

## Tattooing: A Universal Language History & Significance (part 3)

### SLAVERY:

The custom of tattooing slaves runs a very long distance in the history of man in many communities. One of the most famous is in the Middle East. The Samians were one of the mostly tattooed people mainly because they were enslaved by the Roman Empire. They tattooed them on their foreheads, but later on they discovered that the mark could be hidden with hair, so they tattooed them right between the eyes. The Romans mockingly called their slaves "men of letters". A proverb from that time stated that there was no one more well read than a Samian. That is because these people were extensively tattooed. Another term was also applied to those people, Caelatos, which means the engraved, because their bodies resembled engraved works of art.



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African slaves were branded on their chests with a red hot iron. They were usually tattooed with a fluer-de-lis. This mark was used to identify runaway slaves as a property belonging to someone or to the state. The same type of design was used centuries later in France. Thieves and prisoners were identified with a fluer-de-lis, or the letter "V" on the right shoulder. Galley slaves were tattooed with three letters "GAL". In Alexandre Duma's novel "The Three Musketeers", Milady de Winter was tattooed with a fluer-de-lis. In 1832 the French government issued a law banning this process, but it was not until twenty years later that it was properly terminated and replaced by police records. In Greece the

his book "Travels" noted that there are etched populations somewhere on the shores of Asia. He was astounded by the fact that these people practiced such an exotic art. He noted that in Yunnan, an area in southern China there were, "bands or fillets pricked in black on men's arms and legs....It is considered a piece of elegance and the sign of gentility to have this black band." Referring to what are now Laos and Burma he noted, "The whole of the people, or nearly so, have their skin marked with the needle in pat-

terns representing lions, dragons, and what not.... and they look on it as a token of elegance, so that those who have the largest amount of embroidery are regarded with the greatest admiration."

It was the discovery of the New World that initiated a new world craze for the art of tattooing. It seems that this art was universal all across the American continent, particularly among the Eskimos and native American Indians. However there are even signs indicating that this art prevailed among the Hopi or the Aztec. The early explorers view these tattooed people with much awe that they even captured a few living specimens and took them back to Europe. And indeed, in 1566, in Germany, people from the city of Augsburg advertised an Eskimo woman and a child from the Newfoundland whose, "Marks cannot be taken off again with any substance." Soon enough tattooed natives brought to Europe were exhibited in saloons and drawing rooms for apprecia-

lowed including Omai of Tahiti in the 1770s transported by Cook himself. And from that day on a new era of this old art has begun. The era of the "tattooed human spectacle". A phenomenon that is carried on until today where inking and tattooing for show in conventions and street shows, a major pastime and a profession to earn money and gain fame.

It was Cook's trip to New Zealand that led to the discovery of the ultimate art of the Maori, the moko. Mokos are tattoos which are elaborate black spirals, stripes, and patterns chiseled into the faces of Maori men and women. This process required great skills, and consumed too much time not to mention the extreme pain one has to undergo. This type of art was highly appreciated among these people and great care was dedicated to preserving the heads of their decorated murdered enemies. This created a craze for this art among the Europeans, and as a consequence, the demand for moko art rose. The Maori traded the moko heads for guns and powder reservedly at first, and then in greater quantities. To satisfy the growing demand of the Europeans, more moko art was produced and more heads were cut off. Prisoners were tattooed by force and their heads removed and sent to Europe. Finally in 1831 the colonial governor passed law prohibiting such a trade and which made the possession of Maori heads a crime. And thus, with the authorities' disapproval, and the missionaries who strongly discouraged the practice, moko tattooing tapered off. By the turn of the century, this custom virtually died



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# SECRETS OF BODY-Piercing: revealed here in this third issue of Kult-Ure newsletter. Articles concerning health, safety, technique, and most of all information regarding body jewelry and the kinds of metal used to make them safe, hygienic, pleasurable and pleasant. The market is flooded with body jewelry of all kinds, many however made from scrap metal and cheap silver highly loaded with copper, zinc, palladium, nickel. . . metals that are, according to the legal health authorities in Europe and worldwide, hazardous to human health and are very likely to cause serious infections and pain, both short and long term. These metals tend to tarnish with time and their color changes from shiny metal to a rusty yellowish greenish brown. Small particles in the metal detach and float away in the body thus causing a long term infection or permanent skin discoloration accompanied by pain (in some cases) and prohibited for use in a freshly made piercing or while still in the healing process.

The market is flooded with countless shops and so called "tattoo and piercing studios" all selling body jewelry and competing fiercely with one another. These shops import and sell at extremely low prices cheap, whatever-kind-of-metal body jewelry which harms their clients and consequently gives the art of body piercing a bad name. This article is intended for those who wish to have their bodies pierced. The aim here is to inform those interested, and to make them aware of the pros and cons, effects and side effects, when to get what kind of body jewelry, technical information, healing process and after-piercing care.

Getting pierced is much more complicated than just sticking a needle through your skin and inserting the jewelry. Many complications may arise if the process is not done properly using the proper piercing tools and materials. Unfortunately not many people are aware of the danger involved, making piercing a potentially unsafe activity, leaving them to suffer the consequences. Partial paralysis (in extreme cases) may occur; swelling, permanent skin discoloration and more often than not, pain over a long period of time is also possible. If this happens it may be due to the piercer's or merchant's ignorance, or secondly, because of the unawareness of the cli-

ents themselves about the process, which can result in people compromising their health and safety for a cheaper price. Now that being said, here are a few guidelines issued by the Association of Professional Piercers in London:

### Every person being pierced has the right...

- To be pierced in a scrupulously hygienic, open environment, by a clean, conscientious piercer wearing a fresh pair of disposable gloves.
- To a sober, friendly, calm and knowledgeable piercer, who will guide them through their piercing experience with confidence and assurance.
- To the peace of mind which comes from knowing that their piercer knows and practices the highest standards of sterilization and hygiene.
- To be pierced with a brand-new completely sterilized needle.
- To be touched only with appropriate implements, properly used and disposed of or re-sterilized in an autoclave prior to use on anyone else.
- To know that ear-piercing guns are NEVER! appropriate, and are often dangerous, when used on anything else than ear-lobes.
- To be fitted only with jewelry which is appropriately sized, safe in material, design, and construction, and which best promotes healing. Gold-plated, gold-filled, and sterling silver jewelry are never appropriate for any new or unhealed piercing.
- To be fully informed about proper after care, and to have continuing access to their piercer for consultation and assistance with all their piercing-related questions.

A lot of people think about having a tattoo or a piercing done. You know, just a small statement that says something about who they are, and what they like. Now, let's take the USA for example; if a teenager were wondering what to have imprinted on his/her skin, or where, the only obstacle would be if they can have such an obvious decoration in their future chosen career.

Here in Lebanon, we function in a slightly different manner. Society and tradition go hand in hand. Just because we follow the current fashion doesn't mean we are as liberal in our thinking as other nations, such as some parts of Europe and the United States of America. When you think that certain fathers would throw their sons out of the house, I mean literally, just because they had their ear pierced, well, you kinda think twice about doing that, or anything else along those lines. Tradition doesn't view this body decoration as suitable, or appropriate, which is really ironic since history shows that marks of distinction and honor were often imprinted on the body.

I think the eighties had a major role to play in this mentality. Two decades ago was the burst of a new movement, the punk rock one, which was characterized by the bikers, the long wild hair, and definitely, the big mean tattoos. That left quite an impression. People nowadays still associate the tattoo to what we witnessed back then. What they fail to comprehend is that the tattoo has taken an altogether different significance today. It is more about art, and appreciation of creativity and expression. For some reason, this is not acknowledged. We have prejudice against artists; be it painters, musicians, and yes, tattoo artists... Let's face it, they're not engineers, or doctors, or lawyers, or any other profession that would make any Lebanese father proud! Artists are dreamers, they are people who are not afraid to question the way the world is, and the way people behave. They don't shrink back when they feel they can make a difference. That scares a lot of people, and so naturally, we condemn these unique souls by building a wall of ignorance around them and cast them out mercilessly.

I don't consider myself to be a dreamer. I mean, I am really realistic, maybe even too much at times. I know what goes on and why, at least I like to think I know, but that doesn't give me the right to discard people who don't function like that. But who am I to change a mentality that has been embedded for such a long time. Learning makes all the difference. Knowledge will get you anywhere. Instead of thinking that a person with a tattoo is a rebel, or a trouble maker, try seeing it through different eyes, like for example, maybe his tattoo has some deep meaning, something about himself, or someone close to him. When you try to see the world through eyes other than your own, things start to make sense. Keep an open mind, for we have no certainties. Who is to say who is right and who is wrong? Only an arrogant fool claims to know everything and to be sure of it.

To give a concrete and contemporary example, let's take the Goth look. You know what I'm talking about: the black clothing, the heavy make-up, and the pale skin. Onlookers would automatically think that these people were sick, hooked on drugs, or just plain unhealthy. This is only a small example of what a limited mind is capable of. Documentaries have shown that successful businessmen and stockbrokers, making millions of dollars per year, are adepts of such styles. Does that make them bad people? Well let's see; they're smart, successful, eccentric and perfectly happy the way they are... Once again I ask: Who are we to judge?

**'Man's stupidity is infinite', whoever said that was on to something.**



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# IS THE TATTOO A PERMANENT REMINDER OF TEMPORARY INSANITY?

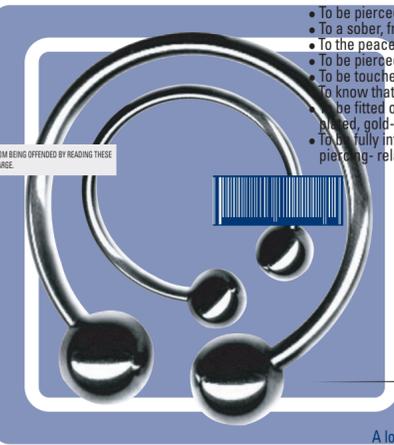
same practice was applied on prisoners. They branded their convicts with an owl, the bird dedicated to their goddess Minerva.

### LIVE ART:

Throughout history, wherever explorers wandered, there are reports of exotic people with markings etched in their skin. In the thirteenth century Marco Polo in

tion. One noted explorer Captain James Cook, probably the first explorer to bring a live tattooed specimen from the new world to Europe, is credited with awakening and popularizing Western interest in tattoos. Prince Jeoly of Meangsi Island is probably the first tattooed Polynesian transported to Europe, more specifically to England where he died after a short while of small pox. A parade of others fol-

among the Maori themselves however to be revived again due to the growing interest of contemporary tattoo artists. Moko designs began enjoying a growing demand in Europe and America. (To be continued)



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## Shedding some light on Jewelry and Metals :

The E.U. Nickel Directive which was passed on the 30th of June, 1994, states that, "Nickel may not be used in post assemblies which are inserted into pierced ears and other parts of the human body during epithelization of the wound caused by a piercing. Whether subsequently removed or not, unless such post assemblies are homogeneous and the concentration of nickel, expressed as mass of nickel to total mass, is less than 0.05%."

### A bit about GOLD :

The quantity of mined gold from the beginning of history to the present day is estimated to be around 127,000 tons. This figure increases by 3,000 tons yearly in new extractings. Gold mines are found in South Africa, USA, Australia, Brazil, Russia, Canada, China, and the Philippines. Where did all the gold in the world go? A recent estimate by economists shows that 30% is in the reserves of central banks around the world, mainly concentrated in The Bank of Italy and The Bank of England. 20% is in private hands (as investments in the form of coins and ingots), and the other 50% is in gold jewelry.

**GOLD PLATED JEWELRY:** It doesn't matter how light the ct coating is. It is still going to wear off leaving small flakes of gold in the piercing. Another thing that concerns the piercer is the process for gold plating surgical steel of any grade. It goes through a process involving cyanide and mercury, neither of which are good for the body. So think carefully: IT IS NOT SAFE!

## THE TRUTH ABOUT SURGICAL STEEL AND IMPLANTATION STEEL :

Otherwise known as the kind you are most likely to find in pharmacies. Iron based alloys have a medical based history extending over three hundred years. In 1667, Fabricius described the use of wire hoops for wound closure and in 1886, Hansmann reported the use of steel sheets for fracture fixation. In 1916, corrosion resistant stainless steel was developed (containing a minimum of 10.5% chromium. Stainless steels achieve their inert characteristics through the formation of an invisible and adherent chromium-rich oxide surface film) and this surgical implant material evolved. In 1947, the American College of surgeons recommended stainless steels for biomedical implant applications. Stainless steels are categorized into four general classes, based on composition. The higher grade series comes with very low percentages of carbon, nickel, and manganese. **However even the best grades of stainless steel, which are nickel holding steels, are now outlawed throughout the EU for Primary Piercing Insertables**

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# GENITAL PIERCING: ONE SIMPLE WAY TO ENHANCE YOUR SEX LIFE!

by hady beydoun

## Genital body piercing for both male and female:

Body piercing has intrigued man for a very long time, though exactly why people get the urge to alter the state of their bodies is still a mystery. People from all social groups and ages pierce their bodies in all sorts of places. Simply for adornment or to please a partner, body piercing still remains a process which includes both pain and pleasure.

Even in its most primitive form, piercing girls' ears has always been a means of attracting the attention of the male and of adorning the face. Nose piercings serve the same purpose. However, more and more people are building up their courage and are getting interested in other forms of body adornment. Navel piercings are most popular among the female gender, simply to attract attention to flat beautiful bellies.

If one were to define some of the most beautiful and delightful things in life, sex surely comes on top of the list. For both males and females, sex is the one thing that makes one feel good about themselves, releases tension, and satisfies man's most basic need. Since sex is that good and that important, why not make it better, enhance the feelings and simply double or triple the intensity of the orgasm? That is where genital piercings come into the limelight. Although the idea of piercing the genitals for both genders triggers an automatic sensation or idea of fear and pain, genital piercings, if performed properly cause little or no pain at all (through the use of an anesthetic) and heal extremely fast. Compared to navel piercings which take around five to six months to heal, genital piercings take two days to completely heal. And once in place, they literally perform miracles!

Called by many "marriage savers," these piercings enhance sex to an extreme level making it more fun and pleasurable every time. Feelings amplify and orgasms multiply. After getting genitally pierced and getting involved in sexual intercourse, one feels as though they had sex for the first time, and even better yet, it feels so great that almost all genitally

pierced people wish they had done it a long time ago, ask me!

It has been reported as a fact that **ALL WOMEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH GENITALLY PIERCED MEN WOULD FEEL SUCH A GREAT PLEASURE AS TO REFUSE TO HAVE SEX WITH OTHER UNPIERCED MEN!** And that means exactly what it says. Both male and female experience a sensation never felt before every time.

Genitally pierced women, on the other hand excite the male partner (even if the male is not pierced) and makes the sexual experience with any male pleasurable, regardless of performance and size. The titillating sensation, the enhanced multiple orgasms... I'm sure my words can't describe it, only a genitally pierced woman would know...

### Technique, jewelry, and hygiene:

Genital piercing isn't really as bad and as scary as it may seem. Fairly simple and easy to do and maintain. It has virtually no risk of getting infected simply because it gets constantly cleaned every time one goes to the toilet (to urinate). Easy as it may sound, only professional piercers can do this at zero risk. The right place is a very determinant factor, so is the right kind of jewelry (kind of metal & shape) and method of piercing are crucial.

### Anatomical differences:

Clearly as in the same manner that people's bodies differ in many different ways, so do the shape and structure of their genitals. No two females have identical anatomical structures, neither do men. So what one woman can pierce in her genitals, another may not be able to do. Sizes vary and as well as shape. However, there always is a suitable piercing for every one.

### Technique:

The technique used for all kinds of piercings is fairly simple... inserting a special piercing needle followed by the jewelry. However simple this may seem, variations do occur depending on the type of piercing to be performed. Anesthesia

may be applied only to certain parts of the body, and different types of piercing needles and jewelry are used relatively (this includes needle length, needle thickness, jewelry size and thickness as well).

### Jewelry:

Only niobium and or very high grade nickel-free surgical steels may be used for this and all types of body piercing. Other cheaper metals, when inserted through the body cause a certain number of undesirable problems. Cheap jewelry found in places here and

### Due to the nature of the subject, photographs cannot be printed in this issue.

In order to make up for the photos, here is a list of all the genital piercing that can be done with a brief description for each:

**Female genital piercing**  
**Inner Labia:** Probably the most popular of all female genital piercing. Rings placed through the inner labia (labia minora) heal very quickly and after a comparatively short time the jewelry can be removed for long periods without causing the piercing to heal over.

**Outer Labia:** Again, outer labia (labia majora) piercing are most comfortable if placed in the top (front) half of the labia, though it is possible to pierce all the way down their length. Healing time is longer than the inner labia because of the greater thickness of the tissue.

**Clitoris Hood:** Otherwise known as prepuce, this piercing causes little or no inconvenience during healing and is usually reported as extremely sexually stimulating. The presence of a ring in a clit hood can help break any adhesion between glans and hood, and thus give this titillating feeling when rubbing against the clitoris itself.

**Clitoris:** This piercing in the clitoral glans, is particularly erotically stimulating and can heal fairly quickly. Some women have reported that they were unable to orgasm during intercourse until they wore a clitoris ring. However clitoral piercing is not suitable for all women: Some clitorises are so tightly surrounded by the hood that jewelry through the clitoris is placed under permanent tension causing uncomfortable sensations.

**Other piercing:** Triangle, Isabella, Princess Albertina, Fouchette, Guiche are also possible however these really depend on the woman's genital anatomy.

there frequently cause infections and trouble. Even when inserted a year or two later after the wound has completely epithelized. So take the greatest care in choosing jewelry you intend to insert into your most precious possession: your body.

but if you can't see the life around you, I always walk alone, the strength we have inside is so much more than you know!

**Foreskin:** Said to have been used in Ancient Rome on male slaves to enforce chastity. Depending on the preference of the wearer only one or several piercings can be made through the foreskin. A ring or a barbell worn through each piercing in no way hinders the retraction of the foreskin. If the object is to enforce chastity, the forward fold of the foreskin is usually pierced on each side. While healing one ring is worn in each piercing. Once healed, a single ring or suitable padlock can pass through both piercings which will hamper erection. One aspect which often surprises wearers, is that when the foreskin is rolled back (such as during erection) the jewelry will of course move with the foreskin to a position partway down the penis shaft. Being there, the jewelry on each side will add sexual stimulation to both partners during intercourse.

**Penis Skin:** Like the foreskin piercing described above, only a bit further back, piercings through the skin of the penis shaft tend to be more successful if barbells are placed at right angles to the penis line rather than in line. Further piercing may be added to form 'ladders' of barbells all the way up the penis shaft.

**Love Beads:** Apparently first practiced by the Japanese, love beads are basically small round objects buried beneath the skin of the penis in order to provide additional stimulation for one's partner during sexual intercourse.

**Frenum:** This is a simple but fairly effective piercing through the loose web of skin (frenum or frenulum) in the cleft of the penis head (glans) on the underside of the penis. A horizontal piercing through the skin of the penis shaft is always possible at this site. The most popular style of jewelry for this piercing is either a small ring or barbell. An alternative style of jewelry goes through the piercing and encircles the glans fitting snugly in the groove behind the coronal ridge.

**Prince Albert:** Popularly said to have originated in the Victorian era during the 19th century as a means of securing the penis to the leg, thus avoiding too visible a bulge when wearing tight trousers. This is the most popular of all male genital piercings, particularly for circumcised men. **The success rate for this piercing is virtually 100%**, provided the correct size of ring is installed. The piercing is made through the cleft of the glans on the underside of the penis at the point where the urethra is the closest to the underside of the penis. It is a very secure piercing and once healed is quite comfortable during intercourse. The piercing is regularly bathed with urine which aids healing. **This is the one piercing in a male genital that makes a woman scream for more!**

**Ampallang:** Originated among the tribesmen of Borneo, where it is said that the women refused to sleep with a man who was without an ampallang. The ampallang is a horizontal piercing through the glans, which may or may not pass through the urethra. It is a very enjoyable piercing for both partners.

**Apadravya:** This is a vertical piercing through the glans (perpendicular to the ampallang). The word apadravya is mentioned in the Kama Sutra, but probably refers to a foreskin piercing.

**Reverse Prince Albert:** This piercing is in fact half an apadravya where it enters the exit hole of the urethra and comes out on the top part of the glans.

**Other piercings:** Dydoe, Penis Shaft, Pubic, Scrotum, and Guiche. If you are interested in knowing more about genital piercing for male and female: go to [yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com) and search for genital piercing.

**A small word of advice: Only go to a professional for this type (or any type) of piercing, surely you do not want some punk with a needle to mess up your sex life, or any other part of your body!**

## A FEW TIPS FOR THOSE CONCERNED WITH NAVEL PIERCING :

Navel piercings probably are the most common and most accepted of all piercings however, many people still wonder why this type of piercing is more prone to getting infected than any other in the human body. Several factors play a very important role in the healing process:

- Jewelry:** This is the most effective factor in promoting an infection or an infection free piercing. Cheap common jewelry found on the market today are the major factor in causing an infection particularly because of the type of metal used. These metals are alloys (a combination of different metals) which have a high percentage of nickel (even gold is not recommended). These tiny particles of nickel migrate from the jewelry and flow in the blood causing redness around the piercing for long periods, headaches, pain in and extreme cases blood poisoning. Types of metals which have a high level of nickel (over 0.05% total mass) are: surgical steel (commonly found in pharmacies), silver (which will tarnish), and gold. Better metals (also alloys) which are recommended for fresh piercings include high grade surgical steel (grade 316), titanium, niobium, and high purity nickel free gold.
- Mixing jewelry:** Although it is very rare, using two different metals in close proximity can cause problems; for example when an ear stud is used with a different butterfly clip. The saline nature of human perspiration allows it to carry a minute electrical charge which turns the jewelry into a tiny volcanic cell or battery when the two metals become the anode and cathode connected by the electrolyte of perspiration: the acid which this creates can cause soreness, or pain.
- Clothing:** This type of piercing can be easily irritated by tight clothing, belts, waist bands or even by sitting or bending. Pressure from clothing can cause the jewelry to migrate towards the surface of the skin. The type of clothing used may cause allergies in the piercing as the nature of the textile may allow certain bacteria to enter the wound (that is if covered by the clothing). If problems do occur, changing the type of clothing might help, and or switching from tight stuff to looser ones which allow more ventilation.

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# TATTOO

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## FIRST INTERNATIONAL MENTION!

In the months of February and March 2000 I traveled to Belfast, Ireland as a guest artist for Belfast City Skinworks, one of the major tattoo and piercing studios in Ireland. During my time over, I met Chris Pfouts, the editor of *TATTOO INTERNATIONAL* magazine, and Kelton McMullen who writes for *TATTOO* magazine. Kelton interviewed me for an article which, in this year, appeared in the June 2001 issue of *TATTOO* #142.

For someone like me, coming from Lebanon and in total isolation from other professionals working in the field, this article is a major step on the international level. It has opened up new opportunities for me worldwide and has given me new contacts with other professionals in the field world wide. Printed below is a copy of the article and the photos of some of my work as shown in the magazine. I hope you enjoy reading it.

# Slinging Ink

Tattoos In The News • Reviews • Music • Fashion • Resources • And Other Interesting Stuff

## MIDDLE EAST INK

Modern Tattooing Comes To Lebanon

Here in America we are spoiled, there are tattoo shops springing up all over and the artistic level of tattoos is rising by the second. Artists have a wide pool of images that are time tested, and some even mother approved. But in war-torn Lebanon up until five years ago there wasn't a single shop. With the 20-year gap in the postal service a tattoo magazine was unheard of. What crude tattoos there were had to be hand-poked with ink made from the soles of shoes, and were only worn by criminals and military groups like the PLO and the Israeli army. Lebanon is slowly coming out of the tattoo dark ages, and the man leading this middle-eastern country into the light is Hady Beydoun, owner of Skin Deep, Lebanon's first tattoo studio.

One fateful day in 1990 when Hady was still airbrushing T-shirts for a living, a client walked in with a copy of *Tattoo* magazine and changed his life forever. The guy wanted an American eagle sprayed on a T-shirt. While the ink was drying Hady opened the magazine, and his first thought was, "How the hell do they do that?" After reading a little further Hady realized that he was in the wrong business.

The next year he started at the American University of Beirut and began studying up on tattoos. He even tried reading about the mixing of molecules for certain colors. He asked around, and one day he got his break and was supplied with the address to a tattoo supply company in the U.S. He sent for a catalog. Unfortunately, during this time Lebanon was just coming out the back side of a civil war that had been raging for over

## Slinging Ink

20 years and the postal service was barely working. Eventually he got the catalog and put out a flyer to see if there was any demand for tattoos. He was amazed to get over 200 replies, and some people even showed up on his doorstep asking for the "tattoo guy." He turned to his friends for advice, and for the most part, they thought it was a great idea. They even offered themselves up as guinea pigs. It wasn't for another year, however, that he decided to give tattooing a serious go.

Since no one knew how a tattoo should look, a unique thing happened: the client and artist broke each other in, and eventually they grew into more complicated work.

Late in 1994, Hady traveled to Davis' Tattoo Supply in England to do some shopping. He spent a whole day there. When he returned to Lebanon, he had everything needed to open up a shop, including the essential sterilizer, but before he opened the door he put himself under the needle. On his thigh he did a little dot, then a little line, then a squiggly line, and then went for a Indian's face. On January 25, 1995, he did his first tattoo on a friend.

Hady is one amazing artist. When he was 13, he started airbrushing T-shirts with Metallica and Guns 'n' Roses album-cover art, and he has moved on to giant murals for William Lawson's Whiskey. He does fantastic finishes on jet skis and motorcycles including an American flag the entire length of one bike. His artistic talent has taken him far in Lebanon, and he is heavily influenced by the West. Now he has transferred his talent onto skin.

Even the slightest mark on the skin made with an electric machine was groundbreaking in Lebanon in 1995. Since no one knew how a tattoo should look, a unique thing happened: the client and artist broke each other in. And eventually the client and artist were able to grow into more complicated work. Although Hady has never totally screwed up a tattoo, he has seen his skill blossom since he started.

Hady is completely self taught without the assistance of stencils or flash. He attributes how well he has done to the 15 years he spent airbrushing. Holding an airbrush is similar to holding a tattoo machine, and over the past five years Hady has adjusted the angles to get under the skin properly for shading and highlights.

It wasn't until last year that Hady was able to work with other artists. He spent some time with the boys and girls at Belfast City Skinworks in Belfast, Northern Ireland. They gave him the critiquing needed to step up to the next level. He is still a long way off from where he is going, but considering that up until last year he hadn't even been able to see another artist work, he has done a fine job. He even picked up some flash and a stencil machine while in Belfast.

For now, Hady is still in his 25-square-meter room. Since his return to Lebanon from Belfast, he has doubled his clientele and is planning on moving into a bigger shop as well as continuing his airbrushing and graphics design business. Hady can be reached at [SkinDeep@hotmail.com](mailto:SkinDeep@hotmail.com). —Kelton McMullen

**Kult-Ure**