

Tattooing: A Universal Language History & Significance (part 4)

Slavery continued

Back in Europe, at the time of the French revolution there was a growing craze for tattooing in certain circles. There is a well known story from that time illustrating the embarrassment the king of Sweden had to face in 1810. As a young republican, Bernadotte had tattooed on his left arm "Death to the King."

This ever growing craze for tattooing did not stop at the common people. Surprisingly, it was adopted by several governments and political parties for a variety of reasons. Prisoners in Nazi concentration camps were branded like animals. The tattoo was a registration number corresponding to the camp, and preceded by a "D" if the prisoner was Jewish.



skin.

Roman soldiers used to tattoo the name of their general or a drawing of a sparrow-hawk (a symbol of their military function) on the back of their hand.

During the reign of Hitler in the first part of the twentieth century, members of the SS group were tattooed with the "SS" sign followed by the blood type of the person under the left armpit. This was to ensure that they would receive more medical attention if wounded in battle and a reference to identify mutilated bodies of the group. Moreover this process helped identify deserters.

In ancient Greece, many leading citizens, and particularly those in power were tattooed. Architects, for example were tattooed with a triangle on the left biceps. Priests with a sun on the thigh, and interpreters with a parrot on the chest. In Nubia and ancient Egypt, musicians, dancers, and prostitutes were tattooed with erotic designs on the pubis and thighs.

These craftsmen or journeymen would travel from country to country all around Europe looking for work. The tattoo they bore was in one way or another a form of certificate describing their profession. It is the only one visual form understood by all people and most unlikely to get lost in any form of accident. This method of identification cannot be forged, and bore witness to their qualifications. It enabled them to find work in their domain regardless of their communication skills with respect to the language of the coun-

try. Dechambre's dictionary provides some examples of these signs and what they meant. Here are some of the most common, many of which still survive until today:

- Stone carvers tattoo compasses, a right angle, a chisel, and a plumb line. Carpenters wear a plane and pliers. Butchers display a bull's head on crossed knives. Barbers tattoo a comb and crossed scissors. Bakers, a loaf, scales, and kneading trough. Cobblers, an owl and a boot. Blacksmiths exhibit a hammer and the anvil. Sailors' motifs are the most famous: the anchor. Vine growers, a bunch of grapes. Gunsmiths, a pistol.

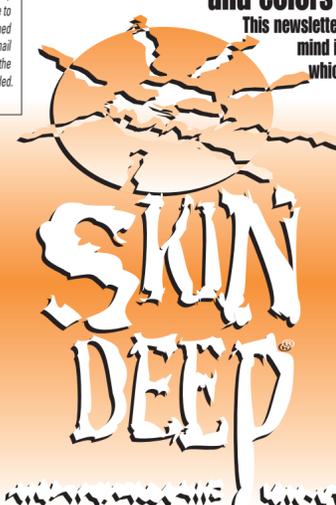
In the year 1791 a revolutionary law, Le Chapelier law, resulting from the Allard Decree abolished these guilds of craftsmen. And gradually, these symbols of journeymen were forgotten. Except for a few who remained faithful to the tradition and continued using these symbols as signs of their profession.

Tattooing was not restricted to the common and lower classes only. Even the bourgeoisie and the nobility were affected by this form of art. It was the young Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII, who endorsed tattooing for the nobility. Queen Victoria's children were tattooed during their trip to Yokohama in Japan in 1882. (To be continued in the next one.)

Your comments are highly appreciated. If you think you have any ideas to make this newsletter a better one, please do not hesitate to call or send email. If you feel you have something to say and would like to have it published here, please email your article to the address provided.

inside! Meet the raving Familia now unleashed: all entangled in an argument of whether or not time will come to an end, THERE IS AN OVERCOMING SENSE OF FAILING IF YOU NEVER CAN SEE THE END. And the emotions now suppressed will in many shapes and colors render the skyline of our actions and pains: O.R.A.N.G.E

This newsletter is not intended for anyone who might just happen on it. It contains material that might twist your mind inside out, take you places and remind you of things you already know. It might even tell you things which you don't know. It might offend you and make you angry. It might as well please you and make you laugh! Surely you are special, and well, you're not just anyone, so read on!



Our Ravings And Nervousness Go Elsewhere.

For further detail visit: www.skindeepkulture.com [beta version]. For comments and feedback send email to: skindeep@hotmail.com, or call hady beydoun: 03. 68. 94. 66

By now you must be wondering about what on earth these characters have anything to do in such a newsletter concerned with art. Well there is a lot more to this newsletter than that. Shock value. In case you haven't noticed yet, this newsletter somehow looks at things from a somewhat distorted perspective. Let me explain: We are all used to thinking in a somewhat similar fashion; we are, in general brought up to believe in certain things and behave in certain manners. And this affects our reasoning and behavior in more than one way. Now, I'm not claiming that what I say is completely true, however, if you follow my line of thinking, I hope you might understand what I am talking about. What we learn and what we hear is not necessarily the truth. What we desire is not necessarily "bad". What we crave for and deeply want, is not necessarily a sin. Though why we feel somehow "guilty" when we get what we want simply is a great dilemma for many of us. We feel small, insignificant, helpless, unworthy; we humble ourselves for fear of others' mockery and judgment. We do not do what we really want to do, we do what we only "think" pleases us and others. We live in constant fear, we go out, we drink and mingle, we let out, and then, we go back to where we started.....



Now meet: uncle smith, good aunt rosa, junior the son, evil madeline the mother, and john the father.

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Discover O.R.A.N.G.E :Our Ravings And Nervousness Go Elsewhere.

TATTOOS BODY-PIERCING MAKE-UP AND SEX.....THE HALLUCINATING FAMILIA: BY HADY BEYDOUN.

Uncle Smith: Ever since childhood, our minds are stuffed with foretells and stories and "ethics" and "values" which when we grow up and see for ourselves, turn out to be not as accurately true as we have been taught to believe. We are charged with hope and visions of truth. We humble ourselves to please others in the hopes of being accepted. We surround ourselves with false ideas. We want what others want. We deny ourselves what we really want. We do not clearly define OUR priorities. We struggle for a truth which we cannot grasp because we are afraid to lose. To lose what we only "think we have". What we fear and loath becomes of us, and eventually becomes us. We imitate the actions of others and we think we are special. The list is endless and we are only imitators. Please, allow me to clarify what I am trying to say by illustrating an example: Make-Up."

"The truth is never advertised"

Evil Madeline: What end does putting make-up on serve? Clearly to enhance facial features and attract attention. Lip gloss, blush, nail polish, even perfume...all act as agents promoting sexual desire. The woman's face would blush, turn red (with blood rushing to her face) on the verge of sexual climax...her scent would intensify as she nears orgasm, eyes almost shut as fluids and saliva meet and mix... So what make-up basically does is imitate those very intimate sexual and physical features of blushing and orgasmic pleasure explicitly and in broad daylight, for all to see in social gatherings, thus arousing sexual instincts in potential partners. Simply, make-up is an invitation for sex.

"The clash of honor calls, to stand where others fall"

John, The Father: What is our ultimate purpose? To decorate, to enhance, to make more beautiful. This is man's endless quest for beauty and sexual attraction. Just like all of nature's creation: Seduction and mating. From butterflies and peacocks to wild beasts. Color combinations to attract the opposite sex, displays of power and status. An infinite show of individuality and personal expression in an endless array of color and form. For us humans, the way we dress, walk, talk and the car we drive, the places we go to, where we study and what we do, help paint an image of ourselves, of what we really are. Ultimately how much money we make and have draws the dividing line between strength and weakness. The more money one has, the more power he/she has. The stronger this person is in the eyes of the others, the more of a chance for a relationship there is. All females in the animal kingdom will only mate with the strongest male, and so is the case in our human social organization. Our females will only settle for the strongest males. In the past, physical strength used to be a basic symbol of power, nowadays it is much more complicated than that. Those who are looking for a lifetime of security and luxury will only go on seducing the strongest and richest. The way they do it is simple: Enhancing the way they look in such ways as to provide the onlooker with a personal invitation for intimacy. Where does love come in this equation? Is that rotten or what? "

"To be content is happiness, not the overflow of material things"

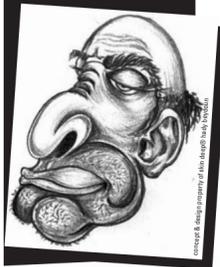
Uncle Smith: Rotten? Only by the standards and ethics you have been taught as a kid in school and by your immediate society (and remote ones which you see on TV). The real thing in life is what you see around you. The real value of the thing is defined by money and nothing else...from the paintings of Rembrandt and Renoire to the shoes you wear. Your social status is defined not by how much you have learned, but by how much you carry in your wallet. And the other values...honesty, beauty, honor, love, truth and what you see dramatized in the movies and on TV...are non-existent where you live. In fact these are only hopes and dreams for a "better" human kind. Follow these higher standards, and you are cast out of the system, walked all over, mistreated, abused, laughed at and beaten into a pile of remorse. Nevertheless, others will sense your noble self, and only commend you with words, not actions. Only the strong will survive."

"Every man dies, not every man really lives"

Junior, the son: But uncle smith! I see your point perfectly well! I really don't see why the teachers at school do not teach us the things you say...They keep on stressing the fact that people and their relationships with one another are not based on material things, but on a spiritual level. Honestly I would love to agree with them, as their point is so poetic, so romantic, so high...so out of this world! Just like in foretells. And I have noticed that even though I would like to treat the people I know with that kind of spiritual respect, they do not treat me likewise, and that hurts me and disappoints me. And so, I'd rather turn mean and less sensitive with respect to others. In other words, I turn more self centered! "

"Never fail to dare, always dare to fail"

Good Aunt Rosa: Now now junior, there is no need for sarcasm. Things are not that bad after all, there is some goodness in everyone! And everyone makes mistakes. You really should learn how to forgive and accept the others as they really are with all their little imperfections and flaws. And by doing that, you will feel good, as the others will sense your goodness and treat you likewise. You see, it takes more courage on your part to show your real self in front of others, with all your weaknesses and imperfec-



uncle smith late 60's, very rich, very wise, "wife beater" (although he has no wife) plays poker heavily, drinks and fucks everyday, gambles a lot he has to know every detail in the family and his opinion is final.



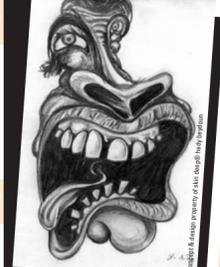
evil madeline the mother late 30's, very strong personality and commanding presence no one dares cross her. she is always up to some evil scheme, always dressed fancily, and a big spender. (well, she spends only on herself), does not cook or take care of anyone around her. everyone fears her.



junior, the son barely 18, silly, aggressive and not very bright. he adores his mother and tries to be like her. he is a trouble maker, always arguing with someone, smokes, and is a big heavy metal fan, (he stole a bicycle once, recently), he has no pity in his heart, and thinks of himself as the center of the world. uncle smith likes him a lot, and they both get in to fights with john, the father.



good aunt rosa everyone likes her, and she adores everyone! especially junior! she treats him like her baby always giving him "shrooms and space cakes! she does all the shopping and cooking for the familia. never married, she is in her mid 30s. she is somehow related to the familia, but only uncle smith knows the truth, he will not say how...[hmmmm something fishy here, but hey, she is sweet!]



john, the father He is the brother of uncle smith and the husband of evil madeline, somewhere in his 40s (he doesn't even know!) takes money from his brother smith and almost shouts and spits every time he talks.

tions. Simply, dare to be yourself, dare to fail in the eyes of others, but not in your own! "

Uncle Smith: Very wise of you aunt rosa, I never imagined you could speak like that. However in as much as I would like to agree with you on what you have just said, I do find myself constantly thinking of all the influence society has on us as little kids and throughout our lives. We are constantly bombarded by the thoughts and fears and paranoia of the others, that they become ours after a while. We are made to believe that what WE really think and feel is of no importance. Think of how many times we are told to ask the others for advice on our own affairs! Think of how many times we make the decisions the others somehow "force" on us in one way or another through fear. Each of us has our uncertainties and weaknesses, granted, but how do we fill that emptiness? Surely not with any poisoned ideas that any person may happen to throw upon us! We really must be very careful in choosing and deciding what and what not to adopt in the little parts we play that make us who we really are!"

Evil Madeline: What we fear and loath becomes of us. What we criticize in others, we do as well. What we preach, we don't practice. What we really need and badly want is to survive. I gather from what you all have said is that we all agree on this point: Man's first duty is to himself. Now, does the end justify the means? And is any means we choose definitely the right one for us taking us to the end we have envisioned? And why is it that we feel discouraged when we cannot have what we desire shortly after we first try? Will small time gains and pleasures fulfill our basic and natural need for a "happy and content" survival? Is happiness those small little victories and pleasures we encounter here and there? Or is it this big dream we are in search for? Why do we bother thinking and talking about this in the first place? Do we need to understand? It surely will lead us nowhere!

This conversation will only confuse our minds more and more and really, i don't see the point why we should talk about abstract things in our lives. Let us go shopping and look at fancy cars and buy expensive clothes and have fun..."

Uncle Smith: Friedrich Nietzsche begins a brilliant somewhat eccentric 1876 essay he called "The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life." "Consider the cattle, grazing as they pass you by, they do not know what is meant by yesterday or today, they leap about, eat, rest, digest, leap about again, and so from morn till night and from day to day, fettered to the moment and its pleasure or displeasure, and thus neither melancholy nor bored..." "A human being may well ask an animal: 'Why do you not speak to me of your happiness but only stand and gaze at me?' The animal would like to answer and say, 'The reason is I always forget what I was going to say'-but then he forgot this answer too, and stayed silent."

Is forgetfulness the key to our happiness? Should we not think and ponder about life and who we are and live like cattle, eating, sleeping, reproducing and spending? The answer is Yes and No. We are only happy when we break from this moment to moment chain of memories and step out of time for a while and think of nothing but of what we are totally immersed in doing at the moment. These moments, we recall as the happiest times we have had and yet, they still come to us briefly and unexpectedly, with no premeditation.

However, if we do try to act like that consciously, we badly fail and eventually we get frustrated. In my twisted opinion, if you want to call it that, I think we are really happy only when we express what we really want and desire in our most personal way with no fear or any sense of guilt whatsoever. Then, and only then, we would be living up to our most natural code of survival and that is man's first duty is to himself. Not only by his natural instinct to eat and go to the toilet when his biological needs call for it, but by how he fulfills his desires, how and what he speaks, eats, acts...be it "vulgar" in the eyes of others, indecent...or whatever you might call it.

Of course, I am still keeping in mind a certain code of behavior when invited, let's say to a formal dinner, but that is only brief. I mean it in a more general and broader sense...One really turning a deaf ear to the redundant and silly comments of everyone else's when doing daily routine stuff...like for example when one wants to break a social barrier and maintain a relationship with someone of another class (be it of a religious or racial difference or of a different material status) one should really feel free to to what he intends to do, for in his eyes, this brings him closer to the end he has foreseen, spiritually or otherwise, he must attain full freedom to do so, otherwise, believe me, he is going to end up frustrated and making the wrong decisions...(this conversation is to be continued in the next one).

what is a good tattoo?

by Hady Beydoun

A tattoo is the most personal thing one can acquire in his/her lifetime, hence styles and meanings vary. What one person might get and be able to associate with, another may not even think of. What I am talking about is the quality of the work done.

By quality I mean the execution process and the final piece of artwork. The final result determines whether the wearer has got a good piece of art or not. By good I mean that you should look for:

-The quality of the outline and lines in the tattoo. Lines must be sharp and straight, not crooked coarse and splay.



tattoo and photo by Skin Deep® Hady Beydoun

Shading (when involved) must be so fine that at least two or three values of grey (and or a smooth gradation of color) are present.

The style you get and what you get does not really matter as long as the subject you choose is to your liking and represent who you are in one way or another, however the way the final result looks really tells of who you are

Man's first duty is to himself and therefore one must aspire to the best job possible one can get to last him/her a lifetime. The choice of the artist to execute such a job is crucial.

How can you tell a good artist from a bad one?

As the word defines itself, an artist is someone who is able to transform abstract ideas into a: Visual form (painting, sculpture, acting), phonetic form (po-

etry, singing, music) and many others. The way this idea is transformed into a "tangible" shape draws the dividing line of whether or not it is well executed.

A tattoo artist, is an artist by all means, and since tattooing is a form of visual art, it goes with painting hand in hand. A good tattoo artist is someone who can paint (or draw) well, and is someone who can handle the technicalities of the tattoo machine as well. Many "tattoo artists" are good technicians but with no sense of subtle artistic expression. That is, they are not able to bring out, in a design, these little details that make it good or not. In other words, they do not have the ability to breathe life into the artwork, even into an abstract tribal piece. An abstract piece is not just a combination of lines and curves filled in with black color, the way the lines and curves are shaped and its placement on the body make a big difference. Let alone the tattoo of something more representational like an animal or a portrait.

Am I driving the point home? I hope it is clear that when someone does a tattoo on your skin he/she must be aware of these little things mentioned above. Art is the expression of a feeling and that feeling gives the final result life. Surely you do not want to carry on your body your whole life some tattoo which looks like a dead thing or even worse, a scribble!

Everyone can make a sandwich, but some people can make better sandwiches than others. So is the case with the hairdresser or barber or doctor you go to. And in the tattoo world, the same rules apply.

When you go into a tattoo studio, make sure you look at the artist's paintings and photos of his/her tattoos. You look at the paintings to see if whether or not this person possesses this fine sense of bringing the subject to life, and you look at the photos of his tattoos to see if he is a good technician. One cannot do without the other.

Again, I must stress upon safety and hygiene. When you're in a tattoo studio make sure the artist working there is always using new needles and sterilized equipment. **Look for an autoclave, disposable latex gloves, disposable ink caps. Do not be satisfied with what they may only say to you, see for yourself. One small mistake can be fatal.**

Art is the expression of a feeling and that feeling gives the final result life.

a good artist has the ability to bring the subject to life

a sensational human genome discovery!

THE CASE OF ADAM'S ALIEN GENES

In whose image was The Adam – the prototype of modern humans, Homo sapiens sapiens – created? The Bible asserts that the Elohim said: "Let us fashion the Adam in our image and after our likeness." But if one is to accept a tentative explanation for enigmatic genes that humans possess, offered when the deciphering of the human genome was announced in mid-February, the feat was decided upon by a group of bacteria!

"Humbling" was the prevalent adjective used by the scientific teams and the media to describe the principal finding – that the human genome contains not the anticipated 100,000 - 140,000 genes (the stretches of DNA that direct the production of amino-acids and proteins) but only some 30,000+ – little more than double the 13,601 genes of a fruit fly and barely fifty percent more than the roundworm's 19,098. What a comedown from the pinnacle of the genomic Tree of Life!

Moreover, there was hardly any uniqueness to the human genes. They are comparative to not the presumed 95 percent but to almost 99 percent of the chimpanzees, and 70 percent of the mouse. Human genes, with the same functions, were found to be identical to genes of other vertebrates, as well as invertebrates, plants, fungi, even yeast. The findings not only confirmed that there was one source of DNA for all life on Earth, but also enabled the scientists to trace the evolutionary process – how more complex organisms evolved, genetically, from simpler ones, adopting at each stage the genes of a lower life form to create a more complex higher life form – culminating with Homo sapiens.

THE "HEAD-SCRATCHING" DISCOVERY

It was here, in tracing the vertical evolutionary record contained in the human and the other analyzed genomes, that the scientists ran into an enigma. The "head-scratching discovery by the public consortium," as Science termed it, was that the human genome contains 223 genes that do not have the required predecessors on the genomic evolutionary tree.

How did Man acquire such a bunch of enigmatic genes? In the evolutionary progression from bacteria to invertebrates (such as the lineages of yeast, worms, flies or mustard weed – which have been deciphered) to vertebrates (mice, chimpanzees) and finally modern humans, these 223 genes are completely missing in the invertebrate phase. Therefore, the scientists can explain their presence in the human genome by a "rather recent" (in evolutionary time scales) "probable horizontal transfer from bacteria."

In other words: At a relatively recent time as Evolution goes, modern humans acquired an extra 223 genes not through gradual evolution, not vertically on the Tree of Life, but horizontally, as a sideways insertion of genetic material from bacteria...

AN IMMENSE DIFFERENCE

Now, at first glance it would seem that 223 genes is no big deal. In fact, while every single gene makes a great difference to every individual, 223 genes makes an immense difference to a species such as ours. The human genome is made up of about three billion nucleotides (the "letters" A-C-G-T which stand for the initials of the four nucleic acids that spell out all

life on Earth); of them, just a little more than one percent are grouped into functioning genes (each gene consists of thousands of "letters"). The difference between one individual person and another amounts to about one "letter" in a thousand in the DNA "alphabet." The difference between Man and Chimpanzee is less than one percent as genes go; and one percent of 30,000 genes is 300. So, 223 genes is more than two thirds of the difference between me, you and a chimpanzee!

An analysis of the functions of these genes through the proteins that they spell out, conducted by the Public Consortium team and published in the journal Nature, shows that they include not only proteins involved in important physiological but also psychiatric functions. Moreover, they are responsible for important neurological enzymes that stem only from the mitochondrial portion of the DNA – the so-called "Eve" DNA that humankind inherited only through the mother-line, all the way back to a single female "Eve." That alone raises doubt regarding



tattoo and photo by Skin Deep® Hady Beydoun

insertion" – the "bacterial explanation."

A SHAKY THEORY

How sure are the scientists that such important and complex genes, such an immense human advantage, was obtained by us – "rather recently" – through the courtesy of infecting bacteria?

"It is a jump that does not follow current evolutionary theories," said Steven Scherer, director of mapping of the Human Genome Sequencing Center, Baylor College of Medicine. "We did not identify a strongly preferred bacterial source for the putative horizontally transferred genes," states the report in Nature.

The Public Consortium team, conducting a detailed search, found that some 113 genes (out of the 223) "are widespread among bacteria" – though they are entirely absent even in invertebrates. An analysis of the proteins which the enigmatic genes express showed that out of 35 identified, only ten had counterparts in vertebrates (ranging from cows to rodents to fish); 25 of the 35 were unique to humans. "It is not clear whether the transfer was from bacteria to human or from human to bacteria," Science quoted Robert Watson, co-director of Washington University's Genome Sequencing Center, as saying. But if Man gave

those genes to bacteria, where did Man acquire those genes to begin with?

THE ROLE OF THE ANUNNAKI

The biblical verses dealing with the fashioning of The Adam are condensed renderings of much more detailed Sumerian and Akkadian texts, found inscribed on clay tablets, in which the role of the Elohim in Genesis is performed by the Anunnaki – "Those Who From Heaven to Earth Came."

As detailed in my books, beginning with The 12th Planet (1976) and even more so in Genesis Revisited and The Cosmic Code, the Anunnaki came to Earth some 450,000 years ago from the planet Nibiru – a member of our own solar system whose great orbit brings it to our part of the heavens once every 3,600 years. They came here in need of gold, with which to protect their dwindling atmosphere. Exhausted and in need of help in mining the gold, their chief scientist Enki suggested that they use their genetic knowledge to create the needed Primitive Workers. When the other leaders of the Anunnaki asked: How can you create a new being? He answered: "The being that we need already exists; all that we have to do is put our mark on it."

THE TIME WAS SOME 300,000 YEARS AGO.

What he had in mind was to upgrade genetically the existing hominids, who were already on Earth through Evolution, by adding some of the genes of the more advanced Anunnaki. That the Anunnaki, who could already travel in space 450,000 years ago, possessed the genomic science (whose threshold we have now reached) is clear not only from the actual texts but also from numerous depictions in which the double-helix of the DNA is rendered as Entwined Serpents (a symbol still used for medicine and healing).

When the leaders of the Anunnaki approved the project (as echoed in the biblical "Let us fashion the Adam"), Enki with the help of Ninharasag, the Chief Medical Officer of the Anunnaki, embarked on a process of genetic engineering, by adding and combining genes of the Anunnaki with those of the already-existing hominids. When, after much trial and error braathtakingly described and recorded in antiquity, a "perfect model" was attained, Ninharasag held him up and shouted: "My hands have made it!" An ancient artist depicted the scene on a cylinder seal. And that, I suggest, is how we had come to possess the unique extra genes. It was in the image of the Anunnaki, not of bacteria, that Adam and Eve were fashioned.

A MATTER OF EXTREME SIGNIFICANCE

Unless further scientific research can establish, beyond any doubt, that the only possible source of the extra genes are indeed bacteria, and unless it is then also determined that the infection ("horizontal transfer") went from bacteria to Man and not from Man to bacteria, the only other available solution will be that offered by the Sumerian texts millennia ago.

Until then, the enigmatic 223 alien genes will remain as an alternative – and as a corroboration by modern science of the Anunnaki and their genetic feats on Earth.

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they beat you at school to make you their fool.
they fill you up with shit so that you grow up like a pig.
and after all these years of complete loss, you think you're ready for a life-course...
well you're still a peasant as far as i can see.
so look up to the sky for it is blue, and all you peasants don't even have a clue!
rihi halabi

the moon and madness

by Hady Beydoun

Ever since man became aware of his surroundings, the moon has always held a special place in his mind. Throughout written (or otherwise unwritten) history the moon has always been associated with romance, religion, love, madness and fear. It plays an important role in the magical and graphic symbolic thought of most peoples. In this regard it is especially important that the moon appears to "live" due to its constantly changing shape, that it is apparently associated with various life rhythms on the earth, and it became an important fixed form in the measurement of time.

The Sumerian Lunar deities differ according to the phases of the moon. The crescent moon was Sin. The full moon Nanna, and Asimbabbar was the god presiding over the start of each lunar phase. In India, the Hindu moon god Soma traversed the night skies in a fabulous chariot drawn by five white horses. He also provided the magic elixir by which the other gods nourished themselves. In the Aztec culture, Coyolxauhqui, the female moon deity acquired her heavenly status as the result of a family feud. Because of an argument with her mother, the Earth goddess Coatlicue, Coyolxauhqui was decapitated. Her severed head was thrown into the sky where it became the lunar sphere.

In the Greco Roman cultures, the moon goddesses Cynthia, Diana, Artemis, Selene and Luna were simultaneously linked with chastity, erotic love, and fertility. Selene was notoriously bad. She had an association with libido and she had three daughters with Zeus and commanded a whole herd of oxen with the horny half-goat, Pan. Because of its "waning" and "waxing" and its influence upon the earth (especially upon the female body), the moon has been associated with female fertility, rain, moistening, and with all becoming and passing since time immemorial. In contrast to the self luminescent sun, which is usually interpreted as being masculine, the moon usually appears as a symbol of that which is gentle. In many myths, it appears as a sister, woman, or lover of the sun. In astrology and in depth psychology, the moon is thought of (among other things) as a symbol of the unconscious, of fertile passivity, and of receptivity.

Tribal peoples also attributed divine qualities to the moon. The West African lunar goddess Mawu was the divinity responsible for sparking creation itself. Mawu and Liza gave birth to the god smith Gu, who hammered out the universe with the aid of the serpent deity, Da. In Maori myth the moon is linked with two gods, both of them cannibalistic. According to the legend an ordinary mortal called Rona once traveled to the moon in search of his estranged mate. When he found her, the couple got into an argument which rages until now. The lunar phases occur as the husband and wife take turns eating one another.

To the Inuit of Greenland, the moon god Anningan was an incestuous teenager who spent all his time chasing his sister, the sun goddess Malina, across the heavens. He never caught her, and in the course of the pursuit he forgot to eat and lost weight, hence the lunar cycles. Each month Anningan retired to the celestial buffet where he stuffed himself for three days. This, the Inuit claimed, explained the new moon. After the feast Anningan returned to the sky a fat and healthy full moon, ready to start the hunt all over again.

While modern people no longer worship the moon, many still have faith in its supernatural powers. The word "lunacy" comes from the widespread belief that the full moon can make one mad. The victims who were believed to be afflicted with the most extreme variety of moon madness were called Lycanthropes. When the moon was full, an ordinary man could become a werewolf or a were-cat, or some other hellish, half human creature. The 1940's classic movie "Curse of the Cat People" was based on this unlikely premise, as were scores of other films.

Up until this very day, no scientific data exists in support of this phenomenon, however many swear by its reality. In a recent survey conducted at the university of New Orleans, 43% of respondents said they believed that the full moon did indeed inspire wild or even homicidal behavior in some people. Among those answering in the affirmative were nurses, physicians and psychologists, hardheaded, reality-oriented professionals who would know firsthand whether a crazy idea like lunar hysteria had any merit or was pure myth. While such evidence may not prove the existence of moonstruck madness, it clearly illustrates the tremendous power the lunar orb still exerts on our imaginations. No wonder it's such a popular subject for tattoos!

doing Rumours

by Sandy Mufarrij

You probably don't need me or anyone else to tell you that we live in a society built on rumors. We can go so far as to say that without these embellished truths, Lebanon would be a dull place indeed to live in!

Every country has an unofficial national sport. Take France for example; their favorite pass-time is to go on strike. In Beirut, we pre-badmouth everybody and everything in sight. Being the holder of the most information (be it factious or not) is considered to be a major asset for the person withholding that knowledge. The so-called town-gossip, looked down upon in other societies, is elevated to the level of national hero in Lebanese standards. Who else is going to spread the word about who is who, and what happened where and so on.

Although Hady has been ignoring such activity, I think that someone should give these information booths something new to talk about. How many people have heard silly and shocking things about him? Not once mind you, but over and over again. In fact, every time Skin Deep's door is closed: Hady is in some trouble. This is common knowledge after all. Now why exactly is he in trouble? Well, you can take your pick from any of the most obscene things your imagination can come up with. Any of this sound familiar? Just to set the record straight, whether this information is true or not is irrelevant. The juicy part is that these vicious rumors were spread by people who:

- Have never met Hady.
- Don't understand the concept of open-mindedness.
- Don't know where Skin Deep is.
- Don't know what Skin Deep is.
- Think tattoos belong to bikers, drunks, convicts and the likes.

I could go on and on and on. Unfortunately, (or rather fortunately) I don't see the need to since it is pretty obvious whom I am talking about. I am talking about the ignorant. I feel like a broken record but this statement is as much valid today as the other 5,489 times I've said it: People are afraid of what they don't understand. If these people want to sum up all the evil in the world and place it in the person of Hady Beydoun just because they don't get what he does, then fine, let them do that. But it would be really awkward if they were faced with the truth that Hady is simply an artist, and has nothing to do with any of that bullshit. Sorry!

The point is, if you don't know what you're talking about (no, I'm not going to say don't say anything at all, because that would make me sound patronizing and kind of like your mother) just try not to go over board with unreliable information. It is human nature to gossip and embellish initially harmless incidents. But take a moment and think about what all the fun gossip is doing. Hady is cited by Tattoo magazine, June issue, 2001, to be the man leading Lebanon out of the dark ages, where body art is considered.

Although there is a minority of bad gossiping people around, the fact is that they ARE there, and have the potential to poison other people's minds. This may mean nothing to you, but just try to imagine someone sabotaging your life's work and passion, every single step of the way. Not so much fun being on the receiving end is it?

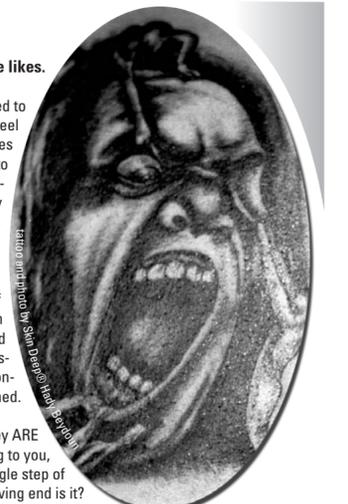


tattoo and photo by Skin Deep® Hady Beydoun

poetry

a few lines of words set together made into a shapeless heap of thoughts.

sitting under a tree, hot sun and sweet breeze, cool black shade, and a fallen one whispering in the ear, about life and what lies therein. A message of true love and happiness and the joy to live on this earth, and those who prosper, and the distribution of wealth, and all the pain involved in all of this turmoil, and the emptiness consuming all and the big question laid out to all, and whatever else is missing in the world, and the lost value of a forgotten treasure consumed by the dust, and the memory of one man...that's all...



tattoo and photo by Skin Deep® Hady Beydoun