

HAIR AS A GLORY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF HAIR IN
ST. SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

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By

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SUPERVISING PROFESSOR: AUGUSTINE AGWUELE

In early Christianity, Biblical authors and theological authorities mandated that a woman should cover her head while in church or prayer. Compared to the time in which the New Testament was compiled, significantly fewer Christian churches today require female parishioners to wear head coverings. Many have embraced this shift in norms, but some continue to veil themselves in worship. This thesis will discuss how hair was viewed in early Christianity as a basis to investigate modern perceptions of hair and its treatment within St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church. In juxtaposing the opinions of the subjects studied, this thesis will demonstrate a transition of hair's significance from the historically spiritual to the contemporarily social. As a complement to the research, five

narratives have been created based on my personal interactions and questionnaire results for five parishioners representing the diverse opinions within this Greek Orthodox community.

INTRODUCTION

“Since the head is the seat of reason and the sensory organs, among other things, this is surely good reason for recognizing that it is a most appropriate seat of the soul.”¹ This statement by C. R. Hallpike points to one explanation of how and why individual cultures place the head and, importantly, the hair in vital physical, symbolic, and mystical roles in the conduct of their societies. Anthropologist Christian Bromberger studies the significance of hair across a great variety of cultures. From when it first drew his attention in South America (witnessing soccer players forego shaving because of a belief that it dulls the ‘nerve impulse’) to his experience in the Middle East with gender-specific hair care, he is convinced that “Society reveals much by its locks.”² For the purposes of this thesis, hair will be studied according to cultural perceptions of its functions in the realms of religion and spirituality.

Hair has claimed a significant role in interpretations of the spiritual world for people around the globe. Hair occupies a threshold in both the minds of the people and the physical world, simply because of the coexistence of life and non-life in the hair. One feels pain at the pulling of the hair and yet can snip it with no painful consequence. Hair

¹ C. R. Hallpike, “Social Hair,” *Man* 4 (June, 1969): 258.

² Christian Bromberger, “Hair: From the West to the Middle East through the Mediterranean,” *Journal of American Folklore* 121, no. 482 (2008): 379-399.

represents the threshold between the self and that outside of the self. The Siamese of Thailand believe that a spirit called *khuan* dwells in the head and must be protected during the cutting of hair by many ceremonies.³ The *smṛti* written circa 500 BCE gives directions on how Hindus should wear their hair to be closer to nature.⁴ Hair symbolizes an essentially spiritual experience for ascetics, hermits, shamans, and magicians who may differ from a religious norm by growing hair out or shaving the head completely.⁵ There are also the Andanian “mysteries,” in which female initiates may not wear jewelry, shoes, or hair decorations of any kind in keeping with the belief that one should approach spiritual rites in a pure, natural state.⁶

Yet even with what seems to be a fairly universal tendency among religions and cultures, opinions on how one wears his or her hair, and what, when, and how tools are used for its care, can become heated. The way another culture treats hair can often be used as a marker of otherness. This subject may seem to some like a characteristic that is relatively fickle compared to larger intercultural issues, something that should be overlooked, but opinions on hair “brutally remind us of [its] importance when we consider the passions, the polemics, the taboos, and the violence that [it] can arouse.”⁷

Consider this: A man known to be a hero among Iranians during the time of World War I called for revolution and vowed not to shave until Iran’s independence was

³ Hallpike, “Social Hair,” 258.

⁴ Coward, Neufeldt, Neumaier, eds., *Readings in Eastern Religions*, 2nd ed, 39-41 (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2007).

⁵ Bromberger, “Hair: West to East,” 394.

⁶ Charles Cosgrove, “A Woman’s Unbound Hair in the Greco-Roman World, with Special Reference to the Story of the ‘Sinful Woman’ in Luke 7:36-50,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 680.

⁷ Bromberger, “Hair: West to East,” 396.

restored from foreign forces. As a result and a sign of his rebellion against established order, his beard and hair grew bushy and unkempt. Years later, local authorities attempted to honor this man, but also attempted to make him appear like an exemplary, traditional Muslim in statues and paintings by depicting him with a turban and a well-trimmed beard. They found soon that this image did not adhere to the image of the hero that still existed in the minds and songs of his many followers. Authorities were forced by the people to produce authentic, controversial portraits of him that more accurately showed him as an ancestor of the revolution. These mixed presentations in statues and murals in Iran show a compromise “between [the] order and disorder” of hair.⁸

This interplay of politics and religion, however, is minor compared to recent laws passed against the Muslim burqa, such as the bill approved by the French Senate in September of 2010 mandating that no woman can wear the veil in public, justified on the “constitutional grounds [of] secularism and a belief that the burqa represents gender discrimination”.⁹ The opinions on this legislation and the resulting conflict among both members of Islam and nonmembers seem to reflect a much bigger issue: misunderstanding of purpose. The individual signs and symbols of a cultural structure can only make sense through the position that they occupy within that structure.¹⁰ Thus, in light of this recent international conflict concerning the veil and hair in religion and society, this thesis studies hair as it relates to one community of one sect of one religion

⁸ Bromberger, “Hair: West to East,” 382.

⁹ Britton Davis, “Lifting the Veil: France’s New Crusade,” *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 34 (Winter 2011): 117.

¹⁰ Bromberger, “Hair: West to East,” 380.

from a culturalist¹¹ approach in order to contribute to a growing dialogue of awareness about the relevance of hair to spirituality across the globe—the perceptions of hair in St. Sophia’s Greek Orthodox Christian Church in San Antonio, TX.

According to Hallpike, “It is only when we realize that the ritual uses of hair are of widely differing types that we can attempt to explain any of them.”¹² This thesis will begin in its first chapter with a brief introduction to key elements of the Orthodox faith needed to understand the spiritual relevance of physical symbols to Orthodox Christianity. It will then begin an analysis of contemporary perceptions of hair at the time the Bible was composed, perceptions of hair from within Biblical texts, and the history of hair within the development of Christianity and Eastern Orthodoxy, its early texts, traditions, and legends, and regional significance. Orthodox Christianity has long and vastly unchanging traditions and theology, the origins of which are necessary to comprehend the modern topic at hand. This chapter will also tell the recent history of the Orthodox Church and its slow spread across the Atlantic to the United States and to my own parish of St. Sophia. The second chapter will describe my research concerning the perceptions of hair: the demographics of the St. Sophia community, my early hypotheses, and the methodology of the study. It will then progress to illustrate the data drawn from the study and their implied results. The final chapter discusses the study more in depth and in terms of proven or disproven hypotheses, successes, missing elements, and final analyses of the study. As a complement to this study, Appendix C holds narratives

¹¹ Risto Uro, “Ritual and Christian Origins,” in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris, 224 (London: Routledge, 2010).

¹² Hallpike, “Social Hair,” 259.

written on five participants in the study that offered a high degree of insight and, at times, sentimentality into their opinions on hair.

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF HAIR AND MYSTICISM IN GREEK ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

1.1 DEFINING THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

Before proceeding, two integral aspects of Christianity's history should be defined: those of mysticism and Holy Tradition. In *The World's Religions*, Huston Smith defines mysticism as the perception of a physical act or object to be a channel by which supernatural grace is made available to people in their current state.¹³ Christianity does include some physical acts and objects considered mystical across all denominations. Sacraments such as baptism and communion, also called "The Eucharist" in the Orthodox Church, are usually accepted as channels of spiritual endowment. While the Orthodox Church puts more of an emphasis on mysticism than the majority of Christian churches, perceptions of physical and spiritual realms being connected through acts and objects colors the history of Christianity. Stories of wars, miracles, conversations, and visions in the recorded Christian memory are full of mysticism. In describing the history of the church, an objective anthropological analysis is necessary. However, in making such an analysis, one must keep in mind the points of view of those who produced that history and its motions toward the modern church.

¹³ Huston Smith, "Christianity," In *The World's Religions*, 2nd ed., 355 (New York: Harper-Collins, 1991).

1.2 HAIR AND THE BIBLE: CONTEMPORARY CULTURE AND TEXTS

For the purpose of this thesis, veiling and head covering will be used synonymously to refer to a fabric which covers the head and hair, but not necessarily the face. In general, from antiquity up through the first century of Christianity, Mediterranean women considered chaste and pious covered their hair in public, seeing as wearing hair loose and uncovered outside of a mourning period was shameful. The attitude of a virtuous woman toward hair was necessarily tied to honor because it was the core value of the collectivist, ancient Mediterranean world. Women had to manifest a positive sense of shame in the dress by avoiding a display of wealth with jewelry or braided hair.¹⁴ Jewish men and women kept the head covered in prayer, and Hebrew women also kept the hair secured tightly when in the open. Greek women covered in social life except in their own homes or those of their relations. Some assert that the tradition of veiling became more lax among the first-century Greco-Roman society but stronger in Eastern societies,¹⁵ and Charles Cosgrove claims that he has not found any evidence to suggest that first century Jewish and early Christian concepts of unbound hair differed in any way from that of the time described by the Old Testament.¹⁶ However, regional differences were likely since ancient Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cultures, like many religious cultures throughout history, were not completely unitary.

¹⁴ Richard Rohrbaugh, "Honor: Core Value in the Biblical World," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris, 109, 112 (London: Routledge, 2010).

¹⁵ Stanley Grenz and Denise Kjesbo. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 109.

¹⁶ Cosgrove, "A Woman's Unbound Hair," 678.

Anthropologist Duncan M. Derrett claims the argument of many: “The real reason why Eastern women’s hair is covered is... [hair’s] universal acceptance as a sign of sexual attractiveness.”¹⁷ Data that shows that unmarried Greek and Roman girls did wear hair loose as a sign of freedom until marriage supports his claim. Married girls would cover hair to show that they were unavailable sexually.¹⁸ This etiquette regarding veiling and head covering became stricter the more one moved east.¹⁹ A longstanding tradition for punishing adultery was to eliminate the tools of seduction by cutting off hair.²⁰ Unbound hair had clear sexual connotation, so when women wanted to make a vow for something valuable, they would often sacrifice the sign of their sexuality and shave their heads. Even today, modern vocabulary still reflects this significance. The word “nuptial,” alluding to marriage in modern English, can be tied to the Latin word *nuptiae*, which refers to the act of covering the hair. Some shaven women could appear in public with their heads uncovered without shame, just as if they were covered, showing that the concern and the significance lies within the hair rather than the head itself.²¹ The context described here for the treatment of women and hair in Mediterranean antiquity represents the setting for the composition of the Biblical texts, which, as a collection integral to the creation of Christian doctrine, must be investigated in reference to its mentions of hair to better understand later commandments, traditions, and practices with hair.

¹⁷ Duncan Derrett, “Religious Hair,” *Man* 8 (March 1973): 101.

¹⁸ Cosgrove, “A Woman’s Unbound Hair,” 681-82.

¹⁹ Ralph Terry, “Aspects of Culture at Corinth,” *An Analysis of Certain Features of Discourse in the New Testament Book of I Corinthians* PhD diss., University of Texas at Arlington, 1993.

²⁰ Bromberger, “Hair: West to East,” 388.

²¹ Derrett, “Religious Hair,” 101.

Within the Christian Bible, many stories exemplify and suggest the mystical perception of hair as a connection between the physical self and the divine. In Genesis, Jacob makes his blind father believe he is his elder brother, Esau, and thus receives the birthright blessing only by making himself seem hairier with wool. In the book of Leviticus, laws prescribe that those cured of leprosy must shave all the hair off of their heads before being incorporated back into society.²² God gave Moses, leader of the Israelites, a command for his tribe members not to cut their hair nor shave their beards when they were wondering the desert for 40 years as punishment for their ungratefulness to God.²³ This mandate supports Hallpike's theory that "long hair is associated with being outside society, and that the cutting of hair symbolizes re-entering society, or living under a particular disciplinary regime within society."²⁴ This same theory explains why members of the Nazarite tribe, which Numbers describes as a tribe separate from society and devoted to God, were not permitted to cut their hair until it was formally shaved after a vowed amount of time. The famous and Biblical Samson was a Nazarite, told to never cut his hair since he was "consecrated to God from birth."²⁵ When his wife, Delilah, sheared his hair while he slept, consequentially, he lost his supernatural strength, bound up in his hair. Heaven consumed the famous prophet Elijah in a whirlwind.²⁶ The Hebrew word used for whirlwind in this passage, *sa'ar*, also used to describe a theophany, relates

²² Lev. 14:9 (Orthodox Study Bible, taken from the New King James Version)

²³ Lev. 19:27

²⁴ Hallpike, "Social Hair," 260.

²⁵ Judg. 13:7

²⁶ 4 Kings 2:11 (In the Orthodox Bible, 1 and 2 Kings are broken into four books, 1-4 Kingdoms)

closely with the word *se'ar*, meaning hair.²⁷ Genesis explicitly describes women considered prominent in Christianity like Sarah, wife of Abraham, and Rebekah, wife of Isaac, as covering and veiling in public spaces.²⁸

Crossing from the Old Testament into the New, a fundamental indication of the continued mystical significance of hair occurs in Matthew 3, where the author includes a description of John the Baptist (also referred to as “John the Forerunner”). He is first described as a “messenger” to prepare the Jewish people for Christ, wearing clothing of camel fur, which was a rejection of societal norms.^{29 30} He is known in Holy Tradition as the last of the Old Testament prophets and is often pictured in Greek Orthodox icons as having wild hair as well (see Figure 1-1)



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Fig. 1-1 Greek Icon of St. John the Forerunner

²⁷ *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, “Greek Dictionary of the New Testament.

²⁸ Gen. 20:16, 24:65

²⁹ Matt. 3:1-6, Mark 1:4-8, Luke 3

³⁰ Mark 1:2-4

³¹ Katelynn D. Hagans, November 19, 2011. St. John the Forerunner, owned by St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, San Antonio, TX.

In Luke 7, a woman described as “sinful” comes to anoint Jesus’ feet, weeping upon them then drying them with her hair. Anthropologist Charles Cosgrove cites various scholars’ opinions of what the text means for the woman, taking into account both the implied detail that her hair must have been loose to perform the act and the contemporary social conjectures against unbound hair. Opinions include: that she was sexually promiscuous; that the undoing of her hair was a spontaneous action of the moment to dry Jesus’ feet in embarrassment; that the immodesty is overshadowed by her goodness and need to express pious grief and love; that the woman may not have meant anything erotic, but since this is how it would have been perceived by others in the room, the Lukan theme that Jesus accepts the disreputable is advanced. Cosgrove concludes with what fourth-century Church Father Asterius of Amaseas states so simply: “She made her grieving soul a matter of public business by her actions.”³² No matter the true interpretation, the very attention the text warrants proves the significance of hair to the spiritual interpretation of the story.

Beyond these cultural examples of significance assigned to hair in the Bible, many epistles in the New Testament of the Christian Bible directly advocate modest practices when it comes to both men and women. The most apparent and controversial of these texts comes in I Corinthians, 11:1-16. This passage has been included in Appendix B for reference.

Interpretations of this letter, and of this particular section concerning the treatment of hair for men and women, have been widely debated across time and region. Does one take these commands literally or analogically? Does one respect them as culturally and chronologically contextual rules or as rules that are universal, to be applied to *all* times

³² Cosgrove, “A Woman’s Unbound Hair,” 676-677.

and regions? According to scholars Carolyn Osiek and Jennifer Pouya, Paul of Damascus, the widely agreed upon author of the text, is concerned primarily with the respectability of his congregation in Corinth. By deduction, “the community reflects the household and the female body becomes the cultural and rhetorical battleground for his honor.”³³ Thus, his command was literal, but also contextual. Paul did reference Jewish law often, held to be the respectable standard of norms, but the texts reveal that the references were by analogy and without much explanation in many places. Fr. Brooks Ledford, interim priest for St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church in San Antonio, TX and anthropology scholar explains that Paul was indeed speaking literally about a veil to cover the heads of women, but that he was simply bringing a confrontation between Jewish law and “the law of the Spirit” to his audience’s attention. Ledford says that this was common in scripture, especially from Paul who was attempting to illuminate the fact that some laws were not applied in the same way they were before the Christ came, but without offending Jews. Paul also believed that Christ was returning during his lifetime, though, making all of his commands more resolute and strict than they may have otherwise been.³⁴ These discoveries of analogous references and inclusion of Jewish law without explanation reveal, as stated by Derrett, that “no translator has understood the passage. Even the most literal translations of the passage cannot convey [his] meaning

³³ Carolyn Osiek and Jennifer Pouya. “Construction of Gender in the Roman Imperial World,” in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard DeMaris. (London: Routledge, 2010), 49.

³⁴ Brooks Ledford, Interviewed by Katelynn Hagans, office interview. San Antonio, November 19, 2011.

adequately.”³⁵ In what follows, I will illustrate what scholars have said about the original Greek language of the letter.

One of the main contentions concerning I Corinthians 11:1-16 centers around the use of two different Greek terms for the English word “cover.” In verses 4, 5, 6, 7, and 13, the word *katakalupto*, which means “to cover wholly, i.e. to veil,” is used in speaking of the covering. The word comes from two other terms, *kalupto* (to conceal, engulf, or cover up) and *kata* (down, about, or exceeding). The term used for covering in verse 15 where Paul states that hair was given to woman as a covering is *peribolaion*, defined as “something thrown around one, a mantle, veil.”³⁶ This differentiation is the basis for many scholars’ assumptions that a woman’s hair described in verse 15 cannot mean the same thing as the covering mentioned in the earlier verses or Paul would have used the same term.³⁷ To assign identical meaning to the two terms would make the statements in verse 6 (“For if the woman be not covered [*katakalupto*], let her also be shorn...”) “nonsensical.”³⁸ Paul is using this reference to a woman’s long hair to illustrate that nature indicates a woman’s head should be more covered than a man’s. According to Grenz and Kjesbo, most scholars have always thought of Paul as speaking of a material covering. However, Paul never uses the actual Greek word for veil (*kalymma*) even though he speaks of hair throughout the passage.

³⁵ Derrett, “Religious Hair,” 100.

³⁶ *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, “Greek Dictionary of the New Testament,” 39-57.

³⁷ Daniel Kauffman, ed, *Bible Doctrine: A Treatise on the Great Doctrines Pertaining to God, Angels, Satan, the Church, and the Salvation, Duties and Destiny of Man*. (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1914), 424.

³⁸ *Headcovering*. Coopies Lane: Scripture Truth Publications, 2003, 2.

Thus, some scholars disagree that Paul was referring to a material covering. A few have even denied that Paul could have written the verses because they seem self-contradictory in some cases. Claims concerning Paul's motivation in emphasizing covering take one or more of the following forms: women were attempting to establish social equality with men; elaborate hairstyles of high status Roman women caused tension with conservative traditionalists; or fear that the church would become associated with cults in which women would cast off veils and shake loose hair as a sign of deity possession and prophesying.³⁹ Scholars also argue that Paul would not advocate against men wearing a covering since it was part of Jewish custom. Concerning verse 15, where Paul uses the term *paribolaion* for the covering rather than *katakalypto* like he does in the rest of Chapter 11, scholars claim that the word translated "as" or "for" in English is *antil* in Greek, a term denoting replacement. Thus, if one reads verse 15 using a more accurate translation, it becomes "...for her hair is given her [in place of] a covering..."

Additionally, Paul's pattern in his letters to his churches is to critique Jews for attempting to impose traditions on new converts, such as the hair covering for women, common among Jews but no longer for Romans. This pattern provides another argument for those who believe Paul is speaking figuratively about a covering. Another interpretation asserts that Paul simply desires women to wear hairstyles up on top of their heads, but this contradicts all the New Testament warnings against braided and elaborate hair.⁴⁰ The final argument claims that Paul's ending words that "we have no such

³⁹ Stanley Grenz and Denise Kjesbo. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 108, 111.

⁴⁰ 1 Tim. 2, 1 Pet. 3 ; Stanley Grenz and Denise Kjesbo. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 109, 110.

custom” refer directly to the practice of the veil.⁴¹ This argument goes against the opinions of one early Church Father, St. John Chrysostom, who claimed that the “custom” Paul is referring to is actually the custom of being unruly in the face of the apostles’ requests.

According to Donald P Goodman III, a historical and classical languages scholar, the Greek word *exousia* used in I Corinthians to describe the “authority” over a woman’s head translates as just that: power or authority, not covering. Paul is saying that a woman needs authority over her head just as Christ is the head of man. Thus, in this argument, Paul is more concerned with establishing spiritual authority over the woman, as that of Christ over man, than with the physical act of her hair being covered. Being covered is merely a sign of this authority.⁴² If what Paul says is accurate, then a covering woman in worship is ultimately testifying to the authority of God. According to Goodman, this garment over her hair declares that woman has a place in exalting God, representing the submission of the church to a higher authority. Goodman’s claim is that Paul was definitely talking about a material veil, because (1) he was never timid about stating actual rules and (2) the analogies of uncovered to shaven would be useless. A woman should wear a veil for the same reason that we wear wedding rings even though the marriage is secure without them. The veil is how a woman perfects nature’s symbolism, the symbolism of her hair.⁴³

⁴¹ 1 Cor. 11:16

⁴² Donald P. Goodman, “Because of the Angels: A Study of the Veil in the Christian Tradition,” Tradition in Action, March 31, 2005, accessed April 2, 2011, http://www.traditioninaction.org/religious/d005rpVeil_1_Goodman.htm#guest.

⁴³ Goodman, “Because of the Angels.”

Unfortunately, to fully understand this passage, one must understand the original Greek in which it was written, the context, and the nature of God's relationship to mankind as was perceived in the time the letter was written. The themes in this controversial passage concerning women are furthered in other New Testament epistles, such as Ephesians 5:22-23, also written by Paul: "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church." He also composed 1 Timothy, in which Chapter 2 warns again against elaborate hair styles, jewelry, flashiness, and a frequent tongue.⁴⁴ Peter wrote the same in 1 Peter 3:1-6 but with added encouragement for women to submit to their husbands for the sake of encouraging the husband's spiritually. One conclusion can be made rather certainly in spite of all the disagreement: the attention that the interpretation of Paul's injunction has warranted from scholars and Christians alike is evidence that hair and its treatment is indeed significant to Christianity. This significance even goes beyond Biblical texts and is further proven through the consistent presence of hair in the texts of the Early Church Fathers and the traditions and legends of Orthodoxy.

1.3 HAIR AND THE PROGRESSION OF CHRISTIANITY: EARLY WORKS, TRADITIONS, LEGENDS, AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

In its first few centuries of existence, Christianity was merely considered a new sect of Judaism.⁴⁵ The appearance of Jesus as the prophesied Christ from the Judaic holy books of the Old Testament helped establish many of the physical markers of mysticism

⁴⁴ 1 Tim. 2:8-15

⁴⁵ Derrett, "Religious Hair," 100.

in the early Christian church. Significance of hair was no less important to them than to Paul of Damascus, a Jew himself. Deviation from tradition signaled a rupture of societal and religious purity.⁴⁶ As time passed, the Church Fathers used typology and allegory to make the instruction relevant to later populations in their attempts to preserve the validity of both Old and New Testament teachings.⁴⁷

Alan Kirk defines this process as the “Memory Theory,” saying that collective memory is compounded and distilled in the meaning and significance of experienced events for those remembering them. According to Kirk, this consolidation of meaning in things and acts is the definition of cultural symbol: “condensations of meaning.” They are refined by remembering more ancient traditions, accounting for the emphasis in the Eastern Orthodox Church on scriptural sayings and historical stories (e.g. Jesus and his apostles quote the Old Testament books consistently). He also remarks, however, that this system of tradition leaves room to the new; it is open to adaptation and makes it possible for a community to remember a “normative past” and yet mobilize its own tradition with changing social contexts.⁴⁸ Many treatises and stories passed down over time convey this memory theory and the continued significance of hair through Orthodoxy’s history in written and oral tradition. These legends add another piece to the foundation from which this thesis’ study will examine modern perceptions of hair

⁴⁶ Bromberger, “Hair: West to East,” 389.

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Clark, “Ideology, History, and the Construction of ‘Woman’ in Late Ancient Christianity,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2 (Summer 1994):170.

⁴⁸ Alan Kirk, “Memory Theory: Cultural and Cognitive Approaches to the Gospel Tradition,” in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris, 59-60 (London: Routledge, 2010).

Even in times of hardship, from persecutions and heresy, many leaders of the Church were known to speak about the significance of loosened hair and “preach the practice of the veil, though briefly, and without much specification.” Goodman, Catholic author, claims that the Early Fathers did not wish to degrade a woman as a whole, but rather “to raise her up from the muck of the fall... The veil is not woman’s yoke, but rather her crown.”⁴⁹ Indeed, “Nature” is said by many scholars to serve as a synonym for God in much of Christian literature attributed to Early Church Fathers which says “Nature” allows for women’s hair to be covered. St. Ambrose of Milan is one among the saints that wrote on the subject in his letters collectively entitled “Concerning Virginity,” asking if anything was so lustful as to unveil that “which either nature has hidden or custom has veiled... to turn the neck, to loosen the hair?”⁵⁰ “To loosen” is assumed to refer to a veil because of a parallel statement by St. John Chrysostom around the same time as St. Ambrose’s writings, clearly referring to a wrap for the hair “on every side.”⁵¹ St. John Chrysostom’s sermon on St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, comments strongly on the covering of a woman in worship as well as in daily life, using the temptation of Eve as the basis.⁵² St. John says that woman was not created inferior to man, but that God’s commandment for woman’s subjection to man was to compensate for the evil Eve brought to Adam, compensation which takes place in symbols, such as the veil. He

⁴⁹ Goodman, “Because of the Angels.”

⁵⁰ Aurelius Ambrosius, “Concerning Virginity (Book III),” *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series* 10 (1896), accessed September, 23, 2011, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/34073.htm>

⁵¹ Goodman, “Because of the Angels.”

⁵² John Chrysostom, “Homily XXVI. On the Veiling of Women,” *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, 12 (1889), Accessed September 23, 2011, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/220126.htm>.

equates the denial of covering with a state of “diminuation,” the same that caused Satan to become a fallen angel in the Christian account of heaven. St. John ends his homily with a statement that God gave women long hair as a *natural* covering, so she may learn from it to veil herself. Some scholars justify this statement by the fact that men are much more likely to bald over time than women. St. John’s claim creates a shift in the perception of hair from subjection to God-imposed humility and virtue. This dichotomy is parallel to the arguably paradoxical statements in St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.

The opinions of St. John and St. Ambrose of Milan were accompanied by the Apostolic Constitutions in the fourth century, but these focused more on veiling the hair to avoid temptation of beauty, by which a woman may accidentally and in thought commit adultery against her husband.⁵³

Both concepts of submission and protection against sin can be observed also within the legends of the Christian Tradition concerning hair, for many stories of saints within Orthodoxy also seem to disclose an unexplained emphasis on hair in spirituality. According to legend, St. Mary of Egypt, an ascetic who turned from her prostituting ways to live in a desert, was found walking in the desert by a monk forty-seven years after she had chosen to devote herself to God. Her body had turned to black, but her hair had become completely white.⁵⁴ The legend of St. Onouphrios of fourth century Egypt says that when he was first seen by a monk, the monk was afraid of him because he was a

⁵³ A. Cleveland Coxe, Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, Eds., “Apostolic Constitutions,” Book 1, Section 3, Ante-Nicene Fathers 7, Translated by James Donaldson (1886), accessed September 23, 2011, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/07151.htm>.

⁵⁴ Department of Internet Ministries of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, “The Fifth Sunday of Great Lent: The Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt,” Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 2011, accessed November 23, 2011, http://lent.goarch.org/saint_mary_of_egypt/learn/.

hermit of the desert, covered like a beast with hair white as snow and completely naked.⁵⁵ Third century St. Agnes of Rome refused to marry a city official who chose to shame the young virgin by ordering her stripped and sent to a brothel. As soon as she was disrobed, long thick hair grew from her head to cover her body (antiochian.org). When Holy Martyr Hesychios was found to be a Christian in fourth century Egypt, emperor Maximian made him wear a shabby coat of hair without sleeves in order to disgrace him. The recent St. Nektarios of Aegina was found to have a sweet, fragrant fluid drenching his hair and preserving his body when his grave was opened by nuns 5 months after death to build a marble tomb. Three years later, his hair still emitted the wet fragrance.⁵⁶

In Orthodoxy, even icons of saints and events rarely show women's hair, most having head coverings of some sort. In the same way, many men portrayed in icons have long hair and beards. Take the icon of the Nativity as a portrayal of hair's significance even for men, displayed below in Figure 1-2. The three wise men ride up a mountain to see the newly born Jesus, all with different lengths of beards, a variety which is meant to indicate that Christ's grace is for everyone regardless of age or level of wisdom (conveyed by the length of one's beard).⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Holy Transfiguration Monastery, "Onouphrios the Great," Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 2011, accessed November 18, 2011, http://www.goarch.org/chapel/saints_view?contentid=84.

⁵⁶ "Life of St. Nektarios the Wonderworker, Metropolitan of Pentapolis," *Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia*, accessed October 20, 2011, http://library.nmu.edu/guides/userguides/style_turabian.htm#IND.

⁵⁷ Mary Paloumpis Hallick, "The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," *The Story of the Icons*, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 1995, accessed November 2, 2011, http://www.goarch.org/special/listen_learn_share/nativity.

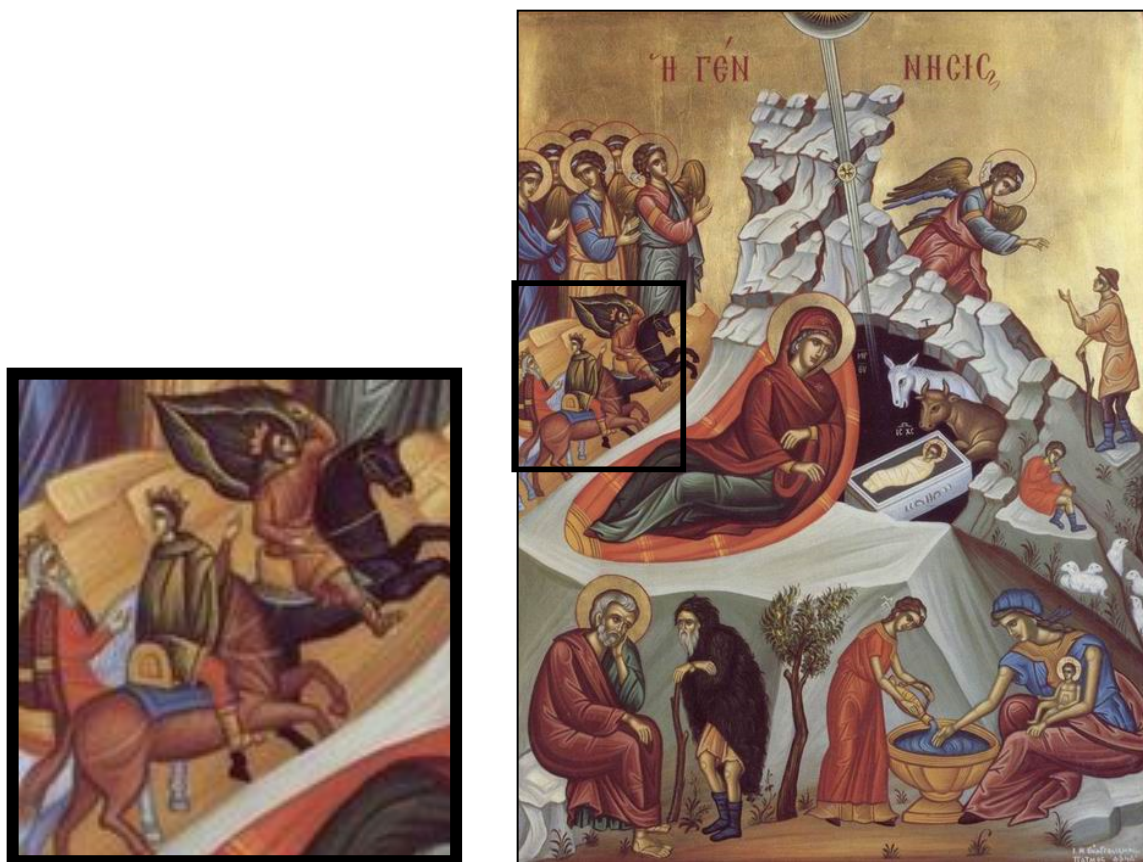


Fig. 1-2 Variety of beard lengths in the Icon of the Nativity⁵⁸

For the first four centuries of Christianity, many of the traditions passed down from the apostles remained, regardless of the culture or geographic location of a Christian community. However, after 400AD, the regional churches began to develop differing ideas on traditions, including those concerning hair.

In the Russian Orthodox Archdiocese, a general rule to “dress as if you were approaching God” remains intact in monasteries and Churches alike. Men must wear long pants and shirts with sleeves to the wrists, and women must wear long skirts, shirts with sleeves to the wrists, and a head covering at all times. Hair remains as holy as any other

⁵⁸ Maria Lavias, “L’icon de la Nativité,” In Greek-Byzantine Icons, accessed November 1, 2011, <http://www.greek-icons.org/texts-papers/orthodox-iconography/nativity-icon.htm>.

exterior symbol of faith to a Russian Orthodox man or woman. Stories still circulating among the laity prove hair's significance. One tells of a priest's demise after angering a Russian saint in heaven by selling bits of his hair to worshippers. Another tells of a devout Russian woman who, because of her practice of veiling as a devotion to St. Mary, mother of Christ, did not lose one hair from her chemotherapy treatment when she developed cancer at a young age. Women of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church also wear veils in worship. Women put the shawls over their heads, wrapping the upper ends about their shoulders to reproduce a cross, similar to practices of Orthodox Jewish women. Ethiopian orthodoxy bases many of its practices on Old Testament teachings, which include more examples of veiling than the New Testament.

Some say the tradition of maintaining uncut hair and beards among men in Orthodoxy can be traced back to the ascetics of the desert. Bromberger claims that many religious leaders of Early Christianity ordered hair rules because they became suspicious of direct contact with the divine by way of trance, manifesting itself in shaven heads and the unkempt hair of extremists. He says of most regions, "The [well-kempt] order of the monastery triumphed over the disorder of the desert and of the forest," where many ascetics took leave to live on nothing but God.⁵⁹ Ethiopian tradition claims that hair should be loosened before baptisms because it prevents hair jewelry from going into the water with the baptized, which was believed to be a residence for demons.

The Orthodox doctrines are handed down between generations mainly through practice. While Greeks have never been as consistent about emphasizing the treatment of hair in worship as other ethnicities have, hair still takes part in traditions other than just

⁵⁹ Christian Bromberger, "Hair: West to East," 395.

baptism. In chrismations, or the anointing of Holy Oil following a baptism or a previously- baptized adult conversion to Orthodoxy, strands of hair from the top of the anointed one's head are snipped in the shape of a cross. This practice follows a pattern of symbols meant to represent spiritual birth as parallel to a physical birth. In physical birth, one comes out of the womb, in blood, with the cutting of an umbilical cord. In spiritual birth, one comes out of the basin, in water, with the cutting of hair. The cutting of the hair is also representative of the sacrifice that the anointed is making of him or herself to be united with Christ. In this service of chrismation in particular, hair seems to imply a more mystical tie between the physical and the divine. Even at the end of the service, the priest prays that the anointed grows to "the grey hairs of old age," including color in the symbolism of honor, wisdom, and blessing.⁶⁰ This mystical unification through baptism and chrismation is what Derrett claims caused the end of head covering for previously Jewish Greek men who typically practiced it in the synagogue. Instead of approaching God as a lowly servant, as in Jewish theology, a Christian is now united with his son, and therefore able to pray to him without imposed inferiority.⁶¹ This claim by Derrett shows the interconnected relationship between theology, chronology, and tradition – precisely what this thesis seeks to analyze. This chapter has thus far illustrated the ancient, integral, and mystical history hair has acquired within the Orthodox Church as a tie between the physical and the spiritual. However, are perceptions of this historical relationship beyond modern influence and change? An analysis of the recent history of the Greek Orthodox Church will deliver a better basis upon which to analyze this thesis' relevant research.

⁶⁰ Alciviadis C. Calivas, "The Sacramental Life of the Orthodox Church," Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 2011, accessed November 2, 2011, <http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith7106>

⁶¹ Derrett, "Religious Hair," 101.

1.4 A RECENT HISTORY OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

The first 1000 years of Christianity saw basic organizational unity by way of five regional patriarchs that kept in communication with one another. These were the patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Rome, and Jerusalem.⁶² In 1054, Christianity underwent its first schism, the Great Schism, splitting one patriarch, that of Rome, from the rest of the four original patriarchs. “From this time on, the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church went their separate ways.”⁶³ The schism provided a wall between Orthodoxy and the new-found successes and challenges of the western churches (i.e. protestant splits, the rise of new nations, cultural movements of the Renaissance, etc.).⁶⁴ Thus, many of the practices associated with the Catholic Church or forms of Protestantism, including treatment of symbols, cannot be assumed to be synonymous in the Greek Orthodox Church because of a lack of evolution within its structure and theology.

Orthodoxy never did undergo a European Reformation or Enlightenment as the Western churches did in the 16th century, due to its residence behind the borders of Russia and the Turkish Empire at the time (see 1-3). While the periods did cause some controversies among administration and theological thought, the Greek Orthodox Church is organized in such a way that there is no single head in power. Rather, the highest power in the Orthodox Church is the Patriarch of Constantinople, who is merely

⁶² Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 151.

⁶³ Ibid., 198.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 198.

considered a first among equals in a council of patriarchs for each region of Orthodoxy.

Thus, heresies or conflicts that the Reformation may have aroused in any upper administrative role had little effect on laity and its traditions.



Fig. 1-3 : Europe in year 1500⁶⁵

Not until the 18th century Greek Enlightenment did modern and secular thought have a potentially lasting impression on Greek Orthodoxy. A sort of tradition has always

⁶⁵ "Complete Map of Europe in Year 1500," Euratlas, 2010, accessed November 2, 2011, <http://www.euratlas.net/history/europe/1500/index.html>.

existed among Greeks, an *intellectual collective*, as Paschalis M. Kitromilides calls it.⁶⁶ During the time between the 15th and 19th centuries, the collective thought became highly secularized and went from focusing on collective identity as the origin of much of Christianity to identity with classical antiquity. Classical thought had actually been encouraged by the Church centuries earlier for educational purposes. According to Paschalis M. Kitromilides, “The relation between Orthodox spiritual tradition and classical learning is evidently a complex one... marked by combative symbiosis.”⁶⁷ Greek society began to use solely classical values, such as beauty and knowledge, and politics to guide its future rather than spirituality or religion. There exists a high possibility this movement could have affected perceptions of hair and veiling even within the churches considering the emphasis on hair in classical beauty. Greeks have never been as consistent about emphasizing the treatment of hair in worship as other ethnicities have, and it would be logical that their descendants wouldn’t consider hair mystical enough to hold this tradition through the new Enlightenment.

The collective intellectual presence among Greeks can easily be paralleled to the concept of Holy Tradition. Greek culture has certainly been integral to the history of Orthodoxy. Although Greek Orthodoxy continues to expand, church attendance has declined in the country of Greece. Fr. Timothy Ware partially blames the military dictatorship of Greece from 1967 to 1974 when the Church was “unnecessarily accused” of supporting its leaders, which hurt its reputation with the contemporary youth, the current generational youth’s parents (including those who may be Greek Orthodox

⁶⁶ Paschalis M. Kitromilides, “The Enlightenment and the Greek cultural tradition,” *History of European Ideas* 36, no.1 (March 2010): 39-46.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.

immigrants to America, possibly affecting how steadfastly religious traditions were passed on).⁶⁸

Greek orthodox traditions stayed relatively true to the original practices of the Church before first entering North America. Fr. Timothy Ware claims the first Orthodox presence in North America was brought by Russian Orthodox explorers to the coast of Alaska on July 15, 1741.⁶⁹ The Russians continued to be the dominating ethnic presence for Orthodoxy in North America, even though many churches established within the 19th century incorporated multiethnic Orthodox immigrants, with a large number of multiethnic customs and traditions— Greek, Slav, Romanian, Russian, and Lebanese. Up to the end of WWI, the Russian archdiocese was the only organized archdiocese in North America, leaving most parishes, whatever their ethnic character, to seek support and priests from there.⁷⁰ The Russians have a more strict tradition concerning hair covering than a variety of other regional churches, including those of Greece. However, while uniting in religious pursuits, each culture tended to retain a sense of pride in traditions, meaning that the practice of hair covering probably did not make a large impact on the Greeks overall during this period of Russian Orthodox jurisdiction. A Greek Orthodox archdiocese was eventually set up in 1922.⁷¹

The original multiethnic nature of Orthodox churches in America was unfortunately lost somewhat with the creation of the various jurisdictions in the twenties.

⁶⁸ Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 138.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 173.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 181-82.

⁷¹ Matthew Namee, "The Historical Reality of Greek Orthodoxy in America," *The Society for Orthodox Christian History in the Americas*, July 12, 2010, accessed September 30, 2011, <http://orthodoxhistory.org/2009/11/23/orthodoxy-in-colonial-virginia/>.

No one can say if traditions were lost or strengthened during this time, but Fr. Timothy Ware expresses that second generation Orthodox are becoming assimilated with more western and secular ways of living.⁷²

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese remains the largest in North America today, with around 475 parishes according to Fr. Ware. Monastic life is lacking, however, and it wasn't until the 1990s that monasteries were established for women (in which the women do consistently cover their heads with veils). In Texas specifically, the first Greek Orthodox community was established in Fort Worth, Texas in 1910 by a man from Crete who was interested in learning about cattle and cowboys.⁷³ With such a drastic location change for what have proved to be deeply entrenched traditions of Orthodoxy, cultural influence is bound to take some hold, perhaps, specifically, on the perceptions of hair and veiling in worship. The following chapter will illustrate how I sought to study this change by describing the demographics of the St. Sophia community, followed by my methods of study, research data, and results.

⁷² Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 185.

⁷³ Ibid., 183.

CHAPTER 2. A STUDY ON HAIR IN ST. SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH AND RESULTS

2.1 ST. SOPHIA: DEMOGRAPHICS AND HYPOTHESES

My own Greek Orthodox Church of St. Sophia in San Antonio, TX was founded early in the twentieth century as well. “The First Meeting” of parishioners interested in forming a church occurred in the home of George Dounson, an immigrant from Greece himself, with the society of St. Sophia being chartered soon after. In 1924, the first Board of Trustees was formed. They quickly made efforts to establish the Church within the current St. Sophia Greek Orthodox church building, which was blessed in 1926 to hold liturgies. The majority of these men and women were either first- or second-generation Greek immigrants.

There is no exact number describing the membership at St. Sophia for the year 2011. The church has 198 stewards at this time. These are members of the church who pledge a certain amount of personal funding to the church each year, and this number may represent individuals as well as whole families. Our church sends out a newsletter each month that goes to a little over 400 homes, which means 400 singles and families, but this number entails members as well as visitors who may have been interested in the church and wanted to begin receiving its updates. The official church phone book, published in 2010, contains 914 people. However, this phone book contains many who

live in other states and cities, and it excludes new members as well as retains those who have moved away or since deceased. Members in attendance on an average Sunday range from about 130 to 170 people. During special services, such as Pascha (Orthodox Easter), the church accommodates over 300 people with many left standing.

There is a broad age demographic in St. Sophia. We have infants, children of all ages, a high school/middle school youth group, a Young Adult League, and organizations for middle aged and elderly members, as well as Parish council and service to “shut-in” members, who are unable to attend regular liturgy services for medical reasons. See Figure 2-1 below.

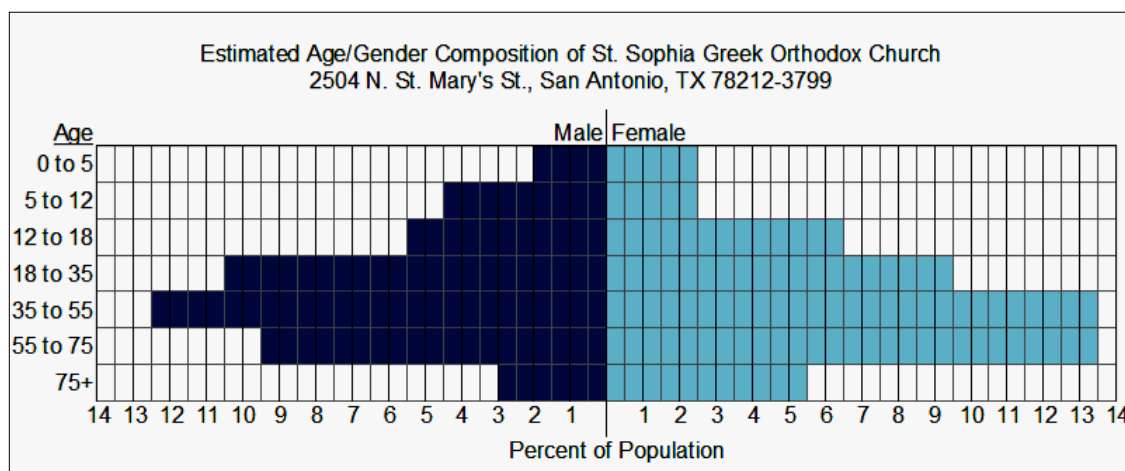


Fig. 2-1 Chart showing distribution of age by sex of members in St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church

There is a plethora of nationalities and ethnicities represented within the membership of the church, with the majority being Greek. The next largest group entails Americans. The church also hosts members who are (in a generally descending order) Romanian, Russian, Ethiopian, Lebanese, Syrian, Mexican, Colombian, Spanish, Polish, Irish, and Japanese.

My hypotheses on this subject may be traced back to 5 years ago, at age 16, when I first found the Orthodox Church. I had always kept my hair extremely short, about 2 inches long, and this treatment had only social significance for me, manifesting my sense of self-confidence and independence to the world. When I began attending a small Greek Orthodox church in Amarillo, TX, I began to notice differences in how hair is treated inside and outside of the church, particularly with the use of a veil. I saw the icons, in which few of the women are left uncovered, even in depictions of recently living women. I began to cover my hair simply out of what I thought was adherence to some unspoken standard, even though many women also didn't participate in the practice. The more I learned about the depth of symbolism and mysticism in Orthodoxy, the more I thought everyone had some consideration for their bodies and, particularly, their hair as spiritual. After learning some of the reasons other cultures and religions around the world use veils, I decided to test this assumption at my own parish of St. Sophia.

Many parishioners, if not veiling, at least pay close attention to the appearance of their hair, touching and readjusting during services as well as after, participating in actions that imply consciousness of appearance, and thus care for appearance. Based on these unofficial observations, I formed some hypotheses prior to administering the questionnaires to the parishioners. In the following paragraphs are my detailed hypotheses.

Both men and women within the church show signs of caring for hair in relation to the church context. This is shown by appearance. Parishioners wear well-kept hair, combed hair, appear to have used hair care products, and occasionally readjust the hair while in church. The majority of parishioners besides those that cover their hair show no

evidence of doing anything structurally different to the hair for the church context than they do for any other event of the same social caliber (such as a dinner gathering or a conference.) Thus, there is obvious attention to the hair. I also observed that most young women in the church, as well as many older women, wear their hair long, i.e. below the shoulders. For this reason, as an addition to my participation in the study, I decided to simultaneously grow my hair out similar to these women, in order to see what changes there may be in my physical, social, and spiritual perception of hair and its treatment.

From Sunday to Sunday between April 2011 to December 2011, I observed a range of between 3 and 13 women covering their heads each week during worship. I estimated that 3% to 9% of the average number of attendees (130 – 170 members) cover their hair during worship at church, and all are women. Laymen wear no hair coverings or hats, nor does the priest. Those who cover consistently are unaffected by factors such as participation in sacraments (like Holy Communion/Eucharist), the type of service (liturgy, vespers, memorial service), and scheduling of feast days. Thus, there is evidence that hair covering is practiced consistently by some parishioners.

My hypothesis was that there are some who do assign spiritual significance to the hair, but some might care about hair appearance, length, or otherwise in the church or in worship more because of a sense of respect for the holiness of the setting than any direct mystical tie between hair and the divine. Thus, my hypothesis is that, given the biblical injunction of Paul as previously discussed, those who pay attention to the hair might have a theological basis, perhaps attach mysticism to hair, or hold Paul's letter as literal. I also hypothesized that Orthodox converts and members of the church who are from regions of Ethiopia and Russia are more likely to cover their hair than other parishioners. Converts

may be assumed to over-compensate for years of missing Orthodox traditions, or may be overwhelmed by the atmosphere of, and sense of, sanctity present in the Orthodox Church, thus covering their hair in response. From my own experience as a convert to Orthodoxy, I can attest to the fact that this sense of sanctity and tradition is often novel for newcomers to the church, encouraging them to seek out many modes of piety, even if they are not as popular today as in the past. I assumed that Ethiopian and Russian women are more likely to cover simply because, unlike for the European and American parishioners, hair covering is still a major part of their national religions, while in Greece, it is not as prevalent. Immigrants from Ethiopia and Russia still have it in their cultural memories that hair and veiling in worship is significant. These hypotheses were examined by means of a 36-question survey concerning the role of hair in worship and parishioners' personal lives, given to various members, both covering and noncovering, men and women. The thesis will now proceed to a description of the study and its results.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF STUDY, COLLECTED DATA, AND RESULTS

Methods of gathering data:

20 individuals, 9 men and 11 women, completed the survey. The total number of respondents represents over 10% of the average Sunday population. Those surveyed ranged in age from 22 to 89. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix B. First I will present the results of the empirical questionnaire, followed by my observational data obtained informally. These results will lay the foundation for the following chapter, in which I will discuss these results and their implications alongside the perceptions I gained by exploring my own experiences as a hair-covering Orthodox Christian woman.

Empirical Data:

Responses by the participants to 14 questions pertinent to the described hypotheses are presented below. The results are separated by sex in the form of charts as illustrated in Figures 2-2 (females) and 2-3 (males).

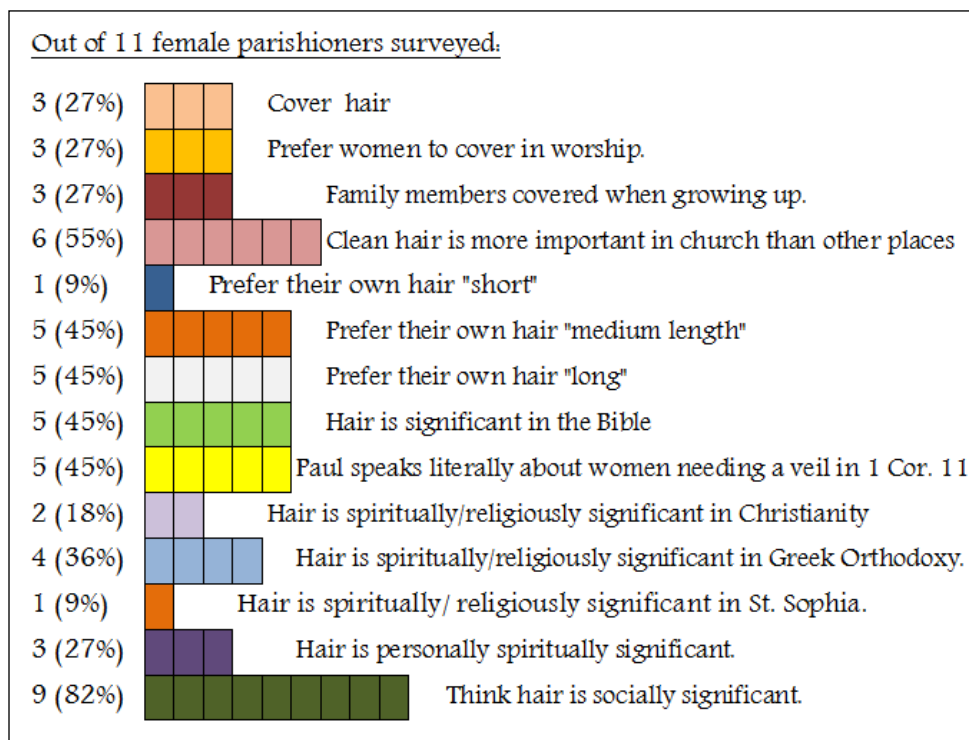


Fig. 2-2 – Chart showing the distribution of female responses to 14 questions on the perception of hair among St. Sophia parishioners.

As shown in the above chart, three out of 11 females cover their hair and three out of eleven prefer that women cover their hair during worship. Three out of 11 come from families where hair was covered. Six out of 11 believe clean hair is more important in church than in other locations. One out of 11 prefers her own hair “short.” Five out of 11 prefer their own hair “medium length,” and five out of 11 prefer their own hair “long.”

Five out of 11 consider hair to be significant in the Bible. Five out of 11 women accept Paul's injunction literally. Two out of 11 consider hair spiritually significant in Christianity. Four out of 11 consider it to be spiritually significant in Greek Orthodoxy, and one out of 11 considers hair to be significant in St. Sophia specifically. Three out of 11 women consider hair to be of personal, spiritual significance, while nine out of 11 think hair is socially significant.

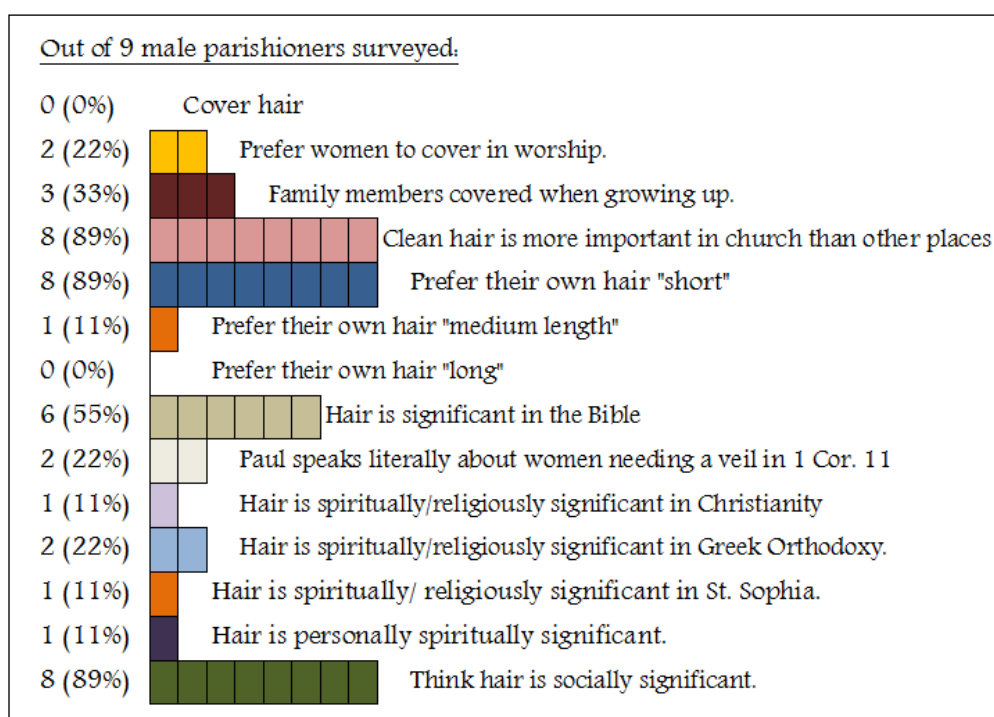


Fig. 2-3 – Chart showing the distribution of male responses to 14 questions on the perception of hair among St. Sophia parishioners.

As shown in the above chart, zero out of nine males cover their hair. Two out of nine prefer that women cover their hair during worship. Three out of nine come from families where hair was covered. Eight out of nine believe clean hair is more important in church than in other locations. Eight out of nine men prefer their own hair “short.” One

out of nine prefers his own hair “medium length.” Zero out of nine prefer their own hair “long.” Six out of nine consider hair to be significant in the Bible. Two out of nine men accept Paul’s injunction literally. One out of nine considers hair spiritually significant in Christianity. Two out of nine consider it to be spiritually significant in Greek Orthodoxy, and One out of nine considers hair to be significant in St. Sophia specifically. One out of nine men consider hair to be of personal, spiritual significance, while eight out of nine think hair is socially significant.

From the above results, the following observations are made:

1. An expectation for hair covering by women is not confirmed. Only 15% of participants cover their hair, and only 25% prefer women to cover. Hair covering to the extent that it exists is driven by women. There appears to be no male dominance in the expectation of women to cover, since more females prefer women covering in church than males (a 3/2 ratio respectively).
2. There does appear to be a dichotomy in hair length between sexes, with 91% of females preferring medium to long hair, and 89% of males preferring short hair.
3. Only 25% of total parishioners prefer that women use hair coverings in church, 15% believe it to be significant in Christianity, 30% regard it as significant in Greek Orthodoxy, and only 20% believe hair to be personally spiritually significant. These numbers show that the majority of the population does not regard hair as religiously or spiritually significant.

4. The number of women who regard hair as spiritually significant is consistently higher than the number for men – such as in Paul’s letter (5/2 ratio, women to men), Christianity (2/1 ratio), Greek Orthodoxy (4/2), personally spiritually significant (3/1). Thus, women are more likely to assign spiritual or religious significance to hair than men.
5. 8 out of 9 men (89%) thought clean hair is more important in church than in other locations, and only six out of 11 women (55%) thought the same. Men may be assumed to view more of a dichotomy between the state of hair in church as compared to outside of church.
6. Similar percentages of both men and women (55% and 45% respectively) voted that hair was significant in the Bible, yet only 35% of total parishioners thought Paul’s injunction in Corinthians referred to a literal veil for women. This shows that the general treatment of hair in St. Sophia appears to be motivated by sources other than theology and Biblical literature. This conclusion is further supported by that fact that 70% of total parishioners thought of clean hair as more important in church than other locations, but only 15% think of hair as significant in Christianity, 30% in Greek Orthodoxy, and 10% in St. Sophia. This means the preference for clean hair in church has little to do with any specifically religious relevance. Thus the number of members that hold a theological and biblical view for the perception of hair is minor. Rather, treatment of hair may result from familial tradition or even secular reasons. For example, 85% of all parishioners regard hair as significant in society.

7. Very few parishioners regard hair as significant in St. Sophia specifically since only 10% of men and women together marked positively on this question.
8. The majority of the population at St. Sophia *does* care about hair in general, however, as is evidenced by the 70% of those who advocate clean hair for church and the 85% that consider hair as significant in society.

Observational and conversational data:

I was also able to make personal observations in the study through surveys, discussions with members, and participation in services and hair covering. Figures 2-4 and 2-5 show some of my personal observations to be considered with the empirical data as split between those who prefer hair covering for women and those who do not. This organization is to better benefit the analysis of beliefs behind both practices.

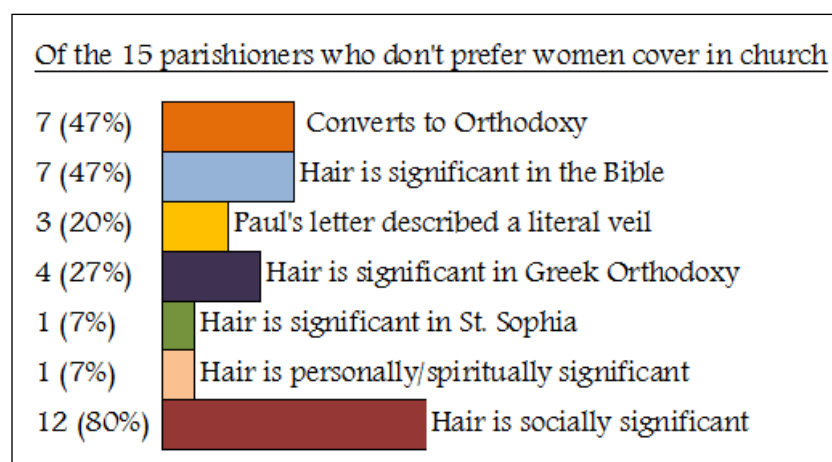


Fig. 2-4 – Chart showing the distribution of responses to six questions by parishioners who don't prefer women to cover their hair.

As shown in the above chart, seven out of 15 non-cover-preferring parishioners are converts to Greek Orthodoxy. Seven out of 15 consider hair to be significant in the Bible. Three out of 15 accept Paul's injunction literally. Four out of 15 believe hair to be significant in Greek Orthodoxy. One out of 15 thinks of hair as significant in St. Sophia specifically. One out of 15 believes hair to be personally spiritually significant. 12 out of 15 consider hair to be of social significance.

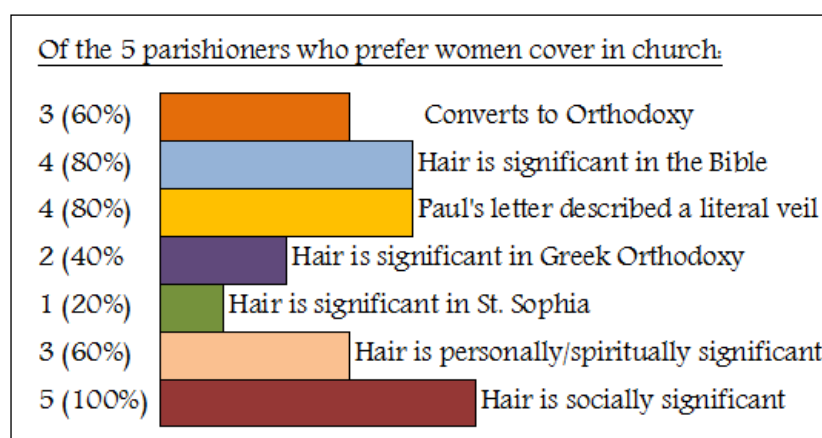


Fig. 2-5 – Chart showing the distribution of responses to six questions by parishioners who do prefer women to cover their hair.

As shown in the above chart, three out of five cover-preferring parishioners are converts to Greek Orthodoxy. Four out of five consider hair to be significant in the Bible. Four out of five accept Paul's injunction literally. Two out of five believe hair to be significant in Greek Orthodoxy. One out of five believes hair to be significant in St. Sophia specifically. Three out of five believe hair to be personally spiritually significant. Five out of five consider hair to be of social significance.

Additional observations:

- a) Only one out of six parishioners who witnessed hair covering in their families still preferred women to use the veil today.
- b) Only one out of the five parishioners who prefer women to cover in church was from a culture with prevalent hair covering traditions (Russia).
- c) The three out of 11 women who cover their hair in church and worship gave the following reasons for covering:
 - a. Respect for place
 - b. Protection from distraction, envy, and lust
 - c. Humility and Penance for humanity's fallen state
- d) One out of two men who prefer the hair covering of women gave as the reason for his opinion: the subtle and sentimental display of piety.

These observations lead to the following conclusions on perceptions of hair:

1. As shown by the fact that only one out of six parishioners (17%) with familial experience with the practice of hair covering still preferred hair covering for women today, familial tradition doesn't seem to have been a factor in who preferred women to use a veil.
2. Since only one out of five parishioners (20%) who prefer hair covering for women is from a culture with prevalent hair covering practices, cultural tradition doesn't seem to be a main motivating factor behind the preference. Thus, my hypothesis with respect to expectation that people with cultural memories of hair covering will be more inclined to covering their hair was not confirmed.

3. Even though the higher percentage of converts among those who prefer hair coverings (60%) than among those who don't prefer coverings (47%) would seem to imply that my hypothesis about converts being more likely to prefer coverings is true, the sample number of parishioners is too small to declare it as factual.
4. Only two out of five veil-preferring parishioners believe hair to be significant in Greek Orthodoxy, and only one of those two believes it to be significant in St. Sophia specifically. Thus, reasons for preferring the veil must be a consideration for hair as personally spiritual or secular. However, only three out of the five thought of hair as personally spiritually significant. Further explication on this contradiction and on the reasons given by those preferring the coverings appear in Chapter 3.
5. Parishioners who prefer veiling for women in church display a consistently higher percentage in regarding hair as religiously or spiritually significant in various categories, such as Orthodoxy and the Bible, and were more likely to take Paul's injunction literally. Thus parishioners who prefer hair coverings are more likely to believe hair is religiously or symbolically significant than those who don't. This is based on the reasons that the subjects further provided in underscoring their preference for hair covering as documented above below the observational data charts: Respect for the church, protection from distraction, humility/penance, and piety.

6. Those who prefer coverings also had a higher percentage that believed hair as socially significant (100%) than those who didn't prefer hair coverings (80%). Therefore, those who prefer coverings may be considered more aware of hair as a symbolic device overall.

CHAPTER 3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

I will now discuss the combination of empirical data, observational data, and personal participatory experiences in services and hair covering in order to formulate some overall conclusions concerning how the community of St. Sophia perceives hair, its treatment, and veiling.

The 15% of parishioners who cover their heads each Sunday coincided closely with the higher end of my hypothesized percentage, 9%.

Those who do not prefer hair coverings were shown to not apply as much spiritual significance to hair as those who do cover. However, even among those who do cover, only three out of five claimed that hair was personally spiritually significant and even fewer believed in hair as significant in Greek Orthodoxy or St. Sophia. In order to make this measure of spiritual significance assigned by covering-preferring parishioners accurate, I must discuss those who marked negatively to each of these questions. Of the two that marked hair is not personally spiritually significant, one admitted later to having a tendency for cutting her hair when attempting to escape times of spiritual crises. The other one was a male parishioner who claimed that he enjoyed the sense of piety delivered by a woman's hair covering. Thus he may not assign spiritual significance to his own hair, but rather to that of women. Two added questions to the survey on whether or not a woman's hair was spiritually significant and whether a man's hair was spiritually significant would have cleared the issue presented by the latter man's answer. In addition, all four of the five cover-preferring members who marked that hair is not significant

in Greek Orthodoxy expressed that it *is* significant in other forms of Orthodoxy, such as Russian Orthodoxy or in the Orthodox Church of America – just not in the Greek Church.

Empirical data combined with observational data has shown that the majority of the population at St. Sophia does not consider hair spiritually or religiously significant in any way, but the minority that prefers hair covering (25%) certainly does. Out of this minority of parishioner who did consider hair as spiritually or religiously significant, perceptions of the hair as representing a *mystical* connection between the physical and divine were rare. Most of the five who do favor a covering and consider hair significant cited external reasoning, such as respect, protection from distraction caused by hair, or a display of piety, none of which were concerned with internal spiritual growth or devotion. Only one of the five (20%) described the hair covering as what she thought to be an actual service to God, a means by which she could accept God's grace in a humble state. According to her, to cover the hair is to sacrifice the gift of beauty God has given in the form of a woman's hair. This description is reminiscent of the mysticism implied in the service of chrismation as described in Chapter 3. Even though this woman represents a minority of belief, 100% of those who prefer the covering for women were still also part of the majority who recognized the social dimension of hair as significant. The majority of total parishioners think clean hair is more important in church than in other locations (six out of 11 women, eight out of nine men - 70% overall) and regard hair as significant in modern society (nine out of 11 women, eight out of 9 men - 85%). Because of this persistence of social recognition in hair, I may conclude that many parishioners display good care of their hair for church simply because it is a part of the social dimension of their lives. They participate in its upkeep out of a sense of respect that this particular circle of society seeks to uphold. As part of that society, they pursue to contribute to that collective sense. However, as an aside, what "clean hair" means according to each participant is not clear as the survey did not provide an exact definition of cleanliness.

The higher percentage of men who marked that clean hair is more important in church could be considered a result of our culture, in which daily occupations known to be sources of filth in our society, such as construction, underground sewer work, etc., are still dominated by males.

My pre-study observation was confirmed that most women prefer medium to longer length hair. The only woman to mark that she preferred short hair was in her elderly years, 89 years old. She expressed the necessity of ease at her age. She represents the peak of a trend in how long women prefer their hair to be. The five that preferred their hair longer ranged from ages 22-33 with one exception of a woman who is 78, Greek, and who described taking great pride in her hair. The age range of the five that prefer their hair as medium length went up a little: ages 44-58. This trend of longer to shorter as women grow from younger to older could be further proof that the treatment of hair in St. Sophia is motivated by particularly secular concerns, such as ease of care or prioritization of perceived beauty. Unfortunately, the number of participants was not sufficient to determine if there was a correlation between those women who prefer to cover and those who prefer long hair for themselves.

Given the observation that most young women, and many older women as well, wear their hair long, I would also redesign the questionnaire to include direct questions concerning whether Paul's command for women's covering is still applicable today and whether long hair acts as a substitute for the veil described in Paul's command for women to cover. These specific details were not directly indicated by the used survey.

My hypothesis on the spiritual significance variations between converts and inherent (i.e. cradle) Orthodox members could not be confirmed by empirical evidence. However, one of the two cover-preferring parishioners who marked herself as cradle Orthodox did comment that her family had converted to Orthodoxy just after she was born. This means that, if there is a difference in how converts treat Orthodox symbolism and how cradle Orthodox do, then the convert culture could have directed her upbringing in Orthodoxy, prioritizing and maximizing

upon the mystical aspects of the religion. This tendency of converts to show more outward devotion and piety has been confirmed by fellow members with experience in various churches, stating that one can recognize a convert in almost any Orthodox community for this reason. As a convert myself, I can certainly second these notions. Having come from a Protestant background, with little to no spiritual significance assigned to physical objects, I take full advantage of the implications of mysticism. After months of covering, I now feel naked and disrespectful in a church without a veil.

When I first began covering, my feelings were the exact opposite. Considering 1) that veiling in the Greek Orthodox Church is practiced by a minority, 2) that this minority seemed to be only members from cultures with high prevalence of veiling, and 3) that the way I perceived myself and my independence as a woman was to some degree manifest in the shorter than normal length of my hair, I felt like a visual magnet. My hair at that time was not a separate entity, but rather an extension of my head, and one that was so short and efficient that it required little conscious effort to care for. I assigned no spiritual significance to it.

When I began covering, I thought all the other members of St. Sophia would find me pretentious, which was not entirely untrue. Members of my own age group became slightly distant, as if they weren't sure how to relate to some new level I had either ascended or descended to in my worship. Older members simply watched and became less forward with me in jokes. To me, these reactions indicated some perception of veiling I did not understand. As I continued veiling, people began to accept it as a part of my worship. Now, I am even surprised by some random voice tone or question directed at me that indicates some unwarranted respect from fellow parishioners. However, to think this is solely a result of the veil would be inaccurate considering that I've also been more active in the church. However, I can say that since I've begun veiling, I've become both more confident in my role in the church as a woman, that is, as a helper and potential laity leader, as well as more humble toward what I may or may not be asked to participate in or do for the Church.

Veiling did not mean nearly so much with short hair as it does now that my hair has grown to be five inches below my shoulders. My view toward my short hair was similar to my view toward my fingernails: potential for statement, but essentially, a part of me that requires little focused care. Now, I have to brush it and spend over 50% more time in the shower exclusively because of the shampooing required by the thickness of my hair. Now, I have a relationship with my hair. It has become a greater percentage of my physical self, and yet the majority of it is also an entity separate from my person. Now, it has the potential to be beautiful in its own right, not exclusively as a symbol of my character. Longer hair requires dedication and attention, two common markers of anything with quality.

Humanity has treated hair with a great degree of spirituality throughout history, due to its liminal state of being. It acts as a *threshold*, a connection between what is part of a person, to what is not, between what is alive and what is not. Van Gennep identified three stages in a rite of passage that I believe could be relevant to the context of St. Sophia: preliminal → liminal → postliminal. These terms may accurately describe the experience of a veiling Orthodox Christian, at least from my own experience.

When parishioners enter into an Orthodox Church, often they are going to receive of the Eucharist, or Holy Communion. Not only is the Church itself considered to have a link of liturgy between heaven and earth, but the Orthodox Church also holds this act of Holy Communion as one that can be either cleansing or condemning, depending on the attitude and the preparedness of the recipient. So, the liturgy is broken up into three main parts: preliminal prayers before the Eucharist, the liminal consumption of the Eucharist, and postliminal prayers of thanks and dismissal. The act of hair covering by women could easily be seen as part of the preliminal act of entering the church on the brink of salvation and condemnation, the liminal state as taking of the Communion, and the postliminal as exiting the church and removing the veil. It by this comparison that I can define the mystical significance I now assign to my hair as a veiling Christian woman. The veil is a means by which I humble myself, sacrifice the visual beauty of

the gift, the separate entity of beauty, originating from my own head. Church, the entity into which I enter in order to worship higher than myself, has no place for personal assertions of beauty that I'm not sure I can even call my own, considering its great extension beyond myself.

In future studies, I would like to research the relevance of this comparison further, between the liminal situation of a liturgy and the liminal state of hair and veiling.

While the empirical and observational data do much to reflect what I believe to be true about the community of St. Sophia and its overall perceptions concerning hair, I feel that the number of participants (a bit over 10% of the average Sunday attendance) is not sufficient to fully account for the total population's beliefs and thoughts on the subject. Were I to do the study over again, I would seek greater participation.

Were I to continue my study on the perceptions of hair in St. Sophia, I would also like to focus on specific reasons described by those who do veil for their opinions on covering, seeking out beliefs about the role hair plays in their personal spirituality.

CONCLUSION

Hair's historical treatment by humanity as something significant or symbolic of the spiritual realm is evident in many cultures, past and present. Not only is it a subject of potential decent, but it is also a changing one. Factors such as politics, family life, belief systems, and even weather can change a culture's perspective on hair and its treatment. With this consideration, this thesis has touched on what Obeyesekere defines as three levels of meaning for hair and its treatment:⁷⁴ 1) The origin of the symbol, which was found to be the modesty inherited from past traditions, commanded of early Christians by the apostles and the Church Fathers. This took place via veiling and care for hair by men as well; 2) The personal meaning of the symbol (both individually and as a group). For the Church as a whole, hair was indeed socially significant as a part of overall appearance, a vehicle of respect and cleanliness. For those who cover, personal meaning in hair was also examined; 3) The sociocultural message or meaning of the group through its treatment of hair. The thesis discussed the modern message of cleanliness and respect overall through the Church's treatment of hair, but those who do participate in covering also had a separate message of piety and devotion. Within this paradigm, one can see a

⁷⁴ Gananath Obeyesekere, "Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience," *The Anthropology of Religion*, 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

gradual transition of hair's significance from spiritual to social, but nonetheless, with an intact sense of liminality between the self and outside the self. In light of the recent bans on veils in European and Eastern countries, one may ask how globally this shift in spiritual to social perceptions of hair is manifesting itself.

As with any cultural symbol, this thesis has only scratched the surface of hair's complex and intricate significance among Orthodox Christians. Every individual and every culture have varying experiences, stories, and convictions that lead to personal beliefs. If this thesis study has managed to reveal any standing truth, let this be the one.

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APPENDIX A

NARRATIVES

Due to the high level of variability in parishioners' thoughts concerning hair, this thesis includes 5 short narratives describing the beliefs of some of the participants surveyed, celebrating their differences in culture, memory, reason and spirituality. Thus, in the spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy, that of passing down traditions via oral and historically narrative means, I offer the perspectives of certain parishioners who I believed offered particular insights to the research of this thesis. All participants are referred to in the narratives by pseudonyms.

NARRATIVE 1: SUBJECT 1

DK remembers the traditions before Vatican II. The Spanish half of her heritage won over all the others insofar as religious education went, and she was raised Catholic. She remembers watching, as a little girl, her mother wrap the worn ends of her scarf about her neck. It reminded her of the ease with which she quickly arranged a pie crust into a pan – a weathered sequence, melted into one quick movement. DK was excited when she became old enough to start veiling with the other women. She loved the way the incense would cling to the fibers until she returned to the cathedral a week later.

“We are daughters of Eve,” she says, “the woman who began it all for us by the biting, not even the tasting, of a fruit. Such a seemingly simple act, yet such weakness. All for separation from God.” We women can be so sentimental, even toward death.

As she grew up, DK felt the penance asked of her in the covering of her locks. To cover in worship this gift of beauty was a sacrifice of praise. She remembers the discontent she accidentally revealed to other women when, with the rebirth of Vatican II, so came the death of the veil. She continued her practice, but sweat under glances from others noticing her in a pious act no longer required by authorities. These are the glances that reside behind eyes, not in them – judgments that tend to target those they call “prideful.” So, she ceased. This is America, land of the free. We have no right to feel guilt for things we didn’t directly cause. She continued her veiling in secret prayer, when she felt particularly humbled.

In June of 1983, when she was 40, she walked into a Russian Orthodox Church in San Francisco. The urgent tone of the young man in the narthex stopped her from entering while he simultaneously handed her two wide panels of fabric: one to wrap her separated, jean-clad legs and the other for her loose hair. She decided to stay in San Francisco a while.

The fourteen years that have passed since this coming-home for her spirit have brought her here, to St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church. DK still feels the pennant joy and sanctity she felt in that Russian Church. There, she approached worship alongside other women as if they were approaching the throne of God itself. But here, the women don’t seem to feel the same sense of penance or the reality of where they stand in liturgy. But no hidden glances have caught her wizened eyes. No accusations of self-

righteousness has she heard here at St. Sophia. So, she remembers a time when women recognized humility on the outside like we are meant to hold on the inside. She continues the tradition of Eve, and covers herself in the presence of the divine.

NARRATIVE 2: SUBJECT 2

In my life, the hair has always been very important. You know, the Greeks have always had the good hair. I only did this once, but girls in Athens where I grew up used to put the oil, olive oil, in the hair to let it sit some days and make it shiny, you know. I like to wear my hair long because I can throw it up, and it is easy. Out of the way just like that. But I enjoy it and value it, keep it clean all the time, as everyone should. Everyone should have clean hair, shouldn't they dear? We should. But I do not do much with it anymore, decorate it or anything, at 85 years old, you know. I never saw the women cover there. Not in church. I didn't see this except in the mountains where the monasteries are. Now if there was the wind from the North or people were working, then they would use a head-scarf to protect the ears, you know, but that was all. I keep other traditions from my mother and Greece like my cooking, but never hair covering. You know, I cook for the Christmas feast every year for my family and my husband's family. It always turns into a feast for the whole neighborhood. Can you imagine? Now that is the Greek party. The Russians cover, but I didn't see much of them until I came to the United States after the War in 1945. I do think hair is important though, in the Greek Church, because of the tonsure. They snip the hair and put it in Holy Chrism to bless the baptized and dedicate the life to God. I do not think the Fathers would want us women to

cover today. You know, it is a lot to ask and I think today they would forgive us of it. Paul I think would talk more about having clean hair for the worship, not covered.

NARRATIVE 3: SUBJECT 3

I guess it is obvious to me, or someone like me, that religions can be so interconnected. I spent 30 years of my life making light of all of them. And it was in Thailand of all places that I came to believe in Christ, and not even among Christians. I found the Orthodox Church here in America though. Another weird instance in my search for truth I suppose, considering how low key it is here. I suppose my conversion in Thailand makes sense, in retrospect. There is a great sense of piety among those in the East who *are* religious, and this is something I found also in Orthodoxy. I think, in fact, that this is the reason I prefer veiling in the church. Not because it is a distraction or because they should be respectful to the Church. While both of those may be important to some, I appreciate the subtle sense of devout worship it delivers. But this is a piety that is entirely personal, not for the community. Accusations of pride among women who practice this are silly simply because you never know their situations, you know. Lots of people who go to monasteries before they know much about it consider the monks to be completely proud and antisocial toward visitors. Just like everything in life and especially in religions, you have to take practice in context.

NARRATIVE 4: SUBJECT 4

ML knows the Greek Church is a bit less pious in practice than the churches she came from up north. This church too, St. Sophia. But this church has family. Just like her

family back home, this one has folks who really care about each other, bicker occasionally, and make back up.

ML knows a little bit about trouble. She's been in the back-alleys of San Antonio and understands the grit culture there. She's made mistakes. She's human. It only magnifies the beauty of the Church. Christ came not for the healthy but for the sick. This is why ML wears the veil. She knows the vices human nature is drawn to and must do all she can to prevent them in such a holy place. Hair is a source of beauty, after all.

After some weeks of buried hints that things in her own life are not going well, one can expect to see her hair just a tad shorter, ends removed by her own craft scissors onto the kitchen floor of her apartment.

Modesty is a cultural tradition for ML. She may have been raised in Buckle-of-the-Bible-Belt Tennessee, full-blooded American, but her family was already attending an Orthodox Church when she came into the world. They attended a variety of Orthodox Churches before finding St. Sophia, such as the Orthodox Church of America and Romanian Orthodoxy. The women in those churches knew modesty. Her mother and sisters and she covered before entering and after exiting, keeping heads low in concentration, standing throughout the service as a means of sacrifice and devotion. Many here use the veil too, but the younger generations, those up and coming in this dangerous world she knows, are not being taught the same. Hair is just one more tool of temptation for use inside of the church, a distraction, a source of vanity for some and a source of distraction for others. ML's own light, flowing hair has caused her problems many a late night. Even in the Bible, she's read stories of Samson who lost his strength

with his hair, and the woman who washed Christ's feet with her hair. Hair has never been a direct part of worship, but it certainly affects it.

NARRATIVE 5: SUBJECT 5

When the dictatorship was in power, no religion was allowed. No one was allowed to show they were of any belief system whatsoever. To reveal even that you thought the earth was cubical would have been dangerous. Muslims were not allowed to use head coverings in public. Christians could not carry Bibles. It was simply understood in AV's family that they were Orthodox Christians, but this meant little to AV until the dictatorship fell and churches began reestablishing themselves across her country. She entered into liturgical life at age 14 without much of a background for her family's beliefs, but with the memories and blood of a survivor of political revolution.

AV has now found her place in the United States. Her family brought her with them when they came in 1999 to make a home in New York. While the dirty, somewhat hurried streets did remind her of her childhood, they did not welcome her as warmly as Texas did when she found a job as an accountant in San Antonio.

AV remembers her first liturgy at St. Sophia with a sense of disturbance. She is a confident woman, having endured plenty more than a simple dictatorship through her failed marriage. But even she recognizes the need to respect a religious holy ground. This church is indeed much different than the Russian Orthodox churches she was used to in her home country. AV watches the men here who wear their hair below their shoulders. They are men and yet they show such signs of femininity. And hardly any women in St. Sophia cover their hair! Her mother would have been appalled. AV can't imagine ever

giving up such a source of comfort and respect in her religious life. Whether you are praying or simply walking in to speak with a good friend, a woman should cover her hair within the church. There is no reason to show everyone what you look like here. AV knows that the One listening for her prayers during liturgy already knows everything in its most natural state, including the beauty she has retained over her 40 years of life.

Still, AV finds in St. Sophia the source of reassurance her spirit needs. AV's past *is* Orthodoxy. Here, she can find the peace of a tradition that's never been far away from her, even in the old country. AV's attendance of late is something her mother would find lacking, but if only she knew the fuel of the soul the Church gives her when she *does* go. So AV continues into St. Sophia when she is hungry, not just for local worship, but for the eternal truth she finds hidden in the *Pantocrator* and the reflections of the ancient icons.

APPENDIX B

THE VEIL TEXT

1 Corinthians 11:1-16, Orthodox Study Bible, taken from the New King James Version

¹Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

²Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you. ³But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. ⁴Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. ⁵But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. ⁶For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. ⁷For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. ⁸For man is not from woman, but woman from man. ⁹Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. ¹⁰For this reason, the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. ¹²For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.

¹³Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is dishonor to him? ¹⁵But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. ¹⁶But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

APPENDIX C

THESIS STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic

1. Culture/Ethnicity you identify yourself as _____

Age _____

Male / Female (circle one)

2. In what city did you grow up?

3. How many years have you been a practicing Greek Orthodox Christian?

4. How often do you attend Sunday liturgical services? (circle one) Never / Rarely / Festive Occasions / 50% / Often / Regularly

5. How often do you attend services other than Sunday liturgies (e.g. feast days, vespers)? (circle one) Never / Rarely / Festive Occasions / 50% / Often / Regularly

6. How do you see yourself? (circle one) Cradle Orthodox (Orthodox from birth) / Convert to Greek Orthodoxy

7. If you are a convert, what was your former church/religion?

8. How do you like to wear your hair? (circle one) Long / Medium length / Short / Shaved

9. How much time do you spend on your hair each day including care and appearance?
_____minutes

10. Do you think hair was perceived as symbolic in Mediterranean culture at the time of Christ's life and death, in 1st century A.D.?

11. To what degree do you think hair and its treatment has been significant or symbolic to Christian worship since the time of Christ? (circle one) Not at all / Maybe / In some cases / Moderately / Very Significant or Symbolic

Questions: rate answers from strong No (1) to strong Yes (5). Example: "Do you like to cook?"	(No → Neutral → Yes) 1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5
1. Is your hair important to you?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
2. Do you prefer that women wear a cover for their hair in worship?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
3. Do you prefer that women wear a cover for their hair in public?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
4. Should men wear hair longer than their shoulders?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
5. Should men wear beards or facial hair in church?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
6. Is it more important for people to have clean hair in church than in other places?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
7. Do you see your hair as an adornment / an accessory for appearance?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
8. Do you think that hair is significant in Christianity?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
9. Do you think that hair has significance in the Bible?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
10. Is hair religiously significant in the Greek Orthodox Church?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
11. Is hair religiously significant in the parish community of St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church in San Antonio, TX?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
12. Do you assign any religious significance to your own hair?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
13. Is your hair reflective of your relationship with society or others?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
14. Does the way you care for your hair reflect your religious beliefs?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
15. Do you consider your hair to be reflective of your relationship with your spirituality?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
16. Is hair important to the culture/society with which you identify most?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
17. Do people of your culture/society (outside of your church) cover their hair?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
18. Did any of your family cover hair in worship, church, or prayer when you were growing up?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
19. Do you cover your hair in church?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
20. Do you cover your hair when in prayer?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
21. Do you believe that Paul speaks literally when he says that a "woman who prays and prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head... [and] is shameful... woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels... Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?" I Corinthians 11:1-16.	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
22. Do you believe Paul speaks figuratively when he says that a "woman who prays and prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head... [and] is shameful... woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels... Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?" I Corinthians 11:1-16.	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
23. Can you cite past experiences as bases for why you believe the way you do about hair?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
24. Do you think that the way you wear your hair could impact how others think of you?	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
25. Does the way hair is worn act as a symbol of gender? (Example: long hair indicates a woman, short hair indicates a man)	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5