

*Hair is the retainer of prana*



**Hair is closely connected with many brain functions. Old people, as they lose their hair, lose much of their memory and become weaker.**

*From Theosophical Glossary: Hair.*

Occult philosophy considers the hair (whether human or animal) as the natural receptacle and *retainer of* the vital essence which often escapes with other emanations from the body.<sup>1</sup> It is closely connected with many of the brain functions — for instance memory. With the ancient Israelites the cutting of the hair and beard was a sign of defilement, and “the Lord said unto Moses . . . they shall not make baldness upon their head, *etc.*”<sup>2</sup> “Baldness,” whether natural or artificial, was a sign of calamity, punishment, or grief, as when Isaiah<sup>3</sup> enumerates, “instead of well-set hair baldness,” among the evils that are ready to befall the chosen people. And again, “on all their heads baldness and every beard cut.”<sup>4</sup> The Nazarite was ordered to let his hair and beard grow, and never to permit a razor to touch them. With the Egyptians and Buddhists it was only the initiated priest or ascetic to whom life is a burden, who shaved. The Egyptian priest was supposed to have become master of his body, and hence shaved his head for cleanliness; yet the Hierophants wore their hair long. The Buddhist still shaves his head to this day — as sign of scorn for life and health. Yet Buddha, after shaving his hair when he first became a mendicant, let it grow again and is always represented with the top-knot of a Yogi.<sup>5</sup> The Hindu priests and Brahmans, and almost all the castes, shave the rest of the head but leave a long lock to grow from the centre of the crown. The ascetics of India wear their hair long, and so do the war-like Sikhs, and almost all the Mongolian peoples. At Byzantium and Rhodes the shaving of the beard was prohibited by law, and in Sparta the cutting of the beard was a mark of slavery and servitude. Among the Scandinavians, we are

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<sup>1</sup> [Cf. “The hair is . . . but an ‘accumulator’ of the energy of him who grew it.” *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111), p. 337; 3<sup>rd</sup> Combined ed.]

<sup>2</sup> *Leviticus* xxi, 1-5

<sup>3</sup> iii, 24

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, xv, 2

<sup>5</sup> [Uchnīcha, also Buddhōchnīcha, is explained as “a protuberance on Buddha’s cranium, forming a hair-tuft.” This curious description is given by the Orientalists, varied by another which states that Uchnīcha was:

“. . . originally a conical or flame-shaped hair tuft on the crown of a Buddha, in later ages represented as a fleshy excrescence on the skull itself.”

This ought to read quite the reverse; for esoteric philosophy would say: Originally an orb with the *third eye* in it, which degenerated later in the human race into a fleshy protuberance, to disappear gradually, leaving in its place but an occasional flame-coloured aura, perceived only through clairvoyance, and when the exuberance of spiritual energy causes the (now concealed) “third eye” to radiate its superfluous magnetic power.\* At this period of our racial development, it is of course the “Buddhas” or Initiates alone who enjoy in full the faculty of the “third eye,” as it is more or less atrophied in everyone else. — Cf. *Theosophical Glossary: Uchnīcha*

\* Look up aura of the Yogi in trance, from *The True Colours of Man*, our fifth Major Work, on page 5 of this study. — ED. PHIL.]

told, it was considered a disgrace, “a mark of infancy,” to cut off the hair. The whole population of the island of Ceylon (the Buddhist Singhalese) wear their hair long. So do the Russian, Greek and Armenian clergy, and monks. Jesus and the Apostles are always represented with their hair long, but *fashion* in Christendom proved stronger than Christianity, the old ecclesiastical rules<sup>1</sup> enjoining the clergy “to wear their hair and beards long.”<sup>2</sup> The Templars were commanded to wear their beards long. Samson wore his hair long, and the biblical allegory shows that health and strength and the very life are connected with the length of the hair. If a cat is shaved it will die in nine cases out of ten. A dog whose coat is not interfered with lives longer and is more intelligent than one whose coat is shaven. Many old people as they lose their hair lose much of their memory and become weaker. While the life of the Yogis is proverbially long, the Buddhist priests (of Ceylon and elsewhere) are not generally long-lived. Mussulmen shave their heads but wear their beards; and as their head is always covered, the danger is less.

### The Yanadi seer grows his hair and lets no razor pass his head.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (A MYSTERIOUS RACE) IV p. 290; [full text in our Living the Life Series, under the title “The Nellore Yanadis.”]

*The seer grows his hair and lets no razor pass his head.* The [typical] Yanadis shave their heads with the sharp end of a glass piece.

### Yet fashion, which has somehow succeeded in making respectability its queer ally, forbids civilized society wearing their hair long.

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV (9), June 1883, p. 219. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (EDITOR’S NOTE TO “SHOULD MEN CUT THEIR HAIR?”) IV p. 503.

[That short article, by Alexander Wilder M.D., F.T.S., was written in defence of the practice of wearing long hair. It is followed by this following comment by H.P. Blavatsky:]

Fashion — which has somehow succeeded in making “respectability” its queer ally — forbids Christian civilized society wearing their hair long at this period of our century. In this the so-called Christian civilization is guilty of inconsistency, and its clergy of disrespect, since Jesus and his Apostles are shown to have worn long hair — every one of them except Paul. The *Nazars* of the Old Testament never allowed the razor to touch their head. The *Āryan Rishis*, the *Yogis*, the *Sadhus* of every kind wore and still wear their hair long. The initiates of Tibet do the same. In Europe, the Greek and Russian clergy alone, along with their monks, have preserved the wise habit, and the longevity of some of the last named is *proverbial*.



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<sup>1</sup> *Apostolic Constitutions*, lib. 1, c. 3; [concerning the adornment of ourselves, and the sin which arises from thence.]

<sup>2</sup> See Riddle’s *Christian Antiquities* [1839, p. 594 & *fn.*]

**Samson, the personification of the Sun and the Jewish Hercules, speaks of his seven locks which, when cut off, will deprive him of his physical strength, i.e., kill the material man, leaving only the spiritual.**

**But the Bible conceals purposely the esoteric truth, that the seven locks symbolize the septenary physical man.**

Four *Fragments*, first published in *Lucifer*, Vol. XVIII (108), August 1896, pp. 449-455. The following *Fragment*, on Initiations, was republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FRAGMENTS) VII pp. 275-76.<sup>1</sup>

In a secret work upon the Mysteries and the rites of Initiation, in which very rough but correct prints are given of the sacramental postures, and of the trials to which the postulant was subjected, the following details are found:

(1) The neophyte — representing the Sun, as “*Sahasrakirana*,” “he of the thousand rays” — is shown kneeling before the “Hierophant.” The latter is in the act of cutting off *seven locks* of the neophyte’s long hair,<sup>2</sup> and in the following (2) illustration, the postulant’s bright crown of golden beams is thrown off, and replaced by a wreath of sharp ligneous spines, symbolizing the loss.<sup>3</sup> This was enacted in India. In trans-Himālayan regions it was the same.

In order to become a “perfect One,” the Sakridāgāmin (“he who will receive new birth,” *lit.*) had, among other trials, to descend into Pātāla, the “nether world,” after which process only he could hope to become an “Anāgāmin” — “one who will be reborn no more.” The full Initiate had the option of either entering this second Path by appearing at will in the world of men under a human form, or he could choose to first rest in the world of Gods (the Devachan of the Initiates), and then only be reborn on this our earth. Thus, the next stage shows the postulant preparing for this journey.

(3) Every kind of temptation — we have no right to enumerate these or speak of them — was being placed on his way. If he came out victorious over these, then the further Initiation was proceeded with; if he fell — it was delayed, often entirely lost for him.

These rites lasted seven days.



<sup>1</sup> [These brief notes from H.P. Blavatsky’s pen on a number of unrelated subjects appear from their context to have been written much earlier than the actual date of their publication. Some passages in them are almost identical with certain sentences in *Isis Unveiled*. It is most likely that these notes belong to the period of 1885-86, and are for this reason published at this particular point of the chronological series. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>2</sup> See *Judges*, xvi, again, where Samson, the symbolical personification of the Sun, the Jewish Hercules, speaks of his *seven locks* which, when cut off, will deprive him of his (physical) strength, i.e., kill the material man, leaving only the spiritual. But the Bible fails to explain, or rather, conceals purposely, the esoteric truth, that the seven locks symbolize the septenary physical or terrestrial man, thus cut off and separated from the spiritual. To this day the High Lamas cut off during public consecrations a lock of the hair of the candidates for the religious life, repeating a formula to the effect that the six others will follow, when the “upāsaka” IS READY. The lock of hair or tonsure of the Roman Catholic priests is a relic of the same mystery-idea.

<sup>3</sup> No need of explaining that Sañjñā — pure spiritual conscience — is the inner perception of the neophyte (or chela) and Initiate; the scorching of it by the too ardent beams of the Sun being symbolical of the terrestrial passions. Hence the seven locks are symbolical of the seven cardinal sins, and as to the seven cardinal virtues — to be gained by the Sakridāgāmin (the candidate “for new birth”) they could be attained by him only through severe trial and suffering.



*Aura 5. Yogi in trance*

**The fact that the Roman Church has abandoned the tradition preserved by the Greek Church, in that it has adopted the solar tonsure, demonstrates that the Church of Rome is the one that has wandered farthest from the religion of the mystical Christ.<sup>1</sup>**

First published in *Le Lotus*, Paris, Vol. II (9), December 1887, pp. 160-173. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (NOTES ON ABBÉ ROCA'S "ESOTERICISM OF CHRISTIAN DOGMA") VIII, pp. 378-79. Translated from the French by Boris de Zirkoff.

I have not the slightest intention of hurting the feelings of those who believe in Jesus, the carnalised Christ, but I feel myself compelled to emphasize our own belief while explaining it, because the Abbé Roca wishes to identify it with that of the Roman Church; never can these two beliefs be united, unless the Catholicism of the Latin Church returns to its earliest tenets, those of the Gnostics. For the Church of Rome was Gnostic — just as much as the Marcionites were — until the beginning and even the middle of the second century; Marcion, the famous Gnostic, did not separate from it until the year 136, and Tatian left it still later. And why did they leave it? Because they had become heretics, the Church pretends; but the history of these cults contributed by esoteric manuscripts gives us an entirely different version. These famous Gnostics, they tell us, separated themselves from the Church because they could not agree to accept a Christ *made flesh*, and thus began the process of carnalising the Christ-principle. It was then also that the metaphysical allegory experienced its first transformation — that allegory which was the fundamental doctrine of all the Gnostic fraternities.<sup>2</sup>

One fact is enough to prove that the Roman Church has abandoned even the tradition preserved by the Greek Church, in that it has adopted the *solar tonsure*<sup>3</sup> proper to the Egyptian priests of the *public* temples, and to the lamas and bonzes of the *popular* Buddhist cult: this is sufficient to demonstrate that the Church of Rome is the one that has wandered farthest from the real religion of the mystical Christ.

Therefore, the time is still far distant when “all the people of the universe will form one flock under one shepherd.” Human nature will have to be completely modified before it occurs.



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<sup>1</sup> Consult “Against Ecclesiastical Christianity,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> The Gnostics were actually divided into various fraternities, such as: Essenes, Therapeuts, Nazarenes or Nazars (from which Jesus of Nazareth); “James,” the Lord’s brother, head of the Church of Jerusalem, was a Gnostic to his fingertips, an ascetic of the old Biblical type, *i.e.*, a Nazar dedicated to asceticism from his birth. The razor had never touched his head or beard. He was such a one as Jesus is represented to be in legends or pictures and such as are all the “Brother-Adepts” of every country; from the yogi-fakir of India to the greatest Mahātmās among the Initiates of the Himālayas.

<sup>3</sup> Magnetic and psychic force resides in the hair; hence the myth of Samson and others like him in antiquity.