me Choj, *Txooj Moob* No. 4 page 20).

- **txaj** ‘(no classifier) a tenth of an ounce’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qián*, a traditional Chinese unit of weight equal to one tenth of a liáng, equivalent to five grams.

- **txaj**: *com txaj* ‘a bundle of ritual paper or spirit-money’:

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, a bundle of ritual paper is given to the dead person to reimburse the spirits of the place:

Neej Tsu as koj nyob Phuaj Hoos nua teb le chaw, sov koj haus luas pes tsawg dlej, tsauv luas pes tsawg le tawg, muab ib com nyaj nuav rua koj koj moog them luas nqe dlej nqe tawg koj le tau kev moog tov Neej Tsu!

‘O Neej Tsu ... when you lived here in the area of Phou Hong [a mountain in Laos], you drank I don’t know how much of someone else’s water, burned I don’t know how much of someone else’s firewood. Take this bundle of money with you to pay for the cost of the water and the firewood and you will be able to go on your way, Neej Tsu!’ (*Initiation*

p. 131).

In a folktale a Pujntxoog (a female spirit) is explaining to Nuj Yob (the protagonist) that Nuj Yob's dead father has made arrangements in the spirit world for her to marry Nuj Yob:

Nuj Yob, koj txiv muab tau peb com txaj ntawd saws kuv rua koj nua es
'Nuj Yob, your father paid me these three bundles of money on your behalf' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84).

- **txaj**: *lug txaj* 'Mong traditional song' (Xiongs).

Types of *Lug Txaj* include:

- **lug txaj hluas nkauj yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws** 'song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 15-17).
- **lug txaj moov tsis saws, hluas nkauj txha moog yuav quas yawg** 'song about how, not being acclimatized to her fate, a young woman married a husband' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 17-18).
- **lug txaj ntsuag** 'song about being orphaned' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 12-13).
- **lug txaj puj cav nyaab** 'song of a woman ill-treating a daughter-in-law' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 13-15).
- **lug txaj pleeg** 'love song' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 18, 19).
- **lug txaj sib tau** 'song about getting to be together with one another' (*Tswv Yim* p. 34).
- **lug txaj sib tog kawm txuj** 'song about waiting for one another while one has gone away to go to school' (*Tswv Yim* p. 35).
- **lug txaj sib ua neej** 'song about getting married and starting a family' (*Tswv Yim* pp. 34-37).
- **lug txaj tuag** 'song about death', 'song sung by an unmarried person when his or her loved one dies, song sung when a loved one dies (either man or woman may sing it, but not married people)' (Lyman p. 101).
- **lug-txaj tsiv-teb tsaws chaw** 'song about fleeing from your homeland' (*Grandmother's Path* pp. 106-107).
- **lug txaj ua noj** 'song about preparing food' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 20).
- **Moob le lug txaj sib ncaim** 'Mong song of separation' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 19).

Lug Txaj consist of couplets based on rhyme and parallelism. The paired words within a strophe rhyme and the paired words across strophes are parallel, for example,

Muam Nkauj Ntsum tau Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum nruag Lob Lw luaj teb ntuv ntoo, cog qoob cog loo, ua vaaj dlog vaaj tsawb. Lob Lw tua lauv nraaj dlawb, Lob Lw tsi pub Muam Nkauj Ntsum noj, Muam Nkauj Ntsum rhu nplej txawb.

Muam Nkauj Ntsum tau Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum nrug Loob Lw luaj teb ntuv ntoo, cog qoob cog loo, ua vaaj tsawb vaaj dlog. Lob Lw tua lauv nraaj rog, Lob Lw tsi pub Muam Nkauj Ntsum noj, Muam Nkauj Ntsum rhu nplej cog.

When Muam Nkauj Ntsum got Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Lob Lw cleared fields and cut down trees, planted grains and planted crops, made gardens of onions and of bananas [*tsawb*]. Lob Lw killed a cock pheasant that was white [*dlawb*], but Lob Lw did not give any to Muam Nkauj Ntsum to eat. Muam Nkauj Ntsum pulled out the rice and threw it away [*txawb*].

When Muam Nkauj Ntsum got Lob Lw, Muam Nkauj Ntsum and Lob Lw cleared fields and cut down trees, planted grains and planted crops, made gardens of bananas and of onions [*dlog*]. Lob Lw killed a cock pheasant that was fat [*rog*], but Lob Lw did not give any to Muam Nkauj Ntsum to eat, and Muam Nkauj Ntsum pulled out the rice and planted it [*cog*]. (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

Examples of the expression *lug txaj* used in sentences:

has koj zaaj lug txaj ‘sing your song’ (Xiongs).

Lob Lw, koj tub xaa kuv lug txug nuav, hab tub yuav txug kuv nam kuv txiv tsev cais wb ib leeg has ib zaaj lug txaj ais wb le mam ncaim moog.

‘Lob Lw, you’ve escorted me this far and we are about to arrive at my parents’ house so we will each sing a Lug Txaj and then we will separate’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

- **txaj**: *ris txaj* ‘grateful’ (Xiongs).

- **txaj**: *tsi tsimtxaj* ‘not of value’:

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

‘Oh, those bellows, why are they worthless like that?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

The first syllable of *tsimtxaj* is from Chinese *zhí* (Southwestern Mandarin *zhì*).

- **txaj ntaub**, in a needlework square (*noob-ncoos*), tiny squares of material (usually white) with even smaller squares set on top as diamonds (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 140).

- **txaj ntsig** ‘(classifier *lub*) credit, something good or help provided by or to others’ (Xiongs) (see also *txaj oob txaj ntsim*).

- **txaj oob txaj ntsim** ‘to treasure’ (see also *txaj ntsig*):

Haus taag nam dlej ab nam peb lu, koj yuav tsis nrug ncu. Koj yuav haus taag nam dlej ab qas tag, nam ncauj le yuav yang taag, koj le txaj oob txaj ntsim tsis ncu taag nplaj lis teb.

‘When you have drunk three mouthfuls of the bitter water, you will lose your memory. When you have drunk the bitter water truly, when your mouth is completely rinsed, you will forget all that you treasured on the face of the earth’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

- **txaj tab**:

The base fabric of the middle section of the skirt (*nthu tab*) is the *cab* or batik. It’s indigo on white, or indigo on light blue. There are several designs for the batik pattern, and very

few of the women in the U.S. remember all of them. Most of the designs are called *txaj tab* or ‘skirt mark’. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145.)

- **txav** ‘to cut, to cut off, to cut down’ (Xiongs):

Txav txuj lab taag, txuj dlawb txuas lawm. Txav txuj nuav taag, txuj tod txuas lawm.

Txav txav taag tes tub txuas taag lawm.

‘Sever the red one, and the white one joins on. Sever this one, and that one joins on. However many you sever, others have already joined on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

Ab yog tas koj tsi kheev los thov txav cov plaubhau rua kuv lauj!

‘Very well, if you won’t [give me the head], then please cut off the hair for me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31.)

Awb! cov plaubhau xwb koj yuav yuav los txav kag teg plaubhau rau.

‘Oh, if all you want is the hair, go ahead and cut off a hank of hair for yourself’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Tes puab txha le muab txav lug kuas tuablu.

‘Therefore they abbreviated it and made one word’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev

‘But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Awb! puj aw, qaug cawv hwv tes koj moog txav paas rua kuv nreg.

‘Oh, grandmother, I’m very drunk, so you go and cut a cane for me to lean on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **txav** ‘to apportion a share’:

Koj yuav lug nqaa txavtxwv moog rua Muam Nkauj Ntsum txav nyaj kub.

‘You want to take the Maiden Ntsum’s share and apportion the silver and gold’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw

‘and took the share and apportioned the silver and gold to be capital to found a nation’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **txav** ‘pancreas’ (Xongs):

mob txav ‘pancreas disease’ (Xiongs).

- **txav muag** ‘to blink the eyes’ (Xiongs).

- **txav ntoo** ‘to cut down trees’ (Xiongs):

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **txav sab** ‘to decide’ (Xiongs).

- **txav txim** ‘to judge, to sentence’ (Xiongs).

- **txav txwv** ‘a share’:

Pegkis koj ca le moog cuag kuv nam hab kuv txiv ob tug, hab moog muab txav txwv lug txav rua wb siv. Koj moog has rua kuv nam hab kuv txiv tas koj yog Muam Nkauj Ntsum tug quasyawg. Koj yuav lug nqaa txavtxwv moog rua Muam Nkauj Ntsum txav nyaj kub.
‘Tomorrow you will go to meet my parents and get our share. Tell my mother and father that you are the Maiden Ntsum’s husband and that you have come for the Maiden Ntsum’s share of the silver and gold’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

tso Yob Nraug Ntsuag moog muab txavtxwv sau ntuj
‘sent Yob the Orphan to get the share of the wealth from heaven’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum moog muab tau txavtxwv
‘the Maiden Ntsum took her share of the wealth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog.
‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **txaab** ‘bad, ugly’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 脏 *zāng* ‘dirty’.

- **txaab** ‘water’ (Xiongs).

- **txaag** ‘(no classifier) bed’ (Xiongs) (see also *txaaj*):

pw ib txaag ‘to sleep in the same bed’ (Xiongs).

- **txaag** ‘to move’ (Xiongs).

- **txaag** (see also *txaaj*): *dlaab rooj txaag* ‘spirit of the bedroom door’:

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

‘When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,
‘you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,
Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.
Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 129).

- **txaag quas nyee** ‘loosely moving’ (Xiongs).

- **txaaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) bed’ (see also *txaag*):

koj pw sau txaaj ‘you sleep on the bed’ (Xiongs).

Nam yawd, muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw, es koj tug nyuas tub moog nrug wb ob nyuas ntxhais pw huv txaaj.

‘Sir, we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on, while your son can sleep in the bed with our two daughters.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

Notice that whereas the Xiongs write *pw sau txaaj* ‘sleep on the bed’, the spirit in the story says that the boy can *pw huv txaaj* ‘sleep in the bed’.

Nam txiv losyog tug tswv tsev lub txaaj ‘The bed of the mother and father or of the head of the household’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Cais nwg tug muam txhaj nkaag tom txaaj rhu hlo tau ib naab nyaj ib naab kub muab rua tug nug ntxawg nqaa lug tsev lawm.

‘So his sister then crawled to the bed and pulled out a bag of silver and a bag of gold to give to the younger brother to carry home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 14).

The drawing on page 106 of *Village* shows the traditional Hmong bed as being made of wooden boards elevated on four short legs, so the bags of silver and gold could have been pulled out from under the bed.

- **txaaj chaw** ‘bed’:

Txaaj chaw rua tub ntxhais hluas ‘The bed for the younger sons and daughters’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **txaaj muag** ‘to be shy, ashamed’ (Xiongs):

ob tug nim txaajmuag quas ntshis tes tsi kaav hu le lauj! ‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm were a bit abashed and did not dare to call out to them’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

- **txaaj qhuas** ‘guest bed’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **txaaj ntseg** ‘a fish trap built as a small dam across a river’ (Xiongs).

- **txaaj zeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) a bed to hold stones especially on top of a ramp or hill for defense purposes’ (Xiongs).

- **txaam** ‘to bump, to hit’ (Xiongs).

- **txaam xem** ‘purple’ (Xiongs), second syllable perhaps from Chinese *sè* ‘color’:

txaamxem lug ‘purple’ (Xiongs p. 557).

The word *txaam xem* appears to be from Chinese but the exact Chinese source is uncertain. The second syllable, *xem*, may be from Chinese 色 *sè* ‘color’, but the first syllable, *txaam*, is more difficult to pin down. Michael Johnson (personal communication) quotes expressions containing one possible source, 藏 *zàng*, from the Guiyang Fangyan Cidian (Guiyang Dialect Dictionary):

藏青 zàngqīn | 蓝中带黑的颜色 ‘the color of blue which has black in its midst’
 藏青布 zàngqīnbù | 用植物染料蓝靛染过的土布，藏青色或黑色，多泛红色。当地苗族、布依族多用此布做衣料 ‘homespun cloth which has been dyed with plantbased indigo, whether “zangqing”, black or red. Local Miao and Buyi all use such cloth to make clothing’.

Then Michael quotes a Wiktionary entry providing another possible source, 酱 jiàng:

酱紫(色) jiàngzǐ dark reddish purple

Michael notes that, in Early Middle Chinese, 酱 was pronounced tsiaŋC, that is, with the initial consonant *ts*, suggesting that if Mong *txaam* (with the initial consonant *tx*, pronounced *ts*) is from 酱, it may have been borrowed relatively early. If the Mong word for ‘purple’ were a very recent borrowing, from the modern Chinese pronunciation *jiàng*, we might expect the Mong initial consonant to be *c*, not *tx*.

Michael writes that Mong *txaam* could be from either 藏 zàng or 酱 jiàng, “(or something else) – not sure.”

Finally, Michael notes that Bertrais’s White Hmong dictionary has a form with *ts* rather than *tx*, an unusual phonological difference:

Bertrais (under *xem*) has:

tshuaj tsam *xem* ‘bleu de Prusse’ – this is an actual substance, classed as tshuaj [‘medicine’]. Can’t find this “Prussian blue” on Larousse. It should be either 1) the blue coloured liquid that is added to hand washed laundry to make the whites whiter (I have only seen this in Ghana). 2) a blue dyestuff for dyeing cloth.

txos tsam *xem* ‘couleur bleue de Prusse’ – this is the actual colour, as a perceivable sense.

- **txaav** ‘to move, to shift, to change position or place, to displace, to remove’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhǎn*, which in Southwestern Mandarin has the sense of ‘to move, to shift’ (see also *tsaav*):

Puab txaav moog rua tim Kev 16 lawm ‘They already moved to 16th street’ (Xiongs).

thov txaav tom ntej zog ‘move over a little’ (Xiongs).

- **txaav tawm** ‘to move out, to emerge’ (Xiongs).

- **txaij** ‘multicolored, striped, spotted, speckled, varicolored’ (Xiongs):

Nwg txawm muab nam Suav paav kawg kag rua nam eeb kub txaij txaij
 ‘Then he fastened the Chinese [merchant] on the resplendent golden saddle’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nraug rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel, oh little zebra squirrel! You a mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

Tes hlay muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

‘Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **txaij**: *kaab txaij* ‘strip’ (Xiongs).

- **Txaij**: *Moob Quasnpaab (Moob Txaij)*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **txaij**: *neeg txaij* ‘(classifier *tug*) zebra’ (Xiongs).

- **txaij**: *qhov muag txaij* ‘to have illusion, unable to see clearly’ (Xiongs):

Ab yawd! yog meb pum Suav Los Paav ua luam dlua kev meb qhovmuag txaij meb laam has le.

‘Oh, my! When you saw the Chinese merchant going by on business, you must have had a hallucination. You’re pulling my leg’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18).

- **txaij**: *tsuv txaij* ‘leopard’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to accept, to receive’ (Xiongs):

Puab tsi tau txais dlaim ntawv le ‘They did not receive the letter yet’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to borrow’ (Xiongs):

Kuv txas [typo for *txais*] *nyaj yuav tsheb*

‘I borrow money to buy a car, I get a loan to buy a car’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to ignite, to catch fire, to start burning’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to pick up sound waves, to be able to get a transmission station (radio, TV etc. –)’ (Xiongs):

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*

‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to interrupt in speaking’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to take a short cut’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*

‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to guess’ (Xiongs):

Nwg laam txais cua le xwb ‘s/he just guesses’ (Xiongs).

- **txais** ‘to catch’:

nwg txhaj tso plhuav nwg nkawm puav yaa moog txais tum cov nkawj hab muv ntawd ua nwg tuag taagnrho lawm ib yaam nkaus.

‘and she released her pair of bats, who flew about catching and biting the wasps and bees until they too were dead’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **txais**: *zoo sab tog txais* ‘welcome’:

zoo sab tog txais mej suav dlawg tuaj huv rooj qav nuav
 ‘welcome all of you to the meal or banquet’ (Xiongs).

- **txais kev** ‘to take a short cut’:

Koj yuaav [typo for yuav] tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab
 ‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

- **txau** ‘to squirt, to spray’ (Xiongs):

txau dlej ‘to squirt water’ (Xiongs).

- **txaug** ‘(classifier *raab*) chisel; to chisel’ (Xiongs):

txaug zeb ‘to chisel a grindstone’ (Xiongs).

tsag 1/ Raab tsag txaug qhov cug.

‘tsag 1/ Cutter for chiseling the hole a in treadmill’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **txauj** ‘to stamp, to bring down the foot forcibly upon something, to strike down with the foot’ (Xiongs).

- **txauj** ‘to make a hole or noise with the beak (bird), to peck’ (Xiongs).

- **txaum** ‘the quantity that can be picked up with the five fingers, a small quantity of something’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus** ‘enough, sufficient, adequate; as much or as often as necessary, to the required degree or amount, fully’ (Xiongs):

cov thee tsi tau kub txaus ‘the charcoal is not hot enough’ (Xiongs).

Txaus lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntxiv lawm ‘enough! I don’t need anymore’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus:** *luj txaus* ‘fully grown’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus:** *ua tau txaus ntxub* ‘stink’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus hlub** ‘lovely’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus luag** ‘funny’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus nyam** ‘lovely’ (Xiongs).

- **txaus sab** ‘to satisfy, to be satisfied’ (Xiongs).

- **txauv** ‘to replace, to change, to exchange, to take the place of’ (Xiongs):

Puab txauv chaw lawm ‘They already changed place’ (Xiongs).

- **txauv:** *sib txauv* ‘to mix, to have to take someone else’s instead of your own’ (Xiongs).

- **txawb** ‘to put down’ (Xiongs):

Muam Nkauj Ntsum rhu nplej txawb.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum pulled out the rice and threw it away’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 27).

Tes nim muab hlo ib lub zimtxwv nyaj coj lug txawb nkaus rua hov
 ‘Then she brought a silver chair and set it down there’ (Ceebpov p. 11).

- **txawb** ‘to lay on, to stand on’ (Xiongs):

muab txawb rua sau rooj ‘stand it on the table’ (Xiongs).

Muab txawb rua sau txee ‘put it on the shelf’ (Xiongs).

- **txawb** ‘to land’:

Nwg tsi tog kuas ca txawb nkaus huv peg teb
 ‘He did not wait for her to land on the ground’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 33).

- **txawb**: *ceg txawb* ‘(classifier *tug*) stand, leg stand’ (Xiongs).

- **txawb paim** ‘to crouch’:

Moog txug nraag kev na tuab nam txiv tsuv txawb paiv nraag kev
 ‘When he got down to the road, why, a male tiger was crouching down by the road’ (Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 28).

- **txawb txuas** ‘to join’:

Nam Sib Tuam ob fuas ob fuas tsi tau taubhau lug txawb txuas rua le
 ‘Sub Tuam snatched about and snatched about but could not find his head to join it back on’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 30).

- **txawj** ‘to know how to do something, to be able to do something’ (Xiongs):

Kuv tsi txawj ua ‘I don’t know how to do it’ (Xiongs).

kuv txiv txawj txua neev ‘my father knows how to make a crossbow’ (Xiongs).

Puab puas txawj has lug Aas Kiv? ‘Do they speak English?’ (Xiongs.)

Luas yog ntxhais fuabtais hab luas txawj ntse heev.
 ‘Someone was a princess and someone was pretty smart’ (Kwvhuam p. 19).

yog nwg moov tsi txug hab luj loog tsi hum mas yeej tsi txawj ua neeb ib zag
 ‘if his destiny/merit does not reach and the faint voice does not fit then he will never know how to perform shamanic ceremonies’ (Tswv Yim p. 93).

Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab tsi txawj mob
 ‘On the face of the earth human beings for millennia have not known illness’ (Initiation p. 125).

Ub! Siv Yig Muas, koj nim txawj txawj ua neeb, tau tau nqaj noj.
 ‘Say, Siv Yig Muas, know how to perform shamanic rites, so you get meat to eat’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 27).

- **txawj ntawv** ‘to be literate’:

tuab neeg txawj ntawv ‘literate people’ (Xiongs).

- **txawj tuag** ‘to die’:

Nyuas laublaig nis laublaig! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho lab lab zoo zoo nkauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little minivet oh minivet! You had a mother and a father to give you beautiful red clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

Nyuas ca nis nyuas ca! Koj nim muaj nam muaj txiv pub rigtsho txaij txaij nraug nrauj rua koj naav es koj nim txawj tuag lawm!

‘Little zebra squirrel oh little zebra squirrel! You had mother and a father to give you beautiful striped clothing to wear and yet you are dead!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 82.)

- **txawm** ‘then, so’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 就 *jiù*:

Nwg txawm dlha ceev ceev tawm ‘s/he then quickly runs away’ (Xiongs).

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

‘The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **txawm** ‘to naturally exist, grow’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 就 *jiù* (this specialized sense is also in Chinese).

- **txawm**: *cais* ... *txawm* ‘accordingly’, ‘then ... and’:

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej

‘The Spirit accordingly flew down to the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Tseem tawv ntau, yog ntev nua cais ua peb co, tuablu txawm ua ob co ntaag!

‘If you keep causing trouble, why then lengthwise you’ll make three pieces, and crosswise you’ll make no more than two!’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13.)

- **txawm ua le los** ‘even though, though’ (Xiongs).

- **txaws** ‘to splash’ (Xiongs):

dlej txaws ‘the water splashes’ (Xiongs).

- **txawv** ‘to differ, to be different, to deviate’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 走 *zǒu* ‘to walk, to go’ in the sense of ‘departing from the norm’:

Lug Moob yog ib hom kws txawv

‘The Mong language is one which is distinctive’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

Thaum muab has tawm lawd, lub suab txawv zog mivmiv

‘When they [White Hmong and Mong Leng] are spoken, the pronunciation is slightly different’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **txawv** ‘different, strange’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 走 *zǒu* ‘to walk, to go’ in the sense of ‘departing from the norm’:

Puab nyav ua tau ib yaam txawv txawv

‘They have just made something very strange’ (Xiongs).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **txawv suab** ‘off tone, different in tone’ (Xiongs).
- **txee** ‘(classifier *lub*) shelf’ (Xiongs, *Tswv Yim* p. 15):

Muab txawb rua sau txee ‘put it on the shelf’ (Xiongs).

- **txeeb** ‘to seize, to snatch away from’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 爭 *zhēng*, heavily used in Southwestern Mandarin:

Yuav ua caag txhaj tua tau Yob Nraug Ntsuag, hab txhaj txeeb tau nwg tej qubtxeeg qubteg ntawd lug ua yug tug!

‘How to get to kill Yob the Orphan and then seize his inheritance as one’s own!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

Tabsis tomqaab nuav luas kuj has tas yog luas sawv Xov Chim xwb, vim tas Faabkis yuav txeeb lub tebchaws cais suavdlawg txhaj sawv lug tua tsi pub Faabkis txeeb nkaus xwb.

‘But afterwards it was said that people were only rebelling, because the French were going to take away the land, so everyone rose up and came to fight the French, just to prevent them from taking the land’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 1).

- **txeeb**: *sib txeeb* ‘to contest for possession of something, to snatch something from one another’ (Xiongs).
 - **txeeb ib ntsiv** ‘almost’ (Xiongs).
 - **txeeb rog** ‘to fry in oil’, first syllable from Chinese 煎 *jiān* ‘to fry in shallow oil, to pan-fry’:
- muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!*
‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)
- **txeeb zig** ‘bladderstone’ (Xiongs).
 - **txeeg** ‘(no classifier) thing’ (Xiongs).
 - **txeeg** ‘wild, virgin’ (Xiongs).
 - **txeeg**: *haav zoov nuj quas txeeg* ‘wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs):

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.

‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **txeeg**: *haav zoov nuj txeeg* ‘(classifier *lub*) a wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **txeeg**: *qub txeeg qub teg* ‘heritage, antiques, old things, old articles’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug lug txug tsev, cais nwg pheej najnub xaav tuab quas ywv has tas: “Ab! Yuav ua caag txhaj tua tau Yob Nraug Ntsuag, hab txhaj txeeb tau nwg tej qubtxeeg qubteg ntawd lug ua yug tug!”

When the Ruler arrived home, he every day kept thinking quietly: “Ah! How to get to kill Yob the Orphan and then seize his inheritance as one’s own!” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17.)

- **txeej** ‘to flow over the brim, to fall, to spill over’:

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev ‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

- **txeem** ‘to get in, to penetrate, to enter, to force a way in’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 进 *jìn*:

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txeem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

- **txeem** ‘to seep’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that *txeem* ‘to seep’ is probably from Chinese 进 *jìn* ‘to enter’, which would suggest that the original sense was ‘to seep in’ rather than ‘to seep out’. This is in accord with Bertrais (p. 498 *txeem*), who gives the example of water seeping into a watch.

- **txeem**: *cuabyeej toom txeem* ‘household goods’:

cov cuabyeej toom txeem ‘the household goods’ (Xiongs).

hab puab coj suav tej cuab yeej toom txeem lug taagnrho.

‘and they carried away all of the household goods of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **txeev** ‘to use as it is, to leave as it is’ (Xiongs):

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it any more’ (Xiongs).

- **txi** ‘to bear fruit’ (Xiongs):

txi txiv zoo heev ‘very fruitful’ (Xiongs).

- **txi** ‘to offer as a sacrifice, to sacrifice’ (Xiongs):

Puab tuab [typo for tua?] qab txi xeeb

‘They sacrifice a chicken for the most important tree in the village (The Mong believed that in doing so, spirits brought them protection and good hopes)’ (Xiongs).

- **txi** ‘to marry, to couple, to pair’ (Xiongs):

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hluv
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **txib**: *tub txib* ‘servant, messenger’ (Xiongs).

- **txig** ‘a married couple’ (see also *txij nkawm*):

Txig tub nyaab hluv pw chaav nuav
 ‘The son and his wife like to sleep in this room’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **txig**: *sib txig* ‘as tall as, as high rank as (sib is used for comparion)’ (Xiongs) (see also *txij*):

txu lug kom sib txig ‘to level off’ (Xiongs) [“lower the level so that they are equal”].

- **txig** (inferred form) or **txhig** ‘to perform one’s duties to the dead’ (Bertrais txws), ‘to hold a memorial ceremony for, to initiate mourning, to attend a memorial service’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* zul):

nub qhua txhig ‘the day of preparation for the dead, the day before the burial, day when relatives bring rice, paper money, etc. as gifts for the deceased’ (Heimbach p. 272 hnub ua qhua txws):

Nub ntawd yog nub qhua txhig.
 ‘That day was the day before the burial’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

txhigtuag ‘to attend a funeral’:

Dlaab ntxawg, koj tuaj txug ko cais pigkig koj nrug kuv moog txhigtuag ib nub ais koj le rov moog tsev.

‘Brother-in-law, since you’re here, tomorrow you and I can spend the day at a funeral together before you go back home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Yawm Dlaab, nwg tug yawm yij, moog hloov tau khaubdluag los cais ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab txawm moog txhigtuag lawm.

‘When the Spirit, the man’s brother-in-law, had changed his clothes, the two brothers-in-law then went to the funeral’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

The corresponding forms in other Hmong dialects (Heimbach p. 327 txws; Bertrais txws; *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* zul) suggest that *txhig* is a variant spelling of *txig*, but I have not yet seen *txig* in the Mong Leng materials I have looked at.

There is another possibility, which was brought to my attention by Nathan White. Nathan has seen, for example in a Mong Leng Gospel reading on Facebook, a form *txhij tuag* meaning ‘to attend a funeral’, from *txhij* ‘assemble people’ + *tuag* ‘to die’. This might also be a source for *txhig*.

- **txij** ‘to reach to, to be on the same level of, to be up to the point of’:

Koj tug hluas nkauj puas txij koj? ‘Is your girlfriend as tall as you?’ (Xiongs.)

txij nrho (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to reach completely].

- **txij** ‘from’ (Xiongs):

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
 ‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

txij nub nua moog txug rua lub 5 hlis ntuj xyoo 1985
 ‘from now on till May 1985, from now to May 1985’ (Xiongs).

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm
 ‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

- **txij nkawm** ‘(no classifier) spouse’ (see also *txig*):

Koj txij koj nkawm ‘Your spouse (poetic form)’ (Xiongs).

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **txij nrho nuav moog** ‘from right here on’ (Xiongs).

- **txim** ‘(classifier *lub* or no classifier) punishment, penalty’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zui* ‘guilt, crime; fault, blame; suffering, hardship’:

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.
 ‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs).

Tub Nuj Sis Loob! Nubnua yog nub kws koj yuav dlim txim, yog koj tua tau tug Dlaab ntawd ko! Yog koj tua tsi tau, cais koj yuav nyob txim le ko moog ib txhis!
 ‘Tub Nuj Sis Loob, today is the day that you will escape punishment, if you kill the spirit. If you cannot kill him, you will remain under punishment for a lifetime!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 36.)

- **txim** ‘to try to get in a small opening or space’ (Xiongs).

- **txim** ‘complete, full amount’ (Xiongs):

Muaj txim \$100 ‘it is \$100 in full amount’ (Xiongs).

- **txim** ‘(no classifier) spark, sparks; to spark’ (Xiongs).

- **txim** ‘to collapse’ (Xiongs).

- **txim** ‘to collide’ (Xiongs).

- **txim** ‘to scold each other’ (Xiongs).

- **txim**: *muab rau txim* ‘to punish’ (Xiongs).

- **txim**: *teem txim* ‘to declare somebody guilty’, from Chinese *dìngzui*:

Tuag moog txug sau tes Nyaj vab tuam teem muab teem txim

‘When they died and arrived on high, then Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem found them guilty’
(*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **txim**: *thov txim* ‘excuse me, I beg your pardon; to ask for an excuse’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 討 zuì ‘to ask for blame’.

- **txim**: *txav txim* ‘to judge, to sentence’ (Xiongs).

- **txim**: *zaam txim* ‘to give an excuse to’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 让 ràng ‘to allow’ + 罪 zuì ‘guilt’.

- **txiv** (classifier *lub*) ‘fruit’ (Xiongs):

cov txiv nuav xwm hwm lawm ‘these fruits are too small’ (Xiongs).

ib tauv txiv ‘a bunch of fruit’ (Xiongs).

lub txiv nuav muaj kua heev ‘this fruit is very juicy’ (Xiongs).

tsob ntoo txiv dluaj ‘peach’ (Xiongs) [peach tree].

txi txiv zoo heev ‘very fruitful’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv** ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) father, daddy’ (Xiongs) (also written *txwv*):

kuv txiv txawj txua neev ‘my father knows how to make a crossbow’ (Xiongs).

Xaav Kim yog kuv txiv ‘Xao Kee is my father’ (Xiongs).

Txiv is polite address for a man, especially a married man. In *Nuj Sis Loob*, page 47, Nuj Sis Loob’s father’s servants, reporting that Nuj Sis Loob is going to ask for the daughter of the King of the Lower Realm in marriage, switch from calling him Tub Nuj Sis Loob to *Txiv* Nub Sis Loob.

The word for ‘father’ is also written *txwv* but this spelling appears only in Jacques Lemoine’s book *Village*. All of my sources by Mong authors write *txiv*. The same remarks apply to compounds such as *yawm txwv* ‘wife’s father’. Mong authors write *yawm txiv*.

- **txiv** ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) husband’ (Xiongs):

Hiv hiv! Nub nua tshaav ntuj quas lug lawm cais, kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb lug lawm tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky has cleared, for my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is truly coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 29).

Hiv hiv! Nub nua ntuj kaaj quas lug lawm cais kuv txiv Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tuaj yuav txug tag lauj!

‘Hee hee! Today the sky is bright and so my husband Txheeb Tshoj Theeb is really coming’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* pp. 31-33).

- **txiv** ‘male’ (Xiongs):

tug txiv thai lab ‘a big male monkey’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv**, **txwv**, or **ntxwv**, noun suffix, from Chinese 子 *zǐ*, *zi* ‘child’, noun suffix:

khawm txiv ‘button’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kòuzi*.

lujtxwv ‘mule’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*). From Chinese *luózi*.

txav txwv ‘a share’ (*Kwvhuam*).

vaaj ntxwv ‘king’ (Xiongs, *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*, *Ceebpov*). From Chinese *wángzǐ* ‘prince’.

xeeb ntxwv ‘nephew or niece’, ‘grandson or granddaughter’ (Xiongs, *Village*). From Chinese *sūnzi*.

yaam ntxwv ‘example, behavior’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàngzi*.

zimtxwv ‘time, hour, period of time’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 日子 *rìzi*.

zimtxwv ‘chair’ (*Ceebpov*).

- **txiv**: *leejtxiv* ‘the father’:

In a folktale, a father and son spend the night in the home of ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the father to sleep on and says that the son can sleep in the bed with the spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night, the son begins to groan:

Leejtxiv taws teeb hlo sawv tseeg moog saib na ob nam dlaabntxaug ua ob tug lag ntsuab ntsa quas nreeg tug nyuas tub hauvsab tes nyua [typo for *nyuas*?] *tub tuag lawm lauj*. ‘The father lit a lamp and got up to look and, why, the two ntxaug spirits had become two green sickles nailed into the son’s chest and the son was dead.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35).

- **txiv**: *muaj txiv lawm* ‘married (said of a lady)’ (Xiongs):

Literally “has a husband already” as opposed to

muaj quas puj ‘married (said of a man)’ (Xiongs)

literally “has a wife”, without *lawm*.

- **txiv**: *nam txiv* ‘mother and father, parents’:

Nam txiv losyog tug tswv tsev lub txaaj ‘The bed of the mother and father or of the head of the household’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv

‘A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **txiv**: *nam txiv* ‘a married couple’:

Ob nam quaspuij moog xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv, xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv.

‘Wherever the two wives looked there was a married couple, wherever they looked there was a married couple’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

- **txiv**: *nam txiv ib txhis raug* ‘naturally fit together as a pair or couple’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv**: *yawm txiv* or *yawm txwv* ‘wife’s father’:

yawm txwv ‘wife’s father’ (*Village* pp. 174, 175).

Puab nyob lug tsi tau ntev, Yawm Nyooglaug, ob tug yawvtxiv [sic] txawm hu Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moog

‘When they had been living together for not very long, Grandfather Nyooglaug, the couple’s father-in-law [i.e. the wife’s father], summoned Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which the couple’s wife’s mother and wife’s father [i.e. Nkauj Fuab’s parents] had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **txiv cuab thoj** ‘(classifier *lub*) the guava (fruit)’ (Xiongs). Probably from a Chinese compound *jiā táo* ‘household peach’ which has survived in Mong but not in Chinese.

- **txiv dlaab** ‘mother’s brother’, also written *txwv dlaab*:

“*Koj ntshai tsuv tsi ntshai?*” “*Awb! tsuv yog kuv txivdlaab, kuv tsi ntshai aj*”.

“Are you afraid of tigers?” “No! Tigers are my maternal uncles, I’m not afraid of them.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22.)

- **txiv dlaab** ‘wife’s older brother’:

In a story about a young woman who marries a spirit (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 6-17), the woman’s younger brother is referred to and addressed as *dlaab ntxawg* ‘wife’s younger brother’ and the woman’s older brother is referred to and addressed as *txiv dlaab* ‘wife’s older brother’:

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua nwg txiv dlaab, tug nug hluab, has tas: “Txiv dlaab! nubnua koj tuaj saib wb ...”

so the Spirit then said to his wife's older brother, the woman's older brother, "Wife's older brother, today you've come to see us ..." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 16).

- **txiv dlaw** 'walnut' in *Haav Txiv Dlaw* 'Walnut Valley', a Green Mong village in Anning County in Yunnan Province in China:

Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Dlaw 'Memoire of Walnut Valley' (*Cim Xeeb*, title).

- **txiv lwg** 'eggplant' (Xiongs).
- **txiv maj keeb** 'orange, from Lao *mâak kîang*' (*Tswv Yim* p. 4)
- **txiv maj qhaam** 'tamarind, from Lao *mâak khăam*' (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **txiv maum kuab** 'papaya' (Xiongs). From Chinese *mùguā*.
- **txiv meb** 'we two, the two of us', male speakers:

Txiv meb moog coj tau txiv meb quaspuj ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!
'The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **txiv mej** 'I, me', male speaker:

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!
'fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

- **txiv mej** 'we, us':

In a folktale a man starts to unplug a gourd that, unbeknownst to him, is filled with dangerous spirits, and immediately hears voices from inside the gourd saying:

"Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!"
"Oh yes! Open us, [we'll] try killing and eating [you]!" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **txiv mig** 'nipple' (Xiongs).
- **txiv neeb** '(classifier *tug*) shaman':

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

'The shaman's body is on the yang world [the world of living human beings], but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person's illness' (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **txiv ntxawm** 'father's younger brother' (also written *txwv ntxawm*):

In a folktale, a man visiting his sister in the spirit world is invited by his sister's spirit-husband to attend a funeral, where the spirit is in charge of preparing food for the funeral guests. The spirit goes off to fetch "meat" – i.e. human beings – and asks the young man whether it would be appropriate to kill the person he has fetched. At one point, the spirit brings the young man's father's younger brother:

Nwg rua ib tsuag tim u, ua cav kag nwg txiv ntxawm lug. Yawm Dlaab tig lug nug has tas:

He [the spirit] took a step way over there, why he had brought his [the young man's] father's younger brother. The Male Spirit turned [to the young man] and asked:

“Dlaab ntxawg, tug nuav tua nyog los tsi nyog?”

“Wife's younger brother, this one is he appropriate to kill or not appropriate?”

Tug nug ntxawg teb tas:

The younger brother replied:

“Yawm yij, tug ko yog tuv txiv ntxawm, tua tsi nyog ho!”

“Sister's husband, that one is my father's younger brother, to kill him is not appropriate!”

(Lug Nruag Dlaab p. 11.)

- **txiv nyuj** ‘(classifier *tug*) bull; ox, bull’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv qaib nphuab** ‘strawberry’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv qaum** ‘fruit’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv tsawb** ‘banana (fruit)’ (Xiongs).

ib ntxuam txiv tsawb ‘a pack of bananas’ (Xiongs).

ib thij txiv tsawb ‘a whole stem of bananas’ (Xiongs).

- **txivtxag** ‘the lid of a coffin’:

Cais puab rovqaab muab dlaim txivtxag lug npug nkaus le qub, hab has kuas suavdlawg tuaj paab zuv.

‘Then they covered him again with the lid of the coffin as before, and had everyone help keep watch’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

cais Yob Nraug Ntsuag tijlaug moog cem hlo dlaim nam txivtxag saib

‘then Yob the Orphan's older brother lifted the lid of the coffin to look’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 28).

- **txiv xaiv** ‘instructional funeral songs’ (Xiongs).

- **txiv zuaj** ‘a kind of fruit that grows along the roots at the surface of the ground’ (Xiongs):

The Hmong-Chinese dictionaries distinguish between

txiv zuaj ‘pear’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 445 zid ruax; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 204 zid ruax)

and

txiv zuaj teb (“ground *txiv zuaj*”) ‘diguā (a kind of wild fruit that grows on vines, actually formed on the root part on the surface of the ground)’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 446 zid ruax deb), ‘ground vine fruit’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 204 zid ruax deb).

The Xiongs have only the kind of *txiv zuaj* that grows on the ground.

Bertrais has only the kind of *txiv zuaj* that grows on a tree, which Bertrais translates as ‘apple’ (Bertrais 1978 pp. 502 and 581). In *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*, Michael Johnson writes that Bertrais’s gloss

should be taken with a large pinch of salt. Chinese pears are typically round like apples, so it is possible that the ancient Hmongic root *-zuaj* could have been transferred to non-native ‘apple’, however the gloss is more likely the result of confusion.

Lyman and Heimbach do not have either kind of *txiv zuaj*.

I have not encountered *txiv zuaj* in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s Mong Leng texts, but there is a story in a dialect similar to Mong Leng, presented by Yaj Ntxoov Yias in his book on the Hmong of Mengla county in Yunnan province, which tells of a childless couple acquiring a plant that produces a single giant *txiv zuaj*. When the couple splits the *txiv zuaj* open, a toad comes out and says “Do not kill me, mother and father”. The couple spares the toad’s life and raises him to young manhood. Eventually, after various adventures, he becomes a handsome young man. (Yaj Ntxoov Yias, *Dab Neeg, Kwv Txhiaj, Keeb Kwm Nyob Moos Laj* [Folktales, Songs, and Origin Stories from Mengla], Association Communauté Hmong, Javouhey, French Guiana, 1992, pp. 217-225.)

- **txo** ‘(no classifier) residue, rest, remainder’ (Xiongs):

cov txo yog hlau ‘the remainder is metal or iron’ (Xiongs).

- **txo**: *muaj txo* ‘not clear (liquid), not limpid’ (Xiongs).

- **txob** ‘itchy; (noun) itching’ (Xiongs):

tshuaj txob ‘itching medicine’ (Xiongs).

- **txob** ‘to cause trouble, to make trouble’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 焦 *jiāo* ‘burnt, scorched, worried, anxious’, which in Southwestern Mandarin has the meaning ‘to cause trouble’.

- **txob**: *fwj txob* ‘black pepper’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 胡椒 *hújiāo* ‘pepper’.

- **txob**: *hov txob* ‘pepper’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 辣椒 *hǎijiāo* ‘chili pepper’:

hov txob ntsim ‘hot pepper’ (Xiongs).

hov txob lab ‘red pepper’ (Xiongs).

ob tug yuav muab tuav hovtxob noj

‘the two of them were about to pound pepper for their meal’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

kuv tas wb muab nam noog hov tua tuav hovtxob noj pebcaug

‘I said that we would kill this bird and pound some pepper and eat the New Year feast’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

- **txob**: *qws hovtxob* or *qws tuav hovtxob* ‘pepper-pestle, pestle for pounding pepper’:

In a story explaining the origin of making offerings to one’s ancestors, two brothers are

frightened when the animals in their house begin to speak, because they believe it to be a bad omen. When the cat speaks, they hit it with a pepper-pestle:

Tes khaws nkaus nam qws tuav hovtxob tuab qws miv, miv quaj miv-auv! nua.
 ‘Then they whacked the cat with a pestle for pounding pepper, the cat went meow!’
 (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67).

When a rat speaks, thanking the brothers for hitting the cat with the pepper-pestle, the brothers try to hit the rat with the pepper-pestle as well but miss. Then even the pepper-pestle speaks:

Txha xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag. Nam tsuag tsiv quas loo rua peg qhov tsev lawm. Nam qws hovtxob tseem has tas; “Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le”.
 ‘Then they tried to give the rat a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat. The rat ran up into a crack in the wall. The pepper-pestle even spoke, saying: “Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot.”’
 (Dlaab Qhuas p. 67.)

- **txob**: *taig hov txob* ‘mortar’ (Xiongs) [bowl for pounding pepper].

- **txob**: *tsi txob nwg tawv le* ‘it doesn’t threaten him (her, it) at all, it doesn’t make him (her, it) any difference at all’ (Xiongs) [“does not make his/her/its skin itch at all”].

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- **txog**: *txoj* or *txog* ‘a serving, an offering’:

Ntaus peb txheej ntawg rua nam tuag. Ua ib txoj caw, muab nam qab tsuj tuag.
 ‘Cast the divinatory rods three times to communicate with the dead person. Pour out one serving of liquor and trample the chicken to death’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 13).

Nts’ong Neng [the Qhuab Ke chanter] opens the dialogue with a first libation of alcohol that he swings in his pot toward the head of Pao Gé [the deceased], saying: *Cawv lug ib txog los koj yuav txais moog Puj Yawg kaab kev yog lev*. ‘Here is the first offering of alcohol; accept it as is the tradition of the Ancestors’ (Initiation pp. 17, 119).

- **txoj** ‘to live close to’ (Xiongs).

- **txoj** ‘to follow’ (Xiongs):

sib txoj sib law ‘to follow each other and help each other’ (Xiongs).

- **txoj** or **txog** ‘a serving, an offering’:

Ntaus peb txheej ntawg rua nam tuag. Ua ib txoj caw, muab nam qab tsuj tuag.
 ‘Cast the divinatory rods three times to communicate with the dead person. Pour out one serving of liquor and trample the chicken to death’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 13).

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- **txom**: *meem txom* ‘irritated, irritating, provoking, provoked anger’ (Xiongs).

- **txom**: *tshwjtxom* ‘stove’, from Chinese *chú zào*:

koj moov zoo es koj nim tau kaum-ob tug lujtxwv hab peb puas txaj dlawb hab nyuas tshwjtxom noj tej.

‘your luck was good and you acquired twelve mules and three hundred silver coins and a little stove to make food’ (*Ceebpov* p. 16).

- **txom nyem** ‘poor, suffering; poor, needy, in poverty, worthy of pity, unfortunate’ (Xiongs), from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin 造孽 *zàoniè*:

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem

‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

nwg quaj vim nwg ntsib kev txom nyem

‘s/he cries because s/he is facing poverty or great problems’ (Xiongs).

khaub khaubhlaab kaumpaam ntsw quas naa, khi khi cos ntsw quas naa, ua ua cospob dlai ntsw quas ntsee, txom txomnyem ua caj ua tuag taag npaum hov le.

‘Dressed in rags, patched all over, tied with knots all over, knots of thread hanging everywhere, poor to the point of death’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **txooj** ‘community’:

Txooj Moob ‘the Mong Community’ (name of Mong Volunteer Literacy’s magazine).

- **txoov**: *nquag quas txoov* ‘vigorous’:

tug nam uab dlub quas nyo, nim nquag quas txoov.

‘the [horse] was crow-black, and vigorous’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **Txoov**, syllable used in men’s “name of maturity” (Kao-Ly Yang personal communication), probably from Chinese *zǒng* ‘chief, general’:

Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas, name of a male celestial being who is one of the major characters in the story “Lying on the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth” (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 35-52). He appears initially as someone whom three women call upon to help them become pregnant. Later in the story, the son of one of the women marries Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas’s daughter, and Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas comes to the young man’s aid when he is in peril. Because Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas helps the three women become pregnant, he is perhaps to be identified with Kabyeeb (Chinese *Guānyīn*), the Goddess of Mercy, one of whose principal functions in Hmong belief is to help women become pregnant. This may be a plausible identification despite the fact that Kabyeeb is female and Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas is male. Bertais (1978:507) translates Txoov Kab Yeeb (without Los Muas) as ‘name of a spirit’ and says that Txoov Kab Yeeb brings children to women.

- **txu** ‘to cut down, to cut off’ (Xiongs).

- **txu** ‘to go down (level), to lower’ (Xiongs):

txu lug kom sib txig ‘to level off’ (Xiongs).

- **txug** ‘until, till, up to, to, at, in’ (Xiongs):

txij nub nua moog txug rua lub 5 hlis ntuj xyoo 1985
‘from now on till May 1985, from now to May 1985’ (Xiongs).

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.
‘The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

Koj leej tub tuag, xaa koj tuaj txug nuav
‘O you who have died, I have brought you this far’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14.)

Ob tug cov nam kua lwj ndlwg txug twg, aav txawm qhuav hab nroj tsuag tuag txug twg
‘Wherever the slime [from the rotting dead bodies] of the two [spirits] flowed, the soil dried up and the plants died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 109-111).

- **txug** ‘about’:

puab thaam txug dlej nyaab ‘They talk about the flood’ (Xiongs).

Oo, Kuv xaav txug ‘Ong, I think about you’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm
‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **txug** ‘article used in front of a string like material (tone changed from txuj)’ (Xiongs):

ib txug hlua ‘a string’ (Xiongs).

ib txug kev ‘a way, one way’ (Xiongs).

- **txug**: *moog txug* ‘to arrive’:

Puab moog txug tom tsev caij tsheb nqaaj lawm
‘they already arrived at the train station’ (Xiongs).

- **txug**: *ntsig txug ntuj ceeb tsheej* ‘heavenly’ (Xiongs).

- **txug**: *nyob txug ... yum cev* ‘to seek knowledge’?:

In the version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant presented in *Initiation*, the primordial human couple are told that they must *nyob txug* and *yum cev* Ntxwj Nyooog’s bed in order to be able to have children:

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyooog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to *nyob txug* Ntxwj Nyooog’s bed of silk and you will have children.”

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyooog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to yum cev Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them.” ’
(*Initiation* p. 122.)

In his French translation of this couplet (*Initiation* p. 21), Lemoine translates the expression as “seek knowledge (*quérir la connaissance*) on Ndzeu Shi Nyong’s bed”. The meaning may be that the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth must learn how to have sex first before they will be able to have children.

- **txug**: *tuaj txug* ‘to arrive’ (Xiongs):

kuv tuaj txug thaum koj tseem taab tom noj mov
‘I arrive when you are still eating’ (Xiongs).

Nwg nkaag hawb zawg tuaj txug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he arrived creeping wheezingly].

Koj tog ca nwg tuaj txug ncua tsaiv
‘Wait for her to arrive’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32).

luas tuaj txug tsi pum koj tes luas ua phem rua peb le.
‘if they arrive and do not see you, then they do harm to us’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

Nam aws! Muaj ib nam yawm Moob laug laug tuaj txug ntawd
‘Mama! An old man has come’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 76).

- **txug ncua** ‘right to’:

dlha quas loo lug txug ncua thoobpuab ‘ran right to the shoulder-bag’ (*Ceebpov* p. 13).

- **txug txug sav** ‘to be out of breath’:

Aww, txug txug sav, su ib ntsiv tsuav ov.
‘Yes, but I’m out of breath. Let me rest a bit first’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 21).

- **txuj** ‘article used in front of a string like material’ (Xiongs) (see also *txug*):

ib txuj hlua ‘a string’ (Xiongs).

ib txuj kev ‘a way, one way’ (Xiongs).

- **txuj** ‘knowledge, customs’:

Poob luas ntuj yoog luas txuj (Mong proverb)
‘Being among them, follow or accept what they have’ (Xiongs) [“Fall into their region / Follow their customs”].

- **txuj**: *ku txuj* ‘skill’:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim's roots of oratory faculty.' (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **txuj**: *ua txuj* 'to pretend':

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlob yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg
'She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen' (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **txuj**: *ua txuj nkaag* "to pretend to creep", 'to creep stealthily':

Nub tomqaab, Yawm Xeev txhaj ua txuj nkaag ib qho dlhau ib qho moog.
'The following day, the Ruler therefore therefore crept stealthily from one place to another' (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **txujci** 'knowledge, know how' (Xiong).

- **txuj ... ci**: *kawm txuj kawm ci* 'to study':

cais koj nrug kuv ua dlej ua num hab kawm txuj kawm ci peb lub hlis kuas tav
'so you work with me and study for three months so that you are ready' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Yog tas, koj xaav kuas kuv nyob kawm txuj kawm ci, cais kuv yuav tau nyob ua le koj has.
'If it is that you want me to stay and study, then I will stay as you said' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Thaus kawg, Yog Nraug Ntsuag txhaj zoo sab nrug nwg tijlaug nyob kawm txuj kawm ci.
'Finally, Yob the Orphan was happy to stay to study with his older brother' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Nuj Sis Loob hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug nrug Yawm Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug cov tub, cov ntchais kawm txuj kawm ci
'Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov studied with the sons and daughters of the King of the Lower Realm' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

- **txum** 'to completely sit down or take the place of, to completely settle or resettle' (Xiongs), from Chinese *zuò* 'to sit':

Puab nyob txum chaw taag lawm 'They completely resettle' (Xiongs).

- **txum** 'to ferment' (Xiongs):

kuv nam txum ib hub cawv 'my mother ferments a jar (a barrel) of alcohol' (Xiongs).

- **txum**: *ib txum cawv* 'a batch of liquor':

Koj ua ib txum cawv qaab qaab ntim ob nam hub puv nkaus hab tua ob tug lauv qab saam coj moog tso rua peg.
'Brew up a batch of tasty liquor and pour out two jars full, and kill a capon and bring it and leave it up there' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **txum tim** 'native' (Xiongs). From Chinese *zuòdì* 'to sit on the ground'.

- **txumyim**: *ua txumyim* ‘a Mong way of asking for excuse by joining the open hands and making a back and forth motion’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zuōyī*, gesture of greeting with the greeter holding the hands together in an up-and-down motion:

These actions are also for giving and receiving formal thanks (e.g at weddings). The Hmong Daw terms are:

txaum yim – to cup the hands, with arms held low down and shoulders slightly stooped low, moving the cupped hands back and forth while uttering words of thanks.

txais yim - to cup the hands, with arms held down low and shoulders slightly stooped low, moving the cupped hands back and forth while uttering words receiving thanks (this can last for almost a minute or so).

At the end of this ritual behaviour each person will swiftly scoop up the hands a couple of times towards the chest while still uttering – for the person giving thanks this is like an action of pouring out the thanks into the receivers hands, for the person receiving thanks this is like scooping up the thanks. It differs from the Chinese action as seen in films (I doubt any Chinese still perform this although it might be expected at rural funerals) in which the clasped hands are held together at chest height and briefly moved back and forth rapidly as a sign of thanking (a little bit like the Thai do “wai” in the Indian fashion of holding the palms together and placing them to one’s forehead as a formal greeting or thanking) (in the films it always feels a bit snobbish – the person doing this action is high class, typically the star actor, he never stoops, but it is basically the same ritual – the person receiving the thanks will also clasp his hands and move them to and fro before his chest while grinning). It is not difficult to imagine that the Hmong actions – slow and deliberate and with plenty of stooping and verbal uttering – were also used by Chinese speakers in earlier times, and that the action has been preserved by Hmong. Here we have another example of cultural preservation by minorities in addition to all the old Southwestern Mandarin lexicon that seems to have been lost. The Hmong ritual is the real meaning of “ua tsaug” ‘to give thanks’ – a ritual giving of thanks. Whereas in normal day to day life it was not normal to say ‘thank you’ (other words can be said, such as “tabkaum koj os” ‘(I) have disturbed you’). In modern culture Hmong casually say “ua tsaug” like English ‘thanks’ without going through the formal ritualized motions. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **txus** ‘kitchen’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 447 zok; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 205 zok; Ruey and Kwan 1962:571):

Dictionaries and glossaries of Hmong dialects spoken in China translate *txus* as ‘zào [kitchen]’, but in my Mong Leng sources I have found the word only in compounds. *Qhov txus*, literally “hole of the txus”, means ‘stove’, i.e. the brick or rammed clay structure built to hold a wok. *Dlaab rooj txus* ‘spirit of the door of the txus’ is, I suspect, the spirit, not the of opening in the stove for stoking the fire (not really a door in the conventional sense), but rather of the door of the room in which the stove is used, hence my translation ‘spirit of the kitchen door’.

- **txus**: *dlaab rooj txus* ‘spirit of the kitchen door’:

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj

npaab.

‘The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **txus**: *qhov txus* ‘stove/range for a wok’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15):

The large wok is bought first (or two of them), then the stove is built from bricks to fit. Sometimes rammed clay is used instead of bricks, using the same construction technique as rammed earth house walls. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **txuv** ‘to put down, to kill, to put a ceiling or level to, to knock down, to turn down’ (Xiongs):

Nwg nyam txuv cov tuab neeg txom nyem
‘s/he likes to knock down or turn down the poor people’ (Xiongs).

- **txua** ‘to make, to build, to construct’ (Xiongs):

kuv txiv txawj txua neev ‘my father knows how to make a crossbow’ (Xiongs).

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.
‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

Luas kuas suavdlawg txua ib lub hleb cab lug ntim nwg
‘He wants everyone to build a coffin of pine to put him in’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

- **txua** ‘nonglutinous, not sticky, not adhesive’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a dog and a cat are carrying a precious object, a gold amulet inside which is their mistress, who has magically shrunk herself so that she fits inside the amulet. When they have to cross a river, the dog says to the cat that the cat should be the one to carry the amulet in its mouth because the cat’s paws are *nplaum* ‘glutinous, sticky’, that is, the cat is able to grip with its claws, whereas the dog’s paws are *txua* ‘nonglutinous, not sticky’, that is, the dog’s paws are not able to grip:

Koj teg taw nplawm [typo for *nplaum*?] *koj koj luas huas! Kuv teg taw txua, nam dlej hov luj dlag tsaam ntsiv kuv nplaam kuataw tes nam poob dleg hab saib yuav ua caag moj.*

‘Your paws are able to grip, so you should carry her. My paws are not able to grip. The river is wide, and my paws will slip and in a moment our mistress will fall in the water, and then what will we do?’ (*Ceebpov* pp. 28-29.)

Tsaam ntsiv muab rua kuv tes kuv teg taw txua kuv muab nam ua poob dleg
‘I feared if he gave her to me that since my paws don’t grip well, I would drop her in the water’ (*Ceebpov* p. 29).

- **txua**, intensifier:

Nwg ... tsag lig xub yaa lab vog cais cov nam pobzeb txawm yaa tawg pis txua
‘He [Grandfather Thunder’s Youngest Son] ... sent red bolts of lightning flying

everywhere and the stones then flew and cracked into pieces' (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **txuab**: *zeb toob txuab* 'soft, accumulating rock; accumulating soft rock' (Xiongs).

- **txuag** 'to care for, to preserve, to keep in good shape, good condition' (Xiongs):

Nwg tsi txaj [typo for *txawj*?] *txuag nwg txuj sa*
's/he doesn't know how to care for his life' (Xiongs).

- **txuag** 'to save money, to put aside money' (Xiongs):

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab
'you should save some money too' (Xiongs).

- **txuaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov txuaj [to make the sound txuaj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **txuam** 'to spray' (Xiongs):

txuam tshuaj tua kaab 'to spray insecticide' (Xiongs).

- **txuam** 'to inject' (Xiongs) (see also *txuas*). From Chinese 扎 *zhā* 'to stab, to prick, to puncture'.

- **txuam** 'to mix up' (Xiongs), from Chinese 杂 *zá*:

tsi xob muab sib txuam 'Do not mix them up' (Xiongs).

- **txuam** 'to interfere in others' affairs' (Xiongs).

- **txuas** 'to join, to connect, to solder together' (Xiongs):

muab ob txuj hlua sib txuas 'connect the two ropes' (Xiongs).

Aub, nam puj dlaab has tas; ua ntaaj hlau te ib ntaag txuas nkaus ntaag txuas nkaus
'Listen! The female spirit said, if we make swords of iron, each time we cut her she will join right back together' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20).

Txav txuj lab taag, txuj dlawb txuas lawm. Txav txuj nuav taag, txuj tod txuas lawm.
Txav txav taag tes tub txuas taag lawm
'Sever the red one, and the white one joins on. Sever this one, and that one joins on.
However many you sever, others have already joined on' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 23).

- **txuas** '(classifier *raab*) a Mong long knife' (Xiongs).

- **txuas** '(no classifier) injection' (Xiongs) (see also *txuam*).

- **txuas**: *dlaab plaag txuas* 'spirit of the area adjacent to the main room':

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas
nyaag ntsuag koj npaab
'You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas*

p. 6; household spirits try to prevent the dead person from leaving the house; the dead person must explain that because he or she has died, he or she must leave).

- **txuas**: *qhov sib txuas* ‘knot, connection, join’ (Xiongs).

- **txuas**: *txawb txuas* ‘to join’:

Nam Sib Tuam ob fuas ob fuas tsi tau taubhau lug txawb txuas rua le
 ‘Sub Tuam snatched about and snatched about but could not find his head to join it back on’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **txuas lug**: *chaw txuas lug* ‘place of communication’, the bamboo divinatory rods used to establish communication between humans and spirits:

Txib leej tub tij khaiv leej tub kwv ntsuag zog cej yaag peb nti, ntsuag zog sau yaag plaub nti coj lug ua neej dlaab lub chaw txuas lug.
 ‘We sent your older son and told your younger son to measure three finger-lengths below the joint, and four finger-lengths above the joint, and bring it to serve as the place of communication between humans and spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11).

- **txuas lug**: *sib txuas lug* ‘to converse, to talk with, to exchange words’ (Xiongs).

- **txwg**: *laij nyug txwg* ‘plow-ox’:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav lai j nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav lai j nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
 ‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

suav lai j nyug txwg zoo zoo saib le ho!
 ‘See how beautiful the plow-oxen of the Chinese are!’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 16.)

Yob Nraug Ntsuag tau moog ua nyuj lai j nyug txwg
 ‘Yob the Orphan had become a plow-ox’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Suav nim hawv los hawv, hu los hu kuas Muam Nkauj Ntsum saib luas lai j nyug txwg
 ‘The Chinese called out to the Maiden Ntsum and kept trying to get her to look at their plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav lai j nyug txwg
 ‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

The creatures that accompany the plow-oxen are referred to both as *dlaav dlub yug yaav* (black eagles?) and *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’.

- **txwjlaug**: *kev txwj laug* ‘elders’:

Cais Muam Nkauj Ntsum txhaj moog hu kev txwj quas laug lug nrug ua povthawj zoo zoo tseg.
 ‘So the Maiden Ntsum called upon the elders to be witnesses’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 19).

- **txwjlaug**: *Xeev* or *Xeev Txwjlaug* ‘the Ruler’, a major character in many stories, for example

“Nuj Yob hab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug” (Nuj Yob and the Xeev Txwjlaug) (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 73-97), and the stories told in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, *Kwvhuam*, and *Nuj Sis Loob*.

Nub caaj thaus u, Nuj Yob nam Nuj Yob txiv pheej naj xyoo raug Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hu moog ua Yawm Xeev qhev txav tawg pub rua puab tau hau [typo for haus?] cawv xeeb.

‘Long ago, Nuj Yob’s mother and Nuj Yob’s father each year would be called upon by the Ruler to be the Ruler’s servants cutting firewood to give them for his birthday celebration’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

Huas nyob lub nam nroog nuav, muaj ib yim tuabneeg muajtxag npluanuj, hab zoo neej heev. Yim tuabneeg nuav yog Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug.

‘But in this town, there was a family that was wealthy, and had a very good life. This family was that of the Ruler’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

Yaav thaus u, yawm Xeev txwjlaug qawm [typo for qaum] ntuj muaj ib tug ntxhais npe hu ua MUAM NKAUJ NTSUM.

‘Long ago, the Ruler of heaven had a daughter named Muam Nkauj Ntsum’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 7).

Nkauj Mim See yog Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug tug ntxhais nraab kws dlua lwm leej lwm tug huv tuabsi.

‘Nkauj Mim See was the Ruler’s middle daughter who was more beautiful than anyone else’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 7).

The Xeev Txwjlaug in the story in *Lug Nruag Tsuv* is a brutal villain. At the end of the story he is, quite deservedly, torn limb from limb and devoured by a tiger. It is not clear in the story what the source is of his wealth and power or what sort of territory he has.

At the opposite extreme, the Xeev Txwjlaug in *Kwvhuam* is the ruler of heaven, who sends his daughter to earth to find a husband and institutes the rites of marriage.

The Xeev Txwjlaug in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and *Nuj Sis Loob* are earthly, and appear to have territories much smaller than all of heaven. Each is the father of the woman that the protagonist marries. In *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* the Xeev Txwjlaug is initially hostile to the protagonist because he is poor and places various obstacles in his way but in the end the protagonist wins out, gains the trust of his father-in-law, and himself becomes a Xeev Txwjlaug.

In the story “Taub Qaub” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 113-129), *Xeev* means ‘Village Headman’. Taub Qaub’s mother dies in childbirth and Taub Qaub’s father dies shortly thereafter. Taub Qaub’s father returns to him in the form of a tiger and takes care of him. When Taub Qaub is grown, his father says it is time to get Taub Qaub a wife. Because he is a tiger, Taub Qaub’s father can not go through proper marriage negotiations. He has to find a suitable woman and carry her off on his back. First, Taub Qaub’s father proposes the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village:

Yog koj xaav yuav nua, kuv moog koj Yawm Xeev Hauvzog tug ntxhais lug rua koj.
‘If you want to marry, I will bring you the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 117).

Unfortunately, when Taub Qaub's father brings the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village, she is too terrified to eat, so Taub Qaub's father kills and eats her and proposes bringing the daughter of the Headman of the Lower Village:

Taub Qaub, Yawm Xeev Hauvzog tug lug txug, nwg tsi kaam noj mov, hab nwg kuj tsi zoo nkauj npaum caag! Ca kuv moog koj Yawm Xeev Qaabzog tug ntshais Ntxawm lug rua koj.

'Taub Qaub, when the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village got here, she wasn't willing to eat, and also she wasn't all that pretty! Let me bring you the Headman of the Lower Village's daughter Ntxawm' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 118).

This time things work out and Taub Qaub and the daughter of the Headman of the Lower Village become husband and wife.

It is possible that *Xeev* is originally from Chinese *shěng* 'province' as in 'provincial official' but in the stories there is no indication of any connection with the Chinese hierarchy of officials.

- **txwm** 'a Mong poetic couplet containing two "nqais" (long verses)' (Xiongs).

- **txwm**, from Chinese 字 *zì* 'characters, letters':

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum.

'Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see' (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4).

- **txwm**: *ib txwm txheej ntawg* 'a pair of divinatory rods':

TUG CUABTSAAV: Yog tug muab dlejcauv nqajmov lug ntawg rua tug tuag tau nqaa moog noj taugkev. Nwg siv ib txwm txheej ntawg lug ntawg.

'The cuabtsaav is the one who brings water and liquor, meat and rice, to the divination ceremony for the dead person to eat on the way. He uses a pair of divinatory rods to divine' (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14).

- **txwmzeej** 'a criminal, a sinner', from Chinese *zuìrén*:

The story *Yob Hlub Has Yob Yau* speaks of wicked people being judged at the court in heaven:

pigkig kuv koj es wb tshaam kab ov. Wb moog saib cov nam txwmzeej os.

'Tomorrow, I will take you with me and we will visit the market. We will go to look at the criminals' (*Yob Hlub Hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

wb muab nwg tsaa ua ib tug tuam yij rua hov ntawd saib cov nam txwm zeej.

'we must elevate him to the position of tuam yij who watches over the criminals' (*Yob Hlub Hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **txwv** 'to stop from doing something, to prohibit, to prevent' (Xiongs). From Chinese 阻 *zǔ* 'to impede, to hinder, to block, to obstruct'.

- **txwv** 'father' (*Village* p. 175) (also written *txiv*):

The word for ‘father’ is written *txwv* only in Jacques Lemoine’s book *Village*. All of my sources by Mong authors write *txiv*. The same remarks apply to compounds such as *yawm txwv* ‘wife’s father’. Mong authors write *yawm txiv*.

- **txwv** ‘master’ (also written *tswv*):

tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

‘an animal refuses to obey its master’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **txwv**, **txiv**, or **ntxwv**, noun suffix, from Chinese 子 *zǐ, zi* ‘child’, noun suffix:

khawm txiv ‘button’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *kòuzi*.

lujtxwv ‘mule’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*). From Chinese *luózi*.

txav txwv ‘a share’ (*Kwvhuam*).

vaaj ntxwv ‘king’ (Xiongs, *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau*, *Ceebpov*). From Chinese *wángzǐ* ‘prince’.

xeeb ntxwv ‘nephew or niece’, ‘grandson or granddaughter’ (Xiongs, *Village*). From Chinese *sūnzi*.

yaam ntxwv ‘example, behavior’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàngzi*.

zimtxwv ‘time, hour, period of time’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 日子 *rìzi*.

zimtxwv ‘chair’ (*Ceebpov*).

- **txwv**: *txav txwv* ‘a share’:

Pegkis koj ca le moog cuag kuv nam hab kuv txiv ob tug, hab moog muab txav txwv lug txav rua wb siv. Koj moog has rua kuv nam hab kuv txiv tas koj yog Muam Nkauj Ntsum tug quasyawg. Koj yuav lug nqaa txavtxwv moog rua Muam Nkauj Ntsum txav nyaj kub. ‘Tomorrow you will go to meet my parents and get our share. Tell my mother and father that you are the Maiden Ntsum’s husband and that you have come for the Maiden Ntsum’s share of the silver and gold’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

tso Yob Nraug Ntsuag moog muab txavtxwv sau ntuj ‘sent Yob the Orphan to get the share of the wealth from heaven’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

Muam Nkauj Ntsum moog muab tau txavtxwv ‘the Maiden Ntsum took her share of the wealth’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog. ‘and used the Maiden Ntsum’s share of her parents’ wealth as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **txwv**: *yawm txiv* or *yawm txwv* ‘wife’s father’:

yawm txwv ‘wife’s father’ (*Village* pp. 174, 175).

Puab nyob lug tsi tau ntev, Yawm Nyooglaug, ob tug yawvtxiv [sic] txawm hu Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moog

‘When they had been living together for not very long, Grandfather Nyooglaug, the couple’s father-in-law [i.e. the wife’s father], summoned Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which the couple’s wife’s mother and wife’s father [i.e. Nkauj Fuab’s parents] had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **txwv dlaab** ‘mother’s brother’ (*Village* p. 175). Also written *txiv dlaab*.

- **txwv hluas** ‘wife’s younger sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **txwv kwj** ‘father’s sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 175):

Charles Johnson (personal communication) suggests that *txwv kwj* is from *txwv* ‘father’ + *kwj*, contraction of a hypothetical **kwb yij*, from Chinese 姑爷 *gūyé* ‘father’s sister’s husband’.

- **txwv laug** ‘wife’s older sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **txwv ntxawm** ‘father’s younger brother’ (*Village* p. 175). Also written *txiv ntxawm*.

TXH

- **txha**: *ib txha* ‘some people, some’ (Xiongs):

Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

- **txhab** ‘to heat up, to warm up, to dry over the fire’ (Xiongs).

- **txhab** ‘(no classifier) thousand year period’ (Xiongs):

Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab tsi txawj mob, qom cais tsi muaj tuag. Meb muab kuv Nplooj Lwg Qaav Cis Kaws ntaus tuag taag. Nplaj teb tej tuab neeg qom txhab yuav muaj mob, qom cais yuav muaj tuag.

‘On the face of the earth human beings for millennia have not known illness. For ages there has been no death. The two of you have beaten me, Nplooj Lwg the Toad, to death. On earth human beings for millennia will experience illness. For ages there will be death’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

Txheeb ‘thousand’ and *txhab* ‘thousand year period’ are ultimately from the same Chinese root, but *txheeb* is a relatively recent loan from Chinese and *txhab* is an old Hmong word which was borrowed from Chinese during the Proto-West-Hmongic period.

- **txhab**: *ib txhab ib txhis* ‘everlasting, whole life long, since the existence of the world’ (Xiongs).

- **txhab vog**: *tu plaub txhab vog* ‘to grow hair or feathers fairly well’ (Xiongs).

- **txhaj** ‘to propound a riddle’ (Xiongs):

Mej txhaj peb txhais ‘You propound the riddles and we explain them’ (Xiongs).

- **txhaj** ‘then’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 才 *cái*:

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other in a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: “*Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?*”

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: “Miss! How would you come to be here?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

- **txhaj**: *cais ... txhaj* ‘so ... then’:

Cais tug muam txhaj hle hlo nkawm nyuas khau quasnyaab rua nwg rau.

‘So the sister then took off her straw sandals and gave them to him to put on’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua tug nwg dlaab ntxawm, tug nug ntxawg

‘and finally the Spirit said to his brother-in-law, the woman’s younger brother’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

cais nwg tug muam txhaj has rua tug nug ntxawg tas

‘the sister then said to her younger brother’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

- **txham xwm** ‘little or small things, seasoning plants’ (Xiongs):

First syllable from Chinese 菜 *cài* ‘vegetable’. Second syllable probably from Chinese 食 *shí* ‘to eat’.

“In Thailand the sense of this word which I was aware of is ‘garden vegetables, herbs’.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **txhaa** ‘(classifier *tug*) ‘bone’ (Xiongs) (see also *txhaav*):

pob txhaa ‘(classifier *tug*) bone’ (Xiongs).

pob qej txhaa ‘bone joint’ (Xiongs).

txhaa luv ‘broken bone’ (Xiongs).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

‘you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and kaab no are rolling about, as big as sheep-bones.

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones’ (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **txhaa** ‘(classifier *tug*) the hard inner part of a tree or something’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa** ‘(classifier *tug*) the scheme or the main frame’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa**: *hlwb txhaa* ‘marrow, spinal cord’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa**: *ua muaj txhaa ib ntsiv* ‘to handle well, to do it carefully or with necessary attention and force’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa cej dlaab** ‘cervical vertebrae’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa ncej qaab** ‘femur’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa nrob qaum** ‘spine, spinal column’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa pob kws** ‘corncob’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa pu** ‘scapula, shoulder blade’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa plaab hlaub** ‘fibula’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa roob qheb** ‘tibia, shin bone’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaa taub hau** ‘skull’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaab** ‘(classifier *lub*) ‘granary, storehouse’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 仓 *cāng*.
- **txhaab** ‘to supply’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaab**: *qhov txhaab* ‘abcess’:

yuav tsum tu hab qhov txhaab xam tsi voog

‘the abcess should be taken care of so as not to get worse’ (Xiongs).

Second syllable from Chinese 疮 *chuāng* ‘sore, running sore’, a relatively early loan, probably predating contact with Southwestern Mandarin.

- **txhaab**: *tsev txhaab nyaj* ‘bank’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaab khum phom** ‘(classifier *lub*) gunstock’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qiāngké*, a wooden holster or case for a revolver or pistol used during the Qing dynasty, shaped like a gunstock. The revolver could be attached to the end of it.
- **txhaaj tshuaj qoob** ‘measles immunization’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaam** ‘to sneeze, to sneeze because water or food gets into the windpipe’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 呛 *qiàng* ‘(of smoke or odor) to irritate the nose’.

- **txhaav** ‘paralyzed, stiff, hardened, stiffened’ (Xiongs).
- **txhaav** ‘to get something forcibly from someone else’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 抢 *qiǎng*.
- **txhaav** ‘bone’ (see also *txhaa*):

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj coj ntawm cov qhua neeb) coj qhua neeb lug ntxooj tub tuabneeg ntawd. Yog hastas nwg luj loog hum hab txhaab [typo for txhaav] hum, Siv Yig le muab ib nkawd qhua neeb nrug nwg.

‘First, when a person is going to know how to perform shamanic ceremonies, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends Siv Yig (Siv Yig is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person. If his faint voice fits and his bones fit, Siv Yig will give him a pair of shamanic spirits’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntxooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le.

‘At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

- **txhaav**: *nplaig txhaav* ‘tongue tied’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais** ‘to translate’ (Xiongs):

Kuv maam txhais ua Faab kis ‘I will translate it into French’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais** ‘to interpret, to explain’ (Xiongs):

Mej txhaj peb txhais ‘You propound the riddles and we explain them’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais** ‘to release, to spring (said of a trap)’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais** ‘article used before a noun indicating a member of the body’ (Xiongs):

ob txhais teg ‘two hands’ (Xiongs).

plaub txhais kua taw ‘four legs’ (Xiongs).

xyaab koj txhais npaab xis lug ‘extend your right arm to me’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais**, classifier for paired things other than paired body parts:

txhais thom khwm ‘one sock’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais lug** ‘interpret, translate’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais lug**: *phau ntawv txhais lug* ‘dictionary’ (Xiongs).

- **txhais lug**: *phoo txhais lug* ‘dictionary’:

Phoo Txhais Lug Aakiv – Moob – Aakiv

‘English – Mong – English Dictionary’ (Xiongs, title).

- **txhaub** ‘to urge animals into fighting’ (Xiongs):

txhaub dle caum mos lwj ‘urge dogs to follow a deer’ (Xiongs).

- **txhaus** ‘to force something to drink, it can be forcibly through the nose’ (Xiongs):

Muaj ib xyoos, Nuj Yob namtxiv txawm moog nrug Yawm Xeev haus cawv xeeb, cais puab txhaj muab ob tug txhaus cawv tuag taagnrho lawm lauj!

‘One year, Nuj Yob’s parents went to a wine drinking ceremony in honor of the ruler’s birthday, and he forced liquor upon them until they died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

- **txhaus kaab txhaus kev** ‘to perform a rite or ceremony properly’:

muab paam paam txhaus kaab txhaus kev taag es muab kwv coj moog log.

‘they performed a proper funeral for her and buried her’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 9).

From Chinese *cuò* ‘to arrange, to manage, to handle’ + *kaab kev* ‘rite, ceremony’.

- **txhauv** ‘easily excited, easily get angry’ (Xiongs).

- **txhawb** ‘to raise, to support, to help, to encourage’ (Xiongs):

Nwg txhawb nwg cov miv nyuas kawm ntawv tag tag

‘s/he really supports her/his children to go to school’ (Xiongs).

- **txhawg** ‘to stuff up, block, plug an opening’ (also written *txhaws*):

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

Cuav Tshoj Tim dlov pobzeb moog txhawg qhovntuj taag lawm

‘Cuav Tshoj Tim had rolled stones completely stuffing up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 23).

Npawg Ntxawg, lub qhov kws kuv nqeg lug nyob sau nuav, tabsis luas dlov pobzeb lug txhawg taag xwb.

‘Cousin Ntxawg, the place where I descended is on top of here, but he has rolled stones and blocked it up’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **txhawj** ‘to worry, to be concerned or distressed’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *chóu*:

Koj yuav toum [typo for tsum] txhawj txug koj lub neeg ib ntsiv hab es xob muab koj lub caij pov tseg ntau dlhau hwv

‘You should be concerned about your life a little and don’t waste too much of your time’ (Xiongs).

tsixob txhawj kag le ‘don’t worry at all’ (Xiongs).

“Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. Kuv kwv ib xubpwg mas tseev kuas tau cuaj tog. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug pobtseg! kuv moog kwv ib xubpwg tau peb tog xwb mas kuv txhawj, kuv txha le quaj”.

‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. I am to carry them on my shoulder until I have brought nine. ... If I cannot do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up. If have only been able to three logs on my shoulder, so I’m worried and that’s why I’m crying’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21).

- **txhawj xeeb** ‘to worry’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *chóu* ‘to worry’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

- **txhaws** ‘to stuff up, to block, to plug an opening’ (Xiongs) (see also *xaws*). Also written *txhawg*.

- **txhaws**: *mob txhaws qaa* ‘to have diphteria’ (Xiongs).

- **txhaws ntswg** ‘stuffy nose’ (Xiongs).

- **txhawv** ‘to issue or come forth, to bear fruit’ (Xiongs):

qhov dlej txhawv ‘(classifier *lub*) spring (river)’ (Xiongs).

- **txhe** ‘to drip’:

ua cav Lob Lw, nwg tug quasyawg taabtom ci ib tug nqaj nraaj dlawb ua npau roj ua txhe huv qhov cub.

‘and, why, Lob Lw, her husband, was toasting the meat of a white pheasant, boiling the fat and letting it drip into the fire’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 25).

- **txhem** ‘to select for good ones or only for what is needed’ (Xiongs). Probably from a dialectal pronunciation of Chinese 擇 *zé*.

- **txheeb** ‘to select, to sort out, to verify’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *qīng*:

Koj yuav tsum muab txheeb saib puab muaj le has.

‘You will have to verify to see if it is as notified’ (Xiongs).

- **txheeb** ‘thousand, the number thousand’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *qiān*:

ob txheeb ‘two thousands’ (Xiongs).

cuaj txheeb ‘nine thousand’ (Xiongs).

Muag [typo for *muaj*?] *pis tsawg txheeb*? ‘How many thousands are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Txheeb ‘thousand’ and *txhab* ‘thousand year period’ are ultimately from the same Chinese root, but *txheeb* is a relatively recent loan from Chinese and *txhab* is an old Hmong word which was borrowed from Chinese during the Proto-West-Hmongic period.

- **txheeb** ‘completely, wholly, totally’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 清 *qīng*:

suav tsi txheeb ‘uncountable, too many to count’ (Xiongs).

Kuv suav tsi txheeb. ‘I cannot totally count. It is numberless, innumerable’ (Xiongs).

- **txheeb** ‘to row’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese 撐 *chēng* ‘to punt with a pole, to pole a boat’:

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes that, “撐 *chēng* has a sense ‘to push off with a pole’ which is probably this. The original sense is very likely to be ‘to punt’

not ‘to row’ – as small boats are very typically punted with long bamboo poles on the rivers in China – the pole is pushed down to touch the river bottom then keep on working it backwards to push the boat forward until reaching the end of the pole.”

- **txheeb** ‘gray (color)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 青 *qīng*.

- **txheeb** ‘close (relative)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *qīn*.

- **txheeb**, Chinese *qīng* ‘clean, clear, pure’:

Ntuj sua teb thauss u, muaj ob tug kwvnpawg Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, hab Cuav Tshoj Tim.
‘In the world of long ago, there were two cousins: Pure One Who Faces Heaven and Cuav Tshoj Tim False One Who Faces Earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 5).

- **txheeb**, from Chinese 筓 *qiān* ‘slender pointed piece of wood’:

ib txheeb xyaab ‘a stick of incense’ (Xiongs).

- **txheeb kaab** ‘(classifier *tug*) rowing pole, pole to advance a boat (by hand)’ (Xiongs).

- **txheeb ze** ‘closely related’ (Xiongs).

- **txheej** ‘generation, layer, level, story’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 层 *céng*:

peb txheej tuab neeg ‘three generations’ (Xiongs).

muab tso ua peb txheej ‘put them in three layers’ (Xiongs).

- **txheej**: *xovtxheej* ‘ritual paper money used by a dead person to reimburse the spirits’, perhaps from Chinese 小钱 *xiǎo qián* ‘small money’:

Koj leej tub tuag, koj tshuav nam pis xeeb ua ntog teb, haus tsuag luas ib ntog dlej. Koj yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntaw rua koj koj moog them se dlej se tawg, se teb se chaw pis xeeb txha le tso koj kev moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. ... (Hlawv peb nplooj xovtxheej rua tug tuag hov. ...)

‘You who have died, you destroyed a portion of the land of the guardian spirit of the place, you drank up a portion of the spirit’s water. When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax, the tax of the land and of the place of the guardian spirit, so that you will be permitted to go to meet your ancestors. ... (Burn three leaves of the ritual money for the dead person. ...)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **txheej ntawg**, divinatory rods used in the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony:

TUG CUABTSAAV: Yog tug muab dlejcauv nqajmov lug ntawg rua tug tuag tau nqaa moog noj taugkev. Nwg siv ib txwm txheej ntawg lug ntawg.

‘The cuabtsaav is the one who brings water and liquor, meat and rice, to the divination ceremony for the dead person to eat on the way. He uses a pair of divinatory rods to divine’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 14).

Ntaus peb txheej ntawg rua nam tuag.

‘Cast the divinatory rods three times to communicate with the dead person’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

The rods are made from short lengths of bamboo split lengthwise into two halves. They are cast to ascertain whether communication has been established between the human world and the spirit world. A rod falling with the flat side up signifies the spirit world. A rod falling with the rounded side up signifies the human world. If one rod falls flat side up and one rod falls rounded side up, this means that communication between the two worlds has been established.

- **txheej txheem** ‘agenda, basis, schedule’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese 层次 *céngcì*, with the rime of the second syllable being assimilated to the rime of the first, or from a hypothetical Southwestern Mandarin dialect reduplicated form, **céngcèng*, of 层 *céng*.

- **txheem** ‘to support, to hold, to help stand’ (Xiongs):

thov paab txheem kom tsi xob poob ‘Help me hold it from falling, please’ (Xiongs).

From a hypothetical Southwestern Mandarin dialect pronunciation **cèng* of Chinese 撑 *chēng*.

- **txheem**: *txheej txheem* ‘agenda, basis, schedule’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese 层次 *céngcì*, with the rime of the second syllable being assimilated to the rime of the first, or from a hypothetical Southwestern Mandarin dialect reduplicated form, **céngcèng*, of 层 *céng*.

- **txheev** ‘to call spirits, to invite spirits for help (in animism)’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 请 *qǐng* ‘to invite, to request’.

- **txhib** ‘to accelerate, to speed up, to hasten’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 催 *cuī* ‘to urge, to push someone to do something, to speed up, to accelerate’.

- **txhib**: *fuabtxhib* ‘Chinese sumac’, also called ‘nutgall tree’ or ‘Chinese gallnut’, a tree, *Rhus chinensis*, native to southern China and Southeast Asia, called 盐麸木 *yánfūmù* ‘salt bran wood’ or 五倍子树 *wúbèizǐ shù* ‘gallnut tree’ in Chinese (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 99 *fuab cib*; see the entry for *Rhus chinensis* in *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature* for further citations and discussion):

The wood of the *fuabtxhib* tree was used to make cannons by the Mong fighters in the rebellion against the French in Indochina (1919-1921):

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down *fuabtxhib* trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

In folklore and Mong belief, *fuabtxhib* is harmful to spirits:

Aub, nam puj dlaab has tas; ua ntaaj hlau te ib ntaag txuas nkaus ntaag txuas nkaus, huas yog ua ntaaj fuabtxhib pleev quav qab nua tes nam puj dlaab ha tuag nua

‘Listen! The female spirit said, if we make swords of iron, each time we cut her she will join right back together, but if we make swords of *fuabtxhib* wood smeared with chicken droppings she will die’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 20).

Below is a photograph of Chinese sumac from the Wikipedia article on *Rhus chinensis*:



- **txhig** ‘to perform one’s duties to the dead’ (Bertrais txws), ‘to hold a memorial ceremony for, to initiate mourning, to attend a memorial service’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* zul):

nub qhua txhig ‘the day of preparation for the dead, the day before the burial, day when relatives bring rice, paper money, etc. as gifts for the deceased’ (Heimbach p. 272 *hnub ua qhua txws*):

Nub ntawd yog nub qhua txhig.

‘That day was the day before the burial’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

txhigtuag ‘to attend a funeral’:

Dlaab ntxawg, koj tuaj txug ko cais pigkig koj nrug kuv moog txhigtuag ib nub ais koj le rov moog tsev.

‘Brother-in-law, since you’re here, tomorrow you and I can spend the day at a funeral together before you go back home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Yawm Dlaab, nwg tug yawm yij, moog hloov tau khaubdluag los cais ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab txawm moog txhigtuag lawm.

‘When the Spirit, the man’s brother-in-law, had changed his clothes, the two brothers-in-law then went to the funeral’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).

The corresponding forms in other Hmong dialects (Heimbach p. 327 txws; Bertrais txws; *Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* zul) suggest that *txhig* is a variant spelling of *txig*, but I have not yet seen *txig* in the Mong Leng materials I have looked at.

There is another possibility, which was brought to my attention by Nathan White. Nathan has seen, for example in a Mong Leng Gospel reading on Facebook, a form *txhij tuag* meaning ‘to attend a funeral’, from *txhij* ‘assemble people’ + *tuag* ‘to die’. This might also be a source for *txhig*.

- **txhij** ‘completely, totally, readily’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 齐 *qí*:

Peb npaaq txhij lawm ‘We are readily preparing’ (Xiongs).

suav dlawg tuaj txhij lawm ‘everyone is here’ (Xiongs).

- **txhij** ‘to level off, to cut off’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese 切 *qiē*: “In Chinese this is a fairly generic cutting off/cutting up verb. The sense of the Hmong verb is to trim the end of something neatly, eg. a small piece of wood that you are making into something (using a knife across the grain), of a bunch of threads so that each is cut off neatly the same length (using scissors).” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **txhij** ‘to gather a group of people, to mobilize military’ (Xiongs):

Perhaps from Chinese 齐 *qí* ‘in good order, together, complete’, used in Mong as a transitive verb, “to cause to be together”.

- **txhij**: *ua ib txhij* ‘together, at the same time’ (Xiongs).

- **txhim** ‘to build with brick or stone’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 砌 *qì*:

txhim ntxaa ‘to build the tomb with stones’ (Xiongs).

- **txhim** ‘article used in front of “horn”’ (Xiongs):

ob txhim kub ‘two horns’ (Xiongs).

Nyuj ob txhim kub zuag heev ‘The bull’s two horns are very sharp or pointed’ (Xiongs).

- **txhis** ‘lifelong period of time’ (Xiongs):

ib txhis ‘everlasting, forever, since the existence of the world’ (Xiongs).

ib txhab ib txhis ‘everlasting, whole life long, since the existence of the world’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

- **txhis**: *nam txiv ib txhis raug* ‘naturally fit together as a pair or couple’ (Xiongs).

- **txhiv** ‘to redeem an article by some payment in return, to buy back, to recover as by paying a fee, to ransom, to rescue’ (Xiongs):

Mey [typo for *Mej*?] *yuav tsum them \$10 txhiv rov qaab*
 ‘You should pay \$10 in order to buy it back’ (Xiongs).

- **txho** ‘gray’ (Xiongs):

txho lag or *txho quas lag* (Xiongs p. 557, not translated) [not quite gray, something gray passes by once].

- **txho tshauv** ‘having an ashy colored coating’ (Xiongs).

- **txhob**: *tsi txhob* ‘don’t!’ (negative imperative), also written *xob* or *tsi xob*, from Chinese *xiāo* as in *bù xiāo* ‘do not need’:

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb aws, tsi yog ua npug dlaabtsi le, hab tsi txhob ntshai!
 ‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb, it’s not a bad omen at all, and don’t be afraid!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

Koj tsi txhob nrug kuv sau yim. Koj moog nrug nplajtog qaumpeg sau yim.
 ‘Don’t marry me. Marry anyone in the world’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 12).

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
 ‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

- **txhoj** ‘(classifier *lub*) mold’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 槽 *cáo* ‘square or rectangular container’, “probably by a specialized use of the root by some craft – pottery?” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **txhoj** ‘to cause problems, to bother’ (Xiongs):

txhoj pob heev ‘very bothersome, mischievous’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes that *txhoj* is “probably a loan of 嘈 *cáo* ‘noisy’, but I am not sure. It is definitely Southwestern Mandarin. The *pob* is probably 包 *bāo* which forms a number of compounds describing people's character.”

- **txhoj**: *Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub* ‘In the beginning long ago’:

Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub, qom tsi sawv tsim noob neej
 ‘In the beginning long ago, who arose to create the seeds of humankind?’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

- **txhoj**: *theej txhoj* ‘to take the place of, to replace, to be in the place of’ (Xiongs):

“This is probably an idiom like 填 *tián* ‘to fill in/up a gap/hole’ + 槽 *cáo* ‘manger; trough from which livestock feeds; ditch; trench; canal’ (to fill someone's ditch).” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **txhom** ‘to catch, to seize’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 操 *cāo* (Southwestern Mandarin *cào*) ‘to hold, grasp’:

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes that 操 *cào* (also written 𦍋 in some Southwestern Mandarin sources) “is quite forceful in the Guiyang dictionary ‘rape; fuck; scold’. Hmong Daw in Thailand also have the rape sense – Lawv tus ntshais raug txhom [‘Their daughter was raped’].”

- **txhom** ‘to hold back’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese 操 *cāo* (Southwestern Mandarin *cào*) ‘to hold, grasp’.

- **txhov**: *saam muas txhov*, pile of leaves covering the remains of a dead person, from Chinese 上

马草 *shàng mǎcǎo* ‘to put 马草 *mǎcǎo* (a type of grass) on the pile’:

On the roads that link villages to one another, or on the paths that lead villagers to their fields, one often finds large piles of leaves that they call, in Sino-Hmong, *Chang Moua Ts’or* (saam muas txhov). This is the site of human remains that are covered up in this way in order that the poor dead man will have a house and have offerings of food. If not, he will fling himself upon the passer-by and devour the contents of his belly, leaving the passer-by wobbly and famished. Each traveler upon seeing the pile of leaves picks up a leaf to add to the pile, saying, “Here is meat, do not come to bother me! You are hungry, here is something to nourish you. Oh, *Chang Moua Ts’or*, let me be free to go and to come back safe and sound! Let me be able to pass without getting illness or fatigue, let me keep my appetite and my health!” (*Entre* p. 103.)

Mǎcǎo means literally “horse grass”. Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “I imagine that the idea is (or was) that you are feeding his horse rather than the deceased himself – I don’t think Hmong would feed someone with grass. Horses have been buried with rulers in China since the Neolithic – some of this culture could have passed down in the idea that the deceased is not alone but is accompanied by his horse. Perhaps deep down in Guizhou/Yunnan this was influenced by the Qing dynasty soldiers (originally northern nomadic horsetribes) rather than being very early.”

Michael sent me this photograph of a person carrying a load of *mǎcǎo*:



- **txhoov** ‘to cut into pieces, to chop’ (Xiongs):

txhoov zaub ‘to cut vegetables’ (Xiongs).

- **txhu**: *nojtsab nojtxhu* ‘to celebrate the New Year’:

Nuj Sis Loob, ua caag koj yuav tsi moog nrug luas nojtsab nojtxhu?

‘Nuj Sis Loob, why are you not celebrating the New Year with the others?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9.)

- **txhu**: *tsaj txhu* or *txag ... txhu* ‘animal, livestock’ (see also *txhuv*):

tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

‘an animal refuses to obey its master’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

yuav txhua yaam noob txag noob txhu lug yug

‘bought all kinds of animals to raise’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 13).

- **txhub** ‘to sneeze’ (Xiongs).

- **txhub** ‘to fill up a hole, to level off a place by pouring something into it’ (Xiongs).

- **txhum** ‘to do wrong’, from Chinese *cuò*:

Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ...”

The doorkeeper of the door of heaven cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...” (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **txhuv** ‘millet (xiǎomǐ)’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* cod; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* cod):

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

In White Hmong, *txhuv* means ‘uncooked husked rice’, a semantic development that I have not seen elsewhere. The Mong Leng word for ‘uncooked husked rice’ is *ntsab*.

Xiǎomǐ and ‘millet’ refer to a variety of different grains of similar appearance. Below, courtesy of Michael Johnson, is a photograph of foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*):



- **txhuv:** *tsaj ... txhuv* ‘animal, livestock’ (see also *txhu*):

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

- **txhua** ‘every, all, each’ (Xiongs):

txhua xyoo or *txhua txhua xyoo* ‘every year, each year’ (Xiongs).

txhua leej ‘everybody, everyone’ (Xiongs).

faib kom txhua ‘distribute to everyone’ (Xiongs).

- **txhua:** *hov txhua chaw* ‘things, goods, articles (including food)’ (Lyman p. 119):

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.

‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth and ran home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **Txhuahawv**, part of the name of a dragon in a story:

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti

‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag*

Txa p. 94).

- **txhua nrho** ‘all, completely’ (Xiongs).

- **txhuam** ‘to brush, to scrub, to polish’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *cā*:

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

- **txhuam** ‘(classifier *tug*) brush’ [noun] (Xiongs):

tug txhuam nav lab ‘the red toothbrush’ (Xiongs).

- **txhuam** ‘to slightly hit or touch’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *cā*.

- **txhuam**: *hauv txhuam* ‘match’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *huǒ* ‘fire’ + *cā* ‘to rub’.

- **txhuas** ‘lead’ [metal] (Xiongs).

- **txhuas**, intensifier:

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.
‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17.)

- **txhuav** ‘to pump, to suck’ (Xiongs):

txhuav cov dlej tawm ‘pump the water out’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “I know this verb in Hmong Daw as ‘to cup (medical treatment using a small porcelain cup or other similar shaped item, place a piece of burning paper/tinder in it and quickly apply it to someone's skin (often the forehead), so that as the flame burns and uses up the oxygen it creates a vacuum which then sucks on the skin, bruising it)’. It is interesting to see suck/pump senses in Xiongs, suggesting it was a more generic verb.”

- **txhwb tawg** ‘a piece of firewood’ (Lyman p. 111):

In a story explaining the origin of making offerings to one’s ancestors, two brothers are frightened when the animals in their house begin to speak because they believe it to be a bad omen. When the dog speaks, they hit it with a piece of firewood:

Tes khaws nkaus txhwb tawg tuab nam txhwb tawg nam dlev
‘Then they grabbed a piece of firewood and gave a sharp blow with the piece of firewood to the dog’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **txhvw txujsa** ‘to be reborn’:

Yog koj moog tuab tuav nkaus nwg xwb tes yuav laaj laaj txhvw txujsa kuas xeev rov lug le hab. ‘If you were to take hold of him, he would have difficulty in being reborn’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

U

- **u** ‘that’ (Xiongs):

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav
 ‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

- **u:** *nub u* ‘that day, couple of days ago, the past couple of days, day before yesterday’ (Xiongs).
- **u:** *saab tom u* ‘the other side’ (Xiongs).
- **u:** *tim u* ‘over there, there, far away there’ (Xiongs).
- **u:** *tim u ... tim nua* ‘yon and hither’:

nam txiv neeg uab dlub hee raag quas tshis ib yeeg tim u ib yeeg tim nua rov rua nplajteb lawm lauj.

‘the crow-black stallion whinnied and galloped one tier yon, one tier hither and returned to the face of the earth’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

Nwg nim muaj nyuj muaj twm, muaj neeg muaj zaag, muaj dlev muaj npua, muaj qab muaj us, hab muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw noj zaub puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

‘It had cattle and it had buffaloes, it had horses and it had mules, it had dogs and it had pigs, it had chickens and it had ducks, and it had ntshuav and it had elephants grazing and filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

- **u:** *tom u* ‘over there, there, far away there’ (Xiongs).
- **u:** *thau u* ‘once upon a time, a long time ago’ (Xiongs) (also written *thau ub* and *thaus u*):

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

‘Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9).

- **u:** *thaus ub* ‘long time ago, once upon a time’ (Xiongs) (also written *thau u* and *thau ub*).
- **u:** *xyoo u* ‘that year, the year before last’ (Xiongs).
- **u:** *yaav tom ntej u* ‘in the past, previous times’ (Xiongs).
- **Ub!**, interjection:

Ub! Maaj kev hwv naj! ‘Oh, but we’re in a big hurry!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

Ub! Ntuj nis nam Dlaav aw! ‘Good heavens, Eagle!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26.)

Ub! Siv Yig Muas, koj nim txawj txawj ua neeb, tau tau nqaj noj.

‘Say, Siv Yig Muas, you know how to perform shamanic rites, so you get meat to eat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

Mas Ub! ‘See here now!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27.)

Ub! tau lawm hab kuas lug noj mov tsuav!

‘Hey, I’m ready, but come and eat first!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28.)

Ob tug dlha dlha xauj na has, ub! puj Los Xaab mas cav yog tug nam kws naag ob tug

pum quas tag.

‘The two of them ran to take a peek and, why, oh my!, Mrs. Los Xaab was indeed the one they had seen the previous day’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23).

“*Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?*” “*Ub! tsiv os. Tsiv! kuv tsi qha le ntshai hwv!*”

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” “Ooh, fleeing. Fleeing! I can’t tell you, I’m too frightened!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35.)

“*Rhu! Ua luas maj*”. “*Ub! tsi rhu, teg tu lawm*”.

“Come on, pull them out!” “Ugh! We can’t, our hands are cut off.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37.)

- **ub**: *tog ub* ‘that side’, an expression used in marriage songs to refer to the bridegroom’s party:

Kuv-nam kuv-txiv tog ub, nwg muab tsuj nrug rau nyog tsuj nis, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku txuj nis.

Muab-neev rau nyog neev, coj nyog lej-lwg rhwv-mim quas caag lis ku peev.

‘My mother my father that side [the bridegroom’s parents] took steps and placed steps, were able to bring Lej Lwg and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory skill.

Took footprints and placed footprints, were able to bring Lej Lwj and Rhwv Mim’s roots of oratory faculty.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 75.)

- **ub**: *thau ub* ‘long ago’ (also written *thau u* and *thaus u*):

Lub theej txhoj moog thau ub, qom tsi sawv tsim noob neej,

‘Long ago, who arose to create the seeds of humankind?’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

- **us** ‘(classifier *tug*) duck’ (Xiongs):

lauv us ‘drake’ (Xiongs).

puj us ‘female duck’ (Xiongs).

- **us ngus** ‘goose’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 32).

UA

- **ua** ‘to make’ (Xiongs):

Puab nyav ua tau ib yaam txawv txawv

‘They have just made something very strange’ (Xiongs).

peb ib tsoom tub ntshais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

- **ua** ‘to build, to construct, to erect’ (Xiongs):

puab taab tom ua ib lub tsev sab ib puas theem rua huv Plawv nroog.

‘they are erecting a building of one hundred stories tall in downtown’ (Xiongs).

- **ua** ‘to be’ (Xiongs):

hu ua ‘to be called, to be named’ (Xiongs).

moog ua qhua ‘to be a guest, to go to another place to participate in a funeral’ (Xiongs).

Koj ua tug saib coj. ‘You are the leader’ (Xiongs).

Koj ua tug ua. ‘You are the maker’ (Xiongs).

Puab ua cov tshawv kev ‘They are the ones who create the way’ (Xiongs).

- **ua** ‘to do’ (Xiongs):

Kuv tsi txawj ua ‘I don’t know how to do it’ (Xiongs).

Koj ua puas tau? ‘Can you do it?’ (Xiongs).

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb ‘s/he can only do up to there’ (Xiongs).

puab pheej ua le ‘they are still doing’ (Xiongs).

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

tsuav mej ua tau ‘if you can do it’ (Xiongs).

xob rawm ua ‘don’t do it’ (Xiongs).

Ua tsi taug hlo le. ‘Cannot do at all.’ (Xiongs p. 554.)

- **ua** ‘to work’ (Xiongs):

nyag ua nyag zum zawg le
‘everyone works by herself or himself here and there’ (Xiongs).

- **ua** ‘as’:

tseg ca ua tshuaj ‘keep as something special, worthy, or effective’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txhaj muab cov tsaj ntawv ntawd lug sau sis pev ua ib phoo miv miv le nuav ca ua qauv tseg.

‘Accordingly, I have written the letters to be compared with each other as a little book like this to serve as a model’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **ua** ‘in, into’:

muab tso ua peb txheej ‘put them in three layers’ (Xiongs).

Kuv maam txhais ua Faab kis ‘I will translate it into French’ (Xiongs).

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dlub ‘My mother dyes her skirt in black’ (Xiongs).

tug dlaab yeeg ua ib tug naab ‘the ghost changes into a snake’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

Puab moog txav ntoo fuabtxhib lug txua ua tuam phom.

‘They cut down fuabtxhib trees to make into cannons’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **ua:** *kev ua neeb ua yaig* or *neeb yaig* ‘shamanism’:

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nqe hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.
 ‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (Tswv Yim p. 91).

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntsooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (Tswv Yim p. 93).

- **ua:** *muab txi ua txij ua nkawm* ‘to unite as husband and wife’:

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

- **ua:** *nyob ua neej ua ntexas*, formula at the end of folktales, similar to ‘lived happily ever after’ in English:

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug ntexas Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv pujiyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaabteb hab ua fuabtais kaav tebchaws, hab nyob ua neej ua ntexas lug lawm.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Nyooglaug daughter Ntxawm then took Ntxawm’s parents down to live in the southern part [of the country] and became king and queen ruling the country, and lived in peace and happiness’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 41).

- **ua:** *to kev lug ua* ‘legally right, legitimate lawfully’ (Xiongs).

- **ua:** *txa ua* ‘to transform oneself into’:

Transformations occur in many stories, for example in *Nuj Sis Loob*:

Nuj Sis Loob ran out from under the rock and went to stand on top of the rock to look around. Why, there was a black cloud flying straight from the horizon. When it reached him, it transformed itself into an ox-eating eagle (*Nwg txawm txa ntshis ua tuab tug nam dlaav nojnyuj*) and perched just below the building. When it had landed, it transformed itself into an elderly man (*nwg kuj txa ua tuab yawm tuabneeg laug*) and entered the building. (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 38.)

Nuj Sis Loob uses his magical powers to transform himself in his battle with the Spirit:

Grandfather Spirit entered and searched and quickly looked at the place where His Majesty the Ruler brought people, but there was no one there at all. Then he entered his dining room and lo and behold his sword was broken in two pieces. Thereupon he became very angry. The Spirit then opened the door in the temple and went outside and searched all round the building two times but could not find anyone all. Then Nuj Sis Loob flew from the area above the drainage ditch and drew near the Spirit and asked him, “Cousin, where are you going and why are you so angry?”

The Spirit replied, “Ah, dear boy, who are you? Why do you come here and call me cousin? I have no cousin who looks like you. Who are you calling?”

Nuj Sis Loob responded, “Do you say that you have no cousins at all who look like me? In that case, I must be the one whom His Majesty the Ruler sent to kill you.”

When Nuj Sis Loob had said all this, Grandfather Spirit became angrier than ever. He laughed loudly and said angrily, “Ha! Ha! Ha! You are the one whom His Majesty the Ruler sent for me to eat! Why did you break my sword and run about boasting to me that you are the one who has come to kill me?”

Nuj Sis Loob responded, “If you think that I cannot kill you, why don’t you come here and see?”

When Nuj Sis Loob had issued this challenge, Grandfather Spirit transformed himself into a dog (*txa ntshis ua tuab tug nam dlev*) and was about to bite Nuj Sis Loob but Nuj Sis Loob transformed himself into a wolf (*txa ntshis ua tuab tug nam maa*) and fought with Grandfather Spirit. The two of them fought back and forth without anyone winning or losing, so Grandfather Spirit just transformed himself into a tigress [*txa ntshis ua kag tuab tug nam tsuv*] to attack Nuj Sis Loob. But Nuj Sis Loob transformed himself at once into a male tiger (*txa ntshis ua kag taub tug txiv tug*) to fight with Grandfather Spirit.

Grandfather Spirit and Nuj Sis Loob transformed themselves into (*txa ua*) dogs and wolves, into tigers and bears, into *ntxhuav* and elephants, into cattle and horses, into frogs and fish, into snakes and dragons, into insects and grasshopper, into moths and ants and into all manner of tame and wild animals, cold-blooded animals and water animals, flying animals and crawling animals, trying to swallow one another and peck one another and kick one another without anyone winning or losing.

The two of them fought all day and all night. The Temple was completely demolished because of their battle. Finally, the two of them changed back into human beings (*rovqaab txa ua tuabneeg*) to fight with each other. (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 39-40.)

- **ua:** *txawm ua le los* ‘even though, though’ (Xiongs).

- **ua:** *xuas teg ua* ‘by hand’ (Xiongs):

xuas teg ua paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to make embroidery by hand].

- **ua:** *yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le* ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

- **ua:** *zaub ua kua* ‘watery soup’ (Xiongs).

- **ua caag** ‘what is the matter, what happens’ (Xiongs):

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

‘Oh, those bellows. What’s wrong with them?’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **ua caag** ‘why?’:

Koj nim tsiv lug ua nkaufjaa rua nuav lawm ais, ua caag tsi qha wb paub?

‘You just ran off and deserted your family. Why didn’t you tell us?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 15.)

Ua caag kuv moog koj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, 'Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas' nua yog le caag tag?

Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, 'Child oh child, when your mother wasn't there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child', why is that? (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

Maaj maam maj! Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!
'Gently! Why are you going at my wound with such force?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

- ua caag 'how?':

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: "Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?"

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: "Miss! How would you come to be here?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

- ua caag 'how ... !':

Hiv! Hiv! Ob yawm yij yawm dlaab nua ua caag yuav txawj sis thaam ua luaj le ntawd!
'Hee hee! These two brothers-in-law, how they can talk!' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 84;
spoken in response to ribald wordplay.)

- ua dlaab tsi 'why?':

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, luas nug koj has tas; Koj yog nplajteb leej tuabneeg, koj yuav lug ua dlaabtsi?

'When you reach the wall at the top of the stairway to heaven, they will ask you: You are a human being of the earth. Why have you come here?' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 16.)

- ua dlaaj ... ua dlu or ua dlu ... ua dlaaj 'to spread wide one's arms and one's fingers':

Household spirits try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house. The dead person must explain to them that he or she has died and therefore must leave.

koj moog txug koj nam koj txiv nam dlaab rooj txaag,
Ua dlaaj lis ris puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis rawv puav koj kev.

'you reach your mother and your father, the spirits of the bedroom door,
Spreading wide their arms to encircle your path, spreading apart their fingers to encircle your way' (*Initiation* pp. 129).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

'Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way' (*Initiation* p. 130).

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

'The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his

fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab plaag txuas ua dlu quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlaaj quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the area adjacent to the main room, who will spread apart his arms and block your path, spread wide his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj moog, nam txivdlaab rooj txaag ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'When you go, the spirit of the bedroom door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 4).

Nam txivdlaab rooj txus ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab.

'The spirit of the kitchen door will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Koj lug txug nam txivdlaab roog ua dlaaj quas ruav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the door, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6).

Koj lug txug nam dlaab ntug cub ua dlaaj quas tsuav thaiv koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

'You will reach the spirit of the edge of the fireplace, who will spread wide his arms and block your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

- **ua fuabtais** 'to reign':

Ob tug namtais yawmtxiv, YAWM XEEV TXWJLAUG, nyob ua fuabtais rua sau qaum ntuj. Huas Muam Nkauj Ntsum hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug nyob ua fuabtais rua nplajteb nuav.

'The Maiden Ntsum's mother and her father, the Ruler, reigned in heaven, but the Maiden Ntsum and Yob the Orphan reigned on earth' (*Kwvhuam* p. 21).

- **ua hau has** 'to be the head speaker':

Coj txiv tuam mej koob moog ua hau has, hab ua povthawj.

'He brought marriage negotiators to be the head speaker, and to be the guarantor' (*Kwvhuam* pp. 31-32).

- **ua hle teg hle taw** 'to thrust out one's hands and feet, to make boastful, arrogant gestures':

Cuav Tshoj Tim nim khaav ua hle teg hle taw tas yog nwg nqeg moog paab Ntxawm

'Cuav Tshoj Tim boasted, thrusting out his hands and feet, that it was he who had gone down to help Ntxawm' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 34).

- **ua ib sab** 'to resign oneself':

nwg txhaj ua ib sab nrug Cuav Tshoj Tim lug

'she resigned herself to accompanying Cuav Tshoj Tim' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21)

- **ua ib sob** ‘all together, jointly’ (Xiongs).
- **ua ib thaj npaws** ‘to have a fever’ (Xiongs).
- **ua ib txhij** ‘together, at the same time’ (Xiongs).
- **ua kag** ‘actually’:

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo

‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs).

- **ua kaam** ‘to work, use to do’ (Xiongs). Perhaps a conflation of Chinese *gàn* ‘work’ and Chinese *guàn* ‘used to doing something’.
- **ua kom qhuav** ‘to dry, to make dry’ (Xiongs).
- **ua kub** ‘to be hot’:

Tshaav ntuj lawm nam peb nub tis ua kub

‘For three days the weather was hot’ (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 76-77).

- **ua kutaw nqaa hlo** ‘to lift off the ground’:

nwg nov quas ntsoov ob tug lug tuavnkaus nwg ob saab npaab, ua kutaw nqaa hlo xwb.

‘He felt the two of them taking hold of his arms and lifting him off the ground’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10)

- **ua lauj vaub**: *plaub hau ua lauj vaub* ‘badly knotted hair’ (Xiongs).
- **ua lawv le xaaj** ‘follow the order’ (Xiongs).
- **ua lawv qaab** ‘to follow’:

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

- **Ua le!** ‘Okay!’:

ua le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to do it like that].

Siv Yig Muas, explaining to Grandfather Sub where his son Tuam has gone, says,

Av! kuv tsi nam yeej nwg, nwg txug txug sav nwg moog haus dlej nraag haav lawm.

‘I couldn’t beat him. Then he got out of breath and went to the river to get some water to drink.’

Grandfather Sub replies,

Ua le! ‘Okay!’

(*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28.)

- **ua le caag** ‘how, how you do it’ (Xiongs).

Ua rua Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm tsi paub ua le caag zoo

‘It made it that Moob Sib Ntxhais Nkauj Ntxawm did not know what would be good to do’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44).

“Ob tug nyuj nuav kub zuag hwy lawm, yuav ua le caag txha dlim lau”.

‘The horns of those two oxen are very sharp, how can we escape?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 37.)

- **ua le caag** ‘why?’:

Yog ua le caag koj yuav tsi kaam has kuas koj tug kheej moog hab?

‘Why are you not willing to tell all of your [subjects] to go?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 33.)

Koj yuav moog qhov twg? Hab yog ua le caag koj yuav chim ua luaj?

‘Where are you going? And why are you so angry?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 39.)

- **ua le caag** ‘whatsoever’:

Tabsis tsi pum tuaj tshwm ua le caag le. ‘But they didn’t see anyone whatsoever come out at all’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **ua le ntawd** ‘thus, like that’:

Aub! Nam Sub Tuam yuav moog mas nwg kuas kuv nyob, tes kuv kwv caav tawg. ... Tsi ua le ntawd, mas nwg lug, nwg yuav muab kuv ntxug povtseg!

‘Alas, Sub Tuam ordered me to carry logs for the fire. ... If I can not do that, when he comes home, he is going to chop me up.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-21.)

Kuv xaav tas Saub qha rua kuv le hov taag lawm, cais peb ua tau ua le ntawd.

‘I want us to do everything that Saub told me’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, p. 26).

Huas cov kws tu tes yog ntsuj teb kws Siv Yig Muas kaav. Txha le tu rua lub cuaj hli hab xyaa hli. Txhua paab pawg tuabneeg txha le ua le ntawd.

‘But those who cut are of the region that Siv Yig Muas ruled. Therefore they cut in the ninth month and the seventh month. Every lineage therefore does it like that’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 33-34).

- **ua ... luag** ‘to accompany, to be a companion to, to keep someone company, to be with someone’:

Kuv yuav tau rovqaab moog ua Nkauj See luag, hab coj nwg lug nrug peb nyob ua nuav!

‘I’ve got to go back to be with Nkauj See and bring her to stay with us’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 42).

- **ua lwj ... nrov** ‘to resound’:

Ua lwj toj quas tog lug mas quas tswb nyuj tswb neeg nim nrov

‘The hills resounded with the sounds of cow bells and horse bells’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **ua lwj ua lam** ‘at all costs’:

Suavdlawg noj nqaj haus cawv taag, qhua sawv kev rovqaab, cais Muam Paajqawm ua lwj ua lam, npaum twg yuav nrug puab rovqaab hab.

‘When everyone was done feasting, the guests stood up to go home, whereupon Muam Paajqawm insisted at all costs on going back with them’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **ua luj quas lawg**, intensifier:

Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm hab Txheeb Tshoj Theeb ob tug pheej sis thaam ua luj quas lawg

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter and Txheeb Tshoj Theeb kept chattering away’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17).

- **ua ... luv quas ntho** ‘to crop vegetation to a stubble’:

Quas nyuj, quas neeg, quas yaaj quas tshis mas nim lug ndluag toj ndluag peg ua quas tauj quas tsuag luv quas ntho.

‘Cattle, horses, sheep and goats filled the hills and highlands and cropped the weeds and shrubs to a stubble’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **ua mev!** ‘Go ahead’ (Xiongs).

- **ua muaj txhaa ib ntsiv** ‘to handle well, to do it carefully or with necessary attention and force’ (Xiongs).

- **ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj** ‘to drizzle’:

dlub lug cais txawm cuab tsaus fuab ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj

‘it began to get overcast and it began to drizzle’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyooj

‘it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Michael Johnson comments: “Sounds like Guizhou weather. Guizhou and Wales compete for the fewest sunny days in a year.”

- **ua neeb** ‘to perform shamanic ceremonies’:

Ub! Siv Yig Muas, koj nim txawj txawj ua neeb, tau tau nqaj noj.

‘Say, Siv Yig Muas, you know how to perform shamanic rites, so you get meat to eat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 27).

cov tuabneeg kws paub ua neeb twb yog cov dlaab nuav ua cov cob hab qha puab.

‘the people who knew how to perform shamanic ceremonies, it was in fact these spirits who were the ones who trained and taught them’ (*Ua npausuav* p. 22).

Thaum nuav nwg le txawj ua neeb hab thaum ua neeb le tshee taug. Muaj ib txha kuj hastas, leej twg zwm txiv losyog qhua neeb tshoj lug txug tes nwg le txawj ua neeb. Nwg txawm xaav ua neeb hab xaav txawj neeb npaum le caag los yog nwg moov tsi txug hab luj loog tsi hum mas yeej tsi txawj ua neeb ib zag

‘At this time he will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies and when he performs shamanic ceremonies he will be able to tremble. There are some who say that anyone whose destined day or clan of shamanic spirits turns to him, will know how to perform shamanic ceremonies. He will then want to perform shamanic ceremonies but however much he wants to know how to [perform] shamanic ceremonies, if his destiny/merit does not reach and the faint voice does not fit then he will never know how to perform shamanic ceremonies’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **ua neej** ‘to live one’s life’:

Moob yog ib haiv tuabneeg kws ua neej nyob raws xeem hab raws paab pawg.
 ‘The Mong are are ethnic group who live their lives in accordance with clan and subgroup divisions’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **ua neej** ‘to be a human being’:

Tshwm sim lug ua neej nyob rua lub nplaj teb nuav
 ‘Among those who emerge as human beings here on the face of the earth’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 81).

- **ua neej** ‘to get married and start a family’:

lug txaj sib ua neej ‘song about getting married and starting a family’ (*Tswv Yim* pp. 34-37).

- **ua neej quas ntxhas** ‘to be married’, used in reference to the primordial human couple:

Nkauj quas Ab ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa naj tsis muaj tub.
 The Mist Maiden had been married for seven long years but had no children.
Nraug Oo ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa xyoo tsis muaj nyuas.
 The Cloud Youth had been married for seven long years but had no little ones.
 (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 6.)

- **ua neej ua ntxhas** or **ua neej quas ntxhas**, formula at the end of folktales, similar to ‘lived happily ever after’ in English:

*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm ob tug txhaj coj namtxiv
 pujiyawm nqeg moog nyob rua tog qaabteb hab ua fuabtais kaav tebchaws, hab nyob ua
 neej ua ntxhas lug lawm.*

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Nyooglaug daughter Ntxawm then took Ntxawm’s parents down to live in the southern part [of the country] and became king and queen ruling the country, and lived in peace and happiness’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 41).

Coj lug tes lug ua neej quas ntxhas tes tsuas muaj taag lawm lauj.
 ‘He brought it home and lived a happy and peaceful life and so it is finished’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 29).

- **ua noj** ‘to cook’ (Xiongs):

tug kws ua noj ‘the cook’ (Xiongs).

chaav tsev ua noj ‘kitchen’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **ua noj** ‘to work on a farm, to plant crops’ (Xiongs).

- **ua noob** ‘to seed’ (Xiongs).

- **ua num** ‘to work’ (Xiongs):

ua num faab fo (Xiongs p. 553, not translated) [to work intensely].

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj
 ‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

- **ua nwg** ‘to cause someone or something to move violently’:

Nuj Yob yawm yij tuab nee ua nwg nyuas laublaig poob tawv lug.

‘Nuj Yob’s brother-in-law with one shot of his crossbow sent the minivet plummeting to the ground’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

- **ua nchaas taw** ‘on tip toe’ (Xiongs).

- **ua npug** ‘to be an evil omen’:

Npawg! Kuv xaav tas yog ua npug lawm es wb txhaj nuv tau ntseg ntau ntau le ntawd!

‘Cousin, I think that it was an evil omen that we caught so many fish’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 10).

Yog yuav rovqaab ua npug rua kuv lawv le npawg Cuav Tshoj tim tau qha

‘It is once again a bad omen for me, just as my cousin Cuav Txhoj Tim said it would be’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb aws, tsi yog ua npug dlaabtsi le, hab tsi txhob ntshai!

‘Txheeb Tshoj theeb, it’s not a bad omen at all, and don’t be afraid!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38.)

Ab! tug quas tsuag kod, ntshai koj ua npug tag, koj yuav rawm tuag!

‘Hey, rat! Your speaking is really a bad omen. You’re sure in a hurry to die!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **ua npau suav** ‘to dream’ (Xiongs):

Ua Npau suav Moog Saib Dlaab Teb

‘A Dream of Going to See the Country of the Spirits’ (*Ua Npau suav*, title).

- **ua npua dlaab / npua rooj**, name of a ceremony:

The chapter titled *Ua Npua Dlaab / Npua Rooj* ‘Doing the Spirit Pig / Door Pig’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 57-61) explains the origin of and describes this ceremony.

Chindarsi (1976:113-119) devotes seven pages to the ceremony. He calls it “The Ceremony of the Door Spirit” and includes it under the heading “Ceremonies distinguishing sub-clans” in his chapter titled “Ceremonies and Beliefs Affecting Social Cohesion”. Chindarsi includes seven drawings showing how different people divide up the meat of the pig.

- **ua nruj nraj** ‘in agony’ (Xiongs).

- **ua nta (tseg)** (Xiongs p. 553) [to leave behind]:

Tes le muab ua pis nta rua nraag qaab tsitaug lawm.

‘So he left them by the downhill side of the house’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 33).

- **ua ntaub ua ntawv xaamnyas** ‘to prepare a contract’ (*xaamnyas* from Lao *sǎn nǎa*):

Ua ntaub ua ntawv xaamnyas tuabsi es pauv kuj tau mas.

‘Prepare a contract and we will make the exchange’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **ua ntej** ‘before, first, to go first’ (Xiongs):

Puab ua ua ntej peb txhaj ua lawv qaab ‘they do first then we follow’ (Xiongs).

Ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le ca meb ua ntej, meb moov zoo es ca meb uantej. Kuv maav uaqaab, kuv ntshai ntshai txiv tshev le.

‘I’m afraid that Father will scold me, so you two go on ahead. Your luck was good, so you two go on ahead. I will follow slowly after, for I am very afraid that Father will scold me’ (Ceebpov pp. 18-19).

Thaus kawg, Ntxawm quab ntab tau Txheeb Txheeb Theeb nce ua ntej

‘Finally, Ntxawm forced Txheeb Tshoj Theeb to agree to go up first’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **ua ntej**: *zaam ... ua ntej* ‘to yield, to allow to go first’:

zaam, kev ca puab ua ntej

‘give them the way to go first’ (Xiongs) [since *zaam kev* ‘to yield the way’ is a constituent, the comma separating *zaam* and *kev* may be a typographical error].

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej

‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **ua ntej qho yim** ‘first’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **ua ntej tshaaj plawg** ‘first’:

Ua ntej tshaaj plawg yog Moob tsiv tebchaws Muam Nkauj Lig rua tebchaws Suav, tsiv tebchaws Suav rua tebchaws Nyab Laaj, tsiv tebchaws Nyab Laaj rua Los Tsuas, tsiv tebchaws Los Tsuas rua tebchaws Thaib, hab tsiv tebchaws Thaib rua lwm lub tebchaws.

‘First the Mong migrated from the country of Muam Nkauj Lig to China, then migrated from the China to Vietnam, migrated from Vietnam to Laos, migrated from Laos to Thailand, and finally migrated from Thailand to other countries’ (*Tswv Yim*, preface).

- **ua ntu quas zug** ‘step by step, chronologically’:

Suavdlawg txhaj tuaj moog muab ntawv peg Paaj Cai lug teev ua ntu quas zug ngeg lug.

‘Everyone brought ritual paper up to Paaj Cai, and then conducted different parts of the ceremony at successive places moving from north to south’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **ua ntsuag vuag ntau hww** ‘to take too much’:

ua ntsuag vuag ntau hww yuav nplaam tuab si

‘don’t try to take too much one will lose all’ (Xiongs).

- **ua ntxhej tis ntxhuv** or **ua ntxhej pes ntxhuv** ‘luxuriantly’:

Hlub ua ntxhej tis ntxhuv dlaab ... Hlub ua ntxhej pes ntxhuv cev.

‘It grew luxuriantly in spirit ... It grew luxuriantly in body’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **ua nyuas** ‘act like a child, childish’ (Xiongs).

- **ua paa** ‘to breathe’ (Xiongs).

- **ua qag** ‘to vomit (baby)’ (Xiongs).

- **ua qaab** ‘following, to follow’ (Xiongs).

- **ua ... qaab quas nyo** ‘to follow someone closely, stay close behind someone, not let someone out of one’s sight’

ua Los Xaab qaab quas nyo ‘followed close behind Los Xaab’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

- **ua qaaj** ‘to snore, snoring’ (Xiongs).

- **ua qoob** ‘to farm, to tend to one’s crops’:

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **ua qhua** ‘to have measles’ (Xiongs).

- **ua qhua** ‘to be a guest’:

moog ua qhua ‘to be a guest, to go to another place to participate in a funeral’ (Xiongs).

- **ua qhua** ‘to welcome guests’:

Koj tuag dlaaj los tuag dleev,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug lawv qab,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug lawv npua,

Tuag dlaaj sawv quas tseeg lug ua qoob,

Tuag dleev sawv quas tseeg lug ua qhua.

‘Are you feigning death? Is your death a pretense?

If you are feigning death, get up and chase out the chickens.

If you are feigning death, get up and tend your crops.

If your death is pretense, get up and welcome your guests’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **ua qhuas ntahas** ‘to do with pride’ (Xiongs).

- **ua rua** ‘to cause one to do such-and-such’, ‘to make it so that such-and-such’:

Lub ntuj nuav ua rua kuv ncu txug kuv zaaj npausuav kws kuv tau ua thaas kuv tsheem yau

‘This sky reminds me of a dream I had when I was still small’ (*Ua Npausuav* p. 6).

Ua rua Yawm Nyooglaug puab tawm tsi tau moog qhov twg hlo le
 ‘It made it impossible for Grandfather Nyooglaug to go out anywhere at all’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **ua sem sov** ‘undecided’ (Xiongs).

- **ua si** ‘to play’ (Xiongs):

Moog Uasi Yaav Qaab Teb ‘A Trip to the South’ (title of an article about a vacation trip to various places in the southern United States, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, October 1990, pp. 37-38).

Nwg najnub moog ua si khuj quas khuav nraagqaab tojntxaas ib qho dlhau ib qho xwb.
 ‘Every day, he would aimlessly wander about from one gravesite to another’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 8).

- **ua si:** *yos ua si* ‘to go to play, to go for a walk’:

Kuv yos ua si ‘I go to play, for a walk’ (Xiongs).

- **ua tag** ‘nonetheless’:

yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

Noj tsi taug los ua tag noj. Haus tsi taug los ua tag haus.

‘If you cannot eat you must nonetheless eat. If you cannot drink you must nonetheless drink’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

- **ua tav** ‘to be ready’ (Xiongs).

- **ua taag** ‘nonetheless’:

koj yuav ua taag tev lawm naj peb lub ‘you must nonetheless peel three’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 77).

- **ua taag ua tab** [typo for *thab*] ‘do again and again’ (Xiongs).

- **ua tau txaus ntxub** ‘stink’ (Xiongs).

- **ua tub saab** ‘to rob, to steal’ (Xiongs).

- **ua tug dlaabtsi** ‘why?’:

Koj yuav nyob tog Nkauj Mim See ua tug dlaabtsi?

‘Why are you waiting for Nkauj Mim See?’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 12).

- **ua tuab ... puv** ‘to fill completely’:

luas tub muab paab nam hluasnkauj kws lug has nwg ntawd khi taag, hab kaw ua tuab khuaj puv nkaus.

‘the young women who had spoken to him had been tied up, and imprisoned, completely filling the pillory’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 15).

- **ua tuab zoo** ‘be careful, watch out for; be careful, carefully’ (Xiongs).

- **ua tsag** ‘to throw a tantrum, to refuse to obey’:

Mivnyuas ua tsag rua namtxiv; tsaj txhu ua tsag rua txwv.

‘A child throws a tantrum with his or her parents; an animal refuses to obey its master’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej* p. 1).

- **ua tsaug** ‘thank you’:

Ua tsaug tej! naj nub naj mo tum kuv, tuab nam txhwb tawg ua nwg, Awv! nua vuaj!

‘Thank you! Every day and every night he bites me. That piece of firewood made him go Ouch!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

Awv! nim naj mo zuv zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev, ua tsaug tej! Txiv tuab qws ua nwg mi-aub nua!

(a rat thanking a man for hitting a cat) ‘Hurrah! Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner. Thank you, father! You got him good with that pestle, making him go meow!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

- **ua tsi tsheej** ‘don’t know what to proceed, to cancel an action to be taken’ (Xiongs).

- **ua tsheej ib yig tuab neeg** ‘to be able to manage the family, to become a family’ (Xiongs).

- **ua txuj** ‘to pretend’:

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlob yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg

‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **ua txuj nkaag** ‘to creep stealthily’:

Nub tomqaab, Yawm Xeev txhaj ua txuj nkaag ib qho dlhau ib qho moog.

‘The following day, the Ruler therefore therefore crept stealthily from one place to another’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 15).

- **ua txumyim** ‘a Mong way of asking for excuse by joining the open hands and making a back and forth motion’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zuōyǐ*, gesture of greeting with the greeter holding the hands together in an up-and-down motion:

These actions are also for giving and receiving formal thanks (e.g at weddings). The Hmong Daw terms are:

txaum yim – to cup the hands, with arms held low down and shoulders slightly stooped low, moving the cupped hands back and forth while uttering words of thanks.

txais yim - to cup the hands, with arms held down low and shoulders slightly stooped low, moving the cupped hands back and forth while uttering words receiving thanks (this can

last for almost a minute or so).

At the end of this ritual behaviour each person will swiftly scoop up the hands a couple of times towards the chest while still uttering – for the person giving thanks this is like an action of pouring out the thanks into the receivers hands, for the person receiving thanks this is like scooping up the thanks. It differs from the Chinese action as seen in films (I doubt any Chinese still perform this although it might be expected at rural funerals) in which the clasped hands are held together at chest height and briefly moved back and forth rapidly as a sign of thanking (a little bit like the Thai do “wai” in the Indian fashion of holding the palms together and placing them to one’s forehead as a formal greeting or thanking) (in the films it always feels a bit snobbish – the person doing this action is high class, typically the star actor, he never stoops, but it is basically the same ritual – the person receiving the thanks will also clasp his hands and move them to and fro before his chest while grinning). It is not difficult to imagine that the Hmong actions – slow and deliberate and with plenty of stooping and verbal uttering – were also used by Chinese speakers in earlier times, and that the action has been preserved by Hmong. Here we have another example of cultural preservation by minorities in addition to all the old Southwestern Mandarin lexicon that seems to have been lost. The Hmong ritual is the real meaning of “ua tsaug” ‘to give thanks’ – a ritual giving of thanks. Whereas in normal day to day life it was not normal to say ‘thank you’ (other words can be said, such as “tabkaum koj os” ‘(I) have disturbed you’). In modern culture Hmong casually say “ua tsaug” like English ‘thanks’ without going through the formal ritualized motions. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **ua xua** ‘to have an itchy rash’ (Xiongs).
- **ua yaam tsi ntshai le** ‘fearlessly, courageously’ (Xiongs).
- **ua yoj ua yeeg** ‘to move back and forth, to waver, to quiver’ (Xiongs).
- **ua yuj yeev** ‘to move back and forth (said of a fish)’ (Xiongs).
- **ua zaam** ‘to dress up beautifully’ (Xiongs):

Luas tej mas nim ua zaam lab quas vog, hab nojnqaj hauscauv ntshu quas fwv rua tom u tom nua.

‘Everyone else was dressed up in speckled red clothing, feasting and celebrating all over the place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **ua zaam quas sees** ‘beautifully dressed up’ (Xiongs).
- **ua zoj ua zig** ‘to run round and round’ (?):

*Tes nam ncej puj dlaab cov mivnyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj moog ua zoj ua zig tes;
“Puj aw, peb moog ua zoj ua zig os puj?”*

Then the spirit children of the female-spirit post were running round and round:

“Grandmother, shall we go and run round and round, grandmother?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

When Brenda Johns and I were translating the story in which *ua zoj ua zig* appears, we were not sure what it meant. Brenda suggested ‘run round and round’. There are

somewhat similar expressions in dictionaries, such as *ua zoj zeeg* ‘to do quickly or hurriedly’ (Heimbach p. 439 *zoj*) and *ua zoj li ub*, *ua zoj li no* ‘sometimes do this, sometimes do that’ (Bertais p. 578 *ZOJ*).

- **uab** ‘a crow’, generic name for birds of a crow like appearance (Lyman).

- **uab dlub quas nyo** ‘crow-black’:

tug nam uab dlub quas nyo ‘the [horse] was crow-black’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **uas** ‘a large quantity’:

Puab moog dle tau ib uas zaub

‘So they picked a great deal of fodder’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 65, 68),

ntim ib uas mov ib uas nqaj rua dlaab Ntxawg

‘they packed a whole load of rice and some meat for Uncle Ntxawg’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

- **uav**, final particle?:

Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ...”

The doorkeeper of the door of heaven cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...” (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

V

- **vab** ‘bent’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 歪 *wāi*.

- **vag** ‘swinging’ (Xiongs).

- **va- -ab** ‘(classifier *lub*) a woven rattan or bamboo tray’ (Xiongs):

Wb los kuj tsi paub tsi pum le hab kuas, muaj ib nyuas ntxhais pheej tuaj qev vaab qev tshaus. Nwg nyav qev vaab lawm. Wb sim hu kuas nwg xaa vaab tuaj, koj saib puas yog nwg!

‘We do not know [if she’s your sister], but there’s a young woman who keeps coming to borrow sifting trays and sifters. She has just borrowed a sifting-tray. We’ll try calling her to bring the sifting-tray, you can see if it is her!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

Thov xaa peb vaab peb tshaus tuaj, peb yuav siv ho!

‘Please bring our sifting-trays and our sifters, we want to use them!’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes that the primary purpose of a *vaab* is removing bran, chaff, or grit from husked rice:

This is done by gyrating the rice in the tray (*zig txhuv*) – swirling the tray round and round in horizonatal position so that the chaff/grit collects together, and by winnowing – flip the rice up into the air then quickly pull down on the tray creating a suction which sucks off the bran, then quickly bring the tray into

position to catch the rice as it falls back to earth – repeat maybe a dozen times and then gyrate again. Of course, the vaab is also a general purpose tray – for example when making pounded rice cakes eggs a boiled and the egg yolk is spread on the vaab so that the cakes will not stick to it as they are being molded into shape.

tshaus or vaab tshaus – same as a vaab, typically a bit smaller and probably mostly with a taller rim, but woven less tight so that there are holes in it. The holes can be coarse (tshaus ntshib) or fine (tshaus mog) which suit different materials to be sieved. It is used as a sieve for foodstuffs, e.g. flour, corngrits.

vaab loog – similar to vaab but very large and with reinforcement to the base, used primarily for drying foodstuff in the sun.

sob cib – nice fresh ones are used like a colander – for draining cooking water from rice/vegetables etc. Tatty ones are used as dustpans - the open mouth lets you use a brush or stick with it to push garbage into the tray.

Michael sent me a number of photographs, including this photograph of a vaab tshaus:



- **Vaab:** *Nyaj Vaab* or *Nyuj Vaab* or *Nyawj Vaab*, from Chinese *Yánwang* ‘King Yama’ (for the identification of Nyaj Vaab with Yánwang, I am indebted to Graham 1954:64):

In Indian and Chinese belief King Yama is the ruler of the underworld but in Mong belief he lives in the sky, judges the dead, and gives out the documents of reincarnation:

Hmong call one class of supernatural beings Kao Eh Tu [Qaum Ntuj?] ... I shall call

these beings gods, because they are more powerful than other spirits: they live in the sky and each has a personal name. ... *Yawang* is often said to be the god under Yonglao [Nyooglaug]. His duty is to interview all the souls of people who have died. If he finds people who have committed crimes such as stealing and murdering in the world of men, he will not allow them to be reincarnated straight away, but punishes them as servants pounding rice for the people in the sky world. They cannot obtain licence to be reincarnated until they have completed this punishment. When they are ready to be reborn, *Yawang* will tell them to pick licences to be born again in the human-world. Some licences last a very long time but others terminate quickly. When the licence has expired the owner of the licence must die, unless *Yawang* allows him an extension. One's span of life on earth is therefore seen as predetermined, and dependent on the luck of the draw (Chindarsi 1976:18-19).

It may happen that the vital spirit, the *pli* [French spelling for *plig*], has been kept in the home of *Nyou Vang* (Nyuuj Vaab Laug). He [the shaman] must go there to find it. How to get there? The path goes up, it makes a fork. It is there that *Nyou Vang* is found in a cave, it is there that he has his office, and summons the souls, to decide between life and death. It is he also who deals with victims of untimely death. Since they have died by accident and their arrival in the Beyond does not coincide with the duration written in their permits for existence on earth, *Nyou Vang* does not allow them to go to be reincarnated and keeps them until a shaman pleads their case and makes reparatory offerings. He then sends them to be reincarnated by a short route. He has an enclosure where the shaman looks for the reindeer and the fleeing buffalo [types of souls]. When he appears in front of him, the shaman asks him to verify that the souls have not been lost in the enclosure and to prepare the papers authorizing the shaman to go to look for them in his enclosure (*Entre* pp. 151, 153).

Nyaj Vaab is often called *Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem* or *Nyawj Vaab Tuam Teem*. Jacques Lemoine believes that this expression comes from Chinese *Yánwang Dà Diàn* 'King Yama's Great Palace', the name of the building in which King Yama dwells being used metaphorically to refer to King Yama himself:

Thus the shamans who, by their profession, are led to visit the Beyond say that once past *Ndzeu Nyong*, one climbs to the "Great Palace of *Nyaeu Vang*", *Nyawj Vaab tuam teem* ... When the Hmong use this expression they are not able to decompose it and use it as if "Great Palace" was part of the Spirit's name (*Initiation* p. 91).

Ob tug txha moog rua tom nyaj vaab tuam teem lub chaw rooj ntug kws luas tu plaub. ... Ob tug moog txug tom na cav lug tug nam khi saw hlau quas nreeg has tas, yog vim le caag es yuav lug tug le hov nua. Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: "Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ..."

'The two of them then went to *Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem*'s gate of heaven where judgement is passed. ... When they arrived, why, there came [Little Yob], firmly bound in iron chains, asking why he had come. The doorkeeper cried out loudly, "This one has done no wrong. Release him. ..." ' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Nyaj vaab tuam teem ha muab tso plhuav. Ob tug ha moog ua ntaub ua ntawv rua moog thawjthab ua num ua tswv

'*Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem* then released him and the two of them then went to prepare the

documents for him to be reborn as a high official' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

Tuag moog txug sau tes Nyaj vab tuam teem muab teem txim, tso quas nkawj quas dlaiv plev, hab tso quas yoov tum ua dlaab ua tuag le hov rua.

'When they died and arrived on high, then Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem found them guilty and released wasps and giant hornets to sting them and released mosquitoes to bite them mercilessly' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

tes moog txug sau nyaj vaab tuam teem muab plaub txuj saw hlau khi plaub txhais teg taw ua ruam quas rug

'and when they arrived on high, Nyaj Vaab Tuam Teem took four iron chains and bound their four limbs rendering them immobile' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

- **vaab**: *tuam vaab* 'widely open or spread out' (Xiongs).

Wb los kuj tsi paub tsi pum le hab kuas, muaj ib nyuas ntxhais pheej tuaj qev vaab qev tshaus. Nwg nyav qev vaab lawm. Wb sim hu kuas nwg xaa vaab tuaj, koj saib puas yog nwg!

'We do not know [if she's your sister], but there's a young woman who comes to borrow a sifting tray. She has just borrowed a tray. We'll try calling her to bring the tray, you can see if it is her!' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

- **vaag** (classifier *tug*) fish net' (Xiongs):

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for taub] hai lug.

'The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **vaag**: *kaab nqog vaag* (classifier *tug*) locust' (Xiongs).

- **vaag**: *qaabvaag tsitaug* 'garden and area downhill from house', 'area around the house':

Cais thaus kawg cua txhaj sawv tseeg lug ntsawj cov nam plawv tshauv moov aav yaa si quas nab tawm ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag, hab ntawm Yawm Nyooglaug puab qaabvaag tsitaug

'Finally a wind arose and blew the dust in a great cloud out from Grandfather Nyooglaug's two betel-palm poles, and from around Grandfather Nyooglaug's house' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **vaag**: *tu ib vaag* 'cut out a small portion' (Xiongs).

- **vaaj** (classifier *lub*) garden' (Xiongs):

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are "smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds". The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

"Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua qhua Yaaj;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua qhua Dluas [typo or variant spelling for Dluag];

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua qhua Mob;

cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua qhua Lauj”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **vaaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) circle, round enclosure; to encircle, to enclose’ (Xiongs).

- **vaaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) king, ruler’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *wáng*.

- **Vaaj** ‘a Mong last name’ (Xiongs), a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Vug** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Wáng*.

- **vaaj**: *yum vaaj*, from Chinese *yào* (Southwestern Mandarin *yó*) ‘medicine’ + *wáng* ‘king’:

thaaj yum vaaj ‘the medicine-king altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **Vaajkaav**, name of a Mong king:

According to Num Tswb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj in Joliet, Illinois in 1982), the term *xwmkaab* (the sheet of ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house opposite the main door) is a deformation of Vaajkaav, the name of a Mong king who gave his subjects copies of his portrait to put up in their houses as a sign of his protection when the kingdom was invaded by the Chinese. Each year, at the New Year, the king instructed his subjects to burn his portrait and he would give them a new one. The *xwmkaab* paper is Vaajkaav’s portrait and shows that even though Vaajkaav was killed and the kingdom destroyed centuries ago the Mong of the household installing the *xwmkaab* paper are still under his protection. The *xwmkaab* paper is burned and replaced each year at the New Year in commemoration of Vaajkaav’s instruction regarding his portrait. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56.)

- **vaaj ntxwv** ‘(classifier *tug*) king’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *wángzǐ* ‘prince’.

- **vaaj ntxwv**: *fuabtais vaajntxwv* ‘king, queen, ruler’:

Referring to a male ruler:

Ab! peb foom kuas nwg tau moog ua fuabtais vaajntxwv lauj!

Ah! Let us bestow a blessing on him that he shall become king’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

Referring to a married couple ruling jointly as king and queen:

Tej teb taj teb tug thau tes yog Ceeb Pov hab Suav Los Xaab ob tug nua es ob tug txha ua fuabtais vaajntxwv noj teb noj chaw lawm.

‘Level and peaceful fields then were Ceeb Pov’s and Suav Los Xaab’s, and the two of them became king and queen and ruled the country’ (*Ceebpov*, p. 31).

- **vaam** ‘to hope, to wish, to trust in, the rely upon’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 望 *wàng*:

Kuv vaam tas koj yuav tuaj koom peb rooj qav hab

‘I hope that you will participate in the feast with us’ (Xiongs).

vaam ntsoov (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to hope, to wish].

- **vaim** ‘(classifier *tug*) larva, an insect in the earliest stages of development (especially in water)’ (Xiongs).

- **vaiv**: *thauv vaiv* ‘hanging’ (Xiongs).

- **vau**: *nraug vauv* or *nraug vau* ‘(classifier *tug*) bridegroom’ (Xiongs).

- **vaub** ‘(no classifier) bunch’ (Xiongs).

- **vaub**: *plaub hau ua lauj vauv* ‘badly knotted hair’ (Xiongs).

- **vaub kib** ‘(classifier *tug*) turtle’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 乌龟 *wūguī*.

- **vauj** ‘(classifier *lub*) kite’ (Xiongs).

- **vauv** ‘(classifier *tug*) son in law or brothers of son in law’ (Xiongs), ‘son-in-law’ (*Village* p. 176):

muab tug nyuas vauv cuav nuav moog txeeb rog rua txiv mej noj saib!
‘fry this false son-in-law in oil for me to eat!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 36.)

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?
‘Son-in-law Yob came to try the medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

- **vauv**: *cov qhua vauv* ‘the bridegroom’s party’ (Xiongs).

- **vauv**: *nraug vauv* or *nraug vau* ‘(classifier *tug*) bridegroom’ (Xiongs).

- **vauv**: *yawm vauv* ‘husband’s sister’s husband (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **vauv xeeb ntxwv** ‘granddaughter’s husband’ (*Village* p. 176).

- **vaws**, intensifier:

Nam dlej ndlwg quas tsaws ndlwg tug quas vaws es wb moog pw nraag mav.
‘The river flows calmly and evenly so let us go to sleep down there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **Vees Caas** ‘Vientiane [the administrative capital of Laos and the province in which the administrative capital is located], from Lao *Viang Can*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4):

lub xeev Vees Caas ‘Vientiane Province’ (Xiongs).

- **vig voog**, intensifier:

hab thaub ntuj thaub teb pawg nam pobzeb kws nwg nqaa lug tso ntawm npoo qhov ndlog vig voog moog txhaws qhovntuj lawm.
‘and hacked with all his might and main against the pile of stones which he had brought to the edge of the chasm, so that they rolled down and plugged up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag txhaj quaj los quaj, qw los qw hab nti ua vig ua voog.

‘Yob the ‘Orphan yelled and yelled, screamed and screamed, and tossed to and fro’
(*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Nwg txhaj sawv tseeg lug tsoo ua vig ua voog.

‘He rose up and began to thrash about’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **vij**, from Chinese *wéi* ‘around’:

zaaj vij nub ‘rainbow around the sun’ (Xiongs).

- **vim** ‘because’ (probably from Chinese 为 *wèi* ‘act as, serve as, be, mean’):

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub*?] *zaig zig*
‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

Pov tshev nwg tug tub vim nwg tsi kawm ntawv

‘Pao scolds his son because he doesn’t study’ (Xiongs).

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

- **vim**: *yib vim* ‘because’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yīnwéi*.

- **vim tas** ‘because’:

cov kua txeej vim tas nwg puv heev

‘the juice spills because it is too full’ (Xiongs).

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm

‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’
(Xiongs).

- **vim yog** ‘because’:

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

- **viv ncaug npawg** ‘bilateral female cross cousin [i.e. mother’s brother’s daughter or father’s sister’s daughter], matrilinear female parallel cousin [i.e. mother’s sister’s daughter] (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **viv thaaj nyuj** ‘radio, from Lao *vī thā nyū*’ (*Tswv Yim* p.4).

- **vog** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 556):

dlaaj vog or *dlaaj quas vog* ‘many yellow things all over’ (Xiongs p. 556).

dlawb quas vog ‘many white things all over’:

Nwg kuj ib ke lug ib ke dlob plaub ua nam pujqab quaj qim quas qom, hab ua plaub poob dlawb vog lug lawm.

‘As he walked he pulled out feathers making the hen squawk, and making the feathers fall many white things all over’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 17).

Tshev quas tawg le hov, tshev tshev Los Xaab quaj quaj kuamuag poob dlawb quas vog nrau zoov

‘He berated him in this fashion until the tears rained from Los Xaab’s eyes’ (*Ceebpov* p. 20).

lab vog or *lab quas vog* ‘speckled red’:

Nwg ... tsag lig xub yaa lab vog cais cov nam pobzeb txawm yaa tawg pis txua

‘He [Grandfather Thunder’s Youngest Son] ... sent red bolts of lightning flying everywhere and the stones then flew and cracked into pieces’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 27).

Luas tej mas nim ua zaam lab quas vog, hab nojnqaj hauscauv ntshu quas fuv rua tom u tom nua.

‘Everyone else was dressed up in speckled red clothing, feasting and celebrating all over the place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

Nwg nim muaj nyuj muaj twm, muaj neeg muaj zaag, muaj dlev muaj npua, muaj qab muaj us, hab muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw noj zaub puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

‘It had cattle and it had buffaloes, it had horses and it had mules, it had dogs and it had pigs, it had chickens and it had ducks, and it had ntshuav and it had elephants grazing and filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

- **vog**: *tu plaub txhab vog* ‘to grow hair or feathers fairly well’ (Xiongs).

- **voob** ‘to cover’ (Xiongs). From Southwestern Mandarin 翁 *ōng*.

- **voog** ‘to get worse, to enlarge (abcess)’ (Xiongs):

yuav tsum tu hab qhov txhaab xam tsi voog

‘the abcess should be taken care of so as not to get worse’ (Xiongs).

- **voog**: *vig voog*, intensifier:

hab thaub ntuj thaub teb pawg nam pobzeb kws nwg nqaa lug tso ntawm npoo qhov ndlog vig voog moog txhaws qhovntuj lawm.

‘and hacked with all his might and main against the pile of stones which he had brought to the edge of the chasm, so that they rolled down and plugged up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

Yob Nraug Ntsuag txhaj quaj los quaj, qw los qw hab nti ua vig ua voog.

‘Yob the ‘Orphan yelled and yelled, screamed and screamed, and tossed to and fro’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Nwg txhaj sawv tseeg lug tsoo ua vig ua voog.

‘He rose up and began to thrash about’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **vug** ‘(classifier *raab*) spear’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “The original sense of this root seems

to be arrow tip (it may have also covered a spear tip in the past?) – potentially dating to Neolithic stone tips.”

- **Vug**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Vaaj** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

- **vuj** ‘(classifier *lub*) knot, loop knot, loop’ (Xiongs):

ua ib lub vuj ‘make a loop’ (Xiongs).

- **vum** ‘to steam in a steamer after half boiled or half cooked’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 焐 *wò*, in the dialectal sense of ‘to poach (eggs)’.

- **vum** ‘warm with no circulating air’ (Xiongs):

From a dialectal pronunciation, probably *wù*, of Chinese 捂 *wǔ*, one of the meanings of which is ‘stuffy’. *Vum* is not likely to be an old loan, because the equivalent form in White Hmong is *vaum*, and variation between *u* and *au* is common in loans from Southwestern Mandarin but not in older loans predating the contact with Southwestern Mandarin.

- **vuv** (classifier *raab*) ‘hand-reaper’ (tiny flat cutting implement for reaping rice):

This instrument, which is only used by the Miao [Mong] and Yao, is held in the right hand between the two middle fingers where it is fastened by means of an attached cord (Lyman p. 356).

Michael Johnson called my attention to the fact that the Xiongs omitted this historically and culturally important word and I have therefore reproduced Lyman’s entry. One of the upsetting things about Lyman’s dictionary is that Lyman consistently refers to the Mong as ‘Miao’. In China this is a polite term but in Vietnam, in Laos, and in Thailand (where Lyman did his fieldwork) it is offensive and derogatory.

Lemoine has a very nice line drawing of *raab vuv* on page 64 of *Village*.

- **vuv**, intensifier:

Los Xaab, wb rovqaab moog pw nraag nam taj suav ntswm kws nim taj tug quas vuv lawm nam peb caug taj, taj tug quas vuv lawm naj pebcaug nraag kws teem nkaus npoo ntuj hov.

‘Los Xaab, let us go back and sleep down in the field that is sandy all over, the field that is level for thirty plots, the field that is level for thirty plains, that presses against the edge of the sky’ (*Ceebpov* p. 21).

- **vuag** ‘to take, to grab in haste’ (Xiongs):

ua ntsuag vuag ntau hwv yuav nplaam tuab si
‘don’t try to take too much one will lose all’ (Xiongs).

- **vuag** ‘(no classifier) a short period of time’ (Xiongs):

Nwg tuaj ib vuag nuav hab ‘s/he comes by here for a short period of time too’ (Xiongs).

- **vuag** ‘(classifier *dlaim*) tile’ (Xiongs).

- **vuag**, a word of uncertain meaning, possibly an intensifier, possibly an adjective meaning ‘harsh’, occurring in the following example:

A man is bemoaning his fate. His parent’s have been killed, he is unmarried, and he lives with his older brother and his older brother’s wife, a hard-hearted woman who makes him work very hard and gives him inferior food:

Num ku quas vuag noj nplooj quas ab haus dlej dlhau sab

‘Toil is harsh, leaves are bitter to eat, water is too much for one’s heart’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **Vwb Caab**, the Nam Ou, a tributary of the Mekong:

Tug dlej lub npe hu le caag los yuav tau teev npe quas zog: Naaj Khoom, Vwb Caab, Naaj Kho, Naaj Khaab

‘The name of each river is recited in order: Mekong, Nam Ou, Nam Kho, Nam Khan’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

Probably from Chinese 乌江 *Wūjiāng* ‘Black River’: “Presumably a well known river name from back in the day that was transferred to the Nam Ou.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **Vwj** ‘a Mong last name’ (Xiongs), a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) for which there is no corresponding *qhua* (Mong clan name) (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Wú*.

- **vwm** ‘crazy, insane’ (Xiongs):

tug tuab neeg vwm ‘the crazy man or person’ (Xiongs).

Moob Ua Rog Vwm (1919-1921)

‘The Mong Wage the Crazy War (1919-1921)’ (*Rog Vwm*, title).

VH

Spelling used by Xeev Nruag Xyooj to represent a sound occurring in an interjection.

- **Vhuag!**, interjection:

Nraag qaab nuav yog qee yaam txwm ntawv kws kuv muab teeb rua mej tau pum. Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘Below examples of different writing systems have been brought together for you all to see. Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

Nathan White (personal communication) has heard speakers pronounce this interjection “as a very breathy *vuag*”.

W

W is used as a vowel.

- **w** ‘to scatter by overhand throw’:

Qaav Taug w hawv tuaj qaab roob

‘Qaav Taug scattered the seeds at the foot of the mountain’ (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **wb** ‘first person dual pronoun, corresponding to third person *ob tug* [the two], *nkawd* [they two]’ (*Kevcai Ntawv*).

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj
[typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘Later, when you’re going, we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

wb ob leeg ‘we two’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 6).

- **Wb!**, interjection, ‘No!’, ‘Yes!’:

Siv Yig Muas says,

Ub! tau lawm hab kuas lug noj tsuav! Yawm Sub! Tsi xob maaj!

‘Hey, I’m ready, but come and eat first, Grandpa Sub! Don’t be in such a hurry!’

Grandfather Sub replies,

Wb! tawm tuaj los maj! ‘No! Come on out!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 28.)

Grandmother Sub complements Siv Yig Muas, saying that because he performs shamanic rites to heal his subjects, they willingly bring food to him, unlike her own husband and son:

Yuav noj tes moog tshev tshev luas tau ib nyuas pluag xwb muaj!

‘When they want to eat they just go and yell at people to get a little meal!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30.)

Siv Yig Muag replies,

Wb! tau hab huas!

‘Yes, indeed!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 30).

- **ws** ‘(classifier *tug*) quail’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. 6), ‘generic term for birds belonging to the Turnix family, i.e. the so-called buttonquail’ (Lyman):

Bertrais’s White Hmong dictionary says that *noog w* is a bird that resembles the quail but does not have a tail but the illustration of *tug ws* used as the example of the letter W in *Phoo Kawm Koom* shows a bird with a short tail. Michael Johnson identified *noog w* as *Excalfactoria chinensis* and sent me this photograph:



- **Wv!**, interjection showing anger:

Wv! nim muab kuv txiv kuv tub tua tuag taag kuv tub tsi nyos nwg, nwg teem nyos kuv oj!
 ‘So, when they killed my husband and my son, I didn’t mock them, but now they’re mocking me!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 32.)

X

- **xab** ‘to stop from rolling’ (Xiongs).
- **xab** ‘to raise or elevate by putting a block under it’ (Xiongs):

Ntxawm moog nqaa hlo plaub choj nyaj lug xab ceg rooj.
 ‘Ntxawm brought four ingots of silver to put under the legs of the table’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nim ib ke noj ib ke cev teg moog rhu ib choj nyaj kws xab ceg rooj nuav.

‘The Ruler simultaneously ate and reached out to pull out an ingot of silver that was propping up a table-leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 15).

Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.

‘It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **xab** ‘wild virgin (jungle)’ (Xiongs).

- **xab** ‘(classifier *lub*) gills (of a fish)’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 鳃 *sāi*.

- **xab** ‘color intensifier’ (Xiongs p. 557):

ntsuab ‘green or blue in general’:
ntsuab laj or *ntsuab quas laj* ‘blue, pure blue’
ntsuab xab or *ntsuab quas xab* ‘green, pure green’
 (Xiongs p. 557).

- **xab** ‘day of the month’:

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:
 ‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows.’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). The list begins:

luav hli – naab xab 1 ‘month of the rabbit – snake day 1’
luav hli – neeg xab 2 ‘month of the rabbit – horse day 2’
luav hli – yaaj xab 3 ‘month of the rabbit – sheep day 3’
luav hli – dlev xab 4 ‘month of the rabbit – dog day 4’
luav hli – qab xab 5 ‘month of the rabbit – chicken day 5’
luav hli – lab xab 6 ‘month of the rabbit – monkey day 6’
luav hli – npua xab 7 ‘month of the rabbit – pig day 7’
luav hli – naag xab 8 ‘month of the rabbit – rat day 8’
luav hli – nyuj xab 9 ‘month of the rabbit – ox day 9’
luav hli – tsuv xab 10 ‘month of the rabbit – tiger day 10’
luav hli – luav xab 11 ‘month of the rabbit – rabbit day 11’
luav hli – zaaj xab 12 ‘month of the rabbit – dragon day 12’

The list then continues through the remaining days of the month of the rabbit (the first month of the year) and then on through the thirty days of the month of the dragon (the second month of the year) and ends with

zaaj hli – zaaj xab 30 ‘month of the dragon – dragon day 30’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 81-83.)

Nub means day in general, as when Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that a month has *pebcaug nub* ‘thirty days’ and *xab* means specifically day of the month, in listing them: *xab 1* ‘first day of the month’, *xab 2* ‘second day of the month’, and so on.

- **xab**: *haav zoov nuj quas xab* ‘(classifier *lub*) wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **xab nyaj** ‘to bribe’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that *xab* ‘to stop from rolling’ and *xab* ‘to raise or elevate by putting a block under it’ are the same word (Michael suggests the gloss ‘to chock’), and that the *xab* in *xab nyaj* ‘to bribe’ is the same word as well, so that *xab nyaj* would be literally something like “to prop up with money”.

- **xas**: *thwsxas* ‘to behave in a certain way’, probably from Lao *thǎi sáa* ‘to mind, to care’:

Tej kws moog thwsxas hammeem es tua tua tuabneeg
 ‘Those who behave wickedly and commit murder’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **xam** ‘so as, in order to’:

Koj yuaav [typo for *yuav*] *tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab*
 ‘You must take a shortcut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo
 ‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau
 ‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

yuav tsum tu hab qhov txhaab xam tsi voog
 ‘the abcess should be taken care of so as not to get worse’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson suggests that *xam* may be a phonetic reduction of ‘then’, from Chinese 才 *cái*.

- **xam le** ‘so as, in order to’ (Xiongs):

yuav tsum rau sab ua num xam le tau noj
 ‘work hard in order to get your livelihood’ (Xiongs).

- **xav** ‘purple, blue’ (Xiongs):

xav lug or *xav quas lug* (Xiongs p. 557, not translated) [purple or blue].

- **xaa** ‘to send’ (Xiongs):

Kuv xaa dlaim dluab nuav tuaj rua koj ‘I send you this photo (or picture)’ (Xiongs).

- **xaa** ‘to hit’ (Xiongs).

- **xaa** ‘to accompany someone back’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav xaa kuv tuaj tsi xaa
 ‘Will you accompany me back or not? (Mong song)’ (Xiongs).

- **xaab** ‘yeast (for starting a fermentation in making wine or alcohol)’ (Xiongs).

- **xaab** ‘(classifier *lub*) coffin’ (Xiongs), euphemistic use of Chinese 箱 *xiāng* ‘trunk, case’:

muab zwm xaab ‘to put into the coffin (a dead body)’ (Xiongs).

- **xaab** ‘to swell, to dilate, to increase in volume; swollen’ (Xiongs).
- **xaab**, from Chinese *sān* ‘three’: *Los Xaab*, name for the third-born son, from Chinese *Lǎo Sān*. Name of the protagonist of *Ceebpov*.
- **xaab**: *phij xaab* ‘(classifier *lub*) luggage, large box; luggage, bag, box’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *píxiāng* ‘leather case (especially one used to store clothing)’.
- **xaab cum** ‘tripod’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 5). From Chinese *sān* ‘three’ + *jué* ‘foot’.
- **xaaj** ‘to order, to give order (originally a Laotian word)’ (Xiongs), from Lao *sāng*:
Nwg xaaj kom kuv ua ‘s/he orders me to do it’ (Xiongs).
ua lawv le xaaj ‘follow the order’ (Xiongs).
- **xaam** ‘to think, to calculate, to reckon, to figure out’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *suàn*:
xaam phaaj ‘to do math or do calculation’ (Xiongs).
tug xib fwb qha xaam phaaj ‘the math teacher’ (Xiongs).

The chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 77-86) lists the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) after whom months and days are named, describes the symbolic significance of these animals, and describes methods for calculating and keeping track of dates.
- **xaam**, Chinese *sàn* ‘to break up, to disperse, to scatter, to distribute, to disseminate’:
tshuaj xaam ‘the medicine is circulated or dissipated in the body’ (Xiongs)
- **xaamnyas** ‘contract’, from Lao *sǎn nyáa*:
Ua ntaub ua ntawv xaamnyas tuabsi es pauv kuj tau mas.
‘Prepare a contract and we will make the exchange’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).
- **xaam pum** ‘to observe’:
Peb lub Rooj Ntawv xaam pum tas peb suavdlawg, tsi has Moob Leeg los Hmoob Dawb, yeej noj sis cev haus sis hlub
‘Our Editorial Board has observed that all of us, regardless of whether we are Mong Leng or White Hmong, have always eaten together in fellowship and drunk together in love’ (*Phoo Kawm Koom* p. iii).
- **xaam quas nuv** ‘to look around in bewilderment’:
Ntxawm hab Yob ob tug pum Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug nkaag plawg lug sawv xaam quas nuv
‘Ntxawm and Yob saw the Ruler come in and stand looking all around him in a daze’ (*Yob hab Yaajqawg* p. 15).
- **Xaas Thoos** ‘Sam Thong [a town in northern Laos], from Lao *Sám Thóng*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).
- **xaav** ‘to think, to reckon, to figure out’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 想 *xiǎng*.
- **xaav** ‘to want’, from Chinese 想 *xiǎng*:

Kuv tsi xaav moog ‘I don’t want to go’ (Xiongs).

Kuv xaav muab koj zawm nkaus ‘I want to tightly embrace you’ (Xiongs).

peb tsi xaav yuav hlo le lawm ‘we don’t want it anymore’ (Xiongs).

Oo, kuv xaav nyob ze koj

‘Ong, I want to be close to you; Ong, I want to stay near you’ (Xiongs).

xaav le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [to want it to be like that].

- **xaav kom** ‘to wish that, to wish’ (Xiongs):

Kuv xaav kom koj paab ua qhov nuav rua kuv

‘I wish you can do this for me’ (Xiongs).

- **xaav tas** ‘to think that’:

Peb xaav tas yuav tsi yog lawm ‘We think that it will not be right’ (Xiongs).

- **xaav txug** ‘to think about’:

Oo, Kuv xaav txug ‘Ong, I think about you’ (Xiongs).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **xai**: *neej xai plaub ntug* ‘court, justice’ (Xiongs).

- **xais** ‘to pinch, to choke’ (Xiongs):

Ntxawm txha le muab nwg txhais teg xais pis kag, muab dlav nraaj tab hlais nwg lub xwbteg, lug ntshaav, he le muab cov ntshaav hov lug sau ntawv.

‘Ntxawm then pinched her hand hard, cut her palm with a batiking knife, it bled, and she used the blood to write a letter’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 48).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “This verb is a special type of Hmong pinching – covering pinching the skin to promote healing, and also severing something by pinching. In a Dabneeg [White Hmong folktale] source it is even used of severing an umbilical cord ... I imagine that in this example Ntxawm is bringing enough blood to the surface by doing the pinching.”

- **xaiv** ‘to choose, to sort out, to select, to decide what to take’ (Xiongs):

xaiv tug koj nyam ‘choose the one you like’ (Xiongs).

tsi pub xaiv ‘sorting is not allowed’ (Xiongs).

- **xaiv** ‘rumors, gossip, stereotyping words’ (Xiongs):

taug xaiv ‘to gossip, to stereotype’ (Xiongs).

- **xaiv**: *txiv xaiv* ‘instructional funeral songs’ (Xiongs).

- **xaub** ‘to slip down an inclined surface’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 趄 *suō*:

Michael Johnson (personal communication) quotes an example of 趄 from the Guiyang Fangyan Cidian (Guiyang Dialect Dictionary): 从山上趄下来 ‘to slip down a hill’.

- **xaub**, from Chinese 蓑 *suō* ‘plant fibres (kapok, palm fibres, etc.) used for padding’:

choj plawv xaub ‘thick cotton blanket’ (Xiongs).

- **xauj** ‘to watch (secretly or not) through an opening, to peek at, to watch, to glance; (no classifier) a glance’ (Xiongs):

qhov muag xauj tsi pum ‘cannot see with the eyes’ (Xiongs).

*Ob nam quaspuj moog xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv, xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv.
Xauj xauj tsausntuj quas nti tes xauj thoob.*

‘Wherever the two wives looked there was a married couple, wherever they looked there was a married couple. They looked until it was quite dark and then had seen them all’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

Perhaps from a dialectal meaning of Chinese 索 *suǒ* ‘to search, to inquire into, to request, to demand’.

- **xaus** ‘to stop, to finish off, to complete, to terminate, to end, to conclude’ (Xiongs):

lug xaus ‘conclusion’ (Xiongs).

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “Peb yuav tsum sib hlub”
s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

xaus koj zaaj lug ‘end your sentence’ (Xiongs).

Nqai raug phom hab ntoo ntaus tes tug tuag cuab teb le kws has sau nuav. Kuas xaus ib yam le nqai 4 ntaag.

‘In the cantos about being shot and struck by a tree, the dead person begins his or her reply as written here, and ends as in canto 4’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

*12 hlis – tsuv hli******

*12th month – month of the tiger******

****** noj pebcaug xaus xyoo.*

****** one eats the feast of the thirtieth [the New Year feast] to finish the year. (Dlaab Qhuas p. 79.)*

- **xauv** ‘to lock’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 锁 *suǒ*:

Puab muab nwg xauv rua huv qhov taub ib txhis le vim nwg tua plaub leeg tuab neeg lug lawm

‘They locked her/him in jail for a lifetime because s/he killed four people’ (Xiongs).

xauv qhov rooj ‘lock the door’ (Xiongs).

In Mong Leng and closely related dialects, the word for ‘to lock’ is always pronounced *xauv*, never **xuv*. This suggests that the word for ‘lock’ was borrowed early, since more

recent loans from Southwestern Mandarin usually show variation between au and u.

- **Xauv Kim** ‘Xao Kee’, man’s name:

Xauv Kim yog kuv txiv ‘Xao Kee is my father’ (Xiongs).

- **xaub teg** ‘(classifier *lub*) handcuff’ (Xiongs).

- **xaw** ‘to leak, to filter through’ (Xiongs):

Naag xaw lug huv tsev ‘The rain (water) leaks into the house’ (Xiongs).

- **xawb** ‘to select, to sort out, to choose good ones from what is left over’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 搜 *sōu*:

Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug moog xawb dlaabntxaug nyaj.
 ‘Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm went and sorted through the ntxaug spirits’ silver’
 (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **xaws** ‘to sew’ (Xiongs):

xaws khaub dluag ‘to sew clothing’ (Xiongs).

xaws paaj ntaub ‘to embroider’ (Xiongs) [to sew embroidery].

tshuab xaws khaub dluag ‘sewing machine’ (Xiongs).

Luas tes luas muaj nam muaj txiv xaws rig xaws tsho rua naav es luas tsi ndluag, luas nim muaj nam muaj txiv ntshua luas khaub rig khaub tsho es luas tsi muaj tuv tsi muaj ntshau [typo for *ntshauv*?]. *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau ob tug tes ob tug tsi muaj nam muaj txiv, muaj nkauj muaj muam xaws rig xaws tsho rua ob tug naav es ob tug tug nim ndluag ndluag, muaj muaj tuv muaj ntshauv.*

‘Other people have mothers and fathers to sew clothes for them to wear so that they are not ragged, other people have mothers and fathers to wash their clothes so that they don’t have body lice and head lice. Big Yob and Little Yob had no mother or father, no sister, to sew clothes for them to wear so they were very ragged and had very many body lice and head lice’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 7).

- **xaws** ‘to completely fill, to fill up, to block totally’ (Xiongs). See also *txhaws*.

- **xaws**: *hauv xaws* ‘the fontanelle on the head of a child’ (Xiongs).

- **xeb** ‘(no classifier) rust; to rust, to get rusty’ (Xiongs):

raab hlau nuav xeb heev lawm ‘this hoe is very rusty’ (Xiongs).

- **xeb**: *tuag xeb* ‘that cannot be any better cooked’ (Xiongs).

- **xej yaag** ‘having a vision problem that one must look to the side in order to be able to see’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 斜眼 *xiéyǎn* ‘cross-eyed’, but the pronunciation of the second syllable is puzzling. Normally, Chinese *yǎn* would be pronounced **yees* in Mong.

- **xem** ‘rough in taste’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 涩 *sè*.

- **xem**: *plhov xem* ‘to imply indirectly to something’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Southwestern Mandarin *piǎo* ‘to skew the eyes’.

- **xem**: *txaam xem* ‘purple’ (Xiongs):

txaamxem lug ‘purple’ (Xiongs p. 557).

The word *txaam xem* appears to be from Chinese but the exact Chinese source is uncertain. The second syllable, *xem*, may be from Chinese 色 *sè* ‘color’, but the first syllable, *txaam*, is more difficult to pin down. Michael Johnson (personal communication) quotes expressions containing one possible source, 藏 *zàng*, from the Guiyang Fangyan Cidian (Guiyang Dialect Dictionary):

藏青 *zàngqīn* | 蓝中带黑的颜色 ‘the color of blue which has black in its midst’
藏青布 *zàngqīnbù* | 用植物染料蓝靛染过的土布, 藏青色或黑色, 多泛红色。当地苗族、布依族多用此布做衣料 ‘homespun cloth which has been dyed with plantbased indigo, whether “zangqing”, black or red. Local Miao and Buyi all use such cloth to make clothing’.

Then Michael quotes a Wiktionary entry providing another possible source, 酱 *jiàng*:

酱紫(色) *jiàngzǐ* dark reddish purple

Michael notes that, in Early Middle Chinese, 酱 was pronounced *tsiaŋC*, that is, with the initial consonant *ts*, suggesting that if Mong *txaam* (with the initial consonant *tx*, pronounced *ts*) is from 酱, it may have been borrowed relatively early. If the Mong word for ‘purple’ were a very recent borrowing, from the modern Chinese pronunciation *jiàng*, we might expect the Mong initial consonant to be *c*, not *tx*.

Michael writes that Mong *txaam* could be from either 藏 *zàng* or 酱 *jiàng*, “(or something else) – not sure.”

Finally, Michael notes that Bertrais’s White Hmong dictionary has a form with *ts* rather than *tx*, an unusual phonological difference:

Bertrais (under *xem*) has:

tshuaj tsam xem ‘bleu de Prusse’ – this is an actual substance, classed as *tshuaj* [‘medicine’]. Can’t find this “Prussian blue” on Larousse. It should be either 1) the blue coloured liquid that is added to hand washed laundry to make the whites whiter (I have only seen this in Ghana). 2) a blue dyestuff for dyeing cloth.
txos tsam xem ‘couleur bleue de Prusse’ – this is the actual colour, as a perceivable sense.

- **xev** ‘to invent words of your own (said in Mong songs), to lie’ (Xiongs).

- **xevthim plaab** ‘to give up one’s old body and be reincarnated’:

saib quas ntsoov tug kwv moog thawj hlo nam xevthim plaab.

‘watched carefully as his younger brother was reborn, abandoning his old body’ (*Yob*)

Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 16).

The expression *xevthim plaab* may mean literally “to slough off one’s belly”, from Chinese *shě* ‘to give up, abandon’ + Chinese *tui* ‘to slough off’ + Mong *plaab* ‘belly’. But Michael Johnson is doubtful about my idea that the first syllable, *xev*, represents Chinese 舍 *shě* ‘to give up, abandon’. Mong *x*, pronounced “s”, does sometimes correspond to Chinese *sh*, so the idea that *xev* could come from 舍 *shě* is not implausible. But in White Hmong, 舍 *shě* is *sev*, with *s*, pronounced “sh”, and in the dialect represented in *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet*, which uses the official Chinese orthography, 舍 *shě* is *shed*, again with *sh*. The Mong Leng form *xev*, therefore, is anomalous vis-à-vis the way 舍 *shě* is pronounced in other closely related Hmong dialects, and may therefore have a different source, something other than 舍 *shě*.

- **xeeb** ‘to exist, to be’ (Xiongs) (perhaps from Chinese 生 *shēng* ‘to give birth to’):

Nwg xeeb nwg le ‘It exists by itself’ (Xiongs).

- **xeeb** ‘part of a compound word pertaining to “heart”’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *xīn*:

cimxeeb ‘memory’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *jì* ‘to remember’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

chim laaj xeeb ‘to be displeased’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *qì* ‘to get angry’ + *nán* ‘difficult’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

yuj xeeb ‘with all my heart’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *yuè* ‘happy, pleased’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

txhawj xeeb ‘to worry’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *chóu* ‘to worry’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

twm xeeb ‘untempered mind; short tempered’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *dú* ‘poisonous’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

teeb xeeb ‘(classifier *tug*) lampwick’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *dēngxīn* ‘heart of the lamp’.

Cim Xeeb Haav Txiv Dlaw

‘Memoire of Walnut Valley’ (*Cim Xeeb*, title).

Ces yuav chim laaj xeeb om. ‘We’re so unhappy, such pain in our hearts’, ending formula for certain Lug Txaj (traditional songs) (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 107).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “All these compounds were presumably in earlier Southwestern Mandarin but have not survived as far as I know. They are possibly Hmong innovations – especially as *siab/sab* is so productive in Hmong! I really have no idea on the sources of *yuj* and *twm*.”

- **xeeb** ‘guardian spirit’:

Puab tuab [typo for *tua*?] *qab txi xeeb*

‘They sacrifice a chicken for the most important tree in the village (The Mong believed that in doing so, spirits brought them protection and good hopes)’ (Xiongs).

Koj leej tub tuag, koj tshuav nam pis xeeb ua ntog teb, haus tsuag luas ib ntog dlej. Koj

yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntaw rua koj coj moog them se dlej se tawg, se teb se chaw pis xeeb txha le tso koj kev moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. ... (Hlawv peb nplooj xovtxheej rua tug tuag hov. ...)

‘You who have died, you destroyed a portion of the land of the guardian spirit of the place, you drank up a portion of the spirit’s water. When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax, the tax of the land and of the place of the guardian spirit, so that you will be permitted to go to meet your ancestors. ... (Burn three leaves of the ritual money for the dead person. ...)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes: “surely a loan of 仙 xiān ‘celestial being, Daoist immortal etc.’ – with thoroughly animist use in Hmong.”

- **xeeb**, from Chinese 生 *shēng* ‘to give birth to’: *cev xeeb tub* ‘to be pregnant’:

cev xeeb tub tau ob hli lug lawm ‘being pregnant for two months already’ (*Xiongs*).

- **xeeb**: *haus cawv xeeb* ‘to drink liquor in honor of someone’s birthday’:

Muaj ib xyoos, Nuj Yob namtxiv txawm moog nrug Yawm Xeev haus cawv xeeb, cais puab txhaj muab ob tug txhaus cawv tuag taagnrho lawm lauj!

‘One year, Nuj Yob’s parents went to a wine drinking ceremony in honor of the ruler’s birthday, and he forced liquor upon them until they died’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

- **xeeb**: *Maum Xeej Xeeb*, name of a dragon in a story:

Tug nam zaaj, Zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb, nyob huv lub nam qhov dlej twb yeej npaaj tas yuav moog yuav Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm nuav

‘A dragon, Dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb, who lived in that water hole, was already preparing to marry Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **xeeb**: *twm xeeb* ‘unique’ (*Xiongs*), perhaps from Chinese *dú shēn* ‘sole self’.

- **xeeb**: *tswm xeeb* ‘quiet’ (*Xiongs*), also written *tswm seeb*. From Chinese *zhùshēng*.

- **xeeb ntxwv** ‘(classifier *tug*) nephew or niece’ (*Xiongs*), ‘grandson or granddaughter’ (*Village* p. 176), from Chinese *sūnzi*:

tub xeeb ntxwv ‘(classifier *tug*) nephew’ (*Xiongs*), ‘grandson’ (*Village* p. 176).

ntxhais xeeb ntxwv ‘(classifier *tug*) niece’ (*Xiongs*), ‘granddaughter’ (*Village* p. 176).

nyaab xeeb ntxwv ‘grandson’s wife’ (*Village* p. 176).

tub xeeb ntxwv ‘(classifier *tug*) nephew’ (*Xiongs*), ‘grandson’ (*Village* p. 176).

vauv xeeb ntxwv ‘granddaughter’s husband’ (*Village* p. 176).

- **xeeb txob** ‘bothersome’ (*Xiongs*).

- **xeej**: *Maum Xeej Xeeb*, name of a dragon in a story:

Tug nam zaaj, Zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb, nyob huv lub nam qhov dlej twb yeej npaaj tas yuav moog yuav Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm nuav

‘A dragon, Dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb, who lived in that water hole, was already preparing to marry Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

- **xeem** ‘(classifier *lub*) last name, name of the clan or tribe’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *xìng*:

Kuv yog xeem Xyooj ‘I am from the Xiong clan’ (Xiongs).

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. Taagnrho yog muaj 18 Xeem. Peb suavdlawg kuj tsi paub tas, “Moob lub Xeem nuav yog cuab muaj lug le caag tag!” Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thoov: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg ‘We Mong have many Clans. Altogether there are 18 Clans. Not all of us know what all the Mong Clans are called. Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2, lesson 2).

Xeem refers to Chinese clan names as opposed to *qhua*, Mong clan names. The *xeem* and their corresponding *qhua* are as follows (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9):

xeem Faaj (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Haam = *qhua* Taag

xeem Hawj = *qhua* Dluag

xeem Khaab = *qhua* Plua

xeem Koo = *qhua* Xoom

xeem Kwm = *qhua* Nkws

xeem Lauj (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Lis = *qhua* Cai

xeem Muas = *qhua* Zaag

xeem Phaab (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Thoj = *qhua* Dlub

xeem Tsaab = *qhua* Nrig

xeem Tsheej (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Tswb (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Vaaj = *qhua* Vug

xeem Vwj (no corresponding *qhua*)

xeem Xyooj = *qhua* Mob

xeem Yaaj = *qhua* Yawg

- **xeem** ‘to call a spirit for guessing of events or something happening’ (Xiongs):

This word looks very much like it comes from Southwestern Mandarin but it has not yet

been possible to find a Southwestern Mandarin word with the right phonological shape to be its source.

- **xeem**: *cov qhua xeem* ‘clans and surnames’:

In a folktale, two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua

‘When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with houses roofed with banana leaves’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24).

- **xeem**: *kav xeem* ‘to change one’s clan name or last name to accept another one’ (Xiongs):

Could be either from Chinese 改性 *gǎixìng* or from Chinese 解性 *jiěxìng* (pronounced *gǎixìng* in Southwestern Mandarin).

- **xeem**: *pej xeem* ‘the people, population’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 百姓 *bǎixìng* ‘the hundred surnames’:

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg tej tsaj tej txhuv, tej qab tej npua txawm quav txawv huv tuabsi.

‘The livestock of all the populace, their chickens and their pigs then all became deformed’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 25).

Pejxeem fuabfwm suavdlawg muab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hab Yob Nraug Ntsuag ob tug paam puv xyaa-nub xyaa-mo

‘The people all had a funeral for the Ruler and Yob the Orphan for a full seven days and seven nights’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

Hab kuas tsoom lajmej pejxeem moog tsua kag ib lub nyuas hleb cab lug ntim Yob Nraug Ntsuag.

‘And she had the people build a pine coffin to put Yob the Orphan in’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 26).

- **Xees**: *Mej Xees*, the dog who fetches the cyclones and the whirlwinds to scatter the seeds of humanity (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 10).

- **xeev** ‘to wake up, to gain consciousness back’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *xǐng*.

- **xeev** ‘(classifier *lub*) province, state of a country’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *shěng*:

lub xeev Vees Caas ‘Vientiane Province’ (Xiongs).

- **xeev** ‘to be reborn’, perhaps from Chinese *xǐng* ‘to wake up, to regain consciousness’:

Yog koj moog tuab tuav nkaus nwg xwb tes yuav laaj laaj txhvw txujsa kuas xeev rov lug le hab.

‘If you were to take hold of him, he would have difficulty in being reborn’ (*Yob Hlub hab*

Yob Yau p. 15).

- **Xeev** or **Xeev Txwjlaug** ‘the Ruler’, a major character in many stories, for example “Nuj Yob hab Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug” (Nuj Yob and the Xeev Txwjlaug) (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 73-97), and the stories told in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, *Kwvhuam*, and *Nuj Sis Loob*.

Nub caaj thaus u, Nuj Yob nam Nuj Yob txiv pheej naj xyoo raug Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hu moog ua Yawm Xeev qhev txav tawg pub rua puab tau hau [typo for haus?] cawv xeeb.

‘Long ago, Nuj Yob’s mother and Nuj Yob’s father each year would be called upon by the Ruler to be the Ruler’s servants cutting firewood to give them for his birthday celebration’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

Huas nyob lub nam nroog nuav, muaj ib yim tuabneeg muajtxag npluanuj, hab zoo neej heev. Yim tuabneeg nuav yog Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug.

‘But in this town, there was a family that was wealthy, and had a very good life. This family was that of the Ruler’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 7).

Yaav thaus u, yawm Xeev txwjlaug qawm [typo for qaum] ntuj muaj ib tug ntxhais npe hu ua MUAM NKAUJ NTSUM.

‘Long ago, the Ruler of heaven had a daughter named Muam Nkauj Ntsum’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 7).

Nkauj Mim See yog Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug tug ntxhais nraab kws dlua lwm leej lwm tug huv tuabsi.

‘Nkauj Mim See was the Ruler’s middle daughter who was more beautiful than anyone else’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 7).

The Xeev Txwjlaug in the story in *Lug Nruag Tsuv* is a brutal villain. At the end of the story he is, quite deservedly, torn limb from limb and devoured by a tiger. It is not clear in the story what the source is of his wealth and power or what sort of territory he has.

At the opposite extreme, the Xeev Txwjlaug in *Kwvhuam* is the ruler of heaven, who sends his daughter to earth to find a husband and institutes the rites of marriage.

The Xeev Txwjlaug in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and *Nuj Sis Loob* are earthly, and appear to have territories much smaller than all of heaven. Each is the father of the woman that the protagonist marries. In *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* the Xeev Txwjlaug is initially hostile to the protagonist because he is poor and places various obstacles in his way but in the end the protagonist wins out, gains the trust of his father-in-law, and himself becomes a Xeev Txwjlaug.

In the story “Taub Qaub” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 113-129), *Xeev* means ‘Village Headman’. Taub Qaub’s mother dies in childbirth and Taub Qaub’s father dies shortly thereafter. Taub Qaub’s father returns to him in the form of a tiger and takes care of him. When Taub Qaub is grown, his father says it is time to get Taub Qaub a wife. Because he is a tiger, Taub Qaub’s father can not go through proper marriage negotiations. He has to find a suitable woman and carry her off on his back. First, Taub Qaub’s father suggests the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village:

Yog koj xaav yuav nua, kuv moog koj Yawm Xeev Hauvzog tug ntxhais lug rua koj.

‘If you want to marry, I will bring you the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 117).

Unfortunately, when Taub Qaub’s father brings the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village, she is too terrified to eat, so Taub Qaub’s father kills and eats her and suggests bringing the daughter of the Headman of the Lower Village:

Taub Qaub, Yawm Xeev Hauvzog tug lug txug, nwg tsi kaam noj mov, hab nwg kuj tsi zoo nkauj npaum caag! Ca kuv moog coj Yawm Xeev Qaabzog tug ntxhais Ntxawm lug rua koj.

‘Taub Qaub, when the daughter of the Headman of the Upper Village got here, she wasn’t willing to eat, and also she wasn’t all that pretty! Let me bring you the Headman of the Lower Village’s daughter Ntxawm’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 118).

This time things work out and Taub Qaub and the daughter of the Headman of the Lower Village become husband and wife.

It is possible that *Xeev* is originally from Chinese *shěng* ‘province’ as in ‘provincial official’ but in the stories there is no indication of any connection with the Chinese hierarchy of officials.

- **Xeev Khuam** ‘Xieng Khouang [a city and province in northern Laos], from Lao *Siang Khwǎng*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **xeev plhawv** ‘to get sudden attention’ (Xiongs).

- **xeev xwm** ‘to be aware of, to know, to realize’ (Xiongs):

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm
‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

Perhaps from Chinese 醒 *xǐng* ‘to wake up’ + 事 *shì* ‘matter, affair’, i.e. ‘to wake up / sober up and become aware of the matters that are going on’. The expression 醒事 *xǐngshì* is not used in present-day Chinese. It may be an older Chinese usage which has survived in Mong or it may be a Mong innovation.

- **xib** ‘classifier for arrows’ (also written *xwb*):

xib xub moog zig lawm ‘the arrow deviates from the goal’ (Xiongs).

- **xib fwb** ‘(classifier *tug*) teacher’ (Xiongs) (also written *xwb fwb*), from Chinese *shīfu*:

Nwg yog tug xib fwb ‘s/he is the instructor’ (Xiongs).

- **xib fwb qha xaam phaaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) math teacher’ (Xiongs).

- **xib taw** ‘the sole of the foot’ (Xiongs).

- **xib teg** ‘palm of the hand’ (Xiongs).

- **xij**, Chinese 随 *suí* ‘to let somebody do as they like’:

Tes nwg xij nug ‘Then he decided to ask’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 22).

- **xij peem** ‘it doesn’t matter, up to’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *suíbiàn*.

- **xij pheej** ‘to insist’:

Koj xij pheej yuav moog yuav Yob Nraug Ntsuag xwb le kuas!

‘You insist on marrying Yob the Orphan!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 12.)

From Chinese 随 *suí* ‘to follow’ + 频 *pín* ‘frequently, repeatedly’. There is no expression 随频 *suípín* in current Chinese usage, but presumably it was once used in Southwestern Mandarin.

- **xim kaab** or **xwmkaab**, a sheet ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house opposite the main door:

The chapter titled *Ntawv Xwmkaab* ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 53-56) describes the origin of the xwmkaab paper and includes a drawing showing a sheet of decorated paper, with three chicken feathers glued to it in the shape of an inverted triangle, and hung on the wall, next to the shaman’s altar.

The xwmkaab or xim kaab is referred to both as ‘the xwmkaab paper’ (*ntawv xwmkaab*) and ‘the xim kaab altar’ (*thaaj xim kaab*). It is hung on the wall of the main room of the house (*chaav tsev hauv taag*), opposite the main door (*qhov rooj taag*), and next to the shaman’s altar (*thaaj neeb*) and the altar of the medicine king (*thaaj yum vaaj*). Three chicken feathers, arranged in an inverted triangle, are glued to the xwmkaab paper. Each year, at the New Year, the xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced. (*Tswv Yim* p. 15; *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56; Chindarsi 1976:61-62.)

The xwmkaab spirit (*txivdlaab xwmkaab* or *Xwm Kaab los yej*) is one of the household spirits who try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house.

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,
All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle your way’ (*Initiation* p. 130).

Different people give different explanations for the name xwmkaab. Num Tswb Xyooj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj in Joliet, Illinois in 1982, says that xwmkaab is a deformation of Vaajkaav, the name of a Mong king who gave his subjects copies of his portrait to put up in their houses as a sign of his protection when the kingdom was invaded by the Chinese. Each year, at the New Year, the king instructed his subjects to burn his portrait and he would give them a new one. The xwmkaab paper is Vaajkaav’s portrait and shows that even though Vaajkaav was killed and the kingdom destroyed centuries ago the Mong of the household installing the xwmkaab paper are still under his protection. The xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced each year at the New Year in

commemoration of Vaajkaav's instruction regarding his portrait. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56.)

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwmkaab mas lub ntsab yog has tas, puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca ntawm dlaim ntawv hov nua nawb.

'The essential meaning of the three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper is that they bring to mind Vaajkaav's mouth and two eyes, there on the paper' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Num Tswb Xyooj provides the following explanation of the Chinese honorific title Los Yej (*Lǎo Yé*) 'Old Father' or 'Old Gentleman' used with the name Xwmkaab. When the Chinese invaded Vaajkaav's kingdom, they could not at first defeat him in battle. Impressed by his prowess, the Chinese called him Tuam Yej (*Dà Yé*) 'Great Father' or 'Great Man'. The Mong wished to retain something of this Chinese honorific, but did not want to lose the name Vaajkaav.

Yog le nuav tes puab yuav hu ua Txiv Tuam Yej los yuav tau Suav lu xwb, Moob lu poob lawm. Yog puab hu Vaajkaav los Suav lu Txiv Tuam Yej yuav poob lawm. Tes puab txha le muab txav lug kuas tuablu. Yog le, puab txhua tug kws txiv xwmkaab txha le has tas, "Txiv Xwmkaab Los Yej."

'If, then, they were to call him Father *Dà Yé*, using Chinese words only, the Mong words would be lost. If they called him Vaajkaav, the Chinese words Father *Dà Yé* would be lost. Therefore they abbreviated it and made one word. Thus, each xwmkaab specialist says, "Xwmkaab *Lǎo Yé*." (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56.)

Nusit Chindarsi describes a very different explanation. He says that one of his informants, Yaitong Tang, told him that Sierglung [Xwmkaab] comes from Laosier [Los Xwm, from Chinese *Lǎo Sì*] 'Fourth-Born Son'. The Sierglung is put up to appease the spirit of Laosier, for whom people did not hold a funeral because he was a lazy good-for-nothing (Chindarsi 1976:24).

Finally, Jacques Lemoine derives Xwmkaab from the name of a Chinese deity, *Sì Guān* 'the Fourth Mandarin', whom Lemoine describes as the spirit of wealth (*Entre* pp. 37, 55; *Initiation* p. 29).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that Lemoine may be referring to the *sì guān*, four generals of the Warring States period, whose idols are kept in the *Sì Guān* Temple in Zhenyuan in eastern Guizhou province in China. However, even though the current name of the xim kaab altar may be derived from the Chinese four generals, the altar itself may have existed prior to the introduction of the Chinese name and the practice of gluing three, not four, chicken feathers to the xwmkaab paper may predate the introduction of the Chinese name.

- **xis** 'right (as opposed to left)':

nwg tsem rua saab xis lawm 's/he turned to the right already' (Xiongs).

saab xis 'right side' (Xiongs).

xyaab koj txhais npaab xis lug 'extend your right arm to me' (Xiongs).

- **xo** ‘to chew, to bite’ (Xiongs).

- **xob** or **tsi xob** ‘don’t!’ (negative imperative) (also written *txhob*), from Chinese *xiāo* as in *bù xiāo* ‘do not need’:

xob tso kuv tseg ‘don’t forget me’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob kov ‘don’t touch’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob muab sib txuam ‘Do not mix them up’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob tib peb nawb ‘don’t blame us’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob ua twm kuv nawb ‘don’t challenge me’ (Xiongs).

Tsi xob zwb koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav
‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

txeev le kod le, tsi xob kov ntxiv lawm ‘leave as it is, don’t touch it any more’ (Xiongs).

thov paab txheem kom tsi xob poob ‘Help me hold it from falling, please’ (Xiongs).

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”

When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!” (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

Txiv! Tsi xob kov dlaim nyuas ko! Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.
‘Father! Don’t bother with that! It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’
(*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **xob huv**: *zaam xob huv* ‘beautifully dressed’:

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!
‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **xob rawm ua** ‘don’t do it’ (Xiongs).

- **xom** ‘pencil’ (Xiongs), from Lao *ສົວ*.

- **xov chim** ‘a rebel’, i.e. not a legitimate king (Djoua Xiong, personal communication).

- **xov chim**: *sawv xov chim* ‘to rebel’ (Djoua Xiong, personal communication):

Tabsis tomqaab nuav luas kuj has tas yog luas sawv Xov Chim xwb, vim tas Faabkis yuav txeeb lub tebhaws cais suavdlawg txhaj sawv lug tua tsi pub Faabkis txeeb nkaus xwb.
‘But afterwards it was said that people were only rebelling, because the French were going to take away the land, so everyone rose up and came to fight the French, just to prevent them from taking the land’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 1).

- **Xov Tshoj**, from Chinese *xiǎo cháo* ‘lesser dynasty’ = places outside of China where Mong live, as opposed to *Tuam Tshoj*, Chinese *dà cháo* ‘greater dynasty’ = China:

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700, cov Moob kws tawm ntuj Tuam Tshoj moog nyob

rua ntuj Xov Tshoj, muaj ib paab tsiv moog nyob rua tebchaws Thaib.

‘During the 1700’s, among the Mong who left the Greater Dynasty to go to live in the Lesser Dynasty, there were some who migrated to Thailand’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 144).

- **xovtxheej** ‘ritual paper money used by a dead person to reimburse the spirits’, perhaps from Chinese *xiǎo qián* ‘small money’:

Koj leej tub tuag, koj tshuav nam pis xeeb ua ntog teb, haus tsuag luas ib ntog dlej. Koj yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntawv rua koj koj moog them se dlej se tawg, se teb se chaw pis xeeb txha le tso koj kev moog cuag koj pug koj yawg. ... (Hlawv peb nplooj xovtxheej rua tug tuag hov. ...)

‘You who have died, you destroyed a portion of the land of the guardian spirit of the place, you drank up a portion of the spirit’s water. When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax, the tax of the land and of the place of the guardian spirit, so that you will be permitted to go to meet your ancestors. ... (Burn three leaves of the ritual money for the dead person. ...)’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **xoob** ‘untight, not severe, not fully pulled, at ease, not much pressure on’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 松 *sōng*.

- **xoob** ‘ample, big, roomy’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 松 *sōng*:

cev rig tsho nuav xoob lawm ‘this suit is big’ (Xiongs).

- **xoob teg** ‘to begin to be afraid of’ (Xiongs).

- **xoob thuav** (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [not tight, not severe, at ease, ample, big, roomy].

- **Xoom**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Koo** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). Some sources on Hmong dialects other than Mong Leng lists *Xoom* as a Chinese clan name, from Chinese *Sòng*.

- **xoov** ‘to bribe’ (Xiongs).

- **xu** ‘to miss, to miss the goal’ (Xiongs):

raab xub moog xu dlaim phaj ‘the arrow misses the target’ (Xiongs).

- **xu**: *ntawv tshaaj xu* ‘notice, news, information’ (Xiongs). See also *xuv*.

- **xu kev** ‘off road, out of convenient reach’ (Xiongs).

- **xu sab** ‘don’t like it’ (Xiongs).

- **xub** ‘(classifier *xwb* or *raab*) arrow’:

raab xub taw phaab nub poob ‘the arrow points to the west’ (Xiongs).

raab xub moog xu dlaim phaj ‘the arrow misses the target’ (Xiongs).

xib xub moog zig lawm ‘the arrow deviates from the goal’ (Xiongs).

zob xub ‘to sharpen an arrow’ (Xiongs).

- **xub** ‘first, before all’ (Xiongs):

Kuv yog tug xub ua tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who does it first’ (Xiongs).

- **xub** ‘to swell, to dilate, to increase in volume, to get bigger’ (Xiongs).

- **xub** or **yawm xub** ‘thunder’ (Xiongs):

Uantej kws zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb yuav moog nteg Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm lug, nwg twb nteg tau Yawm Xub tub Ntxawg lug kaw tseg ca rua tom ib kem pobzeb lawm.
 ‘Before the dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had captured Grandfather Nyooglaug’s Youngest Daughter, he had captured Grandfather Thunder’s Youngest Son and had imprisoned him in a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

In *The Religion of the Hmong Njua*, Nusit Chindarsi describes the attributes of the god “Yorso”. Chindarsi says of Yorso, “His voice is the thunder, lightning is his sword”, which makes me believe that “Yorso” is Chindarsi’s spelling for *Yawm Xub* ‘Grandfather Thunder’:

Hmong call one class of supernatural beings Kao Eh Tu [*Qaum Ntuj?*], which in Thai speech is rendered as Manut Hon Sawan. I shall call these beings gods because they are more powerful than other spirits; they live in the sky and each has a personal name. ...

There are three important gods whom the Hmong often mention: they are named Yonglao [*Nyooglaug*], Yorso [*Yawm Xub*], and Yawang [*Nyaj Vaab*]. There is no clear hierarchy among the gods. Some say Yorso is the chief god, others say that Yonglao is the head of the gods.

Yorso is the god who judges Hmong souls. His voice is the thunder, lightning is his sword.

Long ago Yorso had a son, but his wife had no milk. He asked the Hmong for milk, but they gave him none, so he became angry with them and said, “Since you will not give milk to me, you will never give it to others, or those who drink your milk will die.” Since that time the Hmong never give their milk to another. If a woman has a second child she must not share her milk with the first child. A lactating mother must take care in cooking for if any of her milk should drop on the food, the person who eats it will be struck by Yorso’s sword, the lightning.

Long ago, before the Hmong were subject to Thai law, if a Hmong injured another or committed a breach of custom and did not confess or accept the obligation to pay compensation or a fine, the headman or the villagers could force him to submit to the ordeal of drinking milk. Any man who told a lie after drinking milk would be killed by Yorso’s lightning. However, Yorso is just, and does not harm those who have done no wrong. Yaitong (Tang) who told me this, said that many liars are struck by lightning, and many men have suffered this fate. (Chindarsi p. 18.)

Chindarsi’s account is based on his fieldwork in Chiangmai province in Thailand but Michael Johnson (personal communication) tells me that there is a similar taboo in southeastern Yunnan province in China: “There is a taboo in SE Yunnan where a breast feeding mother must not sit at the dinner table and nurse her child, otherwise Xob [White Hmong spelling of Xub] will send a lightning bolt and kill the men at the table.”

- **xub** ‘before’:

Muaj ib xyoos nim yuav txhug dlua lub nam 6 hli ntuj xub yuam rauj
 ‘One year, it was almost past the sixth month before the press of winter’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).- u

- **xub**: *naag xub* ‘thunderstorm’:

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub
 ‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

- **xub**: *naag xub naag cua* ‘thunderstorm’:

Los Tuam hab Los Lwm! meb moog saib tug dlev tsoob hov ntshai naagmo tuab nam pluav naag xub naag cua tes nyaj tsua has tuag caws ceeg le kws nyuas tsuag poob dleg lawm lauj.
 ‘Los Tuam and Los Lwm, go and see if perhaps last night that wretched cur was so battered by the thunderstorm that he is lying curled up dead like a drowned rat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **xub ntlag** [sic] ‘front’ (Xiongs). *Ntl* is a rarely used alternative way of writing *ndl*.

- **xub pwg** ‘shoulder’ (Xiongs).

- **xub qwb** ‘the back of the neck’ (Xiongs).

- **xub thawj** ‘first of all, before all’ (Xiongs).

- **xub xub** ‘first, first of all’ (Xiongs).

- **xum** ‘to shrink, to get smaller, to decrease in volume’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *suō*.

- **xum** ‘to prefer, to like better’ (Xiongs):

Kuv xum noj tshuaj ab tsi xum nyaj mob
 ‘I prefer taking bitter medicine over suffering a pain’ (Xiongs).

- **xuv** ‘(classifier *txuj*) thread’ (Xiongs):

ib txuj xuv hlau ‘a wire’ (Xiongs) [“a metal thread”].

- **xuv** ‘(classifier *txuj*) news, message’ (Xiongs) (see also *xu*).

- **xuv**: *cuag caab xuv* ‘straight to the goal’ (Xiongs).

- **xuv**: *ntaus xuv* ‘to convey a message’ (Xiongs).

- **xuv**: *tso xuv* ‘to send a message’:

Yawm Tog yawm Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! kuv tuaj ntuj sua teb tom peg tuaj es yawm Tog yawm Txhuahawv tso xuv lis nti
 ‘Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, the one who quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm and grandfather Tog grandfather Txhuahawv sends a message’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 94).

- **xuv**: *xaa xuv* ‘to convey a message’ (Xiongs).

- **xuv tooj** ‘(classifier *lub*) telephone, walky talky’:

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav*?] *txais tsi tau zoo*

‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

- **xuv tooj cua** ‘(classifier *lub*) radio’ (Xiongs, *Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **xuv tswv nkhaus**, in a skirt, zig-zag line made of cross-stitch (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 146).

- **xua** ‘(no classifier) rice bran’ (Xiongs):

tshau xua ‘to sift out the chaff; to sift out the bran’ (Xiongs).

- **xua**: *caj xua* or *caj xuas*, a kind of bird. In one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the *caj xua* brings the seeds of bamboos and trees from “behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade”, i.e. from heaven:

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyoob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug.

‘Let me tell you, O elder, the origin of bamboo and trees.

Noob xyoob noob lis ntoo tsua yuav lug tau Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog qaab nrau lis caav kws.

The seeds of bamboo and trees came from behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade.

Yawm lis Saub tsua yuav tso tau noog caj qas xua rua taag Ntxwj Sib Nyoog tej qaab nrau lis caav.

Grandfather Saub sent the *caj xua* behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade.

Noog caj qas xua tsuas yuav ris qas kho nam peb le nub, ris tau nam peb le lub noob xyoob nrug noob le ntoos.

The *caj xua* carried seeds for three days and carried away three seeds of bamboo and trees.

Noog caj qas xuas moog txug Ntxwj Sib Nyoog tej qaab moog rau caav kws, tsua yuav ris qas kho nam peb li hli, yuav ris tau nam noob xyoob noob le ntoo nam peb le teg.

The *caj xua* went behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade and carried seeds for three months and carried away three handfuls’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

- **xua**: *ua xua* ‘to have an itchy rash’ (Xiongs).

- **xua nplej** ‘rice bran’ (Xiongs).

- **xuab** ‘to rub along, to rub together’ (Xiongs).

- **xuab hlua** ‘to twist rope or cord’ (Xiongs).

- **xuab kutaw rhuj rhuav** ‘to drag the feet’:

Huas Muam Paajlig, Yawm Fuabtais tug nam hlub, kuj ua plhu npkob quas zug, hab xuab kutaw rhuj rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But Muam Paajlig, His Majesty’s senior wife grew more and more pale and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **xuab kua taw** ‘to drag the feet’ (Xiongs).

- **xuab teg** ‘to rub the hands’ (Xiongs).

- **xuab zeb** ‘sand’ (Xiongs), first syllable from Chinese *shā* ‘sand’:

taj xuab zeb ‘beach’ (Xiongs).

- **xuam** ‘to disregard, to unconsider, to drop out, to leave something away, to waste, to forget about’ (Xiongs) (perhaps from Chinese 撒 *sā* ‘to let go, to throw off all restraint’):

muab nwg xuam hlo pov tseg ‘forget all about it’ (Xiongs).

- **xuam phem**: *saab xuam phem* ‘left side’ (Xiongs).

- **xuam qaum** ‘chalk, from Lao *sǎǎ khǎaw*’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **xuas** ‘to touch, to feel, to grope, to search about blindly, to guess’ (Xiongs):

xuas saib zoo le caag ‘to feel blindly to see what it is like’ (Xiongs).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Xauj xauj tsausntuj quas nti tes xauj thoob. Tes sis xuas sis xuas rov lug tsev tes tsuas muaj taag lawm.

‘They looked until it was quite dark and then had seen them all. Then they groped their way back to the house and so it ended’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

- **xuas** ‘to get’ (Xiongs):

Koj xuas tsi raug le ntaag lov? ‘Can’t you get it at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **xuas** ‘to use’ (Xiongs):

Nwg xuas ib tug qws ntaus kuv ‘s/he uses a stick to beat me’ (Xiongs).

Txha xuas nam qws hovtxob tuab qws rua tsi raug nam tsuag.

‘Then they tried to give the rat a blow with the pepper-pestle but did not hit the rat’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **xuas**: *caj xua* or *caj xuas*, a kind of bird. In one version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the *caj xua* brings the seeds of bamboos and trees from “behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade”, i.e. from heaven:

Caav has tau koj qas laug, nam xyoob nam ntoo yuav lug tau qhov twg lug.

‘Let me tell you, O elder, the origin of bamboo and trees.

Noob xyoob noob lis ntoo tsua yuav lug tau Ntxwj Sib Qas Nyoog qaab nrau lis caav kws.

The seeds of bamboo and trees came from behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade.

Yawm lis Saub tsua yuav tso tau noog caj qas xua rua taag Ntxwj Sib Nyoog tej qaab nrau lis caav.

Grandfather Saub sent the *caj xua* behind Ntxwj Nyoog’s stockade.

Noog caj qas xua tsuas yuav ris qas kho nam peb le nub, ris tau nam peb le lub noob xyoob nrug noob le ntoos.

The *caj xua* carried seeds for three days and carried away three seeds of bamboo and trees.

Noog caj qas xuas moog txug Ntxwj Sib Nyoog tej qaab moog rau caav kws, tsua yuav ris qas kho nam peb li hli, yuav ris tau nam noob xyoob noob le ntoo nam peb le teg.

The caj xuas went behind Ntxwj Nyoog's stockade and carried seeds for three months and carried away three handfuls' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 76).

- **xuas phom tua** 'to kill with a gun' (Xiongs).

- **xuas teg ua** 'by hand' (Xiongs):

xuas teg ua paaj ntaub 'to embroider' (Xiongs) [to make embroidery by hand].

- **xuav** 'to whistle' (Xiongs).

- **xuav**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov xuav [to make the sound xuav] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **xuav**: *aav xuav* 'loose ground with small stones' (Xiongs).

- **xuav**: *zeb xuav* 'coarse sand' (Xiongs).

- **xuav kauv** 'to whistle' (Xiongs).

- **xw** 'to dig out, to scoop out, to scoop up' (Xiongs).

- **xw aav** 'to dig out soil from a hole' (Xiongs).

- **xw plig** 'to call back the spirit after thirteen days of death' (Xiongs):

Thirteen days is one cycle, the day on which, in cycling through the twelve animals (**kaum-ob tug tsaj**), one returns to the animal with which one started. The spirit is called back temporarily so that further offerings may be made to it.

- **xwb** 'article used in front of the word meaning "arrow" ' (Xiongs) (also written *xib*):

ib xwb xub 'an arrow' (Xiongs).

- **xwb** 'to crack' (Xiongs).

- **xwb** 'only':

Kuv paab tau koj le nauv [typo for *nuav*?] *xwb*
'I can only help you up to this point' (Xiongs).

tuab tug tub xwb 'only one son' (Xiongs).

tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb 'not only that' (Xiongs).

Nwg tsuas ua tau hov nkaus lawm xwb 's/he can only do up to there' (Xiongs).

Nwg laam txais cua le xwb 's/he just guesses' (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau
's/he will accept only if you participate' (Xiongs).

tshuav peb nub nkaus xwb 'only three more days left' (Xiongs).

Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.

'It's just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

- **xwb** ‘alone’:

Nub caaj thaus, nam tuag nrauj txiv tuag tseg taag, tseg tau peb tug muagnug nyob xwb.
 ‘In ancient times long ago, the mother died and left [the children], the father died and left behind [the children] completely, left three siblings living alone’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 7).

- **xwbcob** ‘sticklac (used by the Mong to cement knife handles)’ (Xiongs).

- **xwb fwb** ‘teacher’ (also written *xib fwb*), from Chinese *shīfu*:

xwb fwb qha ntawv ‘teacher’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 4).

- **xwb pleb** ‘showing a crack’ (Xiongs).

- **xwb tim** ‘to do on purpose’ (Xiongs).

- **xwj peem** ‘it doesn’t matter, up to’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *suíbiàn*:

xwj peem koj ‘up to you, it is up to you’ (Xiongs).

- **xwm** ‘news, event, crime, something happening’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 事 *shì* ‘matter, affair’:

puas muaj xwm dlaab tsi? ‘Is there something happening? Is there any news?’ (Xiongs.)

- **xwm** ‘small’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 细 *xì*:

cov txiv nuav xwm hwm lawm ‘these fruits are too small’ (Xiongs).

- **xwm** ‘funds’, perhaps from Chinese 事 *shì* ‘matter, affair’:

Yog Lob Lw xaav tau Muam Nkauj Ntsum cais, Lob Lw moog khwv kuas tau cuaj laag peev yim laag xwm.
 ‘If Lob Lw wants to get Muam Nkauj Ntsum, Lob Lw should work hard so that he gets nine taels of capital and eight taels of funds’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 28).

- **xwm**: *kaavxwm* ‘the man in charge of ceremonies at a funeral’ (Heimbach p. 327 tuag), from Chinese 管事 *guǎnshì* ‘to be in charge’:

Nwg yawm yij nuav raug hu moog ua tshwjkaab kaavxwm.
 ‘His sister’s husband had been called to be the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 10).
“Tshwjkaab kaavxwm mej ua le caag lawm? Caag ib taagkig nub ntseg ntsog le nuav tseem muab tsi tau nqaj lug rua huv yag hab! Yog mej moog ua dlaabtsi lawm?”
 “How are you the one in charge of preparing the meat and vegetables and the one in charge of ceremonies? Why the whole morning up to midday now still have not brought meat into the wok! What is it you’ve been doing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 11.)

- **xwm**: *khauvxwm* ‘too bad!’, from Chinese *kěxi*:

Yawm Fuabtais Xeev Txwjlaug yuav tso tug twg moog los khauvxwm.
 ‘Whoever His Majesty the Ruler would send [to be eaten by the Spirit], too bad for them!’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 32.)

- **xwm**: *khoom xwm* ‘little or small things, seasoning plants’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese 空 *kòng* ‘spare time, free time, leisure’ + 食 *shí* ‘to eat’, “things that can be eaten in one’s leisure time”, i.e. ‘a snack’.

- **xwm**: *txham xwm* ‘little or small things, seasoning plants’ (Xiongs):

First syllable from Chinese 菜 *cài* ‘vegetable’. Second syllable probably from Chinese 食 *shí* ‘to eat’.

“In Thailand the sense of this word which I was aware of is ‘garden vegetables, herbs’.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **xwm**: *xeev xwm* ‘to be aware of, to know, to realize’ (Xiongs):

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm

‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

Perhaps from Chinese 醒 *xǐng* ‘to wake up’ + 事 *shì* ‘matter, affair’, i.e. ‘to wake up / sober up and become aware of the matters that are going on’. The expression 醒事 *xǐngshì* is not used in present-day Chinese. It may be an older Chinese usage which has survived in Mong or it may be a Mong innovation.

- **xwm**: *xyuam xwm* ‘to be careful, to be alert’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 下细 *xìaxì*, an expression listed in the Guiyang Fangyan Cidian (Guiyang Dialect Dictionary), where it is glossed as 仔细 ‘to be careful’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **xwm**: *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm*, names of two major characters in a folktale:

In the story “Ob Txivtub hab Dlaabntxaug” (The Father and Son and the Ntxaug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 34-38), a man and his son are on their way to visit their kinsmen and they stop at the house of a ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit invites them to spend the night. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the man to sleep on and says that the boy can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night the boy begins to groan. The man lights a lamp and gets up to look and sees that the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters have become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest and that the boy is dead.

The man flees in terror and meets *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm*, who insist that he tell them why he is fleeing. The man says that he is fleeing because he and his son fell into the country of the ntxaug spirits and the ntxaug spirits killed his son.

Yaaj Comxwm and *Pej Comxwm* tell the man not to be frightened and ask him to take them to the ntxaug spirits. When they arrive, the ntxaug spirit couple welcomes the three of them and invites them to spend the night.

The ntxaug spirits spread out bedding in the main room for the man to sleep on and say that *Yaaj Comxwm* and *Pej Comxwm* can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirits’ two daughters. In the middle of the night, there is no sound coming from the bed, so the male

ntxaug spirit lights a lamp and gets up to look. He sees that his daughters have each been cut in half (“one made two sides, two made four sides”). He calls upon his daughters to join themselves back together and they do so, but then they are each cut in half again. “These two oxen have sharp horns”, cries the male ntxaug spirit and calls upon other ntxaug spirits to come and do battle with Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tuck razors in their mouths, the folds of their arms, and the hollows of their knees. When the ntxaug spirits attack them, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm cut off the ntxaug spirits’ hands.

The ntxaug spirits are terrified and ask how they can escape. Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the ntxaug spirits to go inside a gourd. Then Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm plug up the gourd and throw it into a river. A Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river catches the gourd in his net and starts to unplug it but, when the Chinese man hears the ntxaug spirits inside the gourd say that as soon as they are free they are going to eat him, the Chinese man plugs the gourd up again and throws it back in the river and the river carries it away.

Once the ntxaug spirits are gone, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm sort through the ntxaug spirits’ silver and find such a huge amount of silver that they are unable to carry it home and so the story ends.

- **xwmkaab** or **xim kaab**, a sheet ritual paper hung on the wall of the main room of the house opposite the main door.

The chapter titled *Ntawv Xwmkaab* ‘the Xwmkaab Paper’ in *Dlaab Qhuas* (pp. 53-56) describes the origin of the xwmkaab paper and includes a drawing showing a sheet of decorated paper, with three chicken feathers glued to it in the shape of an inverted triangle, and hung on the wall, next to the shaman’s altar.

The xwmkaab or xim kaab is referred to both as ‘the xwmkaab paper’ (*ntawv xwmkaab*) and ‘the xim kaab altar’ (*thaaj xim kaab*). It is hung on the wall of the main room of the house (*chaav tsev hauv taag*), opposite the main door (*qhov rooj taag*), and next to the shaman’s altar (*thaaj neeb*) and the altar of the medicine king (*thaaj yum vaaj*). Three chicken feathers, arranged in an inverted triangle, are glued to the xwmkaab paper. Each year, at the New Year, the xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced. (*Tswv Yim* p. 15; *Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56; Chindarsi 1976:61-62.)

The xwmkaab spirit (*txivdlaab xwmkaab* or *Xwm Kaab los yej*) is one of the household spirits who try to prevent a dead person from leaving the house.

Nam txivdlaab xwmkaab ua dlaaj quas nyaag lug puav koj kaab, ua dlu quas nyaag lug ntsuag koj npaab

‘The xwmkaab spirit will spread wide his arms and encircle your path, spread apart his fingers and measure your arm’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 5).

Caa Xwm Kaab los yej, dlaab cub dlaab txus

Suav qom dlawg ua dlaaj lis ruav puav koj kaab, ua dlu lis ruav puav koj kev.

‘Venerable Xwm Kaab, and the spirits of the fireplace and of the stove,

All spread wide their arms to encircle your path, spread apart their fingers to encircle

your way' (*Initiation* p. 130).

Different people give different explanations for the name xwmkaab. Num Tswb Xyooj, recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj in Joliet, Illinois in 1982, says that xwmkaab is a deformation of Vaajkaav, the name of a Mong king who gave his subjects copies of his portrait to put up in their houses as a sign of his protection when the kingdom was invaded by the Chinese. Each year, at the New Year, the king instructed his subjects to burn his portrait and he would give them a new one. The xwmkaab paper is Vaajkaav's portrait and shows that even though Vaajkaav was killed and the kingdom destroyed centuries ago the Mong of the household installing the xwmkaab paper are still under his protection. The xwmkaab paper is burned and replaced each year at the New Year in commemoration of Vaajkaav's instruction regarding his portrait. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 53-56.)

Peb tsob plaub qab kws lu rua ntawm dlaim ntawv xwmkaab mas lub ntsab yog has tas, puab cim Vaajkaav lub qhovncauj hab ob lub qhovmuag ca ntawm dlaim ntawv hov nua nawb.

'The essential meaning of the three clumps of chicken feathers which are glued to the xwmkaab paper is that they bring to mind Vaajkaav's mouth and two eyes, there on the paper' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56).

Num Tswb Xyooj provides the following explanation of the Chinese honorific title Los Yej (*Lǎo Yé*) 'Old Father' or 'Old Gentleman' used with the name Xwmkaab. When the Chinese invaded Vaajkaav's kingdom, they could not at first defeat him in battle. Impressed by his prowess, the Chinese called him Tuam Yej (*Dà Yé*) 'Great Father' or 'Great Man'. The Mong wished to retain something of this Chinese honorific, but did not want to lose the name Vaajkaav.

Yog le nuav tes puab yuav hu ua Txiv Tuam Yej los yuav tau Suav lu xwb, Moob lu poob lawm. Yog puab hu Vaajkaav los Suav lu Txiv Tuam Yej yuav poob lawm. Tes puab txha le muab txav lug kuas tuablu. Yog le, puab txhua tug kws txiv xwmkaab txha le has tas, "Txiv Xwmkaab Los Yej."

'If, then, they were to call him Father *Dà Yé*, using Chinese words only, the Mong words would be lost. If they called him Vaajkaav, the Chinese words Father *Dà Yé* would be lost. Therefore they abbreviated it and made one word. Thus, each xwmkaab specialist says, "Xwmkaab *Lǎo Yé*." (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 56.)

Nusit Chindarsi describes a very different explanation. He says that one of his informants, Yaitong Tang, told him that Sierglung [Xwmkaab] comes from Laosier [Los Xwm, from Chinese *Lǎo Sī*] 'Fourth-Born Son'. The Sierglung is put up to appease the spirit of Laosier, for whom people did not hold a funeral because he was a lazy good-for-nothing (Chindarsi 1976:24).

Finally, Jacques Lemoine derives Xwmkaab from the name of a Chinese deity, Sī Guān 'the Fourth Mandarin', whom Lemoine describes as the spirit of wealth (*Entre* pp. 37, 55; *Initiation* p. 29).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests that Lemoine may be referring to the *sì guān*, four generals of the Warring States period, whose idols are kept in the Sī

Guān Temple in Zhenyuan in eastern Guizhou province in China. However, even though the current name of the xim kaab altar may be derived from the Chinese four generals, the altar itself may have existed prior to the introduction of the Chinese name and the practice of gluing three, not four, chicken feathers to the xwmkaab paper may predate the introduction of the Chinese name.

- **xwm faab xwm meem** ‘square’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *sìfāng* ‘four sides, square’ + *sìmiàn* ‘four sides’.

- **xws** ‘to like to taste or to eat’ (Xiongs):

Kuv tsi xws ‘I don’t like to eat it’ (Xiongs).

Lub sibhawm kws cov qhua neeb taab tom lug ntsooj hab ntsuag nwg txhaav hab luj loog mas ua rua nwg lub cev tsi xws nyob le.

‘At the time when the clan of shamanic spirits are coming to take possession of him and to measure his bones and his faint voice, his body will not like being there at all’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94).

- **xws** ‘right (opposite to left)’ (Xiongs).

- **xws** ‘similar’:

zoo sib xws xwb ‘similar to each other only’ (Xiongs).

- **xws le** ‘as, like, for example, for instance’ (Xiongs):

tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘Mong people have two kinds of clothing: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog:

– MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB –

Nyob huv rua ob pawg nuav, peb tseem ncau tawm moog, hab muaj npe hu lawv le peb tej tsoogtsho, los peb cov lug; xws le:

The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two big groups:

– MONG LENG and WHITE HMONG –

Within these two groups, we make further divisions, and have names to call them according to our clothing, or our dialects, such as:

(*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6.)

- **xwv** ‘to put (fruit, etc –) aside to ripen artificially’ (Xiongs).

- **xwv** ‘to congratulate someone but with a desire to have what the other has’ (Xiongs).

- **xwv** ‘to pacify or comfort a child to put him or her to sleep’ (Xiongs).

- **xwv pov** ‘to save money’:

tuab neeg txawj xwv pov ‘people that know how to save money’ (Xiongs).

The second syllable, *pov*, is from Chinese 宝 *bǎo* ‘treasure’. This suggests that the first

syllable, *xwv*, may also be a Chinese word, but what Chinese word it comes from has not been ascertained.

XY

- **xyaa** ‘to give birth (said of animals)’ (Xiongs):

Tug maum nyuj nuav xyaa peb tug miv nyuas lawm
 ‘This cow has given birth to three calves already’ (Xiongs).

- **xyaa** ‘seven, the number 7’ (Xiongs):

kaum xyaa ‘seventeen’ (Xiongs).

xyaa caum ‘seventy’ (Xiongs).

xyaa pua ‘seven hundred’ (Xiongs).

- **xyaa lug** ‘to wrongly add words to the original idea’ (Xiongs).

- **xyaab** ‘(classifier *tswm* or *tug*) incense’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *xiāng*:

ib txheeb xyaab ‘a stick of incense’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg tes muab nyaj txag xyaab ntaw rua koj koj moog them se dlej se tawg

‘When you go to meet your ancestors, I will give you the perfumed paper-money to take with to pay the water-tax and the firewood-tax’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 13).

- **xyaab** ‘to stretch, to extend, to spread out’ (Xiongs):

xyaab koj txhais npaab xis lug ‘extend your right arm to me’ (Xiongs).

tuab nam naab xyaab quas leeg ntawm txuj kev.

‘a snake was stretched out in the road’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **xyaab**: *tswv xyaab* or *tswv yas*, applied bands of fabric running the length of the skirt piece. They are often done by machine now, but before they were always sewn by hand, as is everything else on the skirt. (*Grandmother’s Path* p. 145.)

- **xyaav** ‘to stereotype’ (Xiongs).

- **xyaav moo** ‘to stereotype, to say badly about someone’ (Xiongs).

- **xyaw** ‘to mix up, to mix together’ (Xiongs):

sib xyaw taag le lawm ‘all mixed up’ (Xiongs).

- **xyaw** ‘to be among’ (Xiongs):

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo ‘to be among good friends’ (Xiongs).

- **xyeem tshaav**, Chinese *xiànchǎng* ‘scene of an accident or crime; site, spot’:

Taagkig ntawd, nwg txhaj rovqaab tawm plawg sau puab lub xyeem tshaav saib moog rua nraag lub nam pobtsuas qhovntuj dlub

‘That morning, she went back out above their spot to look down at the black chasm in the mountain’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Thaus moog ncig saib taag, puab txawm rovqaab lug su ntawm lub nam xyeemtshaav kws yuav nkaag rua huv haavzoov

‘When they had looked all round the valley, they returned to rest in a spot on the way into the forest’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 10).

Koj nyob tuab quas ywv huv lub xyeemtshaav nua tog.

‘Stay here and wait for us in this spot’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 11).

Yawm Saub txa ua tuab tug nam txiv neeg faubcuas thauj Nuj Sis Loob, hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug yaa tawm plawv huv lub nam qhovntuj dlob ncaajnrain lug tsaws nkaus huv Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug lub xyeemtshaav.

‘Grandfather Saub had transformed himself into a cloud-wind stallion to carry Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov out of the black pit and had deposited them in a site of the King of the Lower Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Sometimes *xyeemtshaav* has an anaphoric meaning: ‘the previously referenced site or spot’, ‘the agreed upon site or spot’:

Cais ob tug txhaj coj Nkauj Mim See cob rua Nuj Sis Loob, hab yuav xaa rovqaab lug ua neej rua nplajteb nuav na, ua cav tsi pum Nuj Sis Loob nyob ntawm xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But when they brought her to present her to Nuj Sis Loob, and to send them back to married on Earth once more, Nuj Sis Loob was not in the place where they had told him to wait’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 13).

Taag ntawd, ob tug txhaj tig loo rov lug rua sau lub xyeemtshaav.

‘This done, Grandfather Nyooglaug and Grandfather Saub sent back up to the spot where they had originally told Nuj Sis Loob to wait’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 14).

Puab najnub nce moog nyob sau puab lub xyeemtshaav noog, hab saib puas pum lug txug twg.

‘Every day, they went up to the agreed upon place to listen and to see whether they could see them coming’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

Huas Muam Paajlig, Yawm Fuabtais tug nam hlub, kuj ua plhu npkob quas zug, hab xuab kutaw rhuj rhuav rua tom ntug xyeemtshaav lawm.

‘But Muam Paajlig, His Majesty’s senior wife grew more and more pale and she dragged her feet to the edge of the agreed upon place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **xyob** ‘to put to flight, to push forcibly’ (Xiongs), from dialectal Southwestern Mandarin *xīāo* ‘to push’.

- **xyom** ‘to salute or to pay respect along with instructional funeral songs, to kneel down’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *xiào* ‘filial piety; mourning’.

- **xyov** ‘(no classifier) bunch (of thread, rope, wire, etc.)’ (Xiongs).

- **xyoo** ‘(no classifier) year’ (Xiongs) (see also *xyoos*):

tim nkaus xyoo ‘exactly one year long’ (Xiongs).

tim nkaus xyaa xyoo ‘exactly seven years’ (Xiongs).

thaws xyoo ‘for a year, year long, all year’ (Xiongs).

txhua xyoo or *txhua txhua xyoo* ‘every year, each year’ (Xiongs).

yuav thev nto plaub xyoo ‘will last for four years’ (Xiongs).

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

txij nub nua moog txug rua lub 5 hlis ntuj xyoo 1985
‘from now on till May 1985, from now to May 1985’ (Xiongs).

Thaum kws thaaj tsaam le xyoo 1700
‘During the 1700’s’ (Tswv Yim p. 144).

Nub caaj thaus u, Nuj Yob nam Nuj Yob txiv pheej naj xyoo raug Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hu moog ua Yawm Xeev qhev txav tawg
‘Long ago, Nuj Yob’s mother and Nuj Yob’s father each year would be called upon by the Ruler to be the Ruler’s servants cutting firewood’ (Lug Nruag Tsuv p. 73).

Nraug Oo ua neej quas ntxhas tau xyaa xyoo tsis muaj nyuas.
‘The Cloud Youth had been married for seven long years but had no little ones’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 6).

Ib xyoo muaj kaum-ob tug tsaj sawv cev kaum-ob lub hlis.
‘A year has twelve animals representing the twelve months’ (Dlaab Qhuas p. 79).

The Mong Leng texts I have looked at say that the twelve animals (*kaum-ob tug tsaj*) represent month of the year and days of the month but do not mention animal years, but sources on Hmong dialects other than Mong Leng do speak of a person being born in the Year of the Rabbit, the Year of the Dragon, and so forth.

- **xyoo twg** ‘which year, what year’ (Xiongs).
- **xyoo u** ‘that year, the year before last’ (Xiongs).
- **xyoob** ‘(classifier *tsob* or *tug*) bamboo’ (Xiongs):

The *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant speaks of the origin of bamboo and trees:

Thau u nplaj quas cai dlo quas ncog, qaum quas cai nqhaa quas su.

Long ago, the earth was completely bare, and heaven was totally treeless.

Noob maag noob ntuag txawm tsi muaj, noob xyoob noob ntoo txawm tsi tau.

The seeds of hemp-plants were not to be found, the seeds of bamboo and trees were not to be gotten.

Le tso Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog muab noob maaj noob ntuag, noob xyoob noog ntoo.

So the Tseej and the Sparrow were sent to fetch the seeds of hemp-plants and the seeds of

bamboo and of trees.

Noog Tseej Noog Quas Tswg moog txug sau qaum ntuj.

The Tseej and the Sparrow went up into heaven. (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

- **xyoob**: *tim xyoob* ‘(classifier *tug*) officer’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese *dìxiōng* ‘brothers, soldiers’:

tuam tim xyoob ‘(classifier *tug*) head officer, captain’ (Xiongs).

tsaa ib tug timxyoob ‘to appoint an official’ (Xiongs).

- **Xyooj** ‘a Mong last name, a Mong clan name’ (Xiongs), a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Mob** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9). From Chinese *Xióng*.

- **xyoos** ‘(no classifier) year’ (Xiongs) (see also *xyoo*):

ib xyoos ‘one year’ (Xiongs).

ob xyoos ‘two years’ (Xiongs).

- **xyu** ‘to sigh or to give a whispered whistle’ (Xiongs).

- **xyu** ‘clarion (made of carabao horn)’ (Lyman), ‘horns (of buffalo horn)’ (Heimbach):

txawm muaj suab qeej suab nruag suab raaj suab xyu nrov ua nqaaj ua nqug tawm tim lub nam dlawmtsua tuaj

‘there was the sound of qeej and drums and flutes and horns resounding from the mountain pass’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 37).

Bertrais’s Hmong-French dictionary says that *xyu* is a kind of flute, but the meaning ‘horn made from a buffalo’s horn’ given by both Lyman and Heimbach fits better in the context of the example.

“Paj xyu refers to lily flower in some dialects – these flowers have trumpet or bugle like shape – a flared mouth or opening, so I assume that this xyu element is primarily referring to the flared shape seen in lily flowers and horns, so you are right to dismiss the flute idea – Hmong flutes are made from bamboo, so are straight with no flaring” (Michael Johnson, personal communication).

- **xyum** ‘to learn’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *xué* ‘to study, to learn’.

- **xyum** ‘to train, to practice’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo

‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs).

- **xyuaj**, phonetic intensifier:

nrov quas xyuaj [to make the sound quas xyuaj] (Xiongs p. 553).

- **xyuam xwm** ‘to be careful, to be alert’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 下细 *xìaxì*, an expression listed in the Guiyang Fangyan Cidian (Guiyang Dialect Dictionary), where it is glossed as 仔细 ‘to be careful’ (Michael Johnson,

personal communication).

- **xyw** '(classifier *tug*) spirit of a deceased person which returns to the place of the death to cause trouble to the living' (Xiongs).

- **xyw** '(classifier *tug*) person's spirit or consciousness which leaves the body during shamanic trance':

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

'The shaman's body is on the yang world [the world of living human beings], but his eyes and his *xyw*, for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person's illness' (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

Lemoine is probably referring to the *xyw* when he speaks of the shaman's consciousness (*conscience*):

While his body moves rhythmically in front of his altar, his consciousness is pulled along by his troop of spirits (*Entre* p. 25).

Y

- **yab**: *Ab yab!*, exclamation of disgust of impatience:

A man throws a pestle at a rat and misses, whereupon the pestle says:

Ab yab! txiv ai! Tsaam raug tsuag kuas tsam phaab taav mob kawg le.

'Damn it, father! When you tried to hit the rat with me, I bumped my side and it hurts a lot' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

- **yab**: *Ab yab!*, exclamation of joy:

A spirit couple, delighted that people have arrived at their house, say:

Ab yab! mej tuaj los.

'Ho ho! Welcome!' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36.)

- **yag** 'straight' (Xiongs):

Tab Moob Leeg yog tab toog nkaaj, muaj tswv lab tswv ntsuab tswv yag, hab ntsuab nkhaus.

'Mong Leng skirts are of a deep indigo color, and have thin red and green stripes, both straight and crooked' (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **yag** '(classifier *lub*) pan, frying pan' (Xiongs):

Tug quaspuj rhaub kag yag roj npau quas dlhev, tsaws hlo yawm Suav nrum nroog rua huv yag roj.

'The wife quickly heated up a wokful of oil until it was at a rolling boil and threw the Chinese [merchant] into the wok of oil' (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 19).

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two

young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit's attention so that they will be able to kill her:

"Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es".
 "Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come." (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

In another story in the same collection, another female spirit has a wok that magically fills with meat when she knocks on it:

Cav nam puj dlaab paug muab lub nyuas tsu khob "ndlawv-ndlawv" tau nyuas tsu mov nplej. Muab nyuas thauv khob "ndlawv-ndlawv" tau nyuas thauv cawv. Muab nyuas yag khob "ndlawv-ndlawv" tau nyuas yag nqaj.

'Why, the female paug spirit took a little steamer and knocked on it "ndlawv-ndlawv" and got a steamer full of rice. She took a little bottle and knocked on it "ndlawv-ndlawv" and got a bottle of liquor. She took a little wok and knocked on it "ndlawv-ndlawv" and got a wok full of meat.' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **yag besg** [sic] 'straightforward' (Xiongs):

"besg" is not a possible syllable in Mong spelling so this is clearly some sort of typo but I do not know what word was actually intended.

- **yaj yeeb** 'opium':

From Chinese 洋烟 *yáng yān* 'foreign smoke / tobacco', which would normally be pronounced **yaaj yeeb* in Mong. The actual pronunciation *yaj yeeb* is perhaps due to the influence of 鸦片 *yāpiàn* 'opium'.

haus yaj yeeb 'to smoke opium' (Xiongs).

- **yas**: *tsuv xyaab* or *tsuv yas*, appliqued bands of fabric running the length of the skirt piece. They are often done by machine now, but before they were always sewn by hand, as is everything else on the skirt. (*Grandmother's Path* p. 145.)

- **yaa** 'to fly, to go up in the air, to take off' (Xiongs):

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
 'If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world' (Xiongs).

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog
Concorde

'the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde' (Xiongs) ["the passenger airbus which flies the fastest ..."].

yaa plawg (Xiongs p. 555, not translated) [to suddenly fly off].

The Xiongs do not translate *yaa plawg*. The translation 'to suddenly fly off' comes from Heimbach (p. 418 *ya plaws*).

plaub qab nrug yaa lis tshaws

‘chicken feathers are flying about all over’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej

‘The Spirit accordingly flew down to the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Caag kuv tsi tau pum ib tug neeg es yuav yaa quas txhuas ntsis tauj ntsis tsuag le kod.

‘Why have I never seen a horse that flies over the tops of the reeds and the bushes like that?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 17).

nam neeg yaa quas laag rau ib ntsee ntuj lawm lauj.

‘the horse flew lightly to the other side of the world’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 20).

- **yaa**: *has lug yaa* ‘to lie, to tell something that is not true’ (Xiongs).

- **yaa ib tis** ‘to make a flight’ (Xiongs).

- **yaa swb sas** ‘to glide down’:

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthaav sau ntuj tuaj, cais ob tug txhaa tsaa hlo qhovmuag saib na, ua cav Nuj Sis Loob hab nam Yawm Dlaab sis ntaus sis tua yaa swb sas nrug thooj nam fuab dlob lug.

‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky, so they lifted their eyes to look, and there were Nuj Sis Loob and Grandfather Spirit fighting and gliding down, accompanied by a black cloud’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

- **yaag** ‘article used in front of a word meaning a portion of the trunk (between two knots)’ (Xiongs) [i.e. nodes]:

ib yaag xyoob ‘a portion of bamboo (between two knots)’ (Xiongs).

Txib leej tub tij khaiv leej tub kwv ntsuag zog cej yaag peb nti, ntsuag zog sau yaag plaub nti coj lug ua neej dlaab lub chaw txuas lug.

‘We sent your older son and told your younger son to measure three finger-lengths below the joint, and four finger-lengths above the joint, and bring it to serve as the place of connection between humans and spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 11; referring to making the bamboo divinatory rods which are cast during the funeral ceremony to ascertain whether communication has been established between the human world and the spirit world).

- **yaag**: *xej yaag* ‘having a vision problem that one must look to the side in order to be able to see’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 斜眼 *xiéyǎn* ‘cross-eyed’, but the pronunciation of the second syllable is puzzling. Normally, Chinese *yǎn* would be pronounced **yees* in Mong.

- **yaaj** ‘to melt; melted’ (Xiongs):

cov dlau taab tom yaaj ‘the snow is melting’ (Xiongs).

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

- **yaaj** ‘to winnow’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 扬 *yáng*:

“There are two types of winnowing. Yaaj is after threshing the rice in the field to remove the chaff – Lemoine [*Village* p. 65] has a drawing of a high platform fashioned from a log, the person climbs up and pours the threshed grain slowly from the top so that the wind will catch the chaff and blow it away. Also in rural China they had winnowing machines for the same purpose – you put the grain in a bin at the top and spin a handle which turns a fan to blow off the chaff. The other type is tsoov which is done using the vaab to remove the bran after pounding the rice in the trestle pounder (cug).” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **yaaj** ‘to disappear’ (Xiongs).

- **yaaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) sheep’ (Xiongs):

“This is a loan of 羊 *yáng* but regular cognates in other West Hmongic dialects suggest that it is very old, i.e. at least Proto-West Hmongic – it just happens to end up looking like the loan was made from Southwestern Mandarin yesterday.” (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

Peb muaj ib puas tug yaaj ‘We have a hundred sheep’ (Xiongs).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The fifth month of the year is the month of the sheep.

5 *hlis* – *yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79.)

Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:
‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj then lists the combined sixty days of the first month of year (*luav hli*, the month of the rabbit) and the second month of the year (*zaaj hli*, the month of the dragon). For example, the third day of the first month is

luav hli – yaaj xab 3 ‘month of the rabbit – sheep day 3’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

- **Yaaj**, a *xeem* (Chinese clan name) corresponding to the *qhua* (Mong clan name) **Yawg** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9), from Chinese *Yáng*:

The term *qhua* also means clan in general, and thus one may speak of *qhua Yaaj* ‘the Yang clan’ as in the following example from a folktale. Two couples give birth to two children, a boy and a girl, who are “smooth and featureless as a couple of gourds”. The husbands kill the children, slice them up, and string the slices together in pairs, one slice from the boy, one slice from the girl. Then they throw the pairs of slices into the garden. Wherever a pair of slices gets caught, it becomes the clan whose name rhymes with the name of the plant on which it was caught:

“Cov nuav khuab rua ntsis vaaj, ua *qhua Yaaj*;
 cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tsuag, ua *qhua Dluas* [typo or variant spelling for *Dluag*];
 cov nuav khuab rua ntsis hovtxob, ua *qhua Mob*;
 cov nuav khuab rua ntsis tauj, ua *qhua Lauj*”.

“These got caught on the top of the garden (vaaj), became the clan Yaaj;
 these got caught on the top of a bush (tsuag), became the clan Dluag;
 these got caught on the top of a pepper-plant (hovtxob), became the clan Mob;
 these got caught on the top of a reed (tauj), became the clan Lauj.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **yaaj** or **yaajceeb** ‘the yang world, the world of living human beings’, from Chinese *yángjiān*, as opposed to *yeebceeb* ‘the yin world, the spirit world’, from Chinese *yīnjiān*:

One speaks of being “on the yang world” (*sau yaajceeb*) but “in the yin world” (*rua yeebceeb*).

sau yaaj ‘on earth’ (Xiongs).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world, but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world which are causing the person to be sick’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **yaaj**: *nuam yaaj* ‘to bend the head backward, to look up’ (Xiongs):

The second syllable, *yaaj*, is probably from Chinese 仰 *yǎng* ‘to look up’. The tone of Chinese *yǎng* does not match the tone of Mong *yaaj* but there could be a Southwestern Mandarin dialect form *yáng* which would match the Mong form. Alternatively, *yaaj* could be from Chinese 阳 *yáng* ‘the yang world [i.e. the human world as opposed to the spirit world]’, so that *muam yaaj* would mean ‘to look out upon the yang world’, ‘to take in the view’. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **yaaj**: *nyob yaaj saab* ‘to live in the country’ (Xiongs):

Yaaj saab is “probably a loan of 阳山 *yáng shān* which seems to have a primary sense of ‘the south side of a mountain which receives direct sunlight’.” (Michael Johnson,

personal communication.)

- **yaaj**: *qos yaaj ywv* ‘potato’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yángyù*.

- **yaaj**: *taubyaaj* ‘Duānyáng’, a festival, often called the Dragon Boat Festival in English, celebrated by both Hmong and Chinese on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar (Graham 1954:87-88; Tsab 1988:81):

In explaining why the fifth month of the lunar calendar is the month of the sheep, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says:

*5 hlis – yaaj hli***

5th month – month of the sheep

** *tej laug noj taubyaaj (nqaj tshis saam) lub 5 hlis ntuj*

** old people “eat taubyaaj” [celebrate the Duānyáng festival] ([eat] the meat of a castrated goat) in the 5th month (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Why eat the meat of a goat (*tshis*) in the month of the sheep (*yaaj*)? Because in Chinese, ‘goat’ and ‘sheep’ are the same word: *yáng*.

- **yaaj**: *tw yaaj pob kws* ‘corn tassels’ (Xiongs).

- **yaaj**: *yeeb yaaj kab* ‘the abode of the dead’ (Xiongs):

I have not seen this expression in texts and I am uncertain of its exact significance. One possible interpretation might be ‘yin-yang market’ or ‘yin-yang street’ (Chinese *yīn-yáng jiē*), but in the texts that I have looked at, the spirit world is called *yeebceeb* ‘the yin world’ (Chinese *yīnjiān*) and *yaaj* ‘yang’ refers not to the abode of the dead but rather to the world of living human beings. One possibility might be that *yeeb yaaj kab* refers to a meeting place between the two realms where the dead (yin) are separated from the living (yang). Again, I have no direct evidence for such an idea, but Michael Johnson lends his support to the hypothesis: “I feel that this is probably correct – the market at the borders of yang and yin realms.”

- **yaaj**: *yug yaaj* ‘to watch over sheep, to be a shepherd’:

tub yug yaaj ‘(classifier *tug*) shepherd’ (Xiongs).

A story about the origin of marriage customs refers to *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’:

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg
‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

But earlier in the story, the same eagles are called *dlub yug yaav*:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

- **Yaaj Comxwm** and **Pej Comxwm**, names of two major characters in a folktale:

In the story “Ob Txivtub hab Dlaabntxaug” (The Father and Son and the Ntxaug Spirit) (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* pp. 34-38), a man and his son are on their way to visit their kinsmen and they stop at the house of a ntxaug spirit. The ntxaug spirit invites them to spend the night. The ntxaug spirit spreads out an oxhide for the man to sleep on and says that the boy can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters. In the middle of the night the boy begins to groan. The man lights a lamp and gets up to look and sees that the ntxaug spirit’s two daughters have become two green sickles nailed into the boy’s chest and that the boy is dead.

The man flees in terror and meets Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm, who insist that he tell them why he is fleeing. The man says that he is fleeing because he and his son fell into the country of the ntxaug spirits and the ntxaug spirits killed his son.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the man not to be frightened and ask him to take them to the ntxaug spirits. When they arrive, the ntxaug spirit couple welcomes the three of them and invites them to spend the night.

The ntxaug spirits spread out bedding in the main room for the man to sleep on and say that Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm can sleep in the bed with the ntxaug spirits’ two daughters. In the middle of the night, there is no sound coming from the bed, so the male ntxaug spirit lights a lamp and gets up to look. He sees that his daughters have each been cut in half (“one made two sides, two made four sides”). He calls upon his daughters to join themselves back together and they do so, but then they are each cut in half again. “These two oxen have sharp horns”, cries the male ntxaug spirit and calls upon other ntxaug spirits to come and do battle with Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm.

Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tuck razors in their mouths, the folds of their arms, and the hollows of their knees. When the ntxaug spirits attack them, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm cut off the ntxaug spirits’ hands.

The ntxaug spirits are terrified and ask how they can escape. Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm tell the ntxaug spirits to go inside a gourd. Then Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm plug up the gourd and throw it into a river. A Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river catches the gourd in his net and starts to unplug it but, when the Chinese man hears the ntxaug spirits inside the gourd say that as soon as they are free they are going to eat him, the Chinese man plugs the gourd up again and throws it back in the river and the river carries it away.

Once the ntxaug spirits are gone, Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm sort through the ntxaug spirits’ silver and find such a huge amount of silver that they are unable to carry it home and so the story ends.

- **yaaj nplej** ‘to winnow rice’ (Xiongs).

- **yaaj phom** ‘handgun’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yáng* ‘from overseas’ + *pào* ‘cannon’.

- **yaajqawg**, a kind of bird which plays a prominent role in *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and which is depicted in the illustrations to the book as a swallow:

Muaj ib nub, Yob Nraug Ntsuag taabtoom tawm moog nyob ua si tom togtsev na, txawm muaj ib paab nam Noog Yaajqawg quaj ntsoog qeeg, hab yaa dluab quas vog hlaa lub

nam taj quavsuv nuav moog.

‘One day, Yob the Orphan was going out for a stroll beside the house when, why, there was a flock of Yaajqawg Birds calling noisily, and flying, in such numbers that the sky was speckled black with them, over a field of artemisia’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 8).

Yob finds a Yaajqawg Bird that has fallen to the ground and nurses it back to health. The birds reward him for his kindness by giving him magic seeds that grow into plants that produce nuggets of silver and gold instead of grain.

Hmong-Chinese dictionaries translate *yaajqawg* as ‘yàn é’ (wild goose) (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 402 yangx gheus; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 184 yangx gheus), but the illustrations on the cover of *Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* and at the beginning of the story (page 6) show swallows.

- **yaaj them** ‘tin, galvanized iron’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yángtiě*.

- **yaam** ‘(no classifier) kind, sort, type’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yàng*:

Muaj pis tsawg yaam? ‘How many kinds are there?’ (Xiongs.)

Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.

‘How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his xyw [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **yaam: ib yaam** ‘something’:

Puab nyav ua tau ib yaam txawv txawv

‘They have just made something very strange’ (Xiongs).

- **yaam: ib yaam dlaab tsi** ‘something’ (Xiongs).

- **yaam: ib yaam nkaus** ‘either’:

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) suggests ‘in the same manner’ as an alternative translation for *ib yaam nkaus*.

- **yaam: paaj ntaub puas yaam tsaav** ‘embroidery’ (Xiongs).

- **yaam: ua yaam tsi ntshai le** ‘fearlessly, courageously’ (Xiongs).

- **yaam ntxuv** ‘early’ (Xiongs).

- **yaam ntxwv** ‘(classifier *tug*) example, behavior’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàngzi*.

- **yaam quas** ‘obstacle, problem’ (Xiongs).

- **yaas**, intensifier:

Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm txhaj dlha yaas moog muab kag nwg raab taus phua tawg

‘Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter ran to fetch his [Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’s] axe for splitting firewood’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **yaav** ‘(no classifier) part, portion’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav** ‘(no classifier) period of time’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav**: *dlub yug yaav* ‘black’?:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laiij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laiij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb

‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

But later in the story, the same eagles are called *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’:

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laiij nyug txwg

‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **yaav nub qaij** ‘afternoon’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav peg suab** ‘in the future’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav qaab** ‘the end’ (Xiongs):

ob yaav qaab ‘both ends’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav qaab teb** ‘south’ (Xiongs):

Moog Uasi Yaav Qaab Teb ‘A Trip to the South’ (title of an article about a vacation trip to various places in the southern United States, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, October 1990, pp. 37-38).

- **yaav qaum teb** ‘north’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav taag lug** ‘in the past’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav tom ntej nua** ‘in the future, following’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav tom ntej u** ‘in the past, previous times’ (Xiongs).

- **yaav tom qaab** ‘in the future’:

hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.

‘and help to teach each and every child and descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

wb coj ib leeg ib saab nyaj nuav tseg ca ua puavpheej rua yaav tomqaab.

‘each of us will keep half of the coin as proof for the future’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 21).

- **yaig** ‘to wear away, to wear out, to use away’ (Xiongs).

- **yaig**: *neeb yaig* or *kev ua neeb ua yaig* ‘shamanism’:

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nge hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.

‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

Neeb yaig tsi yog ib yaam kws noob neej yuav kawm tau. Nwg yog ib yaam taw teg kws ntuj pub xwb. Thaum kws ntuj pum hastas leej twg luj loog hum hab moov dluav tau noob neej txuj sa, ntuj yuav tso qhua neeb lug ntxooj nwg.

‘Shamanism is not something which humankind can learn. It is a skill which only heaven gives. When heaven sees that someone is of suitable faint voice and of destiny/merit to overspread human life, heaven will send the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of him’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 93).

- **yaig**: *saib yaig* ‘to guess spiritually (by the Mong magician)’ (Xiongs):

The Xiongs here use the word ‘magician’ for what other writers would call a shaman.

Graham (1937b, p. 71; 1954, p. 37) also uses ‘magician’ as a synonym for ‘shaman’.

Whatever term one uses, the reference is to a *txiv neeb*, a healer who treats illnesses that have a primarily spiritual rather than physical cause and whose practice (*ua neeb* or *neeb yaig*) includes trance states and invoking shamanic spirits (*neeb*).

- **yaim** ‘to lick’ (Xiongs).

- **yau** ‘small, little, younger in age’ (Xiongs):

Nwg yog tug kwv yau hlo ‘He is the youngest brother’ (Xiongs).

Pa [typo for *Paaj?*] *yau dlua min* [typo for *Mim?*]

‘Pang is smaller than Mae [typo for *Mee?*]’ (Xiongs).

pub rau Yawm Fuabtais, Pug Fuabtais Hlub, hab Pug Fuabtais Yau puab noog [typo for *moog?*] *taagnrho*.

‘they allowed the King, the Senior Queen [senior wife of the king], and the Junior Queen [junior wife of the king] all to go’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 47).

- **yau**: *ntaus sab yau* ‘pessimistic’ (Xiongs).

- **yau**: *tij yau* ‘elder brother right ahead of me’ (*Village* p. 175).

- **yaub**: *Aub yaub!*, interjection, both positive and negative, ‘Hooray!’, ‘Good grief!’ (see also *Haub-yaub!*):

Aub yaub! Ua tsaug tej! naj nub naj mo tum kuv, tuab nam txhwb tawg ua nwg, Awv! nua vuaj!

‘Hooray! Thank you! Every day and every night he bites me. That piece of firewood made him go Ouch!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67.)

Aub yaub! kim kim le tsi yuav.

‘Good grief! That’s too expensive’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 68).

- **yaub**: *Haub yaub!* ‘Good grief!’, ‘Oh yes!’ (see also *Aub yaub!*):

In a folktale, a female spirit fights with two young men, hoping to kill them and bring their meat home in a back-basket for herself and her daughter to eat, but the young men are too much for her and she flees, her basket empty, back to her cave. When she arrives, her daughter says:

Awb! moog saib nam ris nraug nqaj lug oj!

‘Hello! Let’s go see the backload of young-man meat!’

and she replies:

Haub-yaub! nam ris nraug nqaj, nam ris nraug nqaj!

Good grief! Backload of young-man meat, backload of young-man meat!

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 20.)

In another story in the same collection, a man starts to unplug a gourd that, unbeknownst to him, is filled with dangerous spirits, and immediately hears voices from inside the gourd saying:

“Haub yaub! muab txiv mej qheb, sim muab tum noj saib!”

“Oh yes! Open us, [we’ll] try killing and eating [you]!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **yaug** ‘to rinse, to wash in water’ (Xiongs):

yaug rig tsho ‘to rinse the clothes’ (Xiongs).

- **yaugncauj yauglu** ‘to provide for one’s needs’:

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

‘Later, when you’re going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?] *yauglu!*

‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

The expression *yaugncauj yauglu* appears to mean literally ‘to rinse the mouth and the orifice’, but Michael Johnson (personal communication) points out that in some Hmong dialects the corresponding expression is *yug ncauj yug lu* ‘to feed the mouth and the orifice’, which makes more sense semantically. It is possible, therefore, that *yaug* here is not ‘to rinse’ but rather a variant form of *yug* ‘to feed’.

- **yauj**: *Od yauj!* ‘Well!’:

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!

‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag*

Lom Zem p. 13).

- **yauj qeb** ‘(classifier *tug*) trigger’ (Xiongs).

- **yauj qeb phom** ‘trigger’ (Xiongs).

- **yaum** ‘to persuade, to urge, to try to get others to agree to join together’ (Xiongs):

Mej yaum saib puas tau luag

‘You try to get others to join’ (Xiongs) [“You-plural persuade to see whether get companions”].

Probably from Chinese 约 *yuē, yāo* (probably pronounced *yó* in Southwestern Mandarin) ‘to invite, to make an appointment, to arrange, to restrain’.

- **yawd** ‘Grandfather’, vocative form, polite address to an older man (see also *yawm*):

Puj hab yawd, meb nyob nua ais, meb puas pum kuv tug muam tuaj txug ntawm nuav?

‘Grandmother and grandfather, the two of you are here, did the two of see my sister come here?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 8.)

- **yawd**: *Nam yawd*, ... or *Nam yawm*, ... ‘Sir, ...’:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; spirit speaking to a man and his son when they arrive at the spirit’s house.)

Nam yawd, muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw, es koj tug nyuas tub moog nrug wb ob nyuas ntxhais pw huv txaaj.

‘Sir, we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on, while your son can sleep in the bed with our two daughters.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; spirit speaking to a man who has come to the spirit’s house.)

“Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?”

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; two men speaking to a man after spirits have killed the man’s son and the man has fled.)

“Nam yawm, koj pw nuav es koj ob tug nyuas tub nrug wb ob tug nyuas ntxhais pw huv txaaj!”

“Sir, you sleep here and your two sons can sleep with our two daughters in the bed!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, spirits speaking a man whose has come to the spirits’ house with two companions whom the spirits take to be the man’s sons.)

- **yawg** ‘paternal grandfather’ (*Village* p. 174).

- **yawg**: *pug ... yawg* ‘ancestors’ (also written *pug ... yawm*):

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

‘You who have died are going to meet your ancestors’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, koj qab qua luas qab xaa tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag ntxaa.

‘When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if your chicken

crows and their chicken joins in, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb tsi yog koj pug koj yawg hauv maug hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, it is not your ancestors upon the end of the coffin.

Koj qab teb luas qab xaa txha yog koj pug koj yawg huav muag ntxaa.

But if your chicken replies and their chicken joins in, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the grave-mound.

Koj qab qua luas qab teb, txha le yog koj pug koj yawg hauv muag hleb.

If your chicken crows and their chicken replies, then it is your ancestors upon the end of the coffin' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj.

'When you go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven, if the main room is hung with red paper, and the main door is hung with yellow paper, it is not your ancestors' garden.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv cev, tsi yog koj pug koj yawg tsev.

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, it is not your ancestors' house.

Rooj taag lum ntawv dlaaj, hauv taag lum ntawv lab, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaajtsev tshab.

But if the main door is hung with yellow paper, and the main room is hung with red paper, then it is your ancestors' new home.

Rooj taag lum ntawv cev, hauv taag lum ntawv dlaaj, le yog koj pug koj yawg vaaj!

If the main door is hung with paper made from the bark of the cev-tree, and the main room is hung with yellow paper, then it is your ancestors' garden!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 18.)

- **yawg:** *quas yawg* 'classifier *tug* man, gentleman' (Xiongs), 'husband (woman speaking)' (*Village* p. 174):

Moob Dlawb le, quas yawg naav tsig (losyog rig) taug luv (pov taub).

'Among the White Mong, the men wear trousers – *tsig* (or *rig*) – with a short – *luv* (*pov taub*) – seat' (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

- **yawg:** *yuav quas yawg* 'to get married (said of a woman)' (Xiongs):

lug txaj hluas nkauj yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws

'song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 15-17).

lug txaj moov tsis saws, hluas nkauj txha moog yuav quas yawg

'song about how, not being acclimatized to her fate, a young woman married a husband' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 17-18).

- **yawg cuag** 'father-in-law of my son or of my daughter' (*Village* p. 174). Also written *yawm cuag*.

- **yawg koob** 'paternal great grandfather' (*Village* p. 174).

- **yawg laug** ‘father’s elder brother’ (*Village* p. 174):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) points out that in White Hmong the corresponding form, *yawg laus*, means ‘father’s sister’s husband’ (*not* ‘father’s elder brother’) and suggests that Lemoine may have been confused about the meaning of the Mong Leng word. However, on pages 177-179 of *Village*, Lemoine has a long discussion of differences between the kinship terms of Mong Leng and White Hmong, which makes me believe that we are dealing with a real difference between the two dialects, not some sort of confusion or misunderstanding on Lemoine’s part.

We have good descriptions of the kinship systems of several Hmong dialects. The need now is for someone to come up with a theory to explain the differences in pattern and meaning from one dialect to another.

- **yawgncauj**: typo for *yaugncauj*?:

wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for *yaugncauj*?]
yauglu!
 ‘we’ll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **yawg suab** ‘paternal great great grandfather’ (*Village* p. 174).

- **yawm** ‘(classifier *leej* or no classifier) grandfather’ (Xiongs), ‘maternal grandfather’ (*Village* p. 174). See also *yawd*.

- **Yawm** ‘Grandfather’ used as a title for men and for male spirits and male celestial beings:

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!”

When Grandfather Kabyeeb grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather Tuam Caiv, Grandfather Rwg went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!” (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

Nub caaj thaus u, Nuj Yob nam Nuj Yob txiv pheej naj xyoo raug Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug hu moog ua Yawm Xeev qhev txav tawg

‘Long ago, Nuj Yob’s mother and Nuj Yob’s father each year would be called upon by the Ruler to be the Ruler’s servants cutting firewood’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 73).

cais Yawm Dlaab txhaj has rua tug nwg dlaab ntxawm, tug nug ntxawg

‘and finally the Spirit said to his brother-in-law, the woman’s younger brother’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

Cais Yawm Dlaab txawm yaa plawg moog tom haavdlej

‘The Spirit accordingly flew down to the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 9).

ob tug txawm nov suab ntaaj suab muv nrov pis nthav sau ntuj tuaj, cais ob tug txhaa tsaa hlo qhovmuag saib na, ua cav Nuj Sis Loob hab nam Yawm Dlaab sis ntaus sis tua yaa swb sas nruug thooj nam fuab dlob lug.

‘the two of them heard the sounds of swords and spears clanging from the sky, so they lifted their eyes to look, and there were Nuj Sis Loob and Grandfather Spirit fighting and gliding down, accompanied by a black cloud’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 41).

yawm saub

‘creator, in the Hmong belief, He is the creator of all things in the world’ (Xiongs).

Yawm Saub qheb ncauj lug has qheb lug lug nroo has tas; Meb yog nplaj quas cai le leej tuabneeg meb tuaj quas tsw?

Grandfather Saub opened his mouth to speak, gathered his words and roared, “The two of you are from the earth. Why have you come?” (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 9.)

Yawm Saub txa ua tuab tug nam txiv neeg faubcuas thauj Nuj Sis Loob, hab Tub Ceeb Pov ob tug yaa tawm plawv huv lub nam qhovntuj dlub ncaajnrain lug tsaws nkaus huv Fuabtais Ntujsua Teb Tomtaug lub xyeemtshaav.

‘Grandfather Saub had transformed himself into a cloud-wind stallion to carry Nuj Sis Loob and Tub Ceeb Pov out of the black pit and had deposited them in a site of the King of the Lower Realm’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 34).

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj coj ntawm cov qhua neeb) coj qhua neeb lug ntsooj tug tuabneeg ntawd.

‘First, when a person is going to know how to be a shaman, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends Siv Yig (Siv Yig is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94.)

Cav quas nquab quas naag ncuav pheej tuaj txav heev txav heev tes Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog nug Yawm Saub tas;

But doves and squirrels kept coming and cutting down a great deal of his crops and so Yob the orphan went and asked Grandfather Saub:

“Yawm Saub aw, caag es kuv moog ua tau cov nyuas teb rua peg qaab tsuas es quas nquab, quas naagncuav, quas tsuag yuav tuaj txav ua luaj le es yog le caag nua ne?”

“Oh, Grandfather Saub, when I make swidden fields up at the base of the cliff, why do the doves and squirrels and rats come and cut down so much of my crop? Why is that?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Uantej kws zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb yuav moog nteg Yawm Nyooglaug ntshais Ntxawm lug, nwg twb nteg tau Yawm Xub tub Ntxawg lug kaw tseg ca rua tom ib kem pobzeb lawm.

‘Before the dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had captured Grandfather Nyooglaug’s Youngest Daughter, he had captured Grandfather Thunder’s Youngest Son and had imprisoned him in a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

- **yawm** ‘man’:

Muaj ib yawm tsua ua ib dlaim nam teb nraag haav.

‘There was a man making a field down in the valley’ (*Ceebpov* p. 28).

Nam yawm tsi taug teg tes nam yawm coj Yaaj Comxwm hab Pej Comxwm ob tug rov moog lau.

‘The man could not gainsay them so the man went back bringing Yaaj Comxwm and Pej Comxwm’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36).

Cav muaj ib yawm Suav ntaus ntaus ntseg lawv dlej.

‘Why, there was a Chinese man catching fish in a net along the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab*

p. 38).

Nam yawm Suav tuab vaag khwb nkaus nam tawb [typo for *taub*] *hai lug*.

‘The Chinese man caught the gourd in his net and pulled it out’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

Yawm Suav muab kaw nkaus, muab nrum nroog huv nam dlej.

‘The Chinese man shut [the ntxaug spirits] up and flung [the gourd] into the river’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **yawm** ‘to scoop up, to scrape up, to gather up’ (Xiongs):

yawm ntseg ‘to scoop up fish’ (Xiongs).

- **yawm**: *Nam yawd*, ... or *Nam yawm*, ... ‘Sir, ...’:

Nam yawd, mej tuaj lov?

‘Sir, welcome to both of you.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; spirit speaking to a man and his son when they arrive at the spirit’s house.)

Nam yawd, muab tawv nyuj pua rua ntawm nuav koj pw, es koj tug nyuas tub moog nrug wb ob nyuas ntchais pw huv txaaj.

‘Sir, we will spread out an oxhide here for you to sleep on, while your son can sleep in the bed with our two daughters.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; spirit speaking to a man who has come to the spirit’s house.)

“*Nam yawd, koj tsiv dlaabtsi?*”

“Sir, why are you fleeing?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 35; two men speaking to a man after spirits have killed the man’s son and the man has fled.)

“*Nam yawm, koj pw nuav es koj ob tug nyuas tub nrug wb ob tug nyuas ntchais pw huv txaaj!*”

“Sir, you sleep here and your two sons can sleep with our two daughters in the bed!” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 36, spirits speaking a man whose has come to the spirits’ house with two companions whom the spirits take to be the man’s sons.)

- **yawm**: *puj ... yawm* ‘ancestors’ (also written *pug ... yawg*):

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm.

Koj ces koj muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, ces koj moog tau, koj nqeg nrug moog.

You, so, you have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, so can go, you go down.

Kuv ces kuv tsis muaj khau maaj khau le ntuag, kuv yuav nyob qhov nuav qha koj le kev rau koj.

I, so, I do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fibre, I will stay here and tell you the way to go.

Koj le tau kev moog cuag koj puj koj yawm nuav

You then will be able to go on your way to meet you ancestors' (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

koj moog txug toj peg roob txuj kaab ntsig kaab no ntlog [= ndlog] luj laam luaj txhaa yaaj

'you reach the mountain where the stinging hairy caterpillars and the kaab no are rolling about, as big the sheep-bones.

Kaab no ntlog luj laam luaj txhaa tshis

The kaab no are rolling about, as big as goat-bones.

Luas ces, luas muaj khau maaj khau ntuag tsuj, koj tsi muaj khau maaj khau ntuag

The others, now the others have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber in which to walk, you do not have shoes of hemp and of hemp fiber.

Luas tsuj lis npluav ua ntej koj tsuj lis npluav qaab

The others walk in front, you walk behind.

Luas tau luas kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm

The others find their way to find their ancestors.

Koj le tau koj kev moog nrhav puj nrhav yawm no tas

You then will find your way to find your ancestors' (*Initiation* p. 135).

- **yawm cuag** 'father-in-law of one's child' (also written *yawg cuag*):

In a folktale, a girl has married a boy whose father has become a tiger. When the couple visits the girl's parents, the boy's tiger-father is reluctant to show himself and the girl's mother says:

Txawm yog yawm cuag hab puj cuag nrug meb tuaj los ca le koj nrug meb lug tsev.

'If the parents of my daughter's new husband accompanied the two of you, bring them with you to the house' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 121).

- **yawm dlaab** 'wife's brother' (*Village* p. 175):

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke, txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo.

'The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there, and there was a little minivet on a tree' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 80).

- **yawm dlaab** 'a guy', 'a young man not of one's own clan':

In a folktale, two young women are the only people left in their village after a female spirit has eaten everyone else. Two young men who are out hunting arrive in the village and are startled to find it deserted. The two young women come out of their house and say

Awb! ob leej yawm dlaab aw.

'Hello, you two guys.' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

Dlaab is used in kinship terms for relatives on the mother's side. A person belongs to their father's clan. Relatives on the mother's side belong to a different clan. By addressing the young men as *yawm dlaab*, the young women may be implying that they assume that the young men belong to a different clan, and therefore that they are potential marriage partners, since marriage in traditional Hmong culture must be between people of different clans.

- **yawm hluas** ‘mother’s younger sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 174).
- **yawm koob** ‘great grandfather’ (Xiongs).
- **yawm laug** ‘mother’s older sister’s husband’ (*Village* p. 174).
- **yawm suab** ‘great great grandfather’ (Xiongs).
- **yawm tsag** ‘father (used only in the Mong marriage custom word)’ (Xiongs).
- **yawm txiv** or **yawm txwv** ‘wife’s father’:

yawm txwv ‘wife’s father’ (*Village* pp. 174, 175).

Puab nyob lug tsi tau ntev, Yawm Nyooglaug, ob tug yawvtxiv [sic] txawm hu Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moog

‘When they had been living together for not very long, Grandfather Nyooglaug, the couple’s father-in-law [i.e. the wife’s father], summoned Txheeb Tshoj Theeb’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 37).

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov ntxhuav cov ntxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

‘Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab’s cattle and horses, and their ntxhuav and elephants, which the couple’s wife’s mother and wife’s father [i.e. Nkauj Fuab’s parents] had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **yawm vauv** ‘husband’s sister’s husband (woman speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175).
- **yawm xub** or **xub** ‘thunder’ (Xiongs):

Uantej kws zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb yuav moog nteg Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm lug, nwg twb nteg tau Yawm Xub tub Ntxawg lug kaw tseg ca rua tom ib kem pobzeb lawm.

‘Before the dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had captured Grandfather Nyooglaug’s Youngest Daughter, he had captured Grandfather Thunder’s Youngest Son and had imprisoned him in a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

In *The Religion of the Hmong Njua*, Nusit Chindarsi describes the attributes of the god “Yorso”. Chindarsi says of Yorso, “His voice is the thunder, lightning is his sword”, which makes me believe that “Yorso” is Chindarsi’s spelling for *Yawm Xub* ‘Grandfather Thunder’:

Hmong call one class of supernatural beings Kao Eh Tu [*Qaum Ntuj?*], which in Thai speech is rendered as Manut Hon Sawan. I shall call these beings gods because they are more powerful than other spirits; they live in the sky and each has a personal name. ...

There are three important gods whom the Hmong often mention: they are named Yonglao [*Nyooglaug*], Yorso [*Yawm Xub*], and Yawang [*Nyaj Vaab*]. There is no clear hierarchy among the gods. Some say Yorso is the chief god, others say that Yonglao is the head of the gods.

Yorso is the god who judges Hmong souls. His voice is the thunder, lightning is his sword.

Long ago Yorso had a son, but his wife had no milk. He asked the Hmong for milk, but they gave him none, so he became angry with them and said, “Since you will not give milk to me, you will never give it to others, or those who drink your milk will die.” Since that time the Hmong never give their milk to another. If a woman has a second child she must not share her milk with the first child. A lactating mother must take care in cooking for if any of her milk should drop on the food, the person who eats it will be struck by Yorso’s sword, the lightning.

Long ago, before the Hmong were subject to Thai law, if a Hmong injured another or committed a breach of custom and did not confess or accept the obligation to pay compensation or a fine, the headman or the villagers could force him to submit to the ordeal of drinking milk. Any man who told a lie after drinking milk would be killed by Yorso’s lightning. However, Yorso is just, and does not harm those who have done no wrong. Yaitong (Tang) who told me this, said that many liars are struck by lightning, and many men have suffered this fate. (Chindarsi p. 18.)

- **yawm yij** ‘(classifier *tug*) brother-in-law, sister’s husband’ (Xiongs), ‘sister’s husband (man speaking)’ (*Village* p. 175):

The second syllable, *yij*, is from Chinese 爷 *yé* ‘father’.

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke, txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntuo. Nuj Yob txhaj has rua nwg yawm yij tas: “Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?”

The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there, and there was a little minivet on a tree. Nuj Yob then said to his brother-in-law: “Brother-in-law, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 80-81.)

Nyob nyob, muaj ib nub, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj tso nwg tug tub ntxawg dlha tuaj moog has rua Yob Nraug Ntsuag tas: “Yawm yij! Txiv has tas ...”

Time passed, and one day, the Ruler sent his youngest son to run and say to Yob the Orphan: “Sister’s husband! Father says that ...” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **yaws** ‘to take down’ (Xiongs):

yaws lub tsev ntaub ‘to take down the tent’ (Xiongs).

- **yaws** ‘to gather back’ (Xiongs):

Awb, sawv es yaws chaw es yuav nqee mivnyuas plig luas mas.

‘Oh my! I got up to gather up my bedding and I found myself holding in my arms a little soul’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 23).

- **yaws** ‘to slightly touch the skin’ (Xiongs).

- **yaws** ‘to chase away (animals)’ (Xiongs).

- **yeb** ‘to straighten up (an arrow)’ (Xiongs).

- **yej** ‘(classifier *rooj*) a trap set with a slab of wood or rock triggered to fall quickly on the animal’ (Xiongs).

- **yem** ‘(no classifier) fold’ (Xiongs):

Probably from Chinese 页 *yè* ‘leaf, page’ but it is difficult to be certain without examples of *yem* in context.

- **yem**: *qaab yem khaav* ‘porch’:

Qaab yem khaav hab chaw nyob ‘Porch and place to sit’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **yeeb** ‘(classifier *tsob*, *tug*, or no classifier) opium’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yān* ‘smoke’:

fuam yeeb ‘to crave opium or cigarettes’ (Xiongs).

tug quav yeeb ‘smoker’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeb**, from Chinese 阴 *yīn* ‘yin, the feminine or negative principal in nature’, used in expressions referring to the spirit world:

huv nruab yeeb ‘the unborn state’ (Xiongs) [“in the spirit world”].

- **yeeb**: *Kabyeeb*, from Chinese *Guānyīn*, the Goddess of Mercy:

The band is also dotted with several divinities from the pantheon of Chinese folk religion, such as as *Ka Yèng* (the Kouan Yin, goddess of mercy of the Chinese). For Tchou Yao for example, *Ka Yèng* is found in the Sky. “When one is suffering, one calls upon this young lady, who will come to our aid. She is a very learned and very intelligent young woman. She comes to see what evil spirit is involved ... Since she is very wise and very knowledgeable, if she concludes that the sick person is not going to recover, she takes a part of her own body and exchanges it for the soul of the sick person. Then the wild spirit who is holding the soul will let it return to us.” (*Entre* pp. 36-37.)

Some Hmong believe that the god [sic] Gaying is responsible for giving a woman a child. If a married woman has difficulty becoming pregnant, performs a ceremony for Gaying, and then becomes pregnant, the baby is usually called Gaying in gratitude to the god. (Chindarsi 1976:29.)

In an oral history of the Mong rebellion against the French in Indochina from 1919-1921, *Kabyeeb* is the name of one of the Mong fighters:

Thaus yawm Kabyeeb khaws nkaus phom lawv yawm Tuam Caiv, yawm Rwg txawm moog thaiv has tas: “*Tsi xob tua laiv! xob tua laiv!*”

‘When Grandfather *Kabyeeb* grabbed the rifle to follow Grandfather *Tuam Caiv*, Grandfather *Rwg* went to stop him, saying, “Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!”’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 8.)

Yang (2006) richly documents Hmong beliefs about Lady *Kab Yeeb* and their relationship to Chinese beliefs about *Guānyīn*, the Goddess of Mercy.

- **yeeb**: *luam yeeb* ‘tobacco’ (Xiongs):

haus luam yeeb ‘to smoke cigarettes, tobacco’ (Xiongs).

tsi xob haus luam yeeb ‘do not smoke’ (Xiongs).

nplooj luam yeeb ‘tobacco’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeb**: *txa yeeb* ‘the Adam’s apple’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeb**: *Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas*, name of a male celestial being who is one of the major characters in the story “Lying on the Uphill Side of the Fireplace for Three Mornings After Giving Birth” (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 35-52).

Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas appears initially as someone whom three woman call upon to help them become pregnant. Later in the story, the son of one of the women marries Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas’s daughter, and Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas comes to the young man’s aid when he is in peril. Because Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas helps the three woman become pregnant, he is perhaps to be identified with Kabyeeb (Chinese Guānyīn), the Goddess of Mercy, one of whose principal functions in Hmong belief is to help woman become pregnant. This may be a plausible identification despite the fact that Kabyeeb is female and Txoov Kabyeeb Los Muas is male. Bertais (1978:507) translates Txoov Kab Yeeb (without Los Muas) as ‘name of a spirit’ and says that Txoov Kab Yeeb brings children to women.

- **yeeb**: *yaj yeeb* ‘opium’:

From Chinese 洋烟 *yáng yān* ‘foreign smoke / tobacco’, which would normally be pronounced **yaaj yeeb* in Mong. The actual pronunciation *yaj yeeb* is perhaps due to the influence of 鸦片 *yāpiàn* ‘opium’.

haus yaj yeeb ‘to smoke opium’ (Xiongs).

- **yeebceeb** ‘the yin world, the spirit world’, from Chinese *yīnjiān*, as opposed to *yaajceeb* ‘the yang world, the world of living human beings’, from Chinese *yángjiān*:

One speaks of being “in the yin world” (*rua yeebceeb*) but “on the yang world” (*sau yaajceeb*).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world, but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world which are causing the person to be sick’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **yeeb koob** ‘reputation, honor, glory’ (Xiongs):

Almost certainly a loan from Chinese but the exact Chinese source has not been identified.

- **yeeb ncuab** ‘communist’, from Chinese 冤家 *yuān jiā* ‘enemy house’:

cov tub rog yeeb ncuab tau txem rua huv Looj ceeb thaum xyoo 1975
‘The communist soldiers got into Long Cheng in 1975’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeb yaaj kab** ‘the abode of the dead’ (Xiongs):

I have not seen this expression in texts and I am uncertain of its exact significance. One possible interpretation might be ‘yin-yang market’ or ‘yin-yang street’ (Chinese *yīn-yáng*

jiē), but in the texts that I have looked at, the spirit world is called *yeebceeb* ‘the yin world’ (Chinese *yīnjiān*) and *yaaj* ‘yang’ refers not to the abode of the dead but rather to the world of living human beings. One possibility might be that *yeeb yaaj kab* refers to a meeting place between the two realms where the dead (yin) are separated from the living (yang). Again, I have no direct evidence for such an idea, but Michael Johnson lends his support to the hypothesis: “I feel that this is probably correct – the market at the borders of yang and yin realms.”

- **yeeg** ‘to transform, to change form, to change into’ (Xiongs):

tug dlaab yeeg ua ib tug naab ‘the ghost changes into a snake’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeg** ‘to make illusion’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese 影 *yǐng* ‘shadow; image; trace; picture’.

- **yeeg** ‘magic’, probably from Chinese 影 *yǐng* ‘shadow; image; trace; picture’:

Lug Nruag Txa (Yeeg) ‘Stories About (Magical) Transformations’ (*Lug Nruag Txa*, title).

- **yeeg**, intensifier:

Yawm Nyoog Laug tug tub hlub txham le has seev quas yeeg tas
‘Grandfather Nyoog Laug’s eldest son then said with a sigh’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 21).

- **yeeg**: *mob yeeg* ‘a kind of disease causing blood to clot’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeg**: *qwj yeeg* ‘(classifier *tug*) snail’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeg**: *tug yeeg* ‘completely settled, at rest, peaceful, immovable, motionless’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeg**: *ua yoj ua yeeg* ‘to move back and forth, to waver, to quiver’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeg pis zog** ‘completely’:

Cov nam kua aav kuj ca le yeeg pis zog lug npoog kag Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag
‘The mud completely covered Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm posts’ (*Txheej Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

- **yeeg siv** ‘magic’ (Xiongs).

- **yeeg siv** ‘play, acting’ (Xiongs).

- **yeej** ‘to win over, to gain victory, to have success’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yíng*:

tua yeej ‘to win in arm fighting’ (Xiongs).

ntaus yeej ‘to win in fist fighting’ (Xiongs).

kev yeej ‘victory, glory, success’ (Xiongs).

Yog koj caam yeej, le pub koj coj moog. Huas yog koj caam tsi yeej, cais tsi pub hlo le!
‘If you win the argument, I will let you take him. If you do not win the argument, I will not’ (*Lug Nruag Txa* p. 25).

Nwg ua rog txug tsaav neeg dlaabtsi los kov tsi yeej le.

‘Whatever nation he waged war upon could not win’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

- **yeej** ‘(classifier *lub*) guard post, military camp’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 营 *yíng*.

- **yeej** ‘round, circular’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yuán*.

- **yeej**, placed before a verb to show emphasis, something like ‘in fact, indeed, to be sure, ...’, but often sounds more natural in English if left untranslated, from Chinese 原 *yuán* ‘originally, from the start’:

tog nyuj quag [typo for *qaug?*] *los tswg yeej qaij lawm hav*

‘if I am hurt you will be the same’ (Xiongs) [“if the ox falls, then the stake will lean over too”]

Txij thaus kuv xeev xwm lug nwg yeej nyob hov lug le lawm

‘It was already there since I was born (or was aware of)’ (Xiongs).

Tug txiv neeb lub cev nyob sau yaajceeb, tabsis lub qhov muag hab tug xyw, feem ntau, yeej tshuaj tau ib puas tsaav yaam kws nyob rua yeebceeb kws ua rua tug tuabneeg ntawd muaj mob nkeeg.

‘The shaman’s body is on the yang world [the human world], but his eyes and his *xyw* [spirit, consciousness], for the most part, are investigating a hundred things in the yin world [the spirit world] which are causing the person’s illness’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 92).

- **yeej**: *cuab yeej* ‘materials, supplies, tools, implements’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *jiāyuán* ‘home’:

covcuabyeej ‘tools, equipment, utensils’ (Xiongs).

covcuabyeej toom txeem ‘household goods’ (Xiongs).

cuab yeej cuab taam ‘household things’ (Xiongs).

hab puab coj suav tej cuab yeej toom txeem lug taagnrho.

‘and they carried away all of the household goods of the Chinese’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

- **yeej kom** ‘(classifier *tug*) accuser’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yuángào*.

- **yeem** ‘to agree, to be willing to, to admit, to allow’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 愿 *yuàn* as in 愿意 *yuànyì* ‘to be willing’:

Nwg yeem ca puab ntaus ‘s/he is willing to let them beat her or him’ (Xiongs).

- **yeem** ‘to prefer, to like better’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 愿 *yuàn* as in 愿意 *yuànyì* ‘to be willing’:

Kuv yeem ca moog has kag huv tsev tu plaub ‘I prefer going right into court’ (Xiongs).

- **yeem** ‘(classifier *lub*) mark, seal, stamp’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yìn*:

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”]

- **yeem** ‘(classifier *lub*) trace’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *yìn*.

- **yeem teg** ‘(classifier *lub*) fingerprint’ (Xiongs).

- **yees** ‘(classifier *tug* or no classifier) a craving, a habitual desire, habit forming’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 癮 *yīn* ‘addiction, craving’:

muag [typo for *muaj*?] *yees luj heev* ‘to have a very strong habitual desire’ (Xiongs).

- **yees**: *kvv yees* ‘to guess’ (Xiongs):

Almost certainly a loan from Chinese but the exact Chinese source has not been identified.

- **yeev**, intensifier:

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam, roog kaus quas yeev, hab rau sab ntso taug kev tuaj lawm.

‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes, held the parasol over her head, and walked steadfastly until she arrived’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **yeev**: *ua yuj yeev* ‘to move back and forth (said of a fish)’ (Xiongs).

- **yib** ‘to satisfy, to agree, to accept, to allow’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 依 *yī* ‘to lean on, rely on, depend on, obey’:

Nwg tsi yib le ‘s/he doesn’t allow’ (Xiongs).

- **yib** ‘Hey!’:

Los Lwm! yib! nrov kawj! kawj! kawj! nua huv txaaj

‘Los Lwm! Hey! There’s a kawj! kawj! kawj! sound coming from the bedroom’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **yib vim** ‘because’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yīnwéi*.

- **yig** ‘to refrain out of politeness or to conform to custom, to try to refuse’ (Xiongs):

Koj tseem yuav yig hab lov? ‘Will you try to refuse?’ (Xiongs).

- **yig** ‘(no classifier, or classifier *lub*) ‘family, household’ (see also *yim*):

Koj yuav moog taab koj lub cuab lub yig.

‘You will go to have your own family’ (Xiongs).

ua tsheej ib yig tuab neeg ‘to be able to manage the family, to become a family’ (Xiongs).

Ua tau tej nam tsev zeb tsev tsua ua yig quas qaag rua nraag nam taj dlej hlub lawm le.

‘There are houses of stone and of limestone in making households all over the place down in a large river plain’ (*Ceebpov* p. 22).

- **yig**: *kua yig* ‘thin secretion (from an abcess)’ (Xiongs).

- **yig**: *nquag yig* ‘to whirl, to rotate, to move swiftly, to revolve, to gyrate’ (Xiongs).

- **yig**: *pheej yig* ‘cheap, inexpensive’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *piányi*.

- **yig**: *Siv Yig* or *Nyaj Yig*, the first shaman:

siv yig ‘a prophet’ (Xiongs).

Chapter 5 of *Entre* (pp. 115-142) is devoted to *Siv Yig*. The chapter begins:

The mythic origin of the practice of the Hmong shaman is indissociable from *Shi Yi*, also known as *Tsong Yi Lao*, *Tsong Shi Yi*, etc. The tunes of the *kr’eng* [qeej], the mouth organ of the Hmong, often bring to mind his setbacks and his exploits (*Entre* p. 115).

Siv Yig or *Nyaj Yig* is regularly invoked or referred to in the chants that call upon the shaman’s helper-spirits (*Entre* pp. 173-181). Lemoine understands the shaman to consider himself the embodiment of *Siv Yig*, and therefore translates the name *Siv Yig* as ‘I’.

Siv Yig is the chief of the *neeb*, the shaman’s helper-spirits:

Ua ntej kws ib tug tuabneeg yuav txawj ua neeb, ntuj losyog Yawm Saub le tso Siv Yig (Siv Yig yog tug thawj coj ntawm cov qhua neeb) coj qhua neeb lug ntsooj tug tuabneeg ntawd.

‘First, when a person is going to know how to be a shaman, heaven or Grandfather Saub sends *Siv Yig* (*Siv Yig* is the head of the clan of shamanic spirits) to lead the clan of shamanic spirits to take possession of that person.’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 94.)

Siv Yig, given the surname *Muas*, appears in a story explaining the origin of the ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub Spirit (*Tu Sub*). The story begins:

Thau u Moob tsi tau muaj vaaj. Muaj ib tug hu ua Lis Sub Tuam. Nwg kaav ib ntsuj teb. Muaj ib tug hu ua Siv Yig Muas. Nwg kaav ib ntug teb.

‘Long ago, the Mong did not have a king. Instead there was someone named *Lis Sub Tuam* who ruled one region and someone named *Siv Yig Muas* who ruled another area’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 20).

Lis Sub Tuam was a cruel tyrant who terrorized his subjects. When he terrorized one of *Siv Yig Muas*’s subjects, *Siv Yig Muas* fought him and killed both *Lis Sub Tuam* and his son. Then, *Lis Sub Tuam*’s widow, *Puj Sub*, after her death, came down from the sky to avenge her husband and her son. This is the origin of the *sub*, the spirits that cause bloody accidents. The ceremony of Cutting Off the Sub (*Tu Sub*) is performed in the seventh and ninth months of the lunar calendar to get rid of *Puj Sub*. The ceremony of Waving Away the Sub (*Lwm Sub*) is performed at the New Year to get rid of *Lis Sub Tuam* and his son. (*Dlaab Qhuas* pp. 20-34.)

A great many different stories about *Siv Yig* have been recorded from members of different Hmong subgroups in China, Laos, Thailand, and the Hmong diaspora outside of Asia. If we read these stories together, it is possible to piece together an account of the arc of *Siv Yig*’s career: how illness and death came into the world, how *Siv Yig* was sent to earth to heal human beings, how *Siv Yig* got his powers, implements and spirit-helpers, how in acquiring some of his magic medicines he gratuitously destroyed a dragon’s eggs and how the dragon cursed *Siv Yig*, saying that because she was not able to bring her youngest child back to life, *Siv Yig* would not be able to bring *his* son back

to life, how Siv Yig battled the spirits that cause illness and injury, and, finally, how, in fulfillment of the dragon's curse, hubris led to Siv Yig's downfall, when he was tricked into eating the soul of his own son. In despair, Siv Yig threw his implements to the earth (where they were collected by his successors, the modern earthly shamans) and returned to the sky.

- **yig hau** '(classifier *lub*) the center of hair forming on the head' (Xiongs) [hair whorl].

- **yij** 'a kind of wild bird similar to the quail' (Xiongs), 'generic term for quail and partridges' (Lyman).

- **yij**: *yawm yij* '(classifier *tug*) brother-in-law, sister's husband' (Xiongs), 'sister's husband (man speaking)' (*Village* p. 175):

The second syllable, *yij*, is from Chinese 爷 *yé* 'father'.

Ob tug yawm yij yawm dlaab taugkev moog txug tom ib nraab ke, txawm muaj ib nyuas laublaig nyob sau kuntoo. Nuj Yob txhaj has rua nwg yawm yij tas: "Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?"

The two brothers-in-law continued on their way until they were halfway there, and there was a little minivet on a tree. Nuj Yob then said to his sister's husband: "Sister's husband, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 80-81.)

Nyob nyob, muaj ib nub, Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug txhaj tso nwg tug tub ntxawg dlha tuaj moog has rua Yob Nraug Ntsuag tas: "Yawm yij! Txiv has tas ..."

Time passed, and one day, the Ruler sent his youngest son to run and say to Yob the Orphan: "Sister's husband! Father says that ..." (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **yim** '(no classifier) family, household' (Xiongs) (see also *yig*):

Muaj pis tsawg yim nyob huv koj lub zog?

'How many families are there in your village?' (Xiongs.)

- **yim** 'eight, the number 8' (Xiongs):

yim caum 'eighty' (Xiongs).

yim pua 'eight hundred' (Xiongs).

yim phaav 'eight thousand' (Xiongs).

- **yim** 'to trim off':

Divinatory rods, made of split lengths of bamboo are used in the funeral to ascertain whether communication has been established between humans and spirits.

Yim npawv ob tog ntsis phua lis plhaws ua ob saab,

Ua koj leej tub tuag tug tswj moog qhuab kaab.

'Cut off the two ends and split it in two lengthwise,

To make, O dead man, your pointer to show you the path' (*Initiation* p. 127).

- **yim**: *sau yim* 'to establish a family':

In the first story in *Kwvhuam*, a young woman has been instructed by her parents to find a husband and the first creature she meets is a cloud:

Fuab, nub nua kuv lug nrhav neej ua. koj lug txug ho cais koj nrug kuv sau yim luas puas fuab?

‘Cloud, today I have come to look for someone to marry. You have come, so will you establish a family with me, cloud?’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 10.)

- **yim**: *tswv yim* ‘idea’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zhǔyì*:

Tswv Yim Moob ‘Mong Ideas’ (*Tswv Yim*, title).

Ob tug tau siv ob tug tej laajlim tswvyim thaus ob tug moog kawm ntawd lug paab lub teb lub chaw.

‘The two of them used their magic and ideas from the time when they been in school to help the country’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 49).

- **yim**: *ua ntej qho yim* ‘first’:

Cov kws sab nyag tes tsiv ua-ntej qho yim lawm, huas cov nam ntawd tes tsiv tuabsi rua lub taub.

‘Those who were timid fled first, but all of them fled into the gourd’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38).

- **yim**: *ua txumyim* ‘a Mong way of asking for excuse by joining the open hands and making a back and forth motion’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *zuōyǐ*, gesture of greeting with the greeter holding the hands together in an up-and-down motion:

These actions are also for giving and receiving formal thanks (e.g at weddings). The Hmong Daw terms are:

txaum yim – to cup the hands, with arms held low down and shoulders slightly stooped low, moving the cupped hands back and forth while uttering words of thanks.

txais yim - to cup the hands, with arms held down low and shoulders slightly stooped low, moving the cupped hands back and forth while uttering words receiving thanks (this can last for almost a minute or so).

At the end of this ritual behaviour each person will swiftly scoop up the hands a couple of times towards the chest while still uttering – for the person giving thanks this is like an action of pouring out the thanks into the receivers hands, for the person receiving thanks this is like scooping up the thanks. It differs from the Chinese action as seen in films (I doubt any Chinese still perform this although it might be expected at rural funerals) in which the clasped hands are held together at chest height and briefly moved back and forth rapidly as a sign of thanking (a little bit like the Thai do “wai” in the Indian fashion of holding the palms together and placing them to one’s forehead as a formal greeting or thanking) (in the films it always feels a bit snobbish – the person doing this action is high class, typically the star actor, he never stoops, but it is basically the same ritual – the person receiving the thanks will also clasp his hands and move them to and fro before his chest while grinning). It is not difficult to imagine that the Hmong actions – slow and deliberate and with plenty of stooping and verbal uttering – were also used by Chinese

speakers in earlier times, and that the action has been preserved by Hmong. Here we have another example of cultural preservation by minorities in addition to all the old Southwestern Mandarin lexicon that seems to have been lost. The Hmong ritual is the real meaning of “ua tsaug” ‘to give thanks’ – a ritual giving of thanks. Whereas in normal day to day life it was not normal to say ‘thank you’ (other words can be said, such as “tabkaum koj os” ‘(I) have disturbed you’). In modern culture Hmong casually say “ua tsaug” like English ‘thanks’ without going through the formal ritualized motions. (Michael Johnson, personal communication.)

- **yim**: *yooj* or *yooj yim* ‘easy, not difficult’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *róngyì*.

- **yim ... cuaj** ‘eight ... nine’ = ‘many’:

cuaj dlav yim phaaj zaub ‘nine spoons and eight platters of vegetables’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

- **yim los** ‘wherever ... then’:

Ob nam quaspui moog xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv, xauj yim los ob nyuas namtxiv.
‘Wherever the two wives looked then there was a married couple, wherever they looked then there was a married couple’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 25).

- **yim meem** ‘continue’:

yim meem ua tag tsi ntshai le ‘continue, and don’t worry about it’ (Xiongs).

- **yiv!** ‘almost!’ (Xiongs).

- **Yiv** ‘Japanese’:

Peb Moob muaj ntau Xeem. ... Feem ntau, nwg muaj ntsiv zoo thooj: CU (Mien), KAUSLIM (Korean), NYAABLAJ (Vietnamese), SUAV (Chinese), YIV (Japanese), hab lwm tsaav tuabneeg
‘We Mong have many Clans. ... Many are found as well among the Mien, Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and other ethnic groups’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 8).

- **Yob**, name of the two title characters in *Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* ‘Big Yob and Little Yob’.

- **Yobdlub**: *Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub*, name of one of the title characters in the story “Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paaajtaag Nkaujfaa” (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* pp. 99-111):

A tiger carries Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub’s wife Muam Paaajtaag Nkaujfaa away on its back and sets her down at the base of a cliff to eat her. But Muam Paaajtaag Nkaujfaa is wearing nine skirts, nine blouses, and nine pairs of leggings and the tiger cannot bite through. It goes off to wash its fangs, planning to return and try again. While the tiger is gone, two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum brothers, out hunting in the forest, come upon Muam Paaajtaag Nkaujfaa, and ask her how she came to be in that remote place. Muam Paaajtaag tells them the whole story.

“Miss,” say the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, “if that is so, then if we kill the tiger, will you become our wife?” Muam Paaajtaag thinks it over and finally she replies, “Well, yes. If you kill it, then very well.” The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum then take a rope and pull Muam Paaajtaag to the top of the cliff. When the tiger returns, the

Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum kill it and cut off its tail as proof that they have killed the tiger.

Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub finds his wife again when he is asked to be a ritual reed-pipe player at a funeral in heaven and finds that the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum and Muam Paajtaag are also participating in the funeral. Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag are happy to see one another and talk for a long time. When the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum ask Muam Paajtaag who she is talking to she says it is a “close relative” of hers. The unsuspecting Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum invite Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to their house, and leave him alone with Muam Paajtaag while they go off to perform some of their tasks in the funeral. Muam Paajtaag then tells Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub the whole story of how she came to be married to the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. He asks her if the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum have any proof that they killed the tiger, and she shows him the tiger tail, which he promptly burns, replacing it with a dog’s tail.

After the funeral, Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub confronts the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “How can you snatch a wife from her husband’s feet like that?” he cries.

“What do you mean we snatched her from your feet?” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum. “We snatched her from the mouths of tigers and dragons”, i.e. they rescued her from mortal peril.

“Do you have proof?” says Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

“Yes, we do,” reply the two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum, and run to fetch their basket to show everyone the tiger tail, but when they open the basket, what they pull out is nothing but a dog’s tail, and the elders give Muam Paajtaag back to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub.

The Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nraug ntsaum die from grief and anger. Wherever the slime from their rotting bodies touches the soil, the plants all die and toadstools grow in their place. The toadstools are edible to others but poisonous to Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub and Muam Paajtaag. Muam Paajtaag plucks a ripe toadstool, cuts it in two and gives half each to herself and Ntxawm Nug Yobdlub to eat, and they both die.

- **Yob Kaub Yob Mais** ‘Little Kaub and Little Mais’, name of a boy and girl in an account of the origin of clans:

A female spirit eats all of the people in a village except for two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. As the female spirit is dying, she tells her daughter to pull out silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate whether she will live or die. Then she dies.

Then the female spirit’s daughter is bitten by a poisonous snake and the same formula is repeated. The female spirit’s daughter dies.

Now it is time to repopulate the village. The two young men marry the two young women and each couple has a child but the children are smooth and featureless like a couple of gourds. The young men slice the children up and scatter the slices in the garden where they get caught upon the tops of plants. Each slice gives rise to a clan

whose name rhymes with the name of the plant the slice got caught on.

Khuab khuab taag cov qhua xeem tuabneeg tes moog ua tuab taj tsev nplooj tsawb puv quas lua,

When all the pieces had gotten caught, the clans and surnames of humankind went forth and filled the plains with banana-leaf houses,

tes coj cov nqaj moog tso puv nkaus rua cov tsev nplooj tsawb tes coj ntim nyaj ntim kub moog taw lauj. Coj moog txug tes;

then brought meat to fill the banana-leaf houses and then brought silver bowls and gold bowls to indicate. Brought them then:

“Caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj; tuag los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! tuag; caj los mas Yob Kaub Yob Mais! caj”.

“If you are to live, Little Kaub [man’s name] and Little Mais [woman’s name], you will live; if you are to die, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will die; if you are to live, Little Kaub and Little Mais, you will live.”

Taw taw thoob plawg. Tes rauv suavtawg rua auv! tsev nplooj tsawb npu quas lua, huas suavtawg nchu auv quas nab.

Indicated completely. Then fires were lit – oh! –in all the banana-leaf houses, and smoke came up in great clouds.

(*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 24.)

- **Yob Nraug Ntsuag** or **Yob ntsuag ntsuag** ‘Yob the Orphan’, stock name for male protagonists in folktales:

Yob Nraug Ntsuag hab Noog Yaajqawg Poob Qaabnraug

‘Yob the Orphan and the Swallow that Fell to the Ground’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*, title).

- **Yobtshuab**: *Moob Yobtshuab*, a subgroup of the Mong (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **yod?** or **yom?** ‘OK?’ (Xiongs).

- **yog** ‘to be’ (Xiongs):

cov txo yog hlau ‘the remainder is metal or iron’ (Xiongs).

Koj lub nub yug yog nub twg? ‘What is your birth date?’ (Xiongs.)

kuv lub zog yug yog Naaj Caas ‘my village of birth was Nam Chan’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog xeem Xyooj ‘I am from the Xiong clan’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog tug xub ua tshaaj plawg ‘I am the one who does it first’ (Xiongs).

lub dlaav hlau thauj tuab neeg tshaam teb chaws kws yaa ceev tshaaj plawg yog Concorde

‘the fastest passenger airbus is the Concorde’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yog kuv nplooj sab ‘She is my sweetheart’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yog tug kwv yau hlo ‘He is the youngest brother’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yog tug xib fwb ‘s/he is the instructor’ (Xiongs).

Xaav Kim yog kuv txiv ‘Xao Kee is my father’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yog wb dlaim nyuas txag xab ceg rooj xwb.

‘It’s just a bit of our money to prop up the table leg’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

“Puj aw! kuv lawv tau tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj rua ntawm nua es saib yog koj tej nyuas qab nyuas noog tes koj muab kaw tsaam tuaj noj noj kuv tej pas tej txhuv”.

“Grandmother! I pursued the little female dove here and if it is your chicks and baby birds then lock them up lest they come and eat my finger millet and my millet.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

“Yuaj! yog kuv tej nyuas qab os. Ca es kuv muab kaw. Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog”.

“Gracious! It is my chicks. Let me lock them up. You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

Most commonly, *yog* ‘to be’ precedes a noun, as in the above examples, but it can also precede a verb:

Lub yeem yog ntaus nyob Faab kis teb

‘is sealed in France’ (Xiongs) [“the seal is struck in France”].

Nwg lub txim yog raug kaw taag sim neej le.

‘her/his punishment is life long in jail; s/he is life punishment sentenced’ (Xiongs)

[“her/his punishment is to undergo being locked up for a whole lifetime”].

- **yog** ‘yes’ (Xiongs).

- **yog** ‘right, correct, true, real’ (Xiongs):

Peb xaav tas yuav tsi yog lawm ‘We think that it will not be right’ (Xiongs).

yog los mas ‘it is right, it is OK, it is correct’ (Xiongs).

- **yog** ‘if’:

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj

‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

Yog le tsi tau, ca peb fib mej quas tsug.

‘If we have lost the contest, let us return to you for a rematch after a time’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 3).

- **yog** ‘namely’:

Tsaav tuabneeg Moob tau ncau ua ob pawg luj luj yog: MOOB LEEG hab HMOOB DAWB

‘The Mong ethnic group can be divided into two large groups: the Mong Leng and the White Hmong’ (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 6).

- **yog** ‘to frighten, to scare, to attempt to scare’ (Xiongs):

yog qws rua

‘to scare or frighten someone with a stick, to pretend beating with a stick’ (Xiongs).

- **yog:** *kev yog tag* ‘the truth’ (Xiongs).

- **yog:** *losyog* ‘or’:

tuabneeg Moob muaj ob hom roog tsho. Xws le: roog tsho Moob Ntsuab (losyog Moob Leeg) hab Moob Dlawb.

‘Mong people have two kinds of clothing: Green Mong (or Mong Leng) and White Hmong clothing’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 10).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 141).

- **yog:** *ntshai yog* ‘perhaps’ (Xiongs).

- **yog:** *puas yog*, at the end of a yes-no question: ‘isn’t it so?’:

Koj muab kuv lub nplhaib zais lawm puas yog? ‘You hide my ring, isn’t it?’ (Xiongs.)

- **yog:** *Tsi yog* ‘No, it is not’ (Xiongs).

- **yog:** *tsi yog le kod nkaus xwb* ‘not only that’ (Xiongs).

- **yog:** *vim yog* ‘because’:

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

- **yog has tas** ‘if, whether’ (Xiongs).

- **yog le caag** ‘why?’:

Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku zoov nis nyuas’ nua yog le caag tag?

Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, ‘Child oh child, when your mother wasn’t there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child’, why is that? (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **yog tag** ‘it is right, correct’ (Xiongs).

- **yoj** ‘to fit, to go well with’ (Xiongs):

lub mom nuav tsi yoj kuv ‘this hat doesn’t fit me’ (Xiongs).

- **yoj** ‘to swing, to wave, to quiver’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 搖 *yáo*:

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub

‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

- **yoj**: *ua yoj ua yeeg* ‘to move back and forth, to waver, to quiver’ (Xiongs).

- **yom?** or **yod?** ‘OK?’ (Xiongs).

- **yos** ‘to search for, to look for, to search blindly for’ (Xiongs).

- **yos ... tau** ‘to find’:

Koj yos puas tau koj lub tsho dlob? ‘Do you find your black shirt?’ (Xiongs.)

- **yos ua si** ‘to go to play, to go for a walk’:

Kuv yos ua si ‘I go to play, for a walk’ (Xiongs).

- **yov** ‘to wind, to roll back, to make a roll of thread like materials, etc.’ (Xiongs).

- **yoo** ‘to fast, to be on a diet, to abstain from taking or eating something’ (Xiongs):

Nwg tub yoo tau tsib nub lug nuav lawm ‘s/he has already fasted for five days’ (Xiongs).

- **yoo tshaib** ‘to fast, to go on a diet’ (Xiongs).

- **yoob** ‘subdued, startled, dazed, confused, perplexed, perplexing’ (Xiongs):

Nwg yoob has tsi taug lug le lawm

‘S/he stands perplexed and cannot talk anymore’, ‘S/he, perplexed, remains in silence’ (Xiongs).

- **yoog** ‘to adapt, to go along with, to accept, to acclimatize, to follow’ (Xiongs):

Poob luas ntuj yoog luas txuj (Mong proverb)

‘Being among them, follow or accept what they have’ (Xiongs) [“Fall into their region / Follow their customs”].

yoog lawv luas ‘adapt yourself to them’ (Xiongs).

- **yooj** or **yooy yim** ‘easy, not difficult’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *róngyì*.

- **yoov** ‘(classifier *tug*) fly’ (Xiongs):

Ib ntsiv quav tes Los Xaab dlhau plhawv tes nwg txa ntshis ua ib tug yoov yaa ceev ceev moog tsaws nkaus rua ntawm Los Xaab lub naab thoobpuab.

‘The instant that Los Xaab was gone, the old Chinese man’s daughter transformed herself into a fly and flew at top speed and landed on Los Xaab’s shoulder-bag’ (*Ceeb Pov* p. 11).

- **yoov ncauj nte** ‘mosquito’ (Xiongs).

- **yoov ntsuab** ‘fly’ (Xiongs).

- **yoov qab** ‘gnat’ (Xiongs).

- **yub** ‘(classifier *tug*) seedling, young sprout for transplanting’ (Xiongs).

- **yub kab** ‘rice seedling’ (Xiongs).
- **yub nplej** ‘rice seedling’ (Xiongs).
- **yub pob kws** ‘corn seedling’ (Xiongs).
- **yug** ‘to give birth to a baby’ (Xiongs):

kuv lub zog yug yog Naaj Caas ‘my village of birth was Nam Chan’ (Xiongs).

- **yug** ‘to raise, to rear, to keep and care for’ (Xiongs):

Peb yug ib puas tug qab tom tsev teb u hav
 ‘We raise a hundred chickens in the farm too’ (Xiongs).

yuav txhua yaam noob txag noob txhu lug yug
 ‘bought all kinds of animals to raise’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 13).

- **yug** ‘to feed’ (Xiongs).
- **yug** ‘one, oneself, you, yourself’ (Xiongs):

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb
 ‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

Ab! yawm hov caag nam quaspuj los yuav zoo nkauj ua luaj le ne? Ab! yog yug tau es
yug puag ib mos ntshai yug yuav tuag ib tsig le lau, ntuj aw ...
 ‘Ah, how can that man’s wife be so beautiful? If one spent the night in her arms it would
 be like dying, by heaven!’ (*Ceebpov* p. 18.)

Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug lug txug tsev, cais nwg pheej najnub xaav tuab quas ywv has tas:
“Ab! Yuav ua caag txhaj tua tau Yob Nraug Ntsuag, hab txhaj txeeb tau nwg tej
qubtxeeg qubteg ntawd lug ua yug tug!”

When the Ruler arrived home, he every day kept thinking quietly: “Ah! How to get to kill
 Yob the Orphan and then seize his inheritance as one’s own!” (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg*
 p. 17.)

- **yug**: *dlub yug yaav* ‘black’?:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib
suav laij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
 ‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at
 them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

But later in the story, the same eagles are called *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle
 shepherds’:

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laij nyug txwg
 ‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle
 shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **yug**: *nub yug* ‘(classifier *lub*) birth date’:

Koj lub nub yug yog nub twg? ‘What is your birth date?’ (Xiongs.)

- **yug yaaj** ‘to watch over sheep, to be a shepherd’:

tub yug yaaj ‘(classifier *tug*) shepherd’ (Xiongs).

A story about the origin of marriage customs refers to *dlaav dlub yug yaaj* ‘black-eagle shepherds’:

Nwg ua txuj lug saib suav tso dlaav dlub yug yaaj hab suav laiij nyug txwg
 ‘She pretended that she had come to watch the Chinese release their black-eagle shepherds and plow-oxen’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

But earlier in the story, the same eagles are called *dlub yug yaav*:

koj yuav moog ntsib suav laiij nyug txwg, hab dlaav dlub yug yaav. Koj tsi txhob saib suav laiij nyug txwg hab dlaav dlub yug yaav le nawb
 ‘you will meet the plow-oxen and the black eagles (?) of the Chinese. Don’t look at them’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 15).

- **yuj** ‘to fly slowly in circles, to hover’ (Xiongs):

tug dlaav yuj ncig peb dlaim teb ‘the hawk is flying around our farm’ (Xiongs).

- **yuj xeeb** ‘with all my heart’ (Xiongs), perhaps from Chinese *yuè* ‘happy, pleased’ + *xīn* ‘heart’.

- **yuj yeev**: *ua yuj yeev* ‘to move back and forth (said of a fish)’ (Xiongs).

- **yum**: *nyob txug ... yum cev* ‘to seek knowledge’?:

In the version of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant presented in *Initiation*, the primordial human couple are told that they must *nyob txug* and *yum cev* Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed in order to be able to have children:

Puj Saub yuav tas: Nkauj Qas Ab, koj yuav yuav tub yuav kiv, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog nyob txug Ntxwj Si Quas Nyoog lub laav tsuj koj le muab tub.

Grandmother Saub said: “Mist Maiden, you want to have children and offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to nyob txug Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of silk and you will have children.”

Yawm Lis Saub tas Nraug Lis Oo, koj yuav tub yuav kiv ais, koj ntim lub txaj zeeg saub sis yeev moog yum cev Ntxwj Si quas Nyoog lub laav npuag, koj le moog ntsib.

Grandfather Saub said: “Cloud Youth, you want to have offspring, dress in your finest clothes and go to yum cev Ntxwj Nyoog’s bed of satin, and you will get them.” ’ (*Initiation* p. 122.)

In his French translation of this couplet (*Initiation* p. 21), Lemoine translates the expression as “seek knowledge (*querir la connaissance*) on Ndzeu Shi Nyong’s bed”. The meaning may be that the Mist Maiden and the Cloud Youth must learn how to have sex first before they will be able to have children.

- **yum sij** ‘(classifier *tug*) key’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yàoshi* (Southwestern Mandarin *yóshí*).

- **yumsiv** ‘hard plastic’ (Xiongs).

- **yum vaaj**, from Chinese *yào* (Southwestern Mandarin *yó*) ‘medicine’ + *wáng* ‘king’:

thaaaj yum vaaj ‘the medicine-king altar’, on the wall of the main room opposite the main door’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 15).

- **yuad**, final particle:

Yawm yij, koj tua tug nyuas laublaig sau rua kuv yuad?
 ‘Brother-in-law, will you shoot that little minivet to gather for me?’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81.)

- **Yuaj!** ‘Gracious!’:

“Yuaj! yog kuv tej nyuas qab os. Ca es kuv muab kaw. Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog”.

‘Gracious! It is my chicks. Let me lock them up. You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

- **yuam** ‘to incite to action against the person’s desire, to force someone to do something, to compel, to constrain, to get or bring about by force, to oppress’ (Xiongs) (perhaps from Chinese *yā* ‘to control, to suppress’):

cov raug quab yuam ‘the oppressed people’ (Xiongs).

Kuv tsi tau yuam koj ua nawb. ‘I did not force you to do it’ (Xiongs).

Muaj ib xyoos nim yuav txhug dlua lub nam 6 hli ntuj xub yuam rauj
 ‘One year, it was almost past the sixth month before the press of winter’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 10).

hab Ntxawm txhaj yuam pis ntag nwg tawm moog rua lwm chaav tsev lawm.
 ‘Then Ntxawm pushed him out into another room of the house’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 15).

- **yuam** ‘to overcome, to be stronger than’ (Xiongs):

tug ntshab nuav yuam hlo cov tuab si le ‘this smell is the strongest of all’ (Xiongs).

- **yuamkev** ‘to go astray’:

Peb lug nyob yuamkev Dlaabteb lawm es nam puj dlaab tuaj muab peb cov tuabneeg tua noj taag

‘We went astray and came to live in the Country of the Spirits and the female spirit came and killed and ate all our people’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

In the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral chant, the dead person is instructed to tell the spirits not to try to follow the chanter as he returns to the world of living. In one version, the dead person is instructed to say:

Tes kuv rau khau maaaj kuv tsuj tau ncaaj. / Yawm txiv yawm quas tsi rau khau cev tsuj taw yuamkev.

‘I am wearing shoes made of hemp. My steps are straight. / The old man is wearing shoes made from the bark of the cev-tree. His footsteps wander from the path’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 15).

- **yuav** ‘to buy’ (Xiongs):

Kuv nyav yuav tau lub tsho nuav ‘I have just bought this shirt’ (Xiongs).

Kuv txas [typo for *txais*] *nyaj yuav tsheb*
 ‘I borrow money to buy a car, I get a loan to buy a car’ (Xiongs).

- **yuav** ‘to want, to desire’ (Xiongs):

peb tsi xaav yuav hlo le lawm ‘we don’t want it anymore’ (Xiongs).

Txaus lawm naub! Kuv tsi yuav ntxiv lawm ‘enough! I don’t need anymore’ (Xiongs).

yuav qeeg (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to want continuously].

- **yuav** ‘will, shall’ (Xiongs):

lub nkoj yoj yoj heev le vim yog yuav muaj naag xub
 ‘the ship is very swinging because there will be a storm’ (Xiongs).

mej yuav tau moog theem tom puab tsev ib plag
 ‘you will have to stop at their house for a while’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav tseev kom koj moog rua huv xwb xwb xam tau
 ‘s/he will accept only if you participate’ (Xiongs).

Nwg yuav txhais tsi tau ib yaam nkaus
 ‘s/he will not be able to translate either’ (Xiongs).

puab yuav tuaj saib peb ‘they will come to visit us’ (Xiongs).

Tsi xob zwb koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav
 ‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

Txij nuav moog kuv yuav hlub koj taam le kuv tug quas puj
 ‘From now on I will love you as my wife’ (Xiongs).

yog kuv txa tau ua ib tug noog kuv yuav yaa ncig ntuj
 ‘If I could change into a bird I would fly around the world’ (Xiongs).

yuav tau pw ib plag tsaiv
 ‘to have to sleep for a short while before all’ (Xiongs) [“will have to sleep ...”].

yuav thev nto plaub xyoo ‘will last for four years’ (Xiongs).

Ntshai mej ib txha yuav raag tas, Vhuag! Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.
 ‘Perhaps some of you will be shocked and startled and say, Vhuag! How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p. 4.)

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm, hab paab qha kuas peb tsoom tub tsoom kiv kws tseem yuav luj hlub yaav tom qaab paub has lug Moob meej dlua peb tom nuav.
 ‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language and help to teach every child and

descendant who still will grow up in the future to know how to speak Mong more clearly than we at present' (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

Koj leej tub tuag yuav moog cuag koj pug koj yawg.

'You who have died are going to meet your ancestors. Dig up your shirt of silk and satin and put it on' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 14).

Ob tug txhaj tuaj pum Muam Paajtaag, cais ob tug nug tas: "Leej muam! Ua caag koj yuav tuaj nyob nuav?"

The two of them caught sight of Muam Paajtaag, and asked: "Miss! How would you come to be here?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 101.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, kuv le maam muab cov tseem tseem rua koj nqaa moog siv, hab tau yaugncauj yauglu!

'Later, when you're going, I will give you real ones to take to use, and be able to provide for your needs!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 14.)

Ca ib tsaam koj yuav moog, wb le maam rhu mivntsiv rua koj tau nqaa moog yawgncauj [typo for yaugncauj?] yauglu!

'Later, when you're going, we'll pull out a little for you to take to provide for your needs!' (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16.)

- **yuav**: *caag ... yuav* 'why?':

Ab! tej quas lwj nuav, ua caag yuav tsi tsimtxaj le ntawd huab!

'Oh, those bellows. What's wrong with them?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 17) ["why are they not of value?"]

"Npab! dlaabtsi. Caag nam taub yuav ntsaws quas nreeg le nuav ne?"

"Good grief! What's this? Why is this gourd plugged up so tight?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 38.)

- **yuav**: *ntxim yuav muab neu rua sab ca* 'memorable' (Xiongs).

- **yuav**: *nyav yuavlaug taavsu* 'just before noon':

Nyav yuavlaug taavsu xwb, Nuj Sis Loob hab Nkauj Fuab ob tug cov nyuj cov neeg, hab cov nttxhuav cov nttxhw kws ob tug namtais yawmtxiv muab pobphij thaujkhoom txawm caab ke zwb zig tawm plawg nraagqaab zog.

'Just before noon, Nuj Sis Loob and Nkauj Fuab's cattle and horses, and their nttxhuav and elephants, which Nkauj Fuab's parents had given as a dowry, were led out into the lower part of the village' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 48).

- **yuav**: *tub yuav pib tuab tag* 'almost begin, open' (Xiongs).

- **yuav quas puj** 'to get married (said of a man)' (Xiongs).

- **yuav quas yawg** 'to get married (said of a woman)' (Xiongs):

lug txaj hluas nkauj yuav quas yawg tseg hluas nraug nyob qhuas npaws

'song of a young woman who has married a husband and left a young man feverish' (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 15-17).

lug txaj moov tsis saws, hluas nkauj txha moog yuav quas yawg
 ‘song about how, not being acclimatized to her fate, a young woman married a husband’
 (*Cim Xeeb* pp. 17-18).

- **yuav tau** ‘to get’:

Tes lug txug tes muaj ib tug tsua tas; “Ua caag koj yuav tau nyaj?”
 When he arrived, there was someone who said: “How did you get silver?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

- **yuav ... tsi taug** ‘cannot’:

yuav thev tsi taug lawm ‘cannot endure any more’ (Xiongs).

- **yuav tsum** ‘must’ (Xiongs):

The second syllable of *yuav tsum* is from a Southwestern Mandarin pronunciation of *zhuó* ‘to touch’ but the phrase *yuav tsum* is a Hmong innovation.

cov tub rog yuav tsum tau thim ‘the soldiers will have to withdraw’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuaav [typo for yuav] tsum txais kev xam caum cuag puab
 ‘You must take a short cut to catch them’ (Xiongs).

koj yuav tsum txuag qho ntsiv nyaj hab
 ‘you should save some money too’ (Xiongs).

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo
 ‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs).

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
 ‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

Txij nub nua moog meb raug muab txi ua txij ua nkawm mas meb yuav tsum sib hlub
 ‘From today on both of you are coupled as husband and wife; therefore you should love each other’ (Xiongs).

Yug yuav tsum paub saib yug nyam dlaab tsi nawb
 ‘One should know what one likes’ (Xiongs).

Kuv yog ib Yawm Xeev Txwjlaug dlag. Yog tas kuv yuav moog rua qhovtwg, los kuv yuav tsum qha tsoom pejxeem fuabfwm, tsoom tubmaab tubqhe, hab tsoom tubnyaab suavdlawg paub.

‘I am a Ruler. If I want to go somewhere, I must tell all my subjects, all my servants, and all my sons and daughters-in-law’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 16).

Huas yog koj quaj, cais koj yuav tsum nrug peb nyob, ua peb qhev ntawm nuav.
 ‘But if you cry out, then you must remain with us, and become our slave’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 17).

Suav ... tsi pub Moob muaj ntaub ntawv. ... yuav tsum siv Suav le taag nrho.
 ‘The Chinese ... did not allow the Mong to have a writing system. ... they had to use that of the Chinese’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 1).

Kev ua neeb ua yaig tsi ntau nqe hastas yuav tsum yog qhov kws khu tau noob neej txuj sa, tabsis yog ib qhov kws paab khu txuj kev mob nkeeg rua saab ntsuj plig tuaj.
 ‘Shamanism is not of great value as something that necessarily can heal people physically, but it is something that helps to heal illnesses of the soul’ (*Tswv Yim* p. 91).

Tes hu ua tsaav tuabneeg twg tsi pum Vaajkaav tug dluab nua tes luas yuav tsum caab moog ua tauj ua qhev. Luas yuav tsum muab tshoob muaj tsimtxom le.
 ‘So if people of any nation did not see Vaajkaav’s picture, they were certain to come and carry you into slavery. They were certain to carry you off to a life of oppression and suffering’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 54).

- **ywg** ‘to speak out unhappily, to mutter’ (Xiongs):

Yawm Nyooglaug txhaj tsaa hlo qhovmuag saib, hab ywg quas tawg tas:
 ‘Grandfather Nyooglaug then lifted his eyes to look and muttered’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 33).

- **ywg** ‘to water’ (Xiongs).

- **ywg**: *phooj ywg* ‘(classifier *tug*) friend’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *péngyou*:

tsoom phooj ywg ‘all friends, friends’ (Xiongs).

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo ‘to be among good friends’ (Xiongs).

Tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa, hab cov phoojywg npojluag kws mov hab tshua kws yog lub chaw hawm hab ca sab ntawm peb ib tsoom tub ntxhais ua ntaub ntawv huv Rooj Ntawv Moob.

‘All parents, kinsmen, relatives by marriage, and friends and companions who think about and are care about the importance of respect and esteem for all of our young men and young woman who make books in Mong Volunteer Literacy’ (*Txooj Moob* No. 2, p. 1).

Kuv ca sab tas tsoom namtxiv kwvtij neejtsaa hab tsoom phoojywg npojluag suavdlawg yuav paab xaav txug peb lu lug Moob ntawm

‘I hope that everyone parents, kinsmen, and relatives by marriage and all friends and companions will help to think about our Mong language’ (*Meej Hab Tsi Meej*, preface).

- **ywg**: *phooj ywg kwv luag* ‘friend, accompanying friend’ (Xiongs).

- **ywg dlej** ‘to water’ (Xiongs).

- **ywg nyooj** ‘to grumble’:

Tug nam zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb kuj ywg nyooj quas qawg tom nwg chaw pw
 ‘The dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb grumbled in his sleeping chamber’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18)

- **ywj** ‘up to, as one likes, according to one’s wishes’ (Xiongs), probably from Chinese 由 *yóu* ‘depending upon’:

ywj noj le ‘one can eat as much as possible’ (Xiongs).

ywj puab le ‘up to them, as they like’ (Xiongs).

ywj ua ‘one can do as much as one likes’ (Xiongs).

- **ywj**: *paav ywj* ‘the fat around the stomach’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 板油 *bǎnyóu*.

- **ywv**: *nyob tuab ywv* ‘be quiet, keep quiet, don’t move’ (Xiongs). See also *nyob twb ywv*.

- **ywv**: *qos yaaj ywv* ‘potato’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *yángyù*.

- **ywv**: *nyob twb ywv* ‘to be quiet’ (Xiongs) (see also *nyob tuab ywv*):

Koj nyob twbywv kuv ua ntsiv su rua koj es koj le moog.

‘You stay here quietly and I will make a bit of lunch for you and then you will go.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31.)

Z

- **za** ‘sticky tree or vine sap, especially used to trap birds’ (Xiongs).

- **zab** ‘to dry by the fire or the sun’s heat’ (Xiongs):

Lub nam nub txawm poob nroog ib theem lug zab Yawm Nyooglaug lub tebhaws.

‘The sun came down one step and dried up Grandfather Nyooglaug’s country’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

Tshaav ntuj kub kub lug zab tau peb hlis ua aav qhuav nkig quas nkuav tawm plawv tshauv quas tog.

‘The hot sun dried everything for three months, making the soil brittle and turning it to dust’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 40).

- **zab khaub dluag** ‘to dry clothes’ (Xiongs).

- **zab tshaav** ‘to be under the sun’s heat’ (Xiongs).

- **zab tshaav kom hav** ‘to get tanned under the sun’ (Xiongs).

- **zag** ‘(no classifier) time’ (Xiongs):

ob zag ‘twice’ (Xiongs).

peb zag ‘three times’ (Xiongs).

kaum zag ‘ten times’ (Xiongs).

puas zag ‘hundredfold’ (Xiongs).

lwm zag ‘next time’ (Xiongs).

naj zag ‘every time’ (Xiongs).

tej zag ‘maybe, perhaps, sometimes’ (Xiongs).

peb yuav tsum txhuam nav tsawg kawg nkaus los ib nub ob zag
‘we should brush our teeth at least twice a day’ (Xiongs).

Ntau-ntau zag peb nov tej laug losyog tej tuabneeg thoob tsib to nrog hastas nyob rua tebchaws Suav, Ntuj Tuam Tshoj, mas tseem tshuav Moob coob kawg nkaus.

‘Many many times we hear old people or people of insight say that in the country of China, the Skies of the Greater Dynasty, there are still a very great number of Mong’ (Tswv Yim p. 141).

zagnua yog zag kws wb yuav tau sis paab quas tag.

‘now is the time when we will be able to help one another truly’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 13).

Kuv ua txhua zag kuj leej kawgnkaus nas!

‘Each time I make it, it is completely effective!’ (Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg p. 24.)

- **zag** ‘to tie, to bind’ (Xiongs):

Muab nwg zag rua ntawm ntoo ‘tie her, him or it to the tree’ (Xiongs).

- **zagnua** ‘now’ (also written *zag nuav*):

Koj has tas koj xaiv tau koj chaw lawm nua es ... Zagnua zoo los nyob, tsi zoo los nyob xwb!

‘You said that you’ve chosen the one you really want. Now you’ve got to stay with him whether it’s good or not!’ (Lug Nruag Lom Zem p. 13).

zagnua yog zag kws wb yuav tau sis paab quas tag.

‘now is the time when we will be able to help one another truly’ (Txheeb Tshoj Theeb p. 13).

Kuv ua txhua zag kuj leej kawgnkaus nas! Yog ua caag zagnua, kuv yuav ua tsi leej hlo le lawm?

‘Each time I make it, it is completely effective! Why, now, would I make it not effective at all?’ (Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg p. 24.)

Nub tomqaab, yawm laug tuaj moog saib nwg dlaim teb na, ua cav ntshw lug muab nplej noj taag. Zagnua, nwg txawm chim heev.

‘The following day, the old man went to look at his field and saw that elephants had eaten all the rice. Now he became very angry.’ (Nuj Sis Loob p. 43).

zag nua tes kuv noog noog koj has es kuv tsi haus cawv lawm lauj.

‘now I will listen to you and will not drink liquor any more’ (Ceebpov p. 31).

- **zag nuav** ‘now’ (also written *zagnua*):

Hwj! zag nuav wb tau nam quaspuj zoo zoo nkauj lawm.

‘Well, now we’ve gotten a beautiful wife’ (Ceebpov p. 27).

- **zag** ‘(classifier *tug*) cricket’ (Xiongs). See also *kaab zag*.

- **zagroj** ‘giant cricket’ (Michael Johnson, personal communication) (see also *kaab zag roj*):

muab tug zagroj lawv quaj lawv quaj nyog quas nuj.

‘They followed the giant cricket, weeping unrestrainedly’ (Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau p. 9).

- **zas** ‘soft (speaking of rice)’ (Xiongs):

cov mov muav [typo for *nuav*?] *zas heev* ‘this rice is very soft’ (Xiongs).

- **zaab** ‘clown, liar’ (Xiongs):

tso zaab ‘to lie, to pretend’ (Xiongs).

There are many stories in the White Hmong dialect about a man named Zab, the White Hmong form of *zaab*, who uses lies and trickery to humiliate the rich and powerful and to kill man-eating tigers. A number of Hmong subgroups in China have similar stories about a character whose name appears to be etymologically the same word as *zaab*. But, surprisingly, there are no stories about this character in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s collections of Mong Leng folktales.

- **zaag** ‘pertaining to dragons’ (Xiongs) (see also *zaaj*):

ib tug nkauij zaag ‘a dragon’s daughter (according to Mong tales)’ (Xiongs).

An example of a folktale about a dragon’s daughter in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s collections is “Uncle Tuam and Little Sister Plis” (*Lug Nruag Txa* pp. 90-101), which begins by saying that a couple gave birth to a sister called *ntxawm Plis* ‘little sister Plis’ and a brother called *dlaablaug Tuam* ‘mother’s brother Tuam’. When the parents are about to die, they say to Plis and Tuam that, when Plis and Tuam are grown, whatever creature comes and asks Plis, the sister, to marry him, she should accept. Time passes, and when Plis is grown, a black bull comes and asked her to marry him.

Since Tuam, the brother, is still small and would have difficulty finding food on his own, the black bull gives him three sacks of millet and three sacks of rice and says that he is also leaving a trail of grains of millet and of rice so that if, when Tuam has finished eating the sacks of grain, he is still unable to find food on his own, he can then follow the trail of grain and be reunited with his sister and the black bull, who will help him.

Tuam “eats heaven and eats earth” and the grain is soon gone, so he sets out to follow the trail left by his kind brother-in-law, and he comes upon a Xeev Txwjlaug, a local ruler or governor, called grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv, who says to him, “When you go to the lower realm, please tell my kinsman grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob to send servants to help me make a garden and a house. At this time, the sword and the knife have burned all my servants to death.”

Tuam continues on his way and reaches the home of his sister and the black bull. The black bull’s brother takes Tuam to a dragon lake and challenges him to a contest to see who can call forth the dragon. Tuam calls out, “Grandfather Tog grandfather Leejtob, tug quas tog ploog! I’ve come from the upper realm” and then conveys grandfather Tog grandfather Txuahawv’s request to send servants.

The old dragon, grateful for the message, takes Tuam to his home at the bottom of the lake, where Tuam meets and falls in love with the old dragon’s youngest daughter. She tells Tuam that when her father offers to reward him for conveying the message, he must refuse whatever her father offers and say that he wants only the fish with yellow skin. Therefore, when the old dragon offers Tuam silver and gold and livestock, he replies, “As

for silver, in our world on the face of the earth silver is tears. As for animals, in our world on the face of the earth animals are what are placed at the head of the dead person at a funeral. I do not want them.”

“In that case,” says the old dragon, “what do you want?”

“I’ll just go ahead and tell you what I want,” says Tuam, “and if you don’t want to give it to me, it’s all right. I want your fish with yellow skin.”

The fish with yellow skin is the old dragon’s youngest daughter transformed. Tuam takes the fish home with him. There is a lovely illustration in the story of the fish swimming about in a glass jar filled with water. The fish changes back into the old dragon’s youngest daughter and becomes Tuam’s wife. (*Lug Nruag Txa* pp. 90-101.)

The expression *nkauj zaag* does not appear in this story. The dragon’s daughter is referred to simply as *zaaj laug tug ntshais ntshawm* ‘the old dragon’s youngest daughter’. But she appears to be the same folktale character that the Xiongs are referring to in their definition of *nkauj zaag*.

- **zaag** ‘mule’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 319 rangs, *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 151 rangs):

txawm tawm plawg rua ib lub nam tebchaws ci ntsaag quas ab. Nwg nim muaj nyuj muaj twm, muaj neeg muaj zaag, muaj dlev muaj npua, muaj qab muaj us, hab muaj ntshuav muaj ntshw noj zaub puvtoj puvpeg ua lab quas vog tim u tim nua xwb.

‘he emerged into a gleaming, bright country. It had cattle and it had buffaloes, it had horses and it had mules, it had dogs and it had pigs, it had chickens and it had ducks, and it had ntshuav and it had elephants grazing and filling the hills and the highlands with a speckled tapestry of red dots from horizon to horizon’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* pp. 43-44).

Because of homophony, *muaj neeg muaj zaag* could also mean ‘it had horses and it had dragons’, but, in the context, horses and mules may be a more likely pairing than horses and dragons. All of the pairs – cattle and buffaloes, horses and mules, dogs and pigs, chickens and ducks, ntshuav (mythical creature similar to an elephant) and elephants – represent pairs of animals of more or less similar size and more or less similar appearance or habits. With the exception of ntshuav, all of the animals mentioned are mundane, not mythical or supernatural. Therefore, I would argue, the meaning ‘mule’ for *zaag*, given in Hmong-Chinese dictionaries, is a more likely pairing for *neeg* ‘horse’ than is the meaning ‘dragon’.

Michael Johnson has kindly investigated for me how ‘mule’ is translated in Mong Leng Bible translations, specifically in the translation of 2 Samuel 18.9:

Ab’salom was riding upon his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak.

The UBS version translates ‘mule’ as *neeg zaag*, which here means not ‘horses and mules’ but simply ‘mule’:

Axaloos caij ib tug **neeg zaag**, tug **neeg zaag** dlha moog nkaag rua huv ib tsob qaab ntoo qheb.

The TBS (Thailand) version, on the other hand, uses *luj txwv*, the Chinese word for ‘mule’:

Axaloo caij rawv **luj txwv**, mas thaus **luj txwv** dha moog rua huv qaab tug ntoo qheb kws ntxhuv ntxhuv

- **Zaag**, the *qhua* (Mong clan name) corresponding to the *xeem* (Chinese clan name) **Muas** (*Kawm Ntawv* 2 p. 9).

- **zaaj** ‘(classifier *tug*) dragon’ (Xiongs) (see also *zaag*):

Tug nam zaaj, Zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb, nyob huv lub nam qhov dlej twb yeej npaaj tas yuav moog yuav Yawm Nyooglaug ntxhais Ntxawm nuav

‘A dragon, Dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb, who lived in that water hole, was already preparing to marry Grandfather Nyooglaug’s youngest daughter’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 7).

Nwg kuj xuas moog tshawb tau zaaj tej taig dlav

‘He then groped about [in the darkness] and found the dragon’s bowls and spoons’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

In the chapter titled *Moob Xaam Noobnyoog* ‘How the Mong Calculate Dates’ in *Dlaab Qhuas*, Xauv Yeeb Xyooj (recorded by Xeev Nruag Xyooj) says that the twelve months of the year are named for twelve animals. The second month of the year is the month of the dragon.

2 hlis – zaaj hli

2nd month – month of the dragon (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 79).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj also says that a month (*ib lub hlis*) has thirty days (*pebcaug nub*), and that *khib* months (*hli khib*), which begin with the day of the snake and end with the day of the rabbit, alternate with *khub* months (*hli khub*), which begin with the day of the pig and end with the day of the dragon.

Ib lub hlis Moob muaj pebcaug nub. Luas rov qaab muab cov tsaj huv cov hli lug ntaus ua nub dlua. Luas yuav suav lawv le hli KHIB hab hli KHUB zoo le nraag nuav:

‘A Mong month has thirty days. The animals associated with the days are repeated. They are counted in accordance with *khib* months and *khub* months as follows:’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81.)

For example, the twelfth day of the first month is a day of the dragon.

luav hli – zaaj xab 12 ‘month of the hare – dragon day 12’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 81).

Xauv Yeeb Xyooj says that the day of the dragon is an auspicious day for an older brother to get married:

Kev ua tshoob ua kug: Zoo rua zaaj nub. Luas tas tijlaug ntaus thawj kaav teb kaav chaw. Yog tug twg ua tij nua mas nrhav nyaab rua nub ntawd. Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

Marriage: Good for the day of the dragon. People say that older brothers rule the country. If anyone is an older brother, they seek a bride on that day. For younger brothers, good for the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well. (*Dlaab Qhuas*

p. 85.)

- **zaaj** ‘(no classifier) line, sentence’ (Xiongs):

ua peb zaaj ‘in three lines’ (Xiongs).

- **zaaj** ‘(no classifier) idea, point of view’ (Xiongs):

has koj zaaj lug tuaj ‘give your idea or your point of view’ (Xiongs).

- **zaaj**, classifier for songs and stories:

has koj zaaj lug txaj ‘sing your song’ (Xiongs).

has zaaj tshoob ‘sing customary and wedding ceremony songs’ (Xiongs).

ib zaaj lug ntsuag ‘story’ (Xiongs).

zaaj lug txaj ‘song’ (Xiongs).

Zaaj lug nruag Nkauj Ntsuab Nraug Naab

‘The story of Nkauj Ntsuab and Nraug Naab’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 30).

tsaa ntsej quas cuv noog tom tsev, hu pebcaug zaaj nkauj pis taum dlaab rua koj noog. ‘
‘lift your ears to listen to the sounds coming from the house you are about to leave, for I
am going to sing for you thirty ballads about spirits’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **zaaj** ‘a time’:

mob sab ib zaaj ‘one time of grief’ (Xiongs).

- **zaaj**: *muaj zaaj* ‘meaningful, have a lot of ideas’ (Xiongs).

- **zaaj**: *muaj zaaj muaj zeg* ‘inebriated’:

Haus cawv tes Lis Sub Tuam muaj muaj zaaj muaj zeg pav ov!

‘They drank until Lis Sub Tuam became quite inebriated!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

- **zaaj**: *paag zaaj* ‘(classifier *lub*) wild lake, virgin lake’ (Xiongs):

Dragons in East Asian cultures are water deities and in Hmong stories and descriptions of Hmong beliefs are often said to live at the bottoms of large lakes. *Paag zaaj*, therefore, may mean literally “dragon lake”, that is, a lake in which a dragon lives or potentially might live.

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that the expression “dragon lake” is

Also extremely common in Chinese toponyms in, for example, Guizhou – browsing a map reveals dozens of sites named 龙潭 *lóngtán*

in which 龙 *lóng* means ‘dragon’ and 潭 *tán* means ‘deep pool, lake’.

- **zaaj lug** ‘sentence’:

Nwg xaus nwg cov lug rua zaaj lug tas “*Peb yuav tsum sib hlub*”

s/he ends her/his speech with the sentence “we must love each other” (Xiongs).

xaus koj zaaj lug ‘end your sentence’ (Xiongs).

- **zaaj sawv** ‘rainbow’ (Xiongs).

- **zaaj tsu lu** “dragon and tiger mouths”, situation of great peril:

In a folktale, a man’s wife is about to be eaten by a tiger. Two Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum (a kind of spirit) rescue her on condition that she marry them. When her husband comes to reclaim her, the Mojtxiv kuav ntsej nrauj ntsaum protest:

Txiv meb moog koj tau txiv meb quaspuj ntawm zaaj tsu lu lug tag huas!
 ‘The two of us in fact brought our wife from the mouths of dragons and tigers!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 109.)

- **zaaj vij nub** ‘rainbow around the sun’ (Xiongs).

- **zaam** ‘to avoid, to get around’ (Xiongs):

tsi muaj chaw zaam ‘no way to get around’ (Xiongs).

- **zaam** ‘to give way for, to allow, to yield’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 让 *ràng*.

- **zaam** ‘(classifier *lub* or *cev*) dress, dressing up’ (Xiongs):

Muam Nkauj Ntsum naav ib cev zaam
 ‘Muam Nkauj Ntsum put on her finest clothes’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 18).

- **zaam**: *tseev zaam* ‘to dress up, to dress up beautifully’ (Xiongs):

At the beginning of the *Qhuab Ke* (Showing the Way) funeral ceremony, the chanter asks the dead person, “Is it you who I have seen laid out, dressed in burial clothes?”

Nub nua pum tug tseev zaam suj sees tuaj nruab tsev. Yog koj los tsi yog?
 ‘Today I have seen someone, dressed in his finest clothes, in the house. Was it you?’
 (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **zaam**: *ua zaam* ‘to dress up beautifully’ (Xiongs):

Luas tej mas nim ua zaam lab quas vog, hab nojnqaj hauscauv ntshu quas fwv rua tom u tom nua.
 ‘Everyone else was dressed up in speckled red clothing, feasting and celebrating all over the place’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 9).

- **zaam**: *ua zaam quas sees* ‘beautifully dressed up’ (Xiongs).

- **zaam ... ua ntej** ‘to yield, to allow to go first’:

zaam, kev ca puab ua ntej
 ‘give them the way to go first’ (Xiongs) [since *zaam kev* ‘to yield the way’ is a constituent, the comma separating *zaam* and *kev* may be a typographical error].

Zaam rua cov tsheb lug txuj kev ntsais teeb dlaaj ua ntej
 ‘Yield to the vehicles coming from the street with the blinking yellow light’ (Xiongs).

- **zaam xob huv** ‘beautifully dressed’:

Od yauj! zaam xob huv lawm cais tsum lauj!

‘Well! He certainly is beautifully dressed, so now it’s time for the meal’ (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem* p. 13).

- **zaam txim** ‘to give an excuse to’ (Xiongs). From Chinese 让 *ràng* ‘to allow’ + 罪 *zuì* ‘guilt’.

- **zaas** ‘to dye, to color’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 染 *rǎn*:

Kuv nam zaas nwg dlaim tab ua tsus dlub ‘My mother dyes her skirt in black’ (Xiongs).

- **zaas** ‘to face each other before fighting (animals)’ (Xiongs).

- **zaas nkoog** (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [not horizontal?]:

The Xiongs list *zaas nkoog* as an example of the intensifier *nkoog* ‘little bent’ but do not translate the phrase *zaas nkoog*. Bertrais’s dictionary of White Hmong says that *zas* (the White Hmong form of *zaas*) means ‘inclined below the horizontal’ (for example a balance scale with insufficient merchandise), and that might be the meaning of *zaas nkoog*.

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that in White Hmong *zas* means ‘an incline’, as in *lub toj ntshab dhau lub zas* ‘a hill is steeper than an incline’, and that there is a likely cognate in East Hmongic, *vongl*, meaning ‘mountain valley’ or ‘cliff’.

If *zaas* is indeed the same word as White Hmong *zas* and East Hmongic *vongl*, then it is of some historical interest. Michael says that this root is rare in Farwestern Hmongic (the branch of Hmongic to which Mong Leng and White Hmong belong), and that, apart from this possible example in the Xiongs’ dictionary, he does not have a single token for the Mong Leng group.

- **zaig** ‘to cut into pieces’ (Xiongs).

- **zaig** ‘to cut around to make a neck of it’ (Xiongs).

- **zaig** ‘(classifier *lub*) bladder’ (Xiongs).

- **zaig** ‘(classifier *lub*) balloon’ (Xiongs):

lub zaig tawg lawm ‘the balloon broke’ (Xiongs).

- **zaig plaab** ‘fat or big stomach, distended abdomen’ (Xiongs).

- **zaig zig** ‘(classifier *lub*) bladder’ (Xiongs):

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub*?] *zaig zig*
‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

- **zais** ‘to hide, to conceal something’ (Xiongs):

Koj muab kuv lub nplhaib zais lawm puas yog? ‘You hide my ring, isn’t it?’ (Xiongs.)

- **zaub** ‘(no classifier) vegetable’ (Xiongs):

kua zaub ‘vegetable juice, soup’ (Xiongs).

noob zaub ‘seed’ (Xiongs).

rhaub zaub ‘to warm up the food’ (Xiongs).

txhoov zaub ‘to cut vegetables’ (Xiongs).

- **zaub ab** ‘bitter greens’:

Caag namtij hab tijlaug ob tug sab tsi zoo. Ob tug muab mov kuam cej mov kuam xua ntse hauvpaug zaubab rua Nuj Yob noj es tsi noj los tshaib, noj los nim ab ab Nuj Yob sab!

‘Sister-in-law’s and elder brother’s hearts are not good. They give steamed buckwheat and steamed rice bran and the stems of bitter greens to Nuj Yob to eat. If he does not eat them he is hungry. If he eats them, how bitter they are to Nuj Yob’s heart!’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 74).

- **zaub kis**: *zawb* [typo for *zaub*?] *kis* ‘nettles, stinging vegetation’ (Xiongs).

- **zaub looj pwm** ‘radish’ (Xiongs). Probably from Chinese *luóbo*. I do not know why the first syllable of *looj pwm* has a nasal vowel in Mong. Michael Johnson points out that there is the same random rime variation in the first syllable of ‘elbow’: *luj tshib* ~ *lauj tshib* ~ *looj tshib*.

- **zaub mov** ‘food (in general)’ (Xiongs):

Puas muaj zaub mov seem le? ‘Is there any food left at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **zaub ntsuab** ‘mustard greens’ (Xiongs).

- **zaub paaj** ‘cauliflower’ (Xiongs).

- **zaub qaub** ‘pickled vegetables’ (Xiongs).

- **zaub qhwv** ‘cabbage’ (Xiongs).

- **zaub thaaj** ‘(classifier *lub*) cabbage’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *tuán* ‘sphere’. Calling cabbage “sphere vegetable” appears to be a Mong innovation. Michael Johnson checked on the Chinese online search engine Baidu and found no sign of any such expression as * 团菜 *tuáncài* “sphere vegetable”.

- **zaub ua kua** ‘watery soup’ (Xiongs).

- **zawb** [typo for **zaub**?] **kis** ‘nettles, stinging vegetation’ (Xiongs).

- **zawg**: *hawb zawg* or *hawb quas zawg* ‘typical intensifier, wheezingly’ (Xiongs p. 554):

Nwg nkaag hawb zawg tuaj txug (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he arrived creeping wheezingly].

Dlha tuab tug hawb zawg le (Xiongs p. 554, not translated) [She or he ran alone, wheezing].

- **zawg**: *ntoo zawg* ‘a kind of tree’ (Xiongs), ‘kind of tree’ (Bertrais ZAWS), ‘huàgāo tree’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 323 reul), ‘kuǎshān tree’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 152 reul), probably birch (*Betula*), or else transferred to a birch-like tree (Michael Johnson, personal

communication).

- **zawg**: *zug quas zawg* ‘here and there’ (see also *zum zawg*):

Huas tej nam taujvaub abhau los nim quaj zug quas zawg
 ‘Then the blue-throated barbets and great barbets cried out here and there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

- **zawg**: *zum zawg* or *zum quas zawg* ‘here and there’ (see also *zug quas zawg*):

nyag ua nyag zum zawg le
 ‘everyone works by herself or himself here and there’ (Xiongs).

Suav txhaj sawv lug ywg zum zawg tas:
 ‘The Chinese got up and began muttering to one another here and there’ (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

“Ab! mej lub nam zog tuabneeg nuav es coob taag npaum nuav es qab npua quaj zug quas zawg, dlev tum ntshu quas lawg, huas tsi pum ib nyuas tug tuabneeg nyob qhovtwg naw?”

‘Hey! This village of yours with so many people and chickens and pigs crying out all over the place, dogs barking loudly, but we don’t see a single person anywhere?’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **zawj**: *qhov zawj* ‘(classifier *lub*) a depression in the landscape with higher ground rising all around’ (Xiongs).

- **zawm** ‘to fasten, to tie tightly’ (Xiongs).

- **zawm** ‘to strangle’ (Xiongs).

- **zawm** ‘to tightly embrace’ (Xiongs):

Kuv xaav muab koj zawm nkaus ‘I want to tightly embrace you’ (Xiongs).

- **zawm** ‘to seize’ (Xiongs).

- **zaws** ‘to massage, to press and push back and forth’ (Xiongs).

- **zaws**, intensifier:

Nim naav lub nam tsho Suav laug suab quas zaws
 ‘He was wearing a Chinese jacket, embroidered all over with a fern-leaf pattern’ (*Ceebpov* p. 23)

Nwg moog tsuj tau cov aav noo quas zaws
 ‘He trod and found that he was stepping on earth that was moist’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

- **zawv** ‘to wash, to scrub, to rub with hands in a liquid’ (Xiongs):

Koj zawv tsi huv ‘You don’t wash it well’ (Xiongs).

- **zawv plaab** ‘diarrhea, loose stool’ (Xiongs).

- **ze** ‘near, close, in proximity’ (Xiongs):

Oo, kuv xaav nyob ze koj

‘Ong, I want to be close to you; Ong, I want to stay near you’ (Xiongs).

- **ze** ‘close as relative’ (Xiongs).

- **ze**: *txheeb ze* ‘closely related’ (Xiongs). First syllable from Chinese *qīn* ‘related by blood’.

- **zeb** ‘stone, rock’, in compounds and idiomatic expressions:

The usual word for a stone or a rock is *pob zeb*. Normally, *zeb* means stone or rock in compounds and idiomatic expressions such as *kem zeb* ‘crevice in the rock’, *qaab zeb* ‘under a stone’ and *toj rua lu ... zeb rua ruag* ‘gaping hills ... stones with their mouths open wide’ (hazards which dead people encounter on the journey to meet the ancestors). When *zeb* is used by itself, not in a compound or idiomatic expression, it means a grindstone.

- **zeb** ‘(classifier *lub*) grindstone’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

‘Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **zeb**: *kem pobzeb* ‘a crevice in the rock’:

nwg twb nteg tau Yawm Xub tub Ntxawg lug kaw tseg ca rua tom ib kem pobzeb lawm.
‘he had captured Grandfather Thunder’s youngest son and had imprisoned him in a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb txhaj nrhav moog txug kem pobzeb kws zaaj Maum Xeej Xeeb kaw Yawm Xub tug tub ntxawg.

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb then came upon the crevice in the rock in which the dragon Maum Xeej Xeeb had imprisoned Grandfather Thunder’s youngest son’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

cais nwg txhaj muab taus tsoo kem nam pobzeb.

‘So then he took his axe and he struck the crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 24).

Txheeb Tshoj Theeb tsaav zog rua tom kem pobzeb lawm

‘Txheeb Tshoj Theeb moved away into a crevice in the rock’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 27).

- **zeb**: *kem zeb* ‘(classifier *lub*) a crevice in the rock’:

Nwg txhaj taug kem zeb ntawm moog rua tod.

‘He then followed a crevice in the rock to there’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 14).

Ob tug dlha tsiv lug mas aav pob pis nroog lug txhawg tej kem zeb kem aav lawv ob tug qaab.

‘As they fled, they were pursued by an avalanche that stuffed up the crevices in the rocks and the soil’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

tej nyuas kem zeb kem aav

‘the crevices in the rocks and the earth’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 23).

Nuj Yob tig hlo moog saib saib tim lub nyuas kem zeb na cav muaj ib choj nyaj dlaab

‘Nuj Yob turned to look at a small crevice in the stone and lo and behold, there was an ingot of spirit-money’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 85).

- **zeb**: *ncej zeb* ‘a stone pole’ (Xiongs):

I suspect that a more natural English translation might be ‘a stone pillar’. *Ncej* can mean a tall pole such as those used in connection with games and ceremonies at the New Year festival but *ncej* can also mean a housepost.

- **zeb**: *pob zeb* ‘(classifier *lub*) stone, rock’ (Xiongs):

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for lub?] zaig zig
‘s/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder’ (Xiongs).

tawv le pob zeb ‘hard like a stone, rock’ (Xiongs).

Cuav Tshoj Tim dlov pobzeb moog txhawg qhovntuj taag lawm

‘Cuav Tshoj Tim had rolled stones completely stuffing up the chasm’ (*Txheeb Txhoj Theeb* p. 23).

- **zeb**: *phaj zeb* ‘(classifier *dlaim*) a slate, sheet of stone, a slab of rock’ (Xiongs).

- **zeb**: *qaab zeb* ‘under a stone’:

In a folktale, Yob the orphan, in hot pursuit of a female dove who has taken an ear of millet from his field, follows her as she dashes under stones and logs:

Puj nquab quas plawg qaab zeb, puj nquab quas plawg qaab caa los Yob ntsuag ntsuag quas plawg qaab caa.

‘The female dove, right under a stone, the female dove, right under a log, then Yob the orphan, right under a log’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **zeb**: *qhov zeb* ‘cave in the rock, also called *qhov tsua*’ (Xiongs).

- **zeb**: *toj rua lu ... zeb rua ruag* ‘gaping hills ... stones with their mouths open wide’, hazards which a dead person encounters on the journey to meet the ancestors:

Koj moog txug cej laag qaum ntaiv ntuj. Koj moog txug toj rua lu zeb rua ruag, rua lu quas huav luaj qhov paaj

‘Go to the walled city at the top of the stairway to heaven. Go until you reach the gaping hills, the stones with their mouths open wide, gaping like the mouth of a cavern’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 17).

- **zeb**: *txaaj zeb* ‘(classifier *lub*) a bed to hold stones especially on top of a ramp or hill for

defense purposes' (Xiongs).

- **zeb**: *txaug zeb* 'to chisel a grindstone' (Xiongs).

- **zeb**: *xuab zeb* 'sand' (Xiongs), first syllable from Chinese *shā* 'sand':

taj xuab zeb 'beach' (Xiongs).

- **zeb hu** '(classifier *lub*) sharpening stone' (Xiongs).

- **zeb toob txuab** 'soft, accumulating rock; accumulating soft rock' (Xiongs).

- **zeb xuav** 'coarse sand' (Xiongs).

- **zeg** '(classifier *lub*) nest (of birds or animals)' (Xiongs).

- **zeg**: *muaj zaaj muaj zeg* 'inebriated':

Haus cawv tes Lis Sub Tuam muaj muaj zaaj muaj zeg pav ov!

'They drank until Lis Sub Tuam became quite inebriated!' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 26).

- **zej zog** 'people in the village, village' (Xiongs):

Nub caaj thaus u, tsoom tuabneeg zej zog tuag cais luas pheej tuaj tog Nug Xyu moog ua txiv qeej.

'Long ago, when any of the villagers died, people would ask Nug Xyu to be the qeej-player' (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 5).

Luas tej tuabneeg zejzog ntsuabze tub lug txug huv tsev taag.

'Their neighbors from all over the village came to the house' (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 31).

- **zem**: *lom zem* 'fun' (Xiongs):

muaj kev lom zem 'to have fun' (Xiongs).

Lug Nruag Lom Zem 'Fun Stories' (*Lug Nruag Lom Zem*, title).

From Chinese 热闹 *rènao* 'lively, bustling with noise and excitement', literally "hot and noisy", but with the order of the elements reversed: *nàorè* "noisy and hot" > *lom zem*. The order had probably already been reversed in the Chinese dialect from which Mong borrowed the word.

- **zem**: *pum zem zuag* 'dim, dimly' (Xiongs).

- **zeeg**, intensifier:

Tes hlav muv muab nam ncej puj dlaab hov no no muv txaij quas zeeg.

'Then he sharpened arrows and pierced the female-spirit post until it was dotted with arrows' (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 28).

- **zeej** '(no classifier) people' (Xiongs), from Chinese *rén*.

- **zeej**: *twm zeej* 'one person alone, only one alone' (Xiongs), from Chinese *dú rén* 'sole person':

tub twm zeej 'unique child, only son' (Xiongs).

- **zeej**: *txwmzeej* ‘a criminal, a sinner’, from Chinese *zuìrén*:

The story *Yob Hlub Has Yob Yau* speaks of wicked people being judged at the court in heaven:

pigkig kuv coj koj es wb tshaam kab ov. Wb moog saib cov nam txwmzeej os.

‘Tomorrow, I will take you with me and we will visit the market. We will go to look at the criminals’ (*Yob Hlub Hab Yob Yau* p. 16).

wb muab nwg tsaa ua ib tug tuam yij rua hov ntawd saib cov nam txwm zeej.

‘we must elevate him to the position of tuam yij who watches over the criminals’ (*Yob Hlub Hab Yob Yau* p. 22).

- **zeej tsoom** ‘all people’ (Xiongs):

From Chinese 众人 *zhòngrén* ‘everybody, everyone; normal people; ordinary people; commoner’, literally “many person”, but with the order of the elements reversed: *rénzhòng* “person many” > *zeej tsoom*. The reversed word order may be a Hmong innovation. There is no entry for a Chinese expression * 人众 *rénzhòng* “person many” in the online multilingual dictionary Wiktionary.

- **zeem** ‘to admit, to acknowledge’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *rèn*.

- **zeem** ‘to get acquaintance with’ (Xiongs). From Chinese *rèn*.

- **zeem** ‘to melt’ (Xiongs):

cov ntsev zeem lawm ‘the salt melts’ (Xiongs).

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes of this word: “I have never seen this before. I imagine it could be Chinese 润 *rùn* ‘wet, moist; sleek; to moisten, to wet’. I can’t find anything in the Southwestern Mandarin dictionaries. The Xiongs’ sense is perhaps salt absorbing moisture and therefore going a bit soggy and starting to melt in its container – rather than putting salt into boiling water and seeing it melt away (for which I would expect *yaaj*).”

- **zib** ‘(no classifier) honey’ (Xiongs):

Tshaav ntuj quas nrig roj ntshaa yaaj quas ntsuav le roj cab zib dlaag lug naag, ces txhaa nkig nkuav le txhaa plhaub maag

‘In the sunshine fat and blood will melt away like molten wax and yellow honey raining down, and bones will crackle like bones made of hemp stalks’ (*Initiation* p. 125).

The idea may be that the sun’s heat melts the wax of the bees’ honeycombs and the honey drips out.

- **zib**: *qaab zib* ‘sweat’ (Xiongs).

- **zib mu** or **zib muv** ‘honey’ (Xiongs).

- **zig** ‘to excite as to cause trouble, to make trouble’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) says that *zig* is from Chinese 惹 *rě* ‘to invite

or ask for something undesirable, to offend, to provoke' but that it may be a fairly old borrowing.

- **zig** '(no classifier) urine' (Xiongs):

tso zig 'to pass urine, to urinate' (Xiongs).

- **zig** 'bent, not straight' (Xiongs).

- **zig** 'missed, miss the goal, deviated' (Xiongs):

xib xub moog zig lawm 'the arrow deviates from the goal' (Xiongs).

- **zig** 'to force someone against his or her will, to coerce' (Xiongs).

- **zig**: *caab ke quas zig* 'slowly, in a long line' (Djoua Xiong, personal communication):

Faabkis nyav caab ke quas zig txug tim khw xwb

'The French, walking slowly, single-file, had gotten only as far as the market' (*Rog Vwm* p. 3).

- **zig**: *txeeb zig* 'bladderstone' (Xiongs).

- **zig**: *ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj* 'to drizzle':

dlub lug cais txawm cuab tsaus fuab ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj

'it began to get overcast and it began to drizzle' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyooj

'it had been drizzling for a year' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Michael Johnson comments: "Sounds like Guizhou weather. Guizhou and Wales compete for the fewest sunny days in a year."

- **zig**: *zaig zig* '(classifier *lub*) bladder' (Xiongs):

Nwg raug phais vim muaj ib lub pobzeb nyob huv nwg lug [typo for *lub*?] *zaig zig*

's/he is operated on because she has a stone in her/his bladder' (Xiongs).

- **zig**: *ua zoj ua zig* 'to run round and round' (?):

Tes nam ncej puj dlaab cov mivnyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj moog ua zoj ua zig tes;

"Puj aw, peb moog ua zoj ua zig os puj?"

Then the spirit children of the female-spirit post were running round and round:

"Grandmother, shall we go and run round and round, grandmother?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

When Brenda Johns and I were translating the story in which *ua zoj ua zig* appears, we were not sure what it meant. Brenda suggested 'run round and round'. There are somewhat similar expressions in dictionaries, such as *ua zoj zeeg* 'to do quickly or hurriedly' (Heimbach p. 439 *zoj*) and *ua zoj li ub*, *ua zoj li no* 'sometimes do this, sometimes do that' (Bertais p. 578 *ZOJ*).

- **zig plaub** 'to try to cause trouble' (Xiongs).

- **zimtxwv** ‘(classifier *lub*) time, hour, period of time’ (Xiongs):

lub zim txwv nuav ‘this time, this period’ (Xiongs).

From Chinese 日子 *rìzi* ‘day, date’. Michael Johnson (personal communication) explains the shift in meaning from ‘day’ to ‘hour’ as follows:

When the Hmong left China it was doubtful that the modern concept of hour was known in the rural setting. The traditional Chinese hour was a two hour period – the day was divided into 12 of these. I think the term is 更 *gēng* although Wiktionary defines this more narrowly as: (historical) one of the five two-hour periods into which the night was formerly divided. This term does not seem to have entered Hmong with an ‘hour’ like meaning. It does occur in the UBS translation [of the Bible] with the sense of ‘watch (of a sentry, guard)’. The likelihood is that Hmong had never said things like “third geng, fourth geng”, but relied solely on terms like “taav su” [‘noon’], “taav su dlua” [‘afternoon’], etc.

- **zimtxwv** ‘chair’ (Lyman):

Tes nim muab hlo ib lub zimtxwv nyaj coj lug txawb nkaus rua hov tes muab Los Xaab tuav quas loo lug nyob tsawg ndlua hov.

‘Then she brought a silver chair and set it down there and then she grabbed Los Xaab and sat him down’ (*Ceebpov* p. 11).

The word *zimtxwv* ‘chair’ looks like it ought to be a loanword from Chinese but the etymology is uncertain. Chinese 椅子 *yǐzi* ‘chair’ has been suggested as a likely source, but the initial consonant and the tone of Chinese 椅 *yǐ* do not match the initial consonant and the tone of Mong *zim*.

Michael Johnson shares my bewilderment. He writes, “This one really is odd, because the tone is also unexpected – expect tone *yis* or *yig*. I can’t find any *yi > ri* shifts in the Southwestern Mandarin dictionaries.”

Another possibility is Chinese 褥子 *rùzi* ‘mattress’. This time the initial consonants and the tones match, but the meanings are very different.

- **zob** ‘to smooth, to sharpen’ (Xiongs):

zob xub ‘to sharpen an arrow’ (Xiongs).

- **zog** ‘(classifier *lub*) village, town’ (Xiongs):

kuv lub zog yug yog Naaj Caas ‘my village of birth was Nam Chan’ (Xiongs).

Muaj pis tsawg yim nyob huv koj lub zog?

‘How many families are there in your village?’ (Xiongs.)

nyob koom zog ‘to live in the same village, from the same village’ (Xiongs).

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo*?] *le*

‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

hab muab txavtxwv lug txav nyaj kub lug ua peev tsim teb khu chaw, tsim zog tsim nroog.
 ‘and used the share of the silver and gold as capital to found a nation and create towns and villages’ (Kwvhuam p. 21).

cais suavdlawg txhaj nyob ua zog ua moog rua ntus ntawd.
 ‘and everyone came to live in villages and communities at that time’ (Kwvhuam p. 21).

Ob tug taug kev moog ib nub yuav laug tsaus ntuj txhaj moog txug huv ib lub nam zog luj.
Lub zog nuav yog ib lub nam nroog.
 ‘The two traveled all day and into the night and arrived at a large settlement. This settlement was a town’ (Kwvhuam p. 26).

Hmong-Chinese dictionaries (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 319 raol; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 151 raol) translate *zog* both as *zhài* ‘stockade, fortified place, mountain stronghold’, i.e. a walled village, fortified against bandits, and as *cūn* ‘village’, i.e. an unfortified village. Graham (1954) describes the danger from bandits in the Sichuan-Guizhou-Yunnan border area in the 1920’s and 1930’s and in his English translations of Hmong stories usually speaks of “fortified places” rather than “villages”.

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes, “There are a few of these walled zhaizi left in Guizhou. I don’t know why it seems there are not many, perhaps the stones were mostly repurposed. The provincial tourism boards should make more effort to keep some well preserved examples.”

- **zog** ‘than, a little more’ (Xiongs):

Kuv sab zog koj ‘I am a little taller than you’ (Xiongs).

nraag haav zog ‘a little lower’ (Xiongs).

rau sab heev zog ntxiv ‘work a little harder’ (Xiongs).

tom ntej zog ‘a little further’ (Xiongs).

thov txaav tom ntej zog ‘move over a little’ (Xiongs).

tshoom kom sab zog ‘push a little higher’ (Xiongs).

- **zog**, intensifier:

rub zog saum [sic] *rooj* ‘to deploy or set right on the table or publicly’ (Xiongs). *Saum* is an unusual spelling for *sau*, possibly reflecting White Hmong influence.

Luas tub nqaa nqaj nqaa no lug ua noj ua haus, hab luas tub moog pw ntsag zog lawm.
 ‘They brought meat and rice for a meal and then they went to lie down quietly’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 31).

nwg kuj yawm kag ib taig nam moov tshauv moog pleev pis zog tug nam zaaj lub qhov nqaj.

‘she scooped up a bowlful of ashes and smeared them on the dragon’s wound’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16).

aav zum quas zog txij hauvcaug

‘the mud stuck to him up to his knees’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38).

Cov nam kua aav kuj ca le yeeg pis zog lug npoog kag Yawm Nyooglaug ob tug ncej fuab qaag

‘The mud completely covered Grandfather Nyooglaug’s two betel-palm posts’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 39).

hab muab tug nyuas laublaig plhw quas zog

‘and kept stroking the little minivet’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 81).

Nuj Yob saib taag cais tug nam Pujntxoog txhaj moog muab dlaim nyuas khaubhlaab qhwv pis zog choj nyuas nyaj hab cov ntim cov khob nqaa lug tso rua huv nam Pujntxoog lub mej loos lawm.

‘When Nuj Yob was finished looking, the Pujntxoog took a rag, wrapped the silver ingot and the bowls and the cups and put them in her storage basket’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 85).

Nam puj dlaab paug moog txav paas lawm tes sau pis zog nam puj dlaab paug tej nyuas yag nyuas tsu, nyuas hov txhua chaw tsiv tsiv lug tsev lawm.

‘The female paug spirit went to cut a cane and then he gathered up the female paug spirit’s wok, steamer, and so forth and ran home’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 32).

- **zog**: *zej zog* ‘people in the village, village’ (Xiongs):

Nub caaj thaus u, tsoom tuabneeg zej zog tuag cais luas pheej tuaj tog Nug Xyu moog ua txiv qeej.

‘Long ago, when any of the villagers died, people would ask Nug Xyu to be the qeej-player’ (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 5).

Luas tej tuabneeg zejzog ntsuabze tub lug txug huv tsev taag.

‘Their neighbors from all over the village came to the house’ (*Nuj Sis Loob* p. 31).

- **zoj** ‘typical intensifier, short instant’ (Xiongs p. 556):

cug zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to set on one’s back for a moment].

dlha zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to run for a short instant].

na zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to smell for a short instant, take a quick sniff].

pw zoj (Xiongs p. 556, not translated) [to lie down for a short instant].

- **zoj**: *kaim muag quas zoj* ‘to have long beautiful eyelashes’:

Nim zoo zoo nkauj kaim muag quas zoj, dlej muag teev quas mag.

‘She had long beautiful eyelashes and her eyes were moist’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

nim lug ob tug nam kaim muag quas zoj zoo le ob tug namtxiv zaaj lug.

‘They had long beautiful eyelashes like a dragon couple’ (*Ceebpov* p. 12).

- **zoj**: *tsuab zoj* ‘to sprinkle with the fingers’:

koj haus tsis taug nua tes koj tsuab zoj nam peb teg le nphoo zog tuaj tom ntej

‘if you are not able to drink it then sprinkle three handfuls in front of you’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 79).

- **zoj**: *ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj* ‘to drizzle’:

dlub lug cais txawm cuab tsaus fuab ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj
‘it began to get overcast and it began to drizzle’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 22).

ntuj tsaus fuab quas nti ua naag tshauv zig quas zoj tau ib xyoos
‘the sky had been completely overcast and it had been drizzling for a year’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 28).

Michael Johnson comments: “Sounds like Guizhou weather. Guizhou and Wales compete for the fewest sunny days in a year.”

- **zoj**: *ua zoj ua zig* ‘to run round and round’ (?):

Tes nam ncej puj dlaab cov mivnyuas dlaab ua zoj ua zig tuaj moog ua zoj ua zig tes;
“*Puj aw, peb moog ua zoj ua zig os puj?*”

Then the spirit children of the female-spirit post were running round and round:
“Grandmother, shall we go and run round and round, grandmother?” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 27.)

When Brenda Johns and I were translating the story in which *ua zoj ua zig* appears, we were not sure what it meant. Brenda suggested ‘run round and round’. There are somewhat similar expressions in dictionaries, such as *ua zoj zeeg* ‘to do quickly or hurriedly’ (Heimbach p. 439 *zoj*) and *ua zoj li ub, ua zoj li no* ‘sometimes do this, sometimes do that’ (Bertais p. 578 *ZOJ*).

- **zos** ‘to get around, to avoid, to take another route, another way’ (Xiongs):

Puab zos kev lawm puab tsi nkaag lug huv peb zog hle [typo for *hlo?*] *le*
‘They take another route they don’t pass by our village at all’ (Xiongs).

- **zos** ‘not straight, complicated (way)’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo** ‘good, nice, nice-looking, beautiful; well’ (Xiongs):

Koj yuav tsum xyum ua kag xam kawm tau zoo
‘You should actually practice it in order to really get it’ (Xiongs) [“in order to be able to learn well”].

lub xuv tooj muav [typo for *nuav?*] *txais tsi tau zoo*
‘this radio (or walky talky) cannot pick up the sound waves very well’ (Xiongs).

moog xyaw tau cov phooj ywg zoo ‘to be among good friends’ (Xiongs).

muab cov phoo ntawv tum zoo zoo ca ‘pile the books well in order’ (Xiongs).

Puab tshwj cov nqaj zoo taag lawm ‘they already sorted out the quality meat’ (Xiongs).

sav zoo ‘well cooked’ (Xiongs).

tug dlev zuv tsev zoo heev ‘the dog watches the house very well’ (Xiongs).

txi txiv zoo heev ‘very fruitful’ (Xiongs).

Neej sab tsi zoo neej muab dlaab ntaus dlua toj, muab dlaab tub muag noj
 ‘The human beings’ hearts were not good. The human beings drove the spirits past the hills. They sold the spirits’ sons as food’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 2).

- **zoo** ‘effective, efficacious’ (of medicine or poison):

tshuaj ntchim zoo ‘effective medicine’ (Xiongs).

Vauv Yob tuaj sim tshuaj nua, tshuaj puas zoo nej?
 ‘Son-in-law Yob came to try this medicine, was the medicine effective?’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24).

Yob moog sim tshuaj na, tshuaj tub tsi nam zoo hlo le luas muas!
 ‘Yob went to try the medicine, the medicine was not effective at all!’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 24.)

- **zoo**: *kev tau zoo nyob* ‘health’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo**: *nyob zoo* ‘general purpose greeting regardless of time including good morning, good afternoon, good evening, hello, hi, etc.’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson (personal communication) writes:

This an innovation made after leaving China. No one in China knew this phrase although it has started to become known nowadays. Hmong in northwestern Guizhou still find it baffling. A common equivalent in China is “gaox rongt” [*koj zoo* “you are good”] as a direct translation of 你好 [*nǐhǎo* “you are good”, the usual way of saying hello in Chinese]. I get the feeling that there was no generic greeting in the past. The polite way of greeting (outdoors) was to say things like “have you eaten?”, “you are walking to the fields?”, “what are you going to do?”, without it feeling like you are being nosy.

- **zoo**: *poob zoo* ‘(tone changed from zoov) to get lost in the woods, to get lost (in general)’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo**: *pum zoo* ‘to agree, to accept’ (Xiongs):

koj yuav tsum taij saib puab puas pum zoo ‘you must ask to see if they agree’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo**: *saib zoo* ‘watch or look carefully’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo**: *tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo* ‘at any moment’:

Tsaam ntsiv tuab zoo tsuag tho mejloos kwv ceebpov huas.
 ‘Any moment, the rat will gnaw through the storage basket and carry off the gold amulet’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **zoo**: *ua tuab zoo* ‘be careful, watch out for; be careful, carefully’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo chaw** ‘good place, safe place’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo le ntawd** ‘like that’:

Cav muaj tej yaam ntawv zoo le ntawd.
 ‘How can there be all those kinds of writing?’ (Xeev Nruag Xyooj, *Txooj Moob* No. 5, p.

4.)

- **zoo le qub** ‘the same as before, similar to the previous one, identically’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo neej** ‘good life, good fortune, well off’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo neej ua lawm luas puaj** ‘prosperous’

koj ntshai dlaab Ntxawg tau zoo neej ua lawm luas puaj?

‘Is it not so that you sense that Uncle Ntxawg has become prosperous?’ (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 18).

- **zoo nkauj** ‘beautiful (Xiongs)’ (see also *zoo zoo nkauj*):

zoo nkauj heev ‘very beautiful’ (Xiongs).

leejnam nim lug tug nam zoo nkauj quas tshib, huas quas tsuj quas npuag ci quas hob lug txug ncuaw ntawm qhovrooj.

‘The mother-in-law, all beautiful, gleaming with silk and satin, arrived at the door’ (*Ceebpov* p. 24).

- **zoo nraug** ‘nice, handsome, good looking’ (Xiongs):

zoo nraug heev ‘very handsome’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo sab** ‘happy, glad’ (Xiongs):

Thaus kawg, Yog Nraug Ntsuag txhaj zoo sab nrug nwg tijlaug nyob kawm txuj kawm ci.

‘Finally, Yob the Orphan was happy to stay to study with his older brother’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 29).

Ntuj aw! Hiv hiv! zoo sab tsi zoo!

‘By heaven! Hee hee! How happy we are!’ (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 31).

Ob tug nim zoo sab tag tag tes ob tug nim tua qab saam qab sis noj.

‘The two of them were really happy so they killed capons to eat’ (*Ceebpov* p. 27).

- **zoo sab tog txais** ‘welcome’:

zoo sab tog txais mej suav dlawg tuaj huv rooj qav nuav

‘welcome all of you to the meal or banquet’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo saib** ‘watchful’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo saib** ‘worth watching’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo saib** ‘beautiful’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo sib xws xwb** ‘similar to each other only’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo tshaaj plawg** ‘best, most beautiful’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo tshuaj** ‘effective, curative medicine’ (Xiongs).

- **zoo zoo nkauj** ‘beautiful’ (see also *zoo nkauj*):

Nim zoo zoo nkauj kaim muag quas zoj, dlej muag teev quas mag.
 ‘She had long beautiful eyelashes and her eyes were moist’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- **zoo zoo nkauj teg** ‘very beautiful’:

Muaj ob namtxiv Suav muaj ib tug ntxais lub npe hu ua Ceeb Pov nua es zoo zoo nkauj teg
 ‘There was a Chinese couple who had a daughter named Ceeb Pov, who was very beautiful’ (*Ceebpov* p. 8).

- **zoog**, intensifier:

Tsaus tau ntuj nrig lis zoog, tsaus tau quas tsi cev lug txoog? / Tsaus teb nrig sis lo, tsaus quas tsi cev lug nyog?
 ‘When the sky was dark, who was able to come? / When the earth was plunged in darkness, who was capable of coming?’ (*Initiation* p. 119).

- **zooj** ‘soft, tender, malleable, pliable’ (Xiongs), from Chinese 绒 *róng*:

hlau zooj ‘pliable metal’ (Xiongs).

mov zooj ‘soft rice’ (Xiongs).

zooj zooj ‘very soft, very tender’ (Xiongs).

- **zooj** ‘to look into the eyes, to stare at’ (Xiongs):

Michael Johnson comments that this word is found in Hmong-Chinese dictionaries but that this is the first time he has seen it outside of China.

- **zoov** ‘(classifier *lub*) jungle’ (Xiongs) (see also *zoo*).

- **zoov**: *haav zoov* ‘(classifier *lub*) jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **zoov**: *haav zoov nuj quas txeeg* ‘wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs):

Monuav kuas koj tu rag tu neev tog, pegkig koj nrug txiv peb moog lawv nqaj tim lub nam haavzoov nuj quas txeeg nqeg moog rua nraag lub dlawmtsua.
 ‘Tonight you are to get your knife and your crossbow ready, and tomorrow you will go with our father to hunt in the deep forest down to the mountain pass’ (*Yob hab Noog Yaajqawg* p. 17).

- **zoov**: *haav zoov nuj quas xab* ‘(classifier *lub*) wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **zoov**: *haav zoov nuj txeeg* ‘(classifier *lub*) a wild or virgin jungle’ (Xiongs).

- **zoov**: *ku zoov* ‘forest’:

In a folktale, a woman recounts how her husband speaks of the time when he was transformed into a tiger:

“Saub nis Saub! Ua caag kuv moog coj tau Nug Xyu lug es, Nug Xyu puag mivnyuas ncaws quas ntsig nraag qaabcub cais nwg pheej has tas, ‘Nyuas nis nyuas, tsi muaj koj nam cais kuv qhovntsej luaj ntxuam, qhovmuag luaj nkhub ais kuv ua nyog nyog tim ku

zoov nis nyuas' nua yog le caag tag?"

"Saub oh Saub! Why, now that I have brought Nug Xyu home, when Nug Xyu is holding our child in his arms, half asleep down by the fireplace, does he keep saying, 'Child oh child, when your mother wasn't there, my ears were like fans, my eyes were like cups and I went about growling in the forest, oh child', why is that?" (*Lug Nruag Tsuv* p. 44.)

- **zug** 'strength':

kev muaj zug 'strength' (Xiongs).

Maaj maam maj! Ua caag koj nim yuav siv zug ua rua kuv mob ua luaj ne!

'Gently! Why are you going at my wound with such force?' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 16.)

Kuv mas kuv muaj zug hab yaa peg qaum ntuj dlhau rua qaab ntug, yaa qaum teb dlhau qaab teb los tau.

'As for me, I am strong and as for flying from east to west and from north to south, then it is possible' (*Kwvhuam* p. 10; the speaker is the wind).

- **zug** 'gradually':

Tug nam zaaj nti nti zaaj tuag quas zug cais tsaus quas zug tuaj.

'As the dragon gradually writhed to death, their surroundings grew darker and darker' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 20).

- **zug**: *ntu quas zug* 'at successive places':

Suavdlawg txhaj tuaj moog muab ntawv peg Paaj Cai lug teev ua ntu quas zug nqeg lug.

'Everyone brought ritual paper up to Paaj Cai, and then conducted different parts of the ceremony at successive places moving from north to south' (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **zug**: *qhau hlo hau, qhau dlaag qhau zug* 'to lay down one's head, lay down one's strength and one's force', i.e. to humble oneself:

Lob Lw le mam qhau hlo hau, qhau dlaag qhau zug taug kev moog nrhav txiv tuam mej koob, txiv tuam mej zeeg, hab le mam rov qaab moog has Muam Nkauj Ntsum.

'Lob Lw then humbled himself and set out on the road to find marriage negotiators, marriage go-betweens, and once more ask to marry Muam Nkauj Ntsum' (*Kwvhuam* p. 31).

- **zug**: *tsaug zug* 'to sleep, sleepy' (Xiongs):

tsaug ib tsig zug 'to fall asleep once' (Xiongs).

Thaus nwg pw qe muag nti, cais yog tsi tau tsaug zug. Huas yog ob lub qhovmuag qheb quas plav txhaj yog tsaug zug tag!

'When he lies with his eyes shut, then he has not fallen asleep. But if his two eyes are open, then it is that he is really asleep!' (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 18.)

Tsi ntev, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb hab Ntxawm ob tug txawm ua ke nyaag nyaag moog saib na tug nam zaaj pw tsaug zug ua qhovmuag qheb quas plav tag lauj!

'Not long afterward, Txheeb Tshoj Theeb and Ntxawm crept over together to look and,

why, the dragon really was sleeping with his eyes open!’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 19.)

- **zug**: *zujzug* ‘slowly, gradually, continuously’ (Xiongs):

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

- **zug quas zawg** ‘here and there’ (see also *zum zawg*):

Huas tej nam taujvaub abhau los nim quaj zug quas zawg

‘Then the blue-throated barbets and great barbets cried out here and there’ (*Ceebpov* p. 10).

- **zujzug** ‘slowly, gradually, continuously’ (Xiongs):

Koj i koj moog dlhau tau toj kaab ntsig dlawm kaab ntsuab, nyob zuj quas zug saib taag kaab ntsig luaj txuj saab.

‘You, oh, you will cross the hill of stinging hairy caterpillars, the mountain pass of kaab ntsuab. Look them over thoroughly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as person’s footprints.

Moog zuj quas zug, kaab ntsig luaj ncaaj npaab.

Walk on slowly; the stinging hairy caterpillars are as big as a person’s arm’ (*Cim Xeeb* p. 80).

- **zum** ‘to be sticky, to cling’:

aav zum quas zog txij hauvcaug

‘the mud stuck to him up to his knees’ (*Txheeb Tshoj Theeb* p. 38).

- **zum** ‘to grind’ (Xiongs):

In a folktale, a female spirit eats all the people in a village, leaving only two young women. Two young men come to the village and offer to kill the female spirit if the two young women will marry them. The young women agree and then explain to the young men what they must do to attract the female spirit’s attention so that they will be able to kill her:

“Awb, zum zeb, tuav cug, cuab npua, kes yag ntshu quas lawg tes tuaj les es”.

“Well, grind millstones, work a treadmill, call pigs, scratch a wok loudly then she will come.” (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19.)

- **zum**, typo for **zwm** ‘to depend on, to rely on, to join in with, to belong to’:

Peb zum [typo for zwm] rua lub nroog Milwaukee

‘we rely on Milwaukee; we are in the Milwaukee area or boundary’ (Xiongs).

Milwaukee is the U.S. city where the Xiongs' dictionary was written.

- **zum zawg** or **zum quas zawg** 'here and there' (see also *zug quas zawg*):

nyag ua nyag zum zawg le

'everyone works by herself or himself here and there' (Xiongs).

Suav txhaj sawv lug ywg zum zawg tas:

'The Chinese got up and began muttering to one another here and there' (*Kwvhuam* p. 20).

"Ab! mej lub nam zog tuabneeg nuav es coob taag npaum nuav es qab npua quaj zug quas zawg, dlev tum ntshu quas lawg, huas tsi pum ib nyuas tug tuabneeg nyob qhovtwg naw?"

"Hey! This village of yours with so many people and chickens and pigs crying out all over the place, dogs barking loudly, but we don't see a single person anywhere?" (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 19).

- **zuv** 'to look after, to watch, to guard' (Xiongs):

puab zuv peb tshooj qhov rooj 'they guard the door in three levels' (Xiongs).

tug dlev zuv tsev zoo heev 'the dog watches the house very well' (Xiongs).

tug zuv 'the guard' (Xiongs).

ntshai koj moog thawj dlev, ceb laaj zuv luas tsev.

'Now if you are reborn as a dog, you will have the hardship of guarding someone's house' (*Initiation* p. 138).

Cov kwv le zoo rua dlev nub, vim dlev zuv tsev zoo heev.

'For younger brothers, it is good [to look for a wife] on the day of the dog, because dogs guard the house well' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 85).

- **zuv** 'to lie in wait for':

nim naj mo zuv zuv kuv quas kaum vaaj kaum tsev

'Every evening he lies in wait for me in every corner' (*Dlaab Qhuas* p. 67).

Nam dlev ha moog zuv plis, huas nam mlob moog zuv tsuag.

'The dog went to lie in wait for wildcats and the cat went to lie in wait for rats' (*Ceebpov* p. 26).

- **zuv** 'to keep watch':

In a folktale, a man asks Saub (the being to whom people go for advice) why it is that animals are destroying his crops and Saub replies:

"Awb! kuv qha koj es koj moog zuv. Koj zuv es koj lawv qaab moog tes koj tau luas mas".

"Yes! I will tell you what to do, you go and keep watch. You keep watch and you follow and then you will get them", i.e. whatever being is responsible for the man's difficulties (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

Yob ntsuag ntsuag moog zuv tes tuaj tug nyuas puj nquab tuaj txav tau ib nyuas naab txhuv kwv tsiv lawm.

‘Yob the orphan kept watch and along came a little female dove and cut off an ear of millet and carried it off’ (*Lug Nruag Dlaab* p. 31).

- **zuv**: *tub zuv roojntug* ‘doorkeeper of the door of heaven’:

Tug tub zuv roojntug txawm nrov si moog txug ntawd tas: “Tug nua tsi txhum uav, muab tso, ... ”

The doorkeeper of the door of heaven cried out loudly, “This one has done no wrong. Release him. ...” (*Yob Hlub hab Yob Yau* p. 15).

- **zuv kev** ‘to lie in ambush’:

Cov tuabneeg kws muaj phom lawd txha moog zuv kev tua Faabkis

‘The people who had guns already went to lie in ambush to shoot the French’ (*Rog Vwm* p. 2).

- **zuag** ‘sharp, pointed, peaked, subtle’ (Xiongs):

Nyuj ob txhim kub zuag heev ‘The bull’s two horns are very sharp or pointed’ (Xiongs).

- **zuag** ‘(classifier *lub*) comb (to comb the hair)’ (Xiongs):

Koj puas koj zuag nrug kojle? ‘Do you bring a comb with you at all?’ (Xiongs.)

- **zuag**: *pum zem zuag* ‘dim, dimly’ (Xiongs).

- **zuaj** ‘to massage, to squeeze down’ (Xiongs):

zuaj nrob qaum ‘to massage the back’ (Xiongs).

zuaj phom rua ‘to fire at, to shoot, to pull the trigger at’ (Xiongs).

zuaj plaab ‘to massage the stomach’ (Xiongs).

- **zuaj**: *txiv zuaj* ‘a kind of fruit that grows along the roots at the surface of the ground’ (Xiongs):

The Hmong-Chinese dictionaries distinguish between

txiv zuaj ‘pear’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 445 zid ruax; *Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 204 zid ruax)

and

txiv zuaj teb (“ground *txiv zuaj*”) ‘diguā (a kind of wild fruit that grows on vines, actually formed on the root part on the surface of the ground)’ (*Hmongb-Shuad Jianming Cidian* p. 446 zid ruax deb), ‘ground vine fruit’ (*Zongd Lol Hmongb Nbet* p. 204 zid ruax deb).

The Xiongs have only the kind of *txiv zuaj* that grows on the ground.

Bertrais has only the kind of *txiv zuaj* that grows on a tree, which Bertrais translates as ‘apple’ (Bertrais 1978 pp. 502 and 581). In *A linguist’s compilation of Farwestern Hmongic flora nomenclature*, Michael Johnson writes that Bertrais’s gloss

should be taken with a large pinch of salt. Chinese pears are typically round like apples, so it is possible that the ancient Hmongic root *-zuaj* could have been transferred to non-native ‘apple’, however the gloss is more likely the result of confusion.

Lyman and Heimbach do not have either kind of *txiv zuaj*.

I have not encountered *txiv zuaj* in Mong Volunteer Literacy’s Mong Leng texts, but there is a story in a dialect similar to Mong Leng, presented by Yaj Ntxoov Yias in his book on the Hmong of Mengla county in Yunnan province, which tells of a childless couple acquiring a plant that produces a single giant *txiv zuaj*. When the couple splits the *txiv zuaj* open, a toad comes out and says “Do not kill me, mother and father”. The couple spares the toad’s life and raises him to young manhood. Eventually, after various adventures, he becomes a handsome young man. (Yaj Ntxoov Yias, *Dab Neeg, Kww Txhiaj, Keeb Kwm Nyob Moos Laj* [Folktales, Songs, and Origin Stories from Mengla], Association Communauté Hmong, Javouhey, French Guiana, 1992, pp. 217-225.)

- **zuam** ‘(classifier *tug*) tick, a kind of parasitic insect’ (Xiongs).

- **zuas** ‘to grab hurriedly, to take rapidly’:

Puab zuas tsi tau puab cov rig tsho hlo le vim tas tsev kub nyab luj hwv lawm
 ‘They cannot hurriedly grab their clothes because the house is already burning badly’
 (Xiongs).

- **zuav** ‘to dent, to have a depressed place; dented, depressed, bent in’ (Xiongs).

- **zwb** ‘to sit on the ground’ (Xiongs):

Tsi xob zwb koj cov rig tsho yuav lu aav
 ‘Don’t sit on the ground, you will dirty your clothes’ (Xiongs).

- **zwm** ‘to depend on, to rely on, to join in with, to belong to’ (Xiongs), from Chinese *rù* ‘to join, to become a member of’:

Peb zum [typo for zwm] rua lub nroog Milwaukee
 ‘we rely on Milwaukee; we are in the Milwaukee area or boundary’ (Xiongs).

Milwaukee is the U.S. city where the Xiongs’ dictionary was written.

- **zwm**, Chinese *rù* ‘to put into’:

muab zwm xaab ‘to put into the coffin (a dead body)’ (Xiongs).