

Exploring the Core Word "Hair" in *Qutadġu Bilig* by Yusuf Khas Hajib

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ABSTRACT

The study of core words in a language mostly depends on various classical resources. This article investigate the core word "Hair" in one of the classic masterpieces- *Qutadġu Bilig* (*Wisdom of Glory*) within the framework of semantic field theory. Through studying the literature, we found that there are two types of "Hair" in the *Qutadġu Bilig*, which include human hair and animal hair. There are some different specific names for the hair both of human and animal. Although undergone some changes in the long history, most of them still retain the same sound and meaning.

Keywords: Core word, *Qutadġu Bilig*, "Hair".

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of core words has long been practiced in many languages globally. The People's Republic of China is a large family of 56 ethnic groups, with rich linguistic and cultural resources. The language and culture of each ethnic group in China is an integral part of Chinese culture. The cultural landscape of the north western China has always been one of the coexistence and exchange of multiple cultures and civilizations.

In the course of the long-standing intermingling of the languages and cultures of various ethnic groups, the *Qutadġu Bilig* can be considered a classic masterpiece. It was written in 11th century by Yusuf Khas Hajib, a famous scholar of middle ages. *Qutadġu Bilig* is a long admonishing poem with 13290 lines, which written in fresh, symbolic and vivid language. Its content involves major social issues such as politics, economy, military and

law, and occupies an important position in the history of Uyghur literature.

Qutadġu Bilig is one of the best materials for investigating the core words of Uyghur and some other related languages. This paper discusses for the first time the word 'Hair' in *Qutadġu Bilig* from the perspective of the core words.

In order to explore the changes of core words in *Qutadġu Bilig*, we need to employ some other related literature, such as "Dictionary of Turkic" (DLT), "Legend of Uğus Khan" (Oğ), "Maitrisimit or Maitreya-samiti"(MS), "An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish" (ED) and some other historical inscriptions. On the one hand, these resources help us to further understand the meaning of the core words appearing in *Qutadġu Bilig*, and on the other hand, they also help us to know the changes that have taken place in the long history.

2. THE CORE WORD "HAIR"

American linguist Morris Swadesh believes that a language has a core set of words. These core words are more important than other words in the language, it is stable and don't change easily. And he also believes that the core vocabulary in all

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languages is the same or quite similar. It is possible to trace the relationship between different languages by studying core vocabulary. He initially proposed 200 core vocabulary, which was later reduced to 100.^{[1]128}

His "100-item basic vocabulary list" (see Table 1) is an internationally accepted form with universal applicability in most languages. In this paper, we select "Hair" as a core word for discussion.

Table 1 Swadesh's 100-item basic vocabulary list¹

1	I	26	root	51	breast	76	rain
2	you	27	bark	52	heart	77	stone
3	we	28	skin	53	liver	78	sand
4	this	29	flesh	54	drink	79	earth
5	that	30	blood	55	eat	80	cloud
6	who	31	bone	56	bite	81	Smoke
7	what	32	grease	57	see	82	fire
8	not	33	egg	58	hear	83	ash
9	all	34	horn	59	know	84	burn
10	many	35	tail	60	sleep	85	path
11	one	36	feather	61	die	86	mountain
12	two	37	hair	62	kill	87	red
13	big	38	head	63	swim	88	green
14	long	39	ear	64	fly	89	yellow
15	small	40	eye	65	walk	90	white
16	woman	41	nose	66	come	91	black
17	man	42	mouth	67	lie	92	night
18	person	43	tooth	68	sit	93	hot
19	fish	44	tongue	69	stand	94	cold
20	bird	45	claw	70	give	95	full
21	dog	46	foot	71	say	96	new
22	louse	47	knee	72	sun	97	good
23	tree	48	hand	73	moon	98	round
24	seed	49	belly	74	star	99	dry
25	leaf	50	neck	75	water	100	name

"Hair-毛" is ranked 37th in the "100-item basic vocabulary list". Compared with "feather-羽" which is biased towards birds, "hair-毛" usually refers to the hair on humans and beasts. There are at least 9 words related to "毛"(hair) in *Qutadğu Bilig*: yuñ, sač, zülfi, čalbaş, saqal, qaš, yülüg, küj (ž) ek, yal.

Yuñ: 毛. there is only one case in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

Qimiz süit ya yuñ yağ ya yoğrut qurut. 奶酒、乳浆、毛、脂、酸奶和干酪 (milk wine, milk syrup, wool, fat, yogurt and cheese).

Yadim ya kidiz hem erež ewke tut. (4442)^[2] 使居室舒适的毡毯也来自他们。(The blankets that make the room comfortable also come from them).

Judging from the usage in the literature, "yuñ" refers to the hair on animals.

The appearance of the word in related literature is shown as following:

"yuñ- 毛 . 骆驼毛或羊毛。(Camel hair or wool)"(DLT, vol.3).^{[3]352}

The term has only appeared in these two literature. However, the word retains the same sound and meaning to this day.

Sač: 头发 (Hair).

Yalıñ yüzlüg oğlan tolun teg yüzi. 他们有满月似的脸庞。(They have moon-like faces).

Bodı tal qara sač bediz teg özi. (2914) 细腰黑发，象画中人一般。(With thin waist and black hair, just looks like the person in the painting).

This word is seen in *Qutadğu Bilig* five times, and it means "头发" (hair) and is only used for human.

Its appearance in related literature is shown as following:

"arsal sač": 褐色的头发 (brown hair) (DLT, vol. 1).^{[3]114}

"közleri al, sačlari, qašlari qara erdiler erdi. 眼睛是鲜红的，头发和眉毛是黑的。(Eyes are bright red, hair and eyebrows are black)" (Oğ, line 6).^{[4]29}

"...öñlüg köküš sačliğ, 青色头发。(Cyan hair)" (MS).^{[5]123}

"bunča bodun sačin qulqaqın. 这么多的百姓剪去了头发。(So many people have cut their hair...)"(BLQ, line 12).^{[6]166}

"sač- hair: Only refers to the hair on the human head"(ED).^{[7]794}

In the modern Uyghur language, this word is used in two phonetic forms, "sač" and "čač". The pronunciation and meaning have not changed, and it is also a basic word.

Zülfi: 漆黑、鬓发、头发。(hair on the temples, hair).

Qodi idti kesme yaruq yüz tudi, 天空散开秀发，低垂于地面。(The sky spreads its hair, hanging down on the ground).

1. Li Fuyin, Introduction to Semantics [M].Beijing: Peking University Press, 2006, p128.

Seviüg zülfi toldi yuqaru qodi. (3284) 宇宙上下，漆黑一片。(The universe is pitch black up and down).

There is only one exception to this term found in *Qutadğu Bilig*, and it has not appeared in other related literature. However, the phonetic form of "zulfi" is still used in modern Uyghur, generally referring only to "hair on the temples".

Čalbaş: 花白的头发(Gray hair).

Yusuf čalbaşı yigitlikke ökünüp. (C80) 头发已花白的优素甫对往日的遗憾。(Yusuf, who has gray hair, regrets the past).

There is only one case of this term in *Qutadğu Bilig*, and it has not appeared in other related documents.

Saqal: 胡须 (Beard).

Yalıñ yüzliüg erdim pütürdi saqal. 白净的脸上长满了胡须。(His white face was covered with beards).

Qara quzğun erdim quğu qıldı čal. (1098) 鸦翅似的黑发变成了鹅羽。(The crow wing-like black hair turned into white hair like goose feathers).

There are 10 cases of "saqal" in *Qutadğu Bilig*, all of which refer to the "beard" of a person.

Its appearance and meaning in related literature are as following:

"aq saqal er, 白胡子老人(old man with white beard)" (DLT, Vol.1).^{[3]88}

"yanida aq saqalluğ muz saçluğ uzun uzluğ bir qart kişi turur. 在他身旁有位银须皓发的老人。(There was an old man with silver beard and bright hair beside him)"(Oğ, line 312).^{[4]39}

"saqal: Beard, whiskers(胡子、胡须)" (ED).^{[7]808}

The word retains the same sound and meaning to this day.

Qaş: 眉毛(Eyebrows).

Begi yarlıği bolsa edgü söze, 君王的旨令若是金玉良言, (The king's decree is the golden saying).

Qulı köñli yükser yazar qaş köze. (1809) 臣仆眉开眼笑, 新化怒放。(The servants' eyebrows are open and smiling, and are wild with joy).

Its appearance in related literature:

"qaş- 眉: 眼睛上方的眉毛。(Eyebrow. The eyebrows above the eyes)" (DLT, vol.3).^{[3]147}

"közleri saçları qaşları qara erdiler, 眼睛、头发和眉毛是黑的。(Eyes, hair and eyebrows are black)"(Oğ, line 6).^{[4]29}

"qaş- Eyebrows (眉毛)"(ED).^{[7]669}

This word also has some other meanings, such as "Jade", "side of a river" and so on. The word retains the same sound and meaning to this day.

Yülüg: 美丽的须眉 (Beautiful beard and eyebrows).

Yüzi körki körklüg kerek xem yülüg, 大臣还应须眉堂堂, 仪表非凡(The minister should be dignified and handsome).

Qilınči köni tegse helqge ülüg. (2208) 行为正直, 博得人们喜欢。(be upright in behaviours to gain people's favour).

There are 8 cases of this term in *Qutadğu Bilig*, all of which mean "beautiful beard and eyebrows". In addition, it has not appeared in other related literature.

Küžek: 一团头发、一缕头发、辫发(a ball of hair, a strand of hair, braided hair).

Küžek yazdı rumi qizi örtti yüz, 东罗马姑娘垂散了秀美的长发。(An Eastern Roman girl left her beautiful long hair untied).

Qara saç boduği ažuñ toldi tüz. (4885) 遮去姣容, 大地和发色溶为一体。(Covering the beautiful face, and the earth and hair colour melt into being as a whole).

There are 2 cases of this term in *Qutadğu Bilig*, which means "辫发、一缕头发 (braided hair, a strand of hair)".

The appearance of this word in the related literature is as following:

"küžik- 鬃发、鬓角 (hair on the temples, sideburns)" (DLT, Vol. 1).^{[3]412}

"küjek- a strand of hair or something similar" (ED).^{[7]696}

Yal: 鬓毛 (Temple hair). There is only one case in *Qutadğu Bilig*.

Tümen arzu nimet yediñ inqlenip. 你倍享福禄, 养尊处优。(You enjoy times of the blessing and the fortune, pamper yourself).

Boyun yal bedüttiñ buqa teg qilip. (5801) 公牛似的劲颈肥硕无比。(Being as fat as a bull.)

The meaning of the word "鬓毛(sideburns)" is not expressed in the translation, and this meaning can be seen in the sentences in the relevant literature.

Its appearance in related literature is shown as following:

"马鬃也说'yal'。(It is also called 'yal' when referring to the horse temples)" (DLT, Vol.3).^{[3]11}

"ya: 1- Horse's temples(马的鬃毛)"(ED).^{[7]916}

In modern Uyghur language, the same pronunciation and meaning have been retained to this day.

3. CONCLUSION

The words under the concept of "毛 (hair)" in *Qutadġu Bilig* include two types of words, human hair and animal hair. The words "sač, zülfi, čalbaš, saqal, qaš, küj (ž)ek" are related to the hair on the human body, among which the four words "sač, zülfi, saqal, qaš," have been retained with the same pronunciation and meaning to this day. The three words "yuŋ, yülüg, yal" are related to animal hair, among them two words "yuŋ, yal" have the same pronunciation and meaning to this day.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Sufeinuer Saifuding wrote the some part of the main text; Yidayati Yanitake wrote the abstract, introduction and some part of the main text, meanwhile, contributed to revising and editing; Aibibula Tuersun collected the materials.

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