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Abstract

For thousands of years, tattoos have been used cross-culturally for purposes ranging from religious affiliation to ritual. Still, many societies today associate tattoos with deviance and criminality, making it difficult for tattooed people to find employment and acceptance within society. This negative stigma can be traced all the way back to Ancient Greece, when tattoos were used to mark slaves and prisoners of war. Other examples are given from Dynastic China, Japan, the American circus, and the Holocaust. This examination of tattoo stigma throughout history exposes larger patterns of racism, hegemony, and ostracism, and gives us an awareness of social norms and how they evolve.

Introduction

Tattoos are steadily becoming more and more ubiquitous. As of 2004, one quarter of the US adult population had at least one tattoo.[1] However, despite their popularity, tattoos are still rather controversial. To those who have them, they represent creativity and expression, but to many others, they are inexorably linked to social outsiders: gangs, criminals, prostitutes, and other groups usually considered social deviants.[2]

Though the rise of tattooing's popularity appears to be a modern phenomenon, the practice is actually thousands of years old. The first evidence of tattoos on a human is from the Copper Age, on a frozen European corpse by the name of Ötzi the Iceman. The Iceman is over 5,000 years old, and bears 63 tattoos across his body, primarily in areas of stress; specifically, his ankles, spine, and the backs of his knees. Due to the strategic locations of these marks, historians believe Ötzi's tattoos may have been an early form of acupuncture. Other evidence of tattoos, such as depictions on vases and figurines, are even older than the Iceman, and date as far back as 4,800 BCE.[3] Since then, body art has been used by cultures all over the world, for purposes ranging from religious affiliation to identification to ritual.

From where, then, did the tattoo's negative connotations emerge? While many cultures throughout history have worn their tattoos with pride, there is also a long history of tattoos being shamed and demonized. Time and time again throughout history, tattoos have been used to designate groups of people as "lesser," often by literally branding them as such. They've been used to subjugate, to punish, and to stereotype. It is because of this history that there still exists a lingering, unconscious stigma against tattoos, linking them with criminality, depravity, and savageness. By examining the instances in history where tattoos have been condemned, we can observe larger patterns of racism, supremacy, and ostracization that have trickled down through millennia.

Ancient Greece and Rome

Before Greece ever began tattooing, the practice was common in neighboring Syria and Egypt. Egypt has a long history of religious tattooing: in fact, some of the world's oldest preserved tattoos are on Egyptian mummies. Syria also practiced religious tattooing.
Self-decorative tattoos were a custom of the Thracians, who saw being inked as a mark of high birth. This view was at odds with the Greeks, who perceived tattoos not as adornment but as

signs of degradation and wrongdoing, and who mainly saw the Thracians as a society of less-advanced barbarians.[4]

Consistent with the Greeks' negative views on tattoos, the form of tattooing that did eventually spread to Greece came from Persia.[5] Herodotus, a Greek historian from the fifth century BCE, wrote multiple passages describing Persia's use of tattooing on slaves and prisoners of war. The first of Herodotus' accounts of tattooing in Persia doesn't involve a slave being punished, but instead being used as a messenger:

> Histiaeus had been wanting to make Aristagoras take this step, but was in difficulty about how to get a message safely through to him, as the roads from Susa were watched; so he shaved the head of his most trustworthy slave, pricked the message on his scalp, and waited for hair to grow again. Then, as soon as it had grown, he sent the man to Miletus with instructions to do nothing when he arrived except to tell Aristagoras to shave his hair off and look at his head. The message found there was, as I have said, an order to revolt.[6]

There are also passages in Herodotus' accounts of Persia that involve prisoners of war being tattooed. Though no concrete evidence exists of the transmission of this practice, it's likely that the Greeks learned it from Persia because they too used tattooing in this manner.

It is important to note that many of these accounts of tattooing in antiquity are vague and ambiguous at best. For a long time, the perspective held by most historians was that these accounts referred not to tattooing but to branding. However, more recent research has shown that branding was largely only used for animals, rarely humans, and that the language used for branding was different than for tattooing.[7] The verb used for tattooing roughly translates to "to prick" in English. A different word was used to describe the mark made by this pricking: *stigma.* Greeks saw *stigma* as signs of wrongdoing, and the negative connotations associated with the word have traveled through time, morphing into the definition we have today.

Stigma were given to three main groups of people in Ancient Greece and Rome: slaves, criminals, and prisoners of war. The distinctions among the three cases are slim, but worthy of note nonetheless. Delinquent slaves were often the feature of Attic comedies, and the penal tattooing of slaves seems to have been common in the Hellenistic period. They were often marked with the name of their masters or a proclamation of their misdeeds, such as "runaway." Most tattoos were placed in very obvious places such as on the face, the forehead, or the very top of the head. In reference to prisoners of war, the clearest account is from the Samian revolt

against Athens, when it was recorded that Samian prisoners were marked on the forehead by the Athenians, while the Samians marked their Athenian prisoners, each with their respective emblem. Greek criminals were also likely marked with their wrongdoings, though the practice isn't directly attested to until the Roman empire.

The Romans adopted the Greeks' negative view of tattooing, and punitive tattooing continued into late antiquity and onwards, spreading to various cultures and subsequent time periods. However, while many were still being tattooed unwillingly by institutions of political authority, many Romans, especially early Christians, were adopting voluntary tattoos as symbols of their faith. These early Christians wore their marks proudly, even while being sentenced to death for their beliefs under the Roman government.[8] And thus began the dichotomy of tattoos: what many held to be marks of crime and disgrace, others simultaneously wore as symbols of glory and power.

The Greek story of tattoo stigma is echoed several times throughout history, with one group's hegemony over another leading to certain beliefs and cultural practices falling out of favor with society at large. Tattoos were unfavorable to the Greeks because of the Thracians' "barbarian" status, so they were used to mark and repudiate societal outsiders. In China, tattoos encountered the same unsavory fate, through much the same processes as in Greece.

Dynastic China

China has a long and diverse history of tattooing, with tattooing practices dating as far back as the third and fourth century BCE, and likely earlier. There are certain types of tattoos that are most commonly referenced in pre-modern Chinese sources, and they include: slave brands, punishment, facial adornment, and military. Some of these types were involuntary, some voluntary, but the defining feature is that almost all of them were incredibly stigmatized. In all of China's history, there has never been a widespread acceptance of tattoos by the general public.[9]

The negative stigma surrounding tattoos in Chinese culture is much the same as Greece—in China, tattoos were associated with non-Chinese "barbarian" tribes, such as the Man, the Yi, or the Yue. These tribes used tattoos decoratively as well as spiritually, with many donning charms or designs meant to protect them and ward off dragons. One particular account of barbarian tattoos was written by Wang Bao in the first century BCE. It describes not only the tattoos but also the other habits of the people, including eating with the hands, going around

naked, and wearing rings in their noses. The addition of these descriptions serve to make Wang Bao's—and consequently most of general Chinese society's—view of these barbarians abundantly clear: they were indistinguishable from animals.[10]

Because tattoos were attached to uncivilized people in Chinese society, they were an exceptionally effective method of punishment. Hundreds of crimes were punishable by tattoo, and the goal was, of course, to ostracize the punished from society; to defile; to mark as deviant and impure. Tattoo punishment often came hand-in-hand with exile, which, in combination, served to remove the criminal from civilized, law-abiding society both physically and morally. Much of the stigma surrounding tattoos did not come just from their association with barbarians. One of the main tenements of Confucianism is that of filial piety—respect for one's parents and ancestors. Seeing as the body is received from one's parents, failing to keep it whole and pure was seen as a sign of disrespect. This also explains the other popular forms of punishment at the time, which included the amputation of body parts.

In addition to criminals, Chinese society punitively marked slaves and concubines with tattoos. Many of the tattoos used to punish criminals were also used to punish slaves, though there were a few styles of tattoo that pertained exclusively to slaves. These included the forehead brand, used to mark slaves who had tried to escape, and facial brands, which proclaimed ownership to a master. Most tales of concubines being tattooed involve jealous wives, who might have ordered them killed and tattooed in their death so they would be ostracized in the afterlife.[11]

Tattoos were also used in the military, to brand men as part of a particular regiment, to identify them in death, to prevent desertion of recruits, and to mark prisoners of war. Military officials bearing tattoos weren't uncommon, though they still were not entirely acceptable in polite society. Some military men voluntarily tattooed themselves, often with oaths or proclamations of dedication to their regiment. Though tattoos were still considered socially inappropriate, military men bearing tattooed oaths may have also been perceived as heroic.

Most people bearing decorative tattoos in China were described as "unsavory types." They were bandits, street ruffians, outlaws. Pushed to the edges of society, (whether their tattoos were voluntary or not), they often formed bands and "in-groups," creating a new kind of fraternity in being seen as deviant, criminal, and barbaric.

Japan

Both Chinese and Greek society came to view tattoos negatively because of their association with barbarian tribes. Japan did not always hold this same view, but would later on, when the Chinese began to visit the island and impart pieces of their culture onto Japanese society.

Some of the first concrete accounts of tattooing in Japan are from Chinese writers, who visited the island during the Yayoi period (300 BCE to 300 AD). The Wei Zhi, a third-century Chinese historical text, includes two specific references to tattoos. At that time, Chinese people already had their negative associations of tattooing, and lumped these tattooed Japanese people in with other barbarians, but Japan had not yet come to see tattoos negatively.[12]

Views of tattooing in Japan began to shift in the subsequent time period, from 300–600 AD. More Chinese people began to visit the island during these years, known as the Kofun period, which caused some cultural mixing. Chinese values, including negative attitudes towards tattoos, began to seep into Japanese societies. Some tribes still used tattoos as representations of status, but they also began to serve the purpose of punishment. In the *Nihongi,* the second-oldest book of classical Japanese history, one entry reads:

> 1st year, Summer, 4th month, 17th day. The Emperor summoned before him Hamako, Muraji of Azumi, and commanded him, saying:— "Thou didst plot rebellion with the Imperial prince Nakatsu in order to overturn the State, and thy offense is deserving of death. I will, however, exercise great bounty, and remitting the penalty of death, sentence thee to be branded." The same day he was branded near the eye. Accordingly the men of that time spoke of the "Adzumi eye."[13]

The "branding" in question refers, of course, to tattooing.

In the Edo period (1600-1868), tattoos continued to be used as punishment, as the government of the time, the Tokugawa shogunate, grew increasingly conservative and began to base its philosophical ideas on Chinese Confucianism.[14] Criminals would be given a tattoo for each offense, which was generally a single black ring around one arm.[15] The purpose of the tattoo was the same as China's punitive tattoo: to ostracize the criminal from society.

The Edo period also saw the blossoming of the style of tattoo that most people think of in reference to the phrase "Japanese tattoo." The elaborate, full-body suits of tattoos featuring folk heroes, animals, and flowers flourished on the outskirts of society, developing with gamblers and

gangs. Many criminals used the massive tattoos, which were called *irezumi,* to cover up their penal branding. Despite several bans throughout the era, the government was never able to curb the popularity of the practice in Japan's underground communities.[16]

Another group that began to be associated with full-body tattoos was the yakuza. Sometimes referred to as Japan's "mafia," due to their striking resemblance to America's mobs, the yakuza are a collection of around 110,000 gangsters living and working in Japan, carrying out illegal activities such as drug smuggling, loan sharking, and gambling. They control much of Japan's construction and entertainment industries, and they also have a considerable amount of political power. The yakuza are arranged into a number of "families" or "federations," each of which has its own tattoo or crest, which members get tattooed as pieces of larger designs. Due to the incredibly long amount of time it takes to complete a full-body tattoo, and the pain that comes with the process, the tattoos are the ultimate symbol of gang loyalty. Even though the yakuza were not the only ones adopting this style of tattoos, a link began to form in Japanese society between tattoos and organized crime. Today, it can still be difficult to find work in Japan with visible tattoos. Many public spaces, such as saunas and public baths, hang "no tattoo" signs in the hopes that it'll keep gangsters away.[17]

The American Sideshow

By the late eighteenth century, Captain James Cook had returned from his expedition to the Polynesian Islands, and tattooing was reintroduced to Western society.[18] The practice became popular among men, as colonial sentiments created an interest in "primitiveness". The subsequent era of tattooing practices in Europe and the United States demonstrated that not all negative associations of tattoos have criminal origins.

In the nineteenth century, P.T. Barnum introduced beauty contests and the circus to the American public. Heavily tattooed women—known in the circus as tattooed ladies—began to appear as attractions in museums and sideshows.

The circus has always been a place imbued with racist, ableist, and imperialist ideologies.[19] From the display of those with physical deformities to stereotyped farces of foreign peoples, the circus' goal was to commodify difference and exploit shock. Tattooed ladies are a prime example of this. In the late Victorian era and the period slightly after, when tattoos were a largely male practice, women with tattoos were viewed as revolting and depraved. A rape trial in

1920s Boston exemplified this, when the female accuser was discovered to have a butterfly tattoo and the case was immediately dropped.[20] The woman had been tattooed, and so her body was no longer hers. Therefore, any accusations of rape, (which has historically been seen as an issue of property), were baseless.

One of the world's first tattooed ladies was 22-year-old Nora Hildebrandt.[21] When audiences came to see her, displayed at Bunnel's Museum in New York, she handed them a pamphlet detailing the story behind her 365 tattoos. According to the pamphlet, Nora and her father had been captured by Native Americans—specifically Sitting Bull and his tribe—and held hostage for a year. (Ironically, during the time that Nora Hildebrandt was telling her captivity narrative, Sitting Bull was actually being held captive himself as a prisoner of war after surrendering to US troops at Fort Buford.[22]) Over the course of the year, the father had been forced to tattoo his captive daughter, until Nora was tattooed from head to toe, and they escaped captivity. The story is completely fabricated. In reality, Martin Hildebrandt—owner of the first tattoo shop in America and Nora's father—had tattooed his daughter willingly. Despite its outlandishness, however, the story was adopted by every tattooed lady of the era, each new iteration bearing only slight differences.

These captivity narratives served two purposes. Firstly, they shifted the public's view of the tattooed ladies from disgust to pity. If a tattooed woman was a criminal and a prostitute, then an unwillingly tattooed woman was a pathetic spectacle. Secondly, and most importantly, captivity narratives served to justify the colonial and genocidal efforts that were rampant at the time in the United States.[23] Native Americans were already viewed by many as savage and primitive, and the stories of Nora Hildebrandt perpetuated these anti-Indigenous sentiments.

While these women proclaimed to the masses how their agency and free will had been violated, in their real lives the case was anything but. Tattooed ladies were paid salaries higher than most women of the time, and their jobs with traveling circuses meant they had the rare opportunity to see the world. They were far from the helpless victims they made themselves out to be. And, in fact, the freedom provided by the job of a tattooed lady ended up motivating many young women to become heavily tattooed in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Freedom, along with an opportunity to take control of their own bodies in a society where a woman's body was little more than an object and a show. Tattooed ladies played with women's social respectability, and while many became seen as deviant and dangerous, the trend worked its

way up the social ladder, as many things do. To wealthy women, receiving tattoos was the same as "slumming it," and many were drawn to the mysterious primitiveness of the practice.

The case of tattooed ladies is an interesting one, because although they are framed as the victims of forced tattooing, they are actually the only ones out of these examples who chose to become tattooed. However, despite this major difference, the general public's reaction to the tattooed ladies was remarkably similar to the reactions of Greek, Chinese, and Japanese society. They still responded to the tattoos with abhorrence; with a grotesque kind of curiosity towards what kind of barbarian would willingly adopt such a practice. As stated by aristocrat Ward MacAllister in 1896, "It is certainly the most vulgar and barbarous habit the eccentric mind of fashion ever invented."[24]

The Holocaust

Only a few decades later, in the mid-twentieth century, racial conflicts began brewing in Germany. The rise to power of the Nazis and subsequent subjugation of the Jews brought with it perhaps the most infamous example of tattoos being given unwillingly: the forced tattooing of hundreds of thousands of prisoners with identification numbers at the Nazis' largest concentration camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Prisoners, upon being brought to the camp, were given an identification number. Originally, these numbers came sewed onto the prisoners' clothing, but when the SS began stripping corpses, a new system was conceived that would allow for identification even in death. This system was, of course, to tattoo the numbers on the prisoners' skin. The first time the tattoo system was used was in 1940, on some 10,000 Soviet prisoners of war. In 1942, all incoming Jewish prisoners were tattooed. By 1943, after the near-escape of a Polish woman from the camp, the practice was expanded to include all prisoners. Those who had been registered, but not tattooed, were marked as well.[25]

Babies, too, were given tattoos. When a female prisoner gave birth, the brutal custom was to tattoo her newborn with her same number, then drown the child in a barrel and force the mother to watch the body be thrown out of the camp. Many blue-eyed babies were abducted for "Germanisation." These babies were often secretly tattooed by midwife-prisoners, in the hopes that someday they would be reunited with their mothers.

The number tattoos were given in a variety of ways. Initially, they were done using a stamp made of needles, so that each number could be tattooed all at once. Ink was then rubbed into the open wound. When that method proved impractical, a single-needle device was used instead. Tattoos were given either on the outside of the left forearm or the inside of the upper left forearm.

The process of tattooing prisoners served as more than just identification. It was also incredibly dehumanizing. Primo Levi, a Jewish Holocaust survivor, wrote in his book *The Drowned and the Saved*: "The operation was not very painful and lasted no more than a minute, but it was traumatic. Its symbolic meaning was clear to everyone: this is an indelible mark with which slaves are branded and cattle sent to slaughter, and that is what you have become. You no longer have a name; this is your new name."[26] To many prisoners, being given the tattoo felt like being made into an object or an animal. They were made to feel subhuman. The tattoos were especially traumatizing for Orthodox Jews, who worried that, because Mosaic Law forbids tattooing, they would lose the right to a Jewish burial.[27]

The Nazis employed many tactics during World War II whose goal was to demonstrate their perceived racial superiority over Jews, Romanis, and other racial minorities. The boycotting of Jewish businesses, creation of ghettos, and astonishing amount of anti-Jewish legislation that were passed into law were all devastating blows, but there was something particularly violating about the forced tattoo. The common thread linking each new instance of tattoo stigma in history seems to be choice—when one is allowed to choose the marks they wear on their body, the marks are worn with pride. When someone else makes that decision, the tattoo becomes an act of subjugation; an infringement of autonomy.

After the Holocaust, it was difficult for many survivors to decide how they should act about their tattoo. Should they hide it? Should they embrace it, show it off, lie, tell the truth? It varied from person to person. Primo Levi, for one, decided how he discussed his tattoo depending on who his audience was. When asked by younger people why he didn't have it erased, he responded, "Why should I? There are not many of us in the world to bear this witness."[28]

The children and grandchildren of Holocaust victims have also taken to embracing the tattoos, getting themselves marked with their relative's number in order to honor them, acknowledge all they went through, and preserve that dark moment in history. Even some people

with no direct connection to the Holocaust, such as American performing artist David Blaine, have appropriated the Holocaust tattoo.

Conclusion

In many ways, tattooing's history of ostracism lingers to this day. In a US study conducted in 2015, fifteen hiring managers were interviewed concerning their thoughts on hiring employees with visible tattoos. Their opinions were overwhelmingly negative, with a few stating that they associated people with visible tattoos with "questionable behavior" or "dirtiness".[29] Even those whose personal opinions of tattoos were neutral stated that they would be wary of hiring a tattooed employee, fearing customer backlash.

China, as well, continues to harbor some negative feelings towards the practice. There has been a recent crackdown on body art, with new legislation going into effect surrounding the tattooing of minors. In 2017, the State Cyberspace Administration made it illegal to show tattoos during live-streaming or in videos posted to social media.[30] *The Global Times*, one of China's ultra-nationalistic tabloid newspapers, argued that tattoos are "driving minors away from establishing socialist core values," and associated them with "gang culture".[31]

However, despite the persistent cultural memory linking body art with criminality, recent years have seen tattoo culture flourish. Around the world, there has been a revival of curiosity and appreciation for the tattoo, even in places where tattoos have been historically demonized.

Japan, for one, is slowly changing its mind about tattoos, as the Internet brings more and more young Japanese people into contact with tattoo culture. Around 1.4 million Japanese adults have tattoos now—almost double the amount from 2014. A survey also determined that sixty percent of Japanese people in their twenties or younger believe that restrictions on tattoos should be relaxed.[32] The world is experiencing a cultural shift, as tattoos go from being a symbol of disobedience to a symbol of individuality.

Tattoo stigma is a particularly useful lens through which to view world history because it exposes the tendency of dominant groups to look down upon those surrounding them. The tattoo reveals centuries of demographic war between those with power and those without. From the Greeks' disdain towards the Thracians to the American public using tattooed women to fuel their anti-Indigenous ideologies, tattoos have historically embodied savageness and the murky, threatening "other".

The tattoo is body art; a form of self expression. But it's much more than that. It's at once a symbol of repression and of freedom against that repression. Tattoos are an incredibly important part of history, not only because of their universality but also because of the deep emotional response they provoke in people, whether positive or negative. They provide us answers to questions such as: how have we historically decided which behaviors to deem "acceptable" or "unacceptable"? How have these distinctions evolved? Examining tattoos, and specifically the stigma surrounding them, gives us an awareness of the complexities of societal norms and their evolutions across time and space.

Notes

1. Michael Rees, "From Outsider to Established - Explaining the Current Popularity and Acceptability of Tattooing," *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* 41, no. 3 (2016): 157.

2. Anne Laumann and Amy J. Derick, "Tattoos and Body Piercings in the United States: A National Data Set," *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology,* 55, no. 3 (2006): 417.

3. Jarrett A. Lobell and Eric A. Powell, "ANCIENT TATTOOS," *Archaeology* 66, no. 6 (2013): 42. The oldest figurines bearing marks with resemblance to tattoos are dated to 4,800 BCE, and were found in northeastern Romania. They came from a people we know of today as the Cucuteni. Tattooed figurines and pots have since been found in modern-day Egypt, Japan, Oceania, Mexico, Mississippi, and more.

4. C. P. Jones, "Stigma: Tattooing and Branding in Graeco-Roman Antiquity," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 77 (1987): 141.

5. Jones, "Stigma," 141.

6. Herodotus, "*The Histories,*" trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt (London: Penguin Classics, 1954), 323.

7. Jones, "Stigma," 141.

8. W. Mark Gustafson, "Inscripta in Fronte: Penal Tattooing in Late Antiquity," *Classical Antiquity* 16, no. 1 (1997): 100. Christian tattoos included the sign of the cross, various acronyms of Christ's titles, an alpha and omega, portraits of Jesus or Mary, and other emblems such as the fish, the lamb, and the anchor. Many of these symbols persist in Christian tattoos today, carrying on a tradition which Gustafson describes as "a lasting mark of solidarity and of protection under God and Jesus Christ."

9. Carrie E. Reed, "Tattoo in Early China," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 120, no. 3 (2000): 361.

10. Reed, "Early China," 363.

11. Reed, "Early China," 367.

12. White, Kara, "Changing Views of Tattoos in Japan," *Marshall University,* (2019), CORE, 3-4.

13. *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697,* trans. William George Aston, (United Kingdom: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1924), 305-306. The *Nihongi* was originally published around 720 AD, and includes valuable information about Japanese mythology, folklore, and early customs.

14. White, “Changing Views,” 8.

15. David E. Kaplan and Alec Dubro, *Yakuza: Japan’s Criminal Underworld,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 30.

16. Stacey Steele and Geraldine Carney, “Tattoos, Privacy and Toru Hashimoto: A Contemporary Attempt to use the Legal System to Protect Individual Rights in Japan,” *Japanese Studies* 41 no. 2 (2021). *Irezumi* continues to this day as a popular style of tattoo, not only in Japan but also in the Western world, where the style has spread and been adopted with a fervor.

17. David Harold Stark, “The Yakuza: Japanese Crime Incorporated” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1981), 117.

18. Cpt. James Cook’s expedition to Polynesia brought the English language our word *tattoo,* from the Polynesian *tatau.*

19. Anne Clendinning, “Untitled,” Review of *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain,* by Sadiah Qureshi, *Journal of World History,* December 2013.

20. Christine Braunberger, “Revolting Bodies: The Monster Beauty of Tattooed Women,” *NWSA Journal* 12, no. 2 (2000): 4.

21. Margot Mifflin, “Circus Ladies and Society Women,” In *Bodies of Subversion: A Secret History of Women and Tattoo,* (New York: Juno Books, 1997), 10.

22. Jennifer Putzi, *Identifying Marks: Race, Gender, and the Marked Body in Nineteenth-Century America,* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 13.

23. Braunberger, “Revolting,” 9.

24. Braunberger, “Revolting,” 6.

25. “Tattoos and Numbers: The System of Identifying Prisoners at Auschwitz,” Holocaust Encyclopedia, Accessed February 26, 2023, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/tattoos-and-numbers-the-system-of-identifying-prisoners-at-auschwitz

26. Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved,* trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York et. al.: Simon & Schuster, 2017 [1986]), 104–105.

27. Nicole Nyffenegger, “The Illicit Touch: Theorising Narratives of Abused Human Skin,” *Touch*, (2020): 215. Mosaic Law is the law that was given to the Isrealites by God,

describing rules of religious observance. It includes the Ten Commandments and the first five books of the Hebrew Bible.

28. Levi, *The Drowned,* 105.

29. Andrew R. Timming, "Visible Tattoos in the Service Sector: A New Challenge to Recruitment and Selection," *Work, Employment & Society* 29, no. 1 (2015): 68.

30. Zhang, Mengchen, "Inside China's crackdown on tattoo culture," *CNN,* January 10, 2023.

31. Mengchen, "Crackdown."

32. Hikari Hida, "Shifting Norms on Tattoos in Japan," *The New York Times,* April 23, 2022.

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