

להסיר מכשול ע"ז ממחנונו

נדרשנו לאשר שאלונו: בדבר פאות נוכריות אשר יש עליהם איזה שהוא הכשר שאין בהם שיער מתקרובת עבודה זרה, האם ניתן לסמוך עליהם?

תשובה: כידוע, בשנת תשס"ד נדרשו רבותינו גדולי הפוסקים שבדורנו לבירור שאלת תקרובת עבודה זרה בפיאות נוכריות המעורב בהם שיער אדם שהובא מהודו, מרן הגרי"ש אלישיב ומרן הגר"ש הלוי ואזנר זצוק"ל, ולהבחיל"ח מרן הגר"נ קרליץ שליט"א, והרבנים הגאונים חברי הבד"צ העדה החרדית ובראשם הגאב"ד ר"ט וויס שליט"א, והעלו כולם לאסור פאות כאלו בלבישה.

וכתב מרן הגרי"ש אלישיב זצוק"ל (בתשובתו מיום ה' סיון תשס"ד): "אסור להשתמש בפיאות נוכריות העשויות משיער אדם שהובא מהודו", עכ"ל. ובמכתב נוסף (מיום י"א סיון תשס"ד כתב בתו"ד, ובקובץ תשובות ח"ג סי' קיח) ז"ל: "הדבר פשוט שאומרים בזה סתם עכו"ם לעבודה זרה שהרי עצם מטרת המתגלחים הוא לעבודה זרה", עכ"ל. ומרן הגר"ש הלוי ואזנר זצוק"ל כתב במכתב, ז"ל: "מי יודע אם גם זה גרם להרבה מקרים גופניים ונפשיים בבתי ישראל", עכ"ל.

וכבר התברר בזמננו שבתעשיית השיער בעולם מצוי ריבוי גדול מאד של שיער אדם שמקורו ממאות מקדשי עבודה זרה בהודו, וקשה ביותר לברר מקור השיער שבשווקים, על כן אסרו רבותינו כל שיער - שאין בירור גמור מהיכן הוא מגיע.

וכפי שעלה בידינו בבירורים, אי אפשר לסדר בשום אופן השגחה על דבר זה, ואפילו שיער הבא ממדינות הרחוקות מהודו - יכול להיות מקורו בהודו. וכמובן שאי אפשר לסמוך על המפעלים, היבואנים והסוחרים האומרים שהם בעצמם גזזו את השיער במקומם. וחייבים ע"פ הלכה שיהיה פיקוח צמוד של משגיחים יהודים יראי שמים משעת גזיזתו ועד סוף, דבר שאינו אפשרי כלל. ועל כן דעתנו דעת תורה שכל ההכשרים שניתנו בזה אין בהם ממש ואין לסמוך עליהם, ושומר נפשו ירחק מהם.

והננו מרגישים חובה בעצמינו למחות על כך שניתן הכשר מאיסור ע"ז על פאות האסורות ע"פ הלכות הצניעות, (כארוכות ופרועות ובמראה טבעי), ואשר כל גדולי ישראל אסרו לתת הכשר לפאות כאלו. וכשם שלא יעלה על הדעת לתת הכשר על בשר שהתבשל בחלב ולומר כי לכה"פ הוא נשחט 'כהלכה', כך אי אפשר לתת הכשר מעבודה זרה לדבר הנוגד את דיני הצניעות ואסור בלבישה, והרי זה גורם לביטול הצניעות של בנות ישראל.

ובזכות שבנות ישראל יזהרו ממכשולים חמורים אלו, נזכה במהרה לגאולה שלמה בב"א. ועל זה באנו על החתום להציל רבים מעוון, בין המצרים תשע"ז לפ"ק

משה מרדכי קראפ

דומ"צ זרב הגבעה
הדרומית מודיעין

שמעון בעדני

חבר מועצת חכמי
התורה

יהודה סילמן

אב"ד בי"ד בני ברק

שריאל רוזנברג

ראב"ד בני ברק

חיים מאיר הלוי

ואזנר

רב אב"ד זכרון מאיר

The Original Letter signed:

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ועל זה באנו על החתום להציל רבים מעוון, "בין המצרים" תשע"ז לפ"ק

לויאל וזנר זצוק"ל

לויאל וזנר

לויאל וזנר

חיים מאיר הלוי וזנר

Removing the obstacle of Avodah Zara (idol worship) from our camp

בעצמינו למחות על כך שניתן הכשר מאיסור ע"ז על פאות האסורות ע"פ חרזות ובמראה טבעי, ואשר כל גדולי ישראל אסרו לתת הכשר לפאות כאלו. לתת הכשר על בשר שהתבשל בחלב ולומר כי לכה"פ הוא נשחט 'כהלכה', מעבודה זרה לדבר הנגוד את דיני הצניעות ואסור בלבישה, והרי זה גורם שראל.
 ל'יהרו ממכשולים חמורים אלו, זככה במהרה לגאולה שלמה בב"א.
 ו על החתום להציל רבים מעונן, בין המצרים תשע"ז לפ"ק

משה מרדכי קראפ	שמעון בעדני	יהודה סילמן	אבידן רוזנברג
דומ"צ ורב הגבעה הדרומית מודיעין	חבר מועצת חכמי התורה	אב"ד ביד בני ברק	אב"ד בני ברק

We were presented with the following *halachic* question: There are some wigs on the market which have a *hechsher* (kosher certification) claiming that they do not contain hair from *avoda zara* (idol worship) sacrifices. Can we rely on this *hechsher*?

Our answer: As is well-known, in the year 5764, the *rabbanim* and great *poskim* in our generation have ruled that wigs which contain any human hair from India that was sacrificed for *avoda zara* are unequivocally forbidden and may not be worn. (*MaRan HaGaon HaRav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt"l*, *MaRan HaGaon HaRav Shmuel HaLevi Vosner zt"l*, *yb"l MaRan HaGaon HaRav Nissim Karelitz shlit"a*, and the *rabbanim* and *gaonim* of the *Beis Din Tzedek Ha'eida Hachareidus* lead by *HaGaon Av Beis Din HaRav Tuvya Weiss shlit"a*.)

MaRan HaGaon HaRav Elyashiv zt"l has written, "It is forbidden to use wigs which are made from any human hair which come from India."¹ In a subsequent letter the *Rav* added, "There is a general halachic rule that, "סתם עכו"ם לע"ז" - Any act that a non-Jew performs which is an act that could be done for *avoda zara*, (even if his intention is not known), it is accepted that his intent was for *avodah zara*.² Indeed, *MaRan HaGaon HaRav Vosner zt"l* stated the following: "Who knows if the use of these wigs has also been the cause of the many physical and emotional tragedies in Jewish homes, l"a."

It has become known that within the worldwide industry of manufacturing wigs, the majority of human hair originates from the hundreds of idol worshippers in India.

It was confirmed that it is extremely difficult to track down where the hairs on the market originate from. For this reason, our *rabbanim* have ruled that it is forbidden to use any human hair that does not have an absolute verification of its origin.

It has come to our attention that it is clearly impossible under any circumstances to oversee this process. Even hair that comes from countries which are far away from India can still originate from India. As is known, one cannot trust or rely on the manufacturers, merchants, or distributors of hair who claim that they themselves cut off the hair in their home towns.

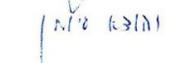
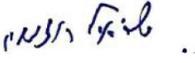
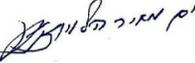
It is obligatory according to *halacha* that a group of Jewish *mashgichim* (supervisors) who fear Heaven must oversee the process - from the time that the hair is cut until it is woven into a wig. This is something which is not possible at all.

Thus our opinion, the *daas Torah* is that all *hechsheirim* that have been given on the wigs are invalid and one cannot rely on them. And one who guards his soul should distance himself from them.

We feel obligated to protest against the giving of a *hechsher* on wigs which are nonetheless forbidden according to the laws of modesty (e.g. long, loose flowing, and natural-looking wigs), upon which all *gedolei yisroel* have prohibited. One would never consider giving a *hechsher* on meat that was cooked in milk claiming, "Well at least it was slaughtered according to 'halacha'." So too, it is impossible to give a *hechsher* from *avoda zara* on something which is against *tznius* and is therefore forbidden to be worn. Indeed, these wigs cause the erosion of *tznius* among Jewish daughters.

In the merit that *Bnos Yisroel* will guard themselves from such severe transgressions, we will be *zoche* to the *geula shleima b'korov*.

Thus, we undersign in order to save the public from sin. Tammuz 5777

				
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דומ"צ ורב הגבעה הדרומית מודיעין	חבר מועצת חכמי התורה	אב"ד ביד בני ברק	ראב"ד בני ברק	אב"ד בני ברק
				ואזנר
				רב אב"ד זכרון מאיר

THE TRUTH EXPOSED

DANGER: AVODA ZARA IS EVERYWHERE!

FACT: Recent investigations have exposed that the majority of hair currently being used in the wig industry is and always has been Indian Temple hair.

FACT: The human hair trade is unregulated and has no supervision. Raw and processed hair is a billion-dollar industry saturated with scams and corruption.

FACT: Because of the copious supply and reasonable price, Indian temple hair is being bought and re-labeled as European, Brazilian, Mongolian, Russian, Chinese, Peruvian, and Uzbek Hair.

FACT: India's hair exporters know that Jews cannot use their hair, so Indian hair is sent far from India to be mixed with other local hair in an effort to camouflage its use. Russia, Europe, South America, and China all import Indian hair and expertly mix it with their own hair so that buyers will never know.

FACT: Indian temple hair can be stripped of pigments to look and feel like natural blond hair without diminishing its quality.

FACT: There are 28 temples in India. In just ONE of the temples, Tirumala, 85,000 heads are shaved daily in holiday season, 40,000 otherwise.

FACT: Hindus practice tonsure (shaving the hair from the head) at least once per lifetime and many perform this ritual multiple times and have it ritually shaved as an offering at the temple.

FACT: Indian temples collect the shorn sacrificed hair (4,000 tons yearly) and sell it at public auctions to international buyers; this raises an astounding \$800,000,000.00 USD annually for the temple's treasury.

FACT: India's population is 1.21 billion, of which 85% are Hindus. With those demographics, India is the only country that has the capacity to supply human hair at a global level.

FACT: There is no shortage of free hair from the pilgrims for the Indian temples to auction off to exporters. The only place in the world that has organized commercial quantities of hair is from India where approximately 600 million women ritually donate their hair to the Hindu idols. It makes the most sense to buy where the supply is high and the price is reasonable.

FACT: It takes an average of five women growing their hair for approximately 8 years to create one long wig. This suggests the need for tremendous amounts of a constant hair supply in order to keep up with just the Jewish wig niche of the market. The only logical source for enough hair at those lengths and quantities would be from India.

FACT: No other genetic structure is as similar to European and North American hair as that of Indian hair. Indian temple hair is of high quality and is very versatile. Indian women take exceedingly good care of their hair and don't use any chemicals, bleaches, or dyes. It can be easily processed to look and feel almost exactly like European, Russian, or Brazilian.

FACT: European women don't generally have naturally black hair, making it almost impossible to have large supplies of naturally dark hair available to the market.

FACT: In European and South American countries, a minority of the hair market is made up of hair collection from villages. The village collectors are comprised of armed Mafia agents who "claim" to travel to poor villages and cut hair in exchange for cash.

FACT: Due to Mafia control, laymen are unable to watch or be involved in the process.

FACT: In many instances, the agents will sell "raw untouched ponytails," which truthfully have been processed and mixed.

FACT: It is impossible for even an expert or Mashgiach to ascertain the country of origin.

FACT: According to investigators, the only possible way to verify with complete certainty the origin of hair in any given wig is to watch the process first-hand from step A to Z.

FACT: While major wig brands and kosher supervisors have very good intentions of using non Indian hair, they are being duped by their suppliers who often are selling camouflaged Indian hair.

FACT: China is the main importer of Indian hair, followed by Brazil, Hong Kong, Italy and the United States.

FACT: Nearly all wigs in the Jewish market are processed and sewn into a cap by Chinese factories.

FACT: Chinese factories operate entirely free of regulation or supervision. They have been known to provide false labeling about product origin, and switching or diluting hair shipments from customers with their own cheaper processed hair.

FACT: A customer sending their own virgin hair to China, should highly suspect that the virgin hair may be mixed or swapped with unidentified (Indian temple) hair. There is no guarantee that hair will not be tampered with.

FACT: Chinese wig manufacturers oftentimes integrate some human hair into synthetic wigs.

FACT: There is absolutely no way to know with certainty where the hair in any wig originates from.

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▶ 98% of all human hair in the world originates from Indian hair. That includes all colors, dark hair, light hair, as well as color treated blonde hair.

- ▶ With a population of roughly 1.3 billion people, of which just over 600 million are women, India certainly has the capacity to supply human hair at a global level.
- ▶ There are no regulations whatsoever in the hair industry. Thus, many countries will re-label Indian hair as their own, and that includes: Russia, Europe, Brazil, Peru, China, Bolivia, Malaysia, Italy, Indonesia, Ukraine, and many more.
- ▶ Once hair has been processed, no expert can tell where the original hair has come from. There's no way to feel the hair, and ascertain its origin.
- ▶ Most wigs are processed in China. The Chinese manufacturers operate within a market which lacks supervision or regulation. They have been known to provide false labeling in their products, and hair switching. China buys an enormous amount of Indian temple hair.
- ▶ Although there are some women in poor villages who will sell their hair, this is a very small minority, making up about 1% of the hair industry. It's more likely that the agents are being dishonest about the hair's origin.
- ▶ I personally know people in Los Angeles who buy Indian hair and then sell it to Jewish people claiming the hair is "kosher" and is from European countries.
- ▶ People have even advised me to lie about the source of the hair (being from India) as this would financially benefit my company and is the norm in this industry, but I don't want to be unethical.

Vince Selva

Indo Asian Human Hair Int.Inc.

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ברכת מרובה למע"כ הגאון חרב ר' ישראל הלוי בעלסקי שליט"א
חנני שולח למעכתר"ח שליט"א חתשובה שקיבלתי ממרן חנני"ש שליט"א לחעביר לרומכתר"ח.
וכדי לחקל חקריאח הדפסתי חעתק תשובתו

ידידו נאמנו דוש"ת
שמחח חכהן קלאר

בס"ד י"א סיון תשס"ד

כבוד הרב הגאון נודע למשגב מוהר"ר ישראל הלוי בעלסקי שליט"א
ברכה ושלוש רב

עברתי על מכתב כת"ר בענין הפאוח וכו' נאמר טענות, א' על עצם האיסור על הפאות הבאים מהדור. ב' גם אם נימא שיש בהם משום חקרוכות ע"ז אין מקום לאוסרם, מקודם נדון על הב', כת"ר כותב "שמעתי מן המומחים שאף שער הבא מהדור רובו לא מתגלחח ע"ז ואף את"ל שיש לחשוש לדין קבוע לא גרע מספק השקול וא"כ משנמכר ונשלח לשאר מקומו. מתערב פעם ב' עם שערח המקום ולדעת הרמב"ם אף ע"ז ניתרת מב' הערובות יר"ד ק"י - לפי"ז במקום שנחערב יזא מותר"

הנה לפי שמסרו לי שבאו מסמך משלטונות הודו ש 75 אחוז השערות המובאות מהדור מאלו שנתגלחו בבית ע"ז שלהם, "גם אם זה להיפך דין קבוע להם כמ"ש בשו"ת דברי חיים ח"ב סי' נ"ז וזל"ש כשהקונה כותב ומבקש ממנו [מן תגוי] שישלח לו כו"כ ותוא שולח מביתו ככה"ג הו"ל כלקח מן הקבוע ולא יחלוק ע"ז וזל"ש - "והגדון של שני הערובות כתוב בשו"ע נחערבו באחרים ונמל מהתערובות? ___ א' לשנים אחרים כו', ובעצם הדבר מה שייך כאן לומר שמתערבים בשערות אחרים הלא כל מדינה ומדינה השערות הוא מסוג אחר ומחיר מיוחד לכ"א ואחד, ואף גם הדמים מודיעים לדעת מאיזה סוג קונה.

עוד כ' "א"א להתחמק מהמון רבוותא דס"ל להלכה כשכיל שבירת מקל כעין זביחה לא נאסרה - ה"ה הרמב"ן והרא"ש והר"ן -".

והנה הטור כס"י קל"ט פסק "אליל שעובדין אותה במקל פירש שמקשקשין לפניו במקל ושבר מקל לפניו נאסר ששבירת מקל דומה לזביחה" וכ"כ בשו"ת שבות יעקב בהשמטות לח"א סי' י"ב זל"ש באשר שילוע ומפורסם הביאו הסמ"ע בדוכתא טובא - שבכל מקום שפסק הטור נגד הרא"ש אכיו צריך להביאו" זאת ועוד ברא"ש שלפנינו כתוב "והא דבעינן זריקה המשתברת היינו בדבר שאין מקריבין ממנו בפנים כגון שבירת מקל".

והר"ן הן בפירושיו על הר"ף והן בחל אמנם הביא דעת הרמב"ן אבל הביא גם דעת החולק עיי"ש.

אשר לטענה הראשונה לפי"ד הרא"ד שליט"א עצם התגלחת עבודתה בכך, וכנראה זה עסימ"ש הרמב"ם בסה"מ מ' ל"ת ה' - ז' זל"ש "וכתנאי שיעבוד כדרכה, כלומר בזכר שדרכה שתיעבד בו כמו פוער לפעור חורק אבן למריקוליס ומעביר שער לכומש" - ובזמן התגלחת הם מזכירים שם האליל והמגלחים אמרו לו על אף שעובדים בשכיל קבלת שכר עבור התגלחת מ"מ אמרו הלוא גם הם מאלה ___? ___? בזה פולחן לע"ז, וככה"ג הדבר ששוט שאומרים בזה סתם עכו"ם לע"ז (עי' חולין י"ג) שהרי עצם מטרת המתגלחים הוא לע"ז.

ומ"ש כת"ר "שנראה לו ברור מגמ' ומסברא שא"א לעשות שום פעולה לקבוע על ידו כלפי איזה חפץ שיהי' עליו דין חקרוכות, אא"כ ייחד החפץ מקודם לע"ז - להיותו עתיד לעשות ממנו חקרוכות לע"ז - כי אין בשום עבודה מעבודת פנים שום חשיבות אא"כ ייעשו בדבר מוקדש מכבד -"

אמנם קי"ל השוחט בחוץ, חטאת העוף - לע"ז חייב משום ע"ז כיון ששחט סי' א' - מתוך העפר הוא ונאסר משום ע"ז, אף שאין לו שום זכות לקבוע ולייחד את העוף לע"ז שהרי הוא הקדש אלא עצם מעשה השחיטה שהוא עושה לע"ז חל עליו דין חקרוכות.

והנה מן הראוי להאריך וכמקום שאמרו להאריך אך בגלל הטרדות הטובבים אותי הוכרחתי להסתפק בה"ל

בברכת התורה
יוסף שלוי אלישיב

INDIAN HAIR Still a Problem in Our Sheitels

(Source numbers are in parentheses, and listed at the end.)

Surprisingly, the issue with Indian hair used for idol worship is still a problem in Jewish wigs. Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt"l and Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch shlita have ruled that wearing wigs from idolatrous practices is forbidden for all Jews. This is because it's benefiting from a product used in avoda zarah, which the Gemara clearly states is forbidden (1). Frum researchers who recently looked into the topic estimate that 99.99% of natural hair wigs for sale contain Indian hair (13) Additionally, much of the hair that is not Indian comes from deceased people (6).

Source of the Hair:

India is the largest exporter of human hair in the world. They exported over 1 million kilograms of hair in 2010 (14). Those sales earned about 238 million dollars to India and the Hindu Indian Temples that year(4).

30 to 40 million people per year visit the Indian Hindu temples to sacrifice their hair. The largest of the Hindu temples, Tirumala, have 40,000 visitors each day coming to offer their hair as a thanksgiving offering to one of their Hindu gods (a process called tonsuring) (3). It says in the Hindu scriptures that one should sacrifice their hair at least once in their lifetime, and Hindus usually do it much more than that (9).

The Hindu worshipers kneel on the ground, bending their heads forward while their hair is shaved, and the hair is then sorted by length before it is bagged and safely stored under lock and key. This "black gold," as it is called, is very valuable and remains heavily guarded until it is sold by e-auction to wig and hair extension companies (4).

From there, the hair usually gets shipped to China first. It is dyed, bleached, curled, straightened, and otherwise processed in China (4,2). The wigs are often manufactured in Chinese factories commissioned by European wig companies (4). The product is then shipped to Europe where it goes through further processing before it is sold with a label saying "European made" or "European hair." The European hair companies do not publicize their products as "made in China" since it would be detrimental to the high-end image they strive for (4).

Logically, one can think about it this way: How many bald European women do you see? Hardly any. Women only shave their hair for one of two main reasons: as a religious offering or because they are starving and as a last resort will sell their hair to put food on the table. Europe is not a starving economy, therefore it doesn't make sense that millions of European woman would shave off their precious hair to make a

little money. Yet, countless wigs are manufactured each year and all of them contain only European hair? How is that possible?

The Tirumala temple alone employs 9,500 full time workers and 10,000 additional laborers to help process the thousands of pounds of hair they collect (4). 85% of the Indian population are Hindu, so hair donation is not in short supply (11). Indian hair is very similar to Caucasian hair in texture and silkiness, making it a desirable material for European wigs (8).

To quote a non-Jewish news source on Indian wigs, "The long and uniformly trimmed hair is called remy hair, which has a big market in Europe and the US, where it is woven into wigs" (8).

To quote another article: "India exported \$190 million-worth of hair and related hair products in 2009-10 and could more than double that to \$470 million by 2013-14, the Department for Commerce and Industry says.

...The U.S. imported over \$900 million-worth of wigs, false beards, eyebrows, eyelashes and similar products in 2010, while the U.K. imported \$79 million-worth and China and Hong Kong \$71 million. Indian hair is in high demand for wig making and hair extensions because it is both 'thin and strong,' explains Chennai-based CurlsNWaves, one of the country's largest exporters of hair. The company also processes hair, stripping it of color and re-dying it"(9).

One must remember that avodah zarah is never batel, one hair in a wig containing thousands of hairs will render the whole wig forbidden (12).

It is a reality that India is supplying wig companies throughout the world with the raw material they require in the amount they need. No other country in the world shaves off their hair on a regular basis. Only starving countries might opt to do such a thing, but their citizens have to possess hair that is similar to Caucasian hair to be useful. China used to be a large supplier of hair from live people, but due to improvement in the Chinese economy in the last 20 years, it is less common to find women willing to part with their treasured hair (7). Hair from deceased people, however, is plentiful in China and throughout the world (6).

A second common source of hair is from deceased people (6). It is a way for people burying the body to make money on the side. Aside from the repulsive fact that the hair came from a dead person, halachicly speaking, using hair from a dead person is assur: "The Shulchan Aruch follows the stringent position of the Rashba, and forbids deriving benefit from hair taken from a human corpse"(6). Deceased people do not object when their hair is shaved before burial, making it a convenient source of wig hair.

How Do You Know the Wig is Kosher?

There is an important point to be made. We don't rely on non-Jews to reassure us that the meat we are buying is kosher, we personally slaughter and place a seal on the meat ourselves to guarantee its kashrus. In fact, non-sealed meat that was handled by a non-Jew is forbidden to be eaten if a Jew wasn't present during that handling (10).

Why are we relying on a non-Jew's word that the hair is not Indian hair or corpse hair? It is known in the wig industry that hair traders commonly lie to buyers in order to make sales (4 and 5). Furthermore, it is known through first-person experience that the Chinese manufacturers will say anything to make a sale (2). They also paste on "rabbinically approved" labels to all types of shaitels, regardless of their origin (2).

The hair used in our wigs passes through many hands before it gets to a Lakewood or Brooklyn sheitel store. Anywhere along that line, a non-Jew could easily lie about the origins of the hair. Remember, all the sheitel stores will only want to purchase the hair if the non-Jewish hair seller assures them it doesn't contain even a little Indian hair.

As far as kosher certification of wigs are concerned, the buyers for wig manufacturers have the ability to easily fabricate where they obtained the hair from. Here is a quote from a book written in 2016 about the wig industry:

"Of course, rabbis are not hair specialists, and confronted by the disorienting sight of crates of hair of different length, shade and texture, they are reliant on what wig manufacturers tell them" (4).

In order ensure Indian hair isn't mixed in with non-indian hair, a Rabbi would have to be guarding the hair continuously from the time it is cut until it is woven into a wig in China. The Chinese are unethical and will blend Indian Hair with other hair when no one is watching. It is financially beneficial for them to do so. (see source #2)

Remember, only some of the wigs sold in sheitel shops have kosher certification to begin with. Many hold no certification of the hair contents, meaning there is no Jew overseeing any part of the production (4).

There is one more point to consider. Hair coming off of a person is not uniform in length (4). In a wig factory, the raw hair is organized in crates by color and length (4). That means that many people's hair ends up in one crate, and even one batch of Indian hair in that crate could end up in many wigs.

Synthetic wigs can be a problem because many also contain real hair to make the wig appear more natural (source #1, towards the end of the article). This has been

confirmed through testing synthetic sheitels. Foreign manufacturers often add human hair to synthetic wigs and still label it “100% synthetic.”

The wigs need to be checked under a microscope by someone properly trained. Some Shatnez rabbanim are trained in this, such as R' Sayagh in Lakewood. (The author of this report is not affiliated with him).

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Sources Listed:

Please see below this list for the actual articles without pictures.

- 1) “Wigs and Idolatry” by Rabbi Yirmiyahu Ullman, shlita for Ohr Somayach. <<https://ohr.edu/1698>>.
- 2) Interview with a shaitel macher with 18 years of experience.
- 3) Culture Unplugged Documentary video called: “Human Hair Trade” Filmed in 2005.
- 4) “Entanglement: The Secret Life of Hair,” a non-fiction book by Emma Tarlo about the wig industry. Published in 2016.
- 5) “The Secret World of Black Market Hair Extensions” by Allie Flynn. [Website address link omitted because of immodest pictures].
- 6) “Wigs Made From the Hair of a Deceased Person” <<http://www.dailyhalacha.com/m/halacha.aspx?id=569>>
- 7) “The Market For Human Hair- Priceconomics” Online Article. Written by Alex Mayyasi. [Website address link omitted because of immodest pictures on it.]
- 8) “Tirumala temple earns nearly Rs200 crore from auctioning human hair in 2011-12” Online article. Website address link omitted because of immodest pictures on it.
- 9) Wall Street Journal Article excerpt, titled “Religion Journal: The Great Indian Hair Auction” online article. Written by Joanna Sugden. [Website address link omitted because of immodest picture at the end.]
- 10) “Kashrut: Deliveries of Fish” from DailyHalacha.com. <<http://www.dailyhalacha.com/displayRead.asp?readID=3096>>.

11) "Older Population from Indian" By Inderjit Jaipaul, DSW <<http://www.mhaging.org/info/10-04-OIA.html>>.

12) "When It's Null and Void: Understanding Batel BShishim" by Rabbi Dovid Heber from the Star-K. <https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/611/when-its-null-and-void-understanding-batel-bshishim-one-sixtieth/#_ftn31>.

13) Video called "Wigs vs. Tichel" by Rabbi Yaron Reuven, shlita. <<http://tznius.tips/wigs-versus-tichel-by-rabbi-yaron-reuven.html>>.

14) Article from Journal of Waste Management, called "Human Hair 'Waste' and Its Utilization: Gaps and Possibilities" written by Ankush Gupta. Found at <<https://www.hindawi.com/archive/2014/498018/>>.

Text of Articles:

SOURCE #1: Article from Ohr Somayach

Ohr Somayach <https://ohr.edu/1698>

Ask!

For the week ending 29 May 2004 / 9 Sivan 5764

Wigs and Idolatry

by Rabbi Yirmiyahu Ullman - www.rabbiullman.com

From: T. R. in Belgium

Dear T.R.

Dear Rabbi,

Could you please enlighten me on the controversy surrounding wearing wigs made of human hair from India, and also is it permissible to continue wearing one. Thank you in advance, T. R.

The Rabbis who oppose the use of Indian-hair wigs are not just splitting hairs. The root of the problem is that the hair from India seems to come from idolatrous ceremonies. Worshipers grow their hair in honor of a certain god, pledging to cut the hair at the temple of the god as a sacrificial thank-offering when their prayer is answered. Of the 20 million annual pilgrims to the Tirupati temple in Andhra Pradesh, millions offer their hair. Six hundred barbers are employed by the temple to shave the pilgrims' hair 24 hours a day. Inside the "tonsuring" room, devotees sit cross-legged on the floor, and bend their head forward to let a temple barber shave their scalp with a straight razor blade. Attendants collect the bundles of hair in dustpans and deposit them in large bins.

The hair is then auctioned to wigmakers, earning the temple a hair-raising 5.6 million dollars. Although India is a small part of the global hair business compared to China, Indian temple-hair heads the industry in price. Indian hair is generally finer than Chinese and more similar to European and American hair. After being processed, Tirupati hair longer than 16 inches sells for as much as \$165 a kilogram (2.2 pounds). Shorter hair goes for about \$100 a kilogram. Some strands bought at auction are made into hair extensions that are sold to Western women for as much as \$3,000 for a full head of hair.

The problem is that the Torah not only forbids idolatry itself, but also prohibits deriving benefit from any accessory, decoration or sacrifice to idol worship. Primarily, such a sacrifice is forbidden only when it is similar to the Jewish Temple offerings of meat, flour, oil, wine and water. However, when this object of idolatrous sacrifice (*tikrovet avoda zara*) is what's normally offered, and is cut or broken in honor of the god, it is also forbidden to derive benefit from it in any way. Furthermore, the sacrificed object can never be nullified, even if it's been changed or altered by some process, and even if it's been indiscernibly mixed with some other permitted material.

According to this, the Indian woman who tilts her head to have her hair cut, as well as the idolatrous barber who cuts it, are both actively offering a sacrifice to the god (even if the hair is discarded), prohibiting the hair from being used in any way, even if it's eventually processed and mixed with other, permitted hair. [In fact, L-Cysteine, a certain food ingredient that can be produced from human hair, would also prohibit an entire food if the hair is from India, for the above reason that anything which is sacrificed to idolatry can never be nullified.] This means that any wig with human hair would be forbidden to wear unless it could be ascertained for certain that none of the hair originated in India.

A leading Torah authority, Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch, asserts that there are other problems than just wearing such a wig. Rambam writes that the prohibition against deriving benefit from offerings to idol worship is from the verse, "Nor shall you bring an abhorrence into your house" (Deut. 7:26). Accordingly, he writes, it should be forbidden to keep such a wig in the home even without wearing it. Also, since the actual money received for objects sacrificed in idol worship becomes forbidden, one must be careful not to receive money from one who sells or otherwise works with such wigs. He suggests that one who buys a synthetic wig or other permitted item from a person who profits from such wigs should pay the exact price in cash, or with a check or credit card, in order to avoid receiving change from money that may have been paid for them.

Maran HaGaon Rabbi Elyashiv has also recently prohibited Indian wigs. After sending Rabbi A. D. Dunner from England to India to witness the Tirupati temple ceremony first hand, he ruled as follows: Regarding human hair wigs in Israel, since most are from Indian hair, all are forbidden unless the origin is known. Regarding wigs in other countries, if the majority of wigs are from a permitted source, all wigs are technically permitted, but one must clarify the source of each specific wig. Regarding wigs made from synthetic hair, if they contain human hair as well (which is often the case), they must be treated as other human hair wigs as above. In a case of doubt whether they contain human hair, they are permitted. Rabbi Elyashiv concludes that since objects associated with idol worship are to be burnt in fire, wigs from hair generally known to originate in India (but not specifically from the temple) *should* be burned, while wigs specifically known to be from the Tirupati temple *must* be burned.

Since the mitzvah of womens hair covering is a highly individual issue, this is not a personal ruling. Rather one must consult a local halachic expert who is able to ascertain the origin of the wigs available in ones community. Also, it should be clear that we are not taking sides on the issue, but merely presenting the opinions currently available. This controversy has been explored in the past, and, as then, lenient opinions may be forthcoming.

Sources:

Avoda Zara 50a,b

Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 139:1,2,3

Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch, Daat vHalacha; Teshuvot vHanhagot 2:414, 3:265; Public letter of Iyar 5764

Rabbi Mordechai Gross, in Teshuvot MBeit Levi (regarding L-Cysteine)

Rambam, Avoda Zara 7:2, also see Rashi, Avoda Zara 64a, s.v. "Rabbanan"

Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 133:1

Public letter of Rabbi Yoseph Efrati in the name of Maran HaGaon Rabbi Elyashiv, 22

Iyar 5764. In a letter of 5 Sivan, Rabbi Elyashiv confirmed Rabbi Efratis account of his ruling.

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SOURCE #2: Interview with a shaitel macher with 18 years experience:

“I would like people to know... that myself first hand can attest to the utter misrepresentation we are handed with our shaitels. I have been a shaitel macher for almost 18 years. I have learned from some of the industry's leading members how to identify hair, physically hand tie hair into a wig, how to construct a wig from scratch, as well as cutting, coloring, and washing techniques only know to the top artist. Approximately 8 years ago I began the difficult process of starting my own line of wigs. Making contacts and having representatives in China is not an easy process. I learned quickly that there are no morals in business in China. Hair which was hand selected here from brokers coming straight from Ukraine would be sent to China only to return blended and processed with other hair which I did not send or request. The factories always offered tags for my wigs which stated "100% European hair" even if we had just negotiated using Brazilian, Mongolian, or Uzbekistan hair. They also always offered the "kashrus" label with the blessings from "the rabbi" which of course they told me didn't exist. At that point I realized that there was no way that I could create a product which I really believed in or stood by. I myself who was dealing directly with the factories would never really know if the hair which I sometimes cut from a woman here in the states would actually return unadulterated or blended with something else. The fact that the factories clearly had no scruples regarding misrepresentation to my customers meant that they would most likely swindle me too. I decided to forgo manufacturing my own line and the money that would come with it.

It's important for women to know that factories will insert any tag necessary to make a sale. Many shaitel machers have no clue that they are being duped. They

are told it's European hair and that it has a hashgacha, but the reality is far from such. They simply don't know.”

-Quoted directly word for word on June 11th, 2017. Shaitel macher chose to remain anonymous in this report.

Report of sources continues, but it has been shortened for the sake of brevity. A full version could be mailed or emailed to the Rav if the Rav wishes.

Proof of Corruption in Wig Industry:

Below is a first-hand email correspondence with an Indian supplier, R2R Export, on Aug 3, 2017:

Question: Hi, I am in the hair industry. Please advise the following: I want to buy Indian temple hair from you, however, I want you to label it NOT as Indian hair. I'll need you to label some as "100% Mongolian hair", some as "100% Ukrainian hair", some as "100% Brazilian Hair", and some as "100% Chinese Hair". Please let me know if you can do that labeling for me.

Mk balaji: Greetings

Yes I can mention it as you say. We have no issue. We sell a lot to USA and UK.

Question: Thank you. I'm worried about the hair texture. Does your hair resemble European/US hair in texture and feel? Is it smooth and silky and thin? Will people think it's Indian hair, or will they believe me when I tell them it's European hair?

Mk balaji: *To be transparent with you people doesn't know the difference. You can mention like you need to.*

Question: I wanted to buy hair from Mongolia because they offer me a very good price. Can you tell me if that is a good idea? Is Mongolian hair good? Is it really coming from Mongolia, or is it really temple hair that they are labeling "Mongolian hair"?

Mk balaji: *All product are from India they are labelling as their wish and client request*

Question: I am being offered hair from all over - Ukraine, Brazilian, Mongolia. You are saying that all these hair is really temple hair? How much percentage of all human hair being sold in the hair market in the world is really temple hair?

Mk balaji: *Almost all products are from India.*

Below is a first-hand email correspondence with another Indian supplier, D2IMPEX, on Aug 4, 2017:

Q. I want to buy your hair but I'd like to label it as "Mongolian Hair", and as "European Hair". Can you do that?

A. *I'll give you empty white label sticker you can write and fix it*

Q. Do you sell your hair to European countries?

A. *We sell more hairs to Europe every month*

Q. On an average, how many kg do you sell to Europe every month? Do they sell it as Indian

temple hair, or do they label it as "100% European Hair"?

A. *We sell indian temple hair only but still we can't mention indian hair, we mention size*

texture and weight only. every month we sell Europe minimum 5 kg above

Q. I am being offered "Mongolian hair" at a good price. Do you know if Mongolian hair is

good? Is there really such a thing as "Mongolian Hair", or is it really temple hair that has been re-branded as "Mongolian Hair"?

A. *our products looks good our import retailers selling most of our products in usa brazilian hair, cambodian hair mongolian hair or some else*

Q. Can you tell me - all human hair that's sold in the world in all countries, how much percentage is really coming from temple hair and just being sold as "Brazilian", "Chinese", etc?

A. *Almost 100 percent hair going all over world from india. China sells a lot of hair too but*

they are buying the hair from the Indian temples.

Q. How do you know that for sure?

A. *We saw more Chinese buys in Chennai*

Q. How do you know that all hair comes from India? And not from China or Europe?

A. *Most of the hairs supplier in india and then china supplying the Indian hair to uk usa europe Africa. More than 1 lakh (100,000) people sacrifice in south indian temple per day*

Below is a first-hand email correspondence with another Indian supplier, Shanmuga, on Aug 4, 2017:

Q: Is Indian temple hair sold as European and South American hair? Are the labels accurate in this industry? If I purchase a wig that has a label that says it's from Europe or China, does that mean that there is no Indian hair in those wigs? Does the largest percentage of the world's better quality wig hair come from India (temple hair)?

Answer: *Hair you buy from South America is 100% Indian temple hair. China products raw hair source is again Indian hair.*

Below is a first-hand email correspondence with another Indian supplier, OSA Hair Extensions, on Aug 4, 2017:

Q: I am being offered Mongolian hair for very cheap. I am being offered Ukrainian hair. I am being offered South American hair. I am being offered Chinese Hair. Is it true that most of that hair is actually temple hair? And if so, can you tell me on average, how much percentage of all human hair being sold in the hair industry is actually temple hair and just being sold as "Brazilian, Mongolian, Ukrainian"? Why would companies label the Indian hair as other country hair?

A: *90% of hair is sourced only from INDIA. Only in India most of the ladies tonsure their head in temples and it is the main source of raw material. But due to the great demand and many ask for different types they condition it and sell it in whatever name the client asks for. Indian hair is the most versatile and best hair.*

Below is a first-hand email with another Indian supplier, Temple Hair Wear, on Aug 3, 2017:

The hair industry is very difficult to navigate these days with so many names given to the same hair. Manufacturers name the hair whatever they want to sell it, unfortunately, the hair market is driven by money not necessarily pleasing the consumer or being genuine. The hair and synthetic blended hair can be chemically altered to mimic or create many textures and curl patterns. Sacrificing hair is a part of Indian culture and India is one of the most populated continents on the planet so there is an abundance of hair. *People from other countries go to India to buy hair and then they do whatever they want to it.*

-Mark

Dear Madam,

Received your mail with thanks. As discussed in the morning, All hairs are sourced from Indian temples, Which are donated to god for religious purpose. Exporters buy from temples and distribute all over the Country. There is no such Brazilian, Russian,

Peruvian or Mongolian hair. They treat the Indian hair with chemicals and they label it has different Countries hair.

Please view our Price List through attachment. Also, for more informations, please visit our website www.indianhumanhair.com

Thanking you, I remain with best regards.

S. Lalitha

Proof That Indian Hair Itself is a Sacrifice

There has been recent discussion among Rabbonim whether Indian hair is permitted for the Jewish people to use in wigs. Some Rabbonim argue that when a Hindu person shaves their head at their temple, the act of shaving the hair is the sacrifice, not the hair itself. That then makes the hair permitted to be used in our sheitels, since the hair is a by-product of the avodah zorah, not the actual avodah zorah.

Many Rabbonim rule against this view, saying the hair itself is avodah zorah. They say the hair is a gift to the Hindu idol. Therefore, they rule that the appearance of one Indian hair in the sheitel makes the whole sheitel forbidden to wear or sell. The Gemara says that avodah zorah is never batel, so that is why the whole sheitel becomes forbidden (sources #18, 19).

This author would like to present proof from websites, written and explained by the Hindu people themselves, that 2 intentions are possible when a Hindu shaves their hair at their temple.

The first intention is for the hair to be a gift to their god. A popular one is "lord Balaji." There is a legend that goes along with this gift of hair, proving the hair is intended to be a physical gift to their god. (This reason is in-line with the rabbinical view mentioned in paragraph 2).

The second reason the Hindus give for shaving their hair is that the act of shaving their head sacrifices their ego by decreasing the person's beauty. (This reason is in-line with the rabbinical view mentioned in paragraph 1.)

Both reasons are given in these Hindu websites written by Hindu people. Sometimes the first reason is given, sometimes the second reason, and sometimes both. If the hair donation takes place because it is a thanksgiving offering or a gift in hopes of their god fulfilling a wish, that would make the resulting hair actual avodah zorah (source #18).

Regardless of the devotee's intention, as the hair is shaved from each person in line, it is grouped by length and added to the large bag with hair that contains that same length of hair. This results in the bag having hair from many people mixed together. The bags are purchased through e-auction by wig and hair extension companies.

Please review the proofs below, which are direct quotes from the Hindu people about the intentions of the Hindu devotees. Also included are some news articles dealing with this topic. Most quotes pertain to showing that the Rabbinical view mentioned in paragraph 2 is a reality.

Source #1 from Wikipedia Article titled "Venkateswara Temple, Tirumala"

This is an online dictionary written by people knowledgeable in the topic at hand:

Hair Tonsuring-

Many devotees have their head tonsured as "Mokku", an offering to god...

When lord Balaji was hit on his head by a shepherd, a small portion of his scalp became bald. This was noticed by Neela Devi, a Gandharva princess. She felt "such an attractive face should not have a flaw". Immediately, she cut a portion of her hair and, with her magical power, implanted it on his scalp. Lord Balaji noticed her sacrifice.

As hair is a beautiful asset of the female form, he promised her that all his devotees who come to his abode would offer their hair to him, and she would be the recipient of all the hair received. Hence, it is believed that hair offered by the devotees is accepted by Neela Devi. The hill, Neeladri, one of the seven hills, is named after her.

Found at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venkateswara_Temple,_Tirumala>.

Source #2: New York Times Article titled "A Religious Tangle Over the Hair of Pious Hindus"

Written by Saritha Rai

"When she came to the temple three years ago, Ms. Subhasri, 35, offered her a waist-length hair to the temple deity, Venkateshwara, in a sign of absolute devotion. She then prayed that her husband, Satyanarayana Raju, be cured of his acute stomach ulcers.

Last week she was back, offering her hair again in thanks for the recovery of her husband, and saying a new prayer for the success of her older son, Veeraraju, 15. "He

has scored 490 marks out of 600 in his recent school exams and, god willing, he will be a doctor one day," Ms. Subhasri said, wiping her tears with one end of her sari..."

From <<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/07/14/world/a-religious-tangle-over-the-hair-of-pious-hindus.html>>. *Please note, an immodest picture appears on the web page. That is why a link is not present.*

Source #3 from Stack Exchange, a Question and Answer Forum answered by Hindu People:

Question: Many Hindus who visit Tirumala Venkateswara temple in Tirupati get their head tonsured [shaved] and offer their hair to lord Venkateswara. Why is this tradition followed? Why is it only followed in Venkateswara temple and not other temples? [Note to readers, from author of this report: Head tonsuring occurs at many other temples throughout India. However, Tirumala is the largest of them. The person asking the question doesn't know that].

Answer: A small but popular story is there for this.

When lord Sri Venkateshawara (MahaVishnu/Balaji) was inside the snake-antHill on Tirumala , one sacred cow is to come and give milk to the lord daily (Brahma took the form as sacred cow), When a cow-herd man at once saw the sacred-cow pouring milk in the snake-ant Hill, he became angry and without understanding the truth, the Cow-herd man took the axe and has hit the cow on the cow's head with the axe.

The Supreme lord Sri Venkatesha(Vishnu) who was present inside the snake-ant Hill received the hurt of the axe on his head from the cow-herd man instead of Cow getting hurt. When lord received the hurt of the Axe on his head, the portion of his hair on his head disappeared due to hurt by the axe.

When mother Neela Devi saw lord being hurt on his head, she immediately removed the hair from her head and placed on the lord's head in the portion where the lord was hurt. Immediately lord became well and Lord's hair reappeared as beautiful as before he was hurt.

Lord Venkatesha(Vishnu), knowing that hair is one of the beautiful features of women, promised that his devotees will shave hair of their head (tonsure) and dedicate their hair to her. Neela Devi accepts the hair sacrificed by devotees of lord Venkatesha(Vishnu) and lord blesses his devotees who sacrifice their hair for the sake of the lord. This is the reason why devotees tonsure or shave their head in Tirumala.

There are also Spiritual reasons: Tonsure or Shaving hair as offering for lord represents a real sacrifice of material beauty and giving up false-ego in the way of shaving their hair as the sacrifice to please supreme lord.

Found at <<https://hinduism.stackexchange.com/questions/3137/why-does-one-get-their-head-tonsured-and-offer-the-hair-to-lord-venkateswara-in>>

Source #4 From “Go Tirupati” Website:

This website has information posted about visiting the temple, such as tonsuring hours, directions, accommodations, etc. Here is a screenshot taken from their webpage. They themselves bolded the sentence shown below on their website:

Story behind Tirumala Hair Offering At KalyanaKatta

First devotee who gave her hair to god is Neela Devi. Lord Srinivasa named this hill by her name as Neeladri. When Lord Srinivasa was hit by a Shepard on his head, a small portion of his scalp becomes bald. There is no hair growth over that place and this was noticed by Gandharva princess, Neeladevi. She felt such a handsome face should not have any defect. Immediately she cuts a portion of her hair and implants it on his scalp with her powers. As hair is considered as the beautiful aspect of women, Lord Srinivasa notices her sacrifice and **he said all the hair given to him by devotees in Tirumala or Tirupati belongs to Neeladevi**. Giving our hair to god is the symbol of leaving our ego. The word “Talanelalu” is also came from her name.

Found at <<https://www.gotirupati.com/tirumala-hair-offering-timings/>>.

Source #5 from a Question and Answer Forum for Hindu People on Quora:

Question: Why is it believed to do Mundan (donating Hair) to lord Tirupati Balaji? What is the story/significance behind it?

Some of the Answers Given:

By Lalitha Bhattiprolu on April 3, 2016:

Mundan [hair donation] is the favorite sacrifice for lord Venkateswara.

The story behind it goes like this: Once NEELA a devotee of the lord offered her hair for him when he lost it accidentally which deprived her of her beauty.

Lord balaji promised her that he will repay it by taking the hair from his devotees as an offering. Thus, mundan became a favorable offering for him.

The legend says, when we offer our hair we bow in front of him. It is a common practice that along with hair, mustache also should be given to him. Then only our offering to him will be completed.

We must go for his darshan [visiting the temple to see the idol] after mundan to show him that we kept our promise of offering our hair.

By Choudhary Abhishek on Nov 14, 2014:

Every devotee (Bhakta) sees god in his/her own way and interprets god's actions(leela) his/her own understanding.

There are various reasons for doing Mundan

- 1 "Mannat" A wish - When the wish is fulfilled one does Mundan / For the fulfillment of the wish.
- 2 New born babies are taken to temples for mundan I've heard its auspicious and may be because the hair grew when the baby was in mother's womb for some reason.
- 3 After someone's death.

By Akhila Kittu, on Nov 5th, 2016:

When lord Balaji went to meet Padmavati Devi there security guards threw stones at him as she was a princess. He found an injury at forehead and lost his hair to some extent. Then Goddess Neeladevi cut and gave her hair to Balaji. Then she was granted a boon that she will get hair by devotees of Balaji in reciprocal.

By Mithilesh Kunal, on July 16, 2015.

She refers to herself as a "Hindu at heart and soul":

"It is said that all the bad works and the sin resulted from them will reside at the edges of your hair.

So in Tirumala, the god is kind hearted to accept all your sins. It is achieved by giving your hair to god. I came to know about this from a priest."

Found at <<https://www.quora.com/Why-is-it-believed-to-do-Mundan-donating-Hair-to-Lord-Tirupati-Balaji-What-is-the-story-significance-behind-it>>.

Source #6: Article titled "Belief Behind Donating hair at Tirupati Balaji"

By Jeevan Mantra, on Sep 12, 2010.

Chittur, a district in Andhra Pradesh is known for the richest and the most prosperous god, Shri Tirupati Balaji, and his temple. For devotees, especially Hindus, it is one of the most sacrosanct pilgrimages. It is believed that the temple is the heavenly abode of lord Vishnu and goddess Laxmi.

A 7 feet bluish-black idol of Shri Tirupati Balaji was founded inside the temple. In India, every religious place is known for observing certain beliefs, traditions and customs. Similarly, tonsuring the head and offering hair at Tirupati Balaji's temple is done with a special purpose. While offering hair, a devotee casts off all the vices, vanities and sins from his whole being. By doing so, he/she wants to become a complete devout. This is also done so that, Shri Balaji, who is all benevolent, showers all his love, benevolence, affection and piety over the devotee by fulfilling all his/her desires.

In older days, people followed the tradition of offering hairs in their own houses but now-a-days people visit a place close to Shri Balaji's temple, known as Kalyan Katta, for a ceremony to donate hair. After the ceremony, devotees take a plunge in the holy river of Pushkarini and visit the temple to offer prayers and to receive Shri Balaji's blessings.

Found at <<http://daily.bhaskar.com/news/belief-behind-donating-hair-at-balaji-1354990.html>>.

Source #7 from Quora, a Question and Answer Forum answered by Hindu people:

Question: Should I donate my hair at Tirupati temple? What is the reason behind this to donate hair?

Answer Submitted by Thirumal Kamalashanthini on Aug 24, 2016

“...Hair or the ThamiL word ‘sikai/சிகை’ was considered the crowning glory of a person....As crowning glory it would be considered sacrifice given to God ...”

Found at <<https://www.quora.com/Should-I-donate-my-hair-at-Tirupati-temple-What-is-the-reason-behind-this-to-donate-hair>>.

Further documentation of this topic is available at the request of the Rav.