

text evidently could be researched in Jakarta, and Knörr has made an ethnographic in-depth exploration there. She spent much time among the Jakartans and took part in their daily life. She observed their cultural and sociopolitical life. This book seems to be a justified clarification of the Betawi identity, whereas many Betawi historians (Sagiman MD, Ridwan Saidi, Yahya Andi Saputra) or the association Al Fatawi are willing to argue that their ancestors were living there already in the neolithic period and that the name Betawi did not come from “Batavia” but is derived from the name of a tree, or from Pitawi (old Malay: to forbid), or is the Malay name of some kind of earring coming from the 11th century.

Betawi as one of the numerous ethnic groups in Indonesia is not so attractive to be explored by researchers in comparison to other larger groups as Javanese, Sundanese, Toraja, Batak, etc. Betawi culture is often seen as a hybrid version of the Javanese or a mixing of many. The promotion of Betawi culture by the state ensures an ever increased awareness of these people’s own specific identity. This book supports their feeling of ethnicity, because it shows that Betawi-ness allows being truly and authentically Jakartan and Indonesian as well. Jakarta as the capital and the centre of the techno-social life of all Indonesians is the best space for all kinds of promotions. The notion “Suku Bangsa” (ethnic group) for Betawi used by the author can only precise the self-confidence of them to promote their culture.

Nevertheless, at the beginning when I read the title of the book, I was curious about the content. “Creole Identity in Postcolonial Indonesia” could have described a holistic situation and an analysis of whole Indonesia. The author, however, presents only the case of Jakarta, may be due to the fact, that Jakarta per se offers more possibilities to study a transethnic and Creole background. Thus, in my opinion, the title should be limited to the Jakarta context. Other ethnic groups of Indonesia came into being – due to their history and ethnogenesis – also through Creolization, although without the mixing with European descendants on a larger scale.

The Betawi’s social significance is a product of a historical Creolization and not on a current process of it, as the author wrote. In the context of systematization of the Betawi of being nominally an ethnic group, Knörr is right. But when Creolization is understood as emphasizing the constant activity of contact and transformation, as Raymond D. Boisvert pointed out (“Diversity as Fraternity Lite.” *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 19.2005.2: 124), I believe that a current process of an ever-lasting change is taking place, because Jakarta, as the territorial basis of Betawiness, is the more dynamic circumstance of all kinds of change.

This book has a clear structure and all subchapters are arranged systematically according to the development of the main issues. It shows a professional approach of the author and her outstanding acquaintance with the issue and the local culture or language as well. It is an enrichment for anthropological studies, due to the fact that on the Indonesian level of ethnological research Betawi is neither categorized exactly as an ethnic group nor seems

it interesting enough to be analyzed. Indonesian cultural anthropology thus can be enlarged with a new perspective of ethnicity, the so-called transethnic identity.

Vinsensius Adi Gunawan

**Krutak, Lars:** *Tattoo Traditions of Native North America. Ancient and Contemporary Expressions of Identity.* Arnhem: LM Publishers, 2014. 255 pp. ISBN 978-94-91394-09-6. Price: € 64.50

The passion that Lars Krutak has for indigenous expressions of identity through tattoos is evident in his latest offering, “Tattoo Traditions of Native North America. Ancient and Contemporary Expressions of Identity.” That passion is required to bring together the divergent and elusive documentation of traditional tattoo practices that have nearly gone extinct, in many cases, among the indigenous inhabitants of North America.

Krutak sets the stage for his discussion by identifying some of the pitfalls and issues that are endemic when talking about indigenous tattooing. Among these are the issues of naming practices and identifying indigenous cultures by region. While he takes a more progressive understanding of names by utilizing culturally appropriate names for the native communities he is discussing, he falls back on a regional platform of organization to pull together similar traditions based on geographic locations. This common practice allows for coverage of a large quantity of variable tattoo practices in a strategic way. It also, however, plays into concepts of hegemonic regional existences and practices for diverse native cultural groups. Krutak addresses these issues and explains his framework before beginning his discussion starting with the most northern regions of North America.

The well-illustrated chapter discussing the tattooing traditions of the Arctic and subarctic regions is a blend of historical and contemporary people woven together by a treatise on the connections of designs to legends and beliefs. Krutak leads us into the topic with an intriguing discussion of the origins of tattooing connecting it to the etiological tale of the Sun and Moon. Explaining the tradition of skin sewing and poking that exemplified the tattooing traditions we begin to understand what individuals endured to mark their place in society. Beyond the signification of rites of passage, Krutak brings the discussion to ideas of honor marks and therapeutic tattooing. He brings the practices into context with the inclusion of practices found in other cultures exemplified by mummified remains of the Neolithic “Iceman” now known as Ötzi, and the Pazyryk chief of Siberia. Concluding the chapter is a treatment of revitalization efforts. Blending historical and contemporary voices, Krutak casts a light on the vitality of the practice of tattooing in the far north.

Setting the pace with his first chapter, Krutak continues in the next chapter to highlight the practices of the Northwest Coast and Plateau region. Within this chapter he stresses the importance of cultural context and provides important information about the social organization of some of the northwest peoples such as the Tlingit and Haida. Most importantly he gives us an insight into

moiety and clan relationships that inform the tattooing of crests and their integration into the customs of the potlatch. With an emphasis on the sacred and ceremonial embeddedness of tattooing within the cultures, we are shown the worldview that informs the plateau area understanding of the spiritual realm. He rounds out the chapter with a look at the revival of practices once again. This allows for a glimpse into what caused the virtual extinction of tattooing among native cultures around 100 years ago and for the contemporary voices to once again be heard.

Moving further south, Krutak continues his narrative through the remaining chapters in progression, moving eastward to finish with the woodlands peoples. His framework permits us to anticipate the content but with intriguing surprises that bring us to a new understanding of topics such as adoption practices and the importance of material culture. The main marks that Krutak leaves on his readers are not only an understanding of the diverse tattoo traditions of the indigenous peoples of North America, but an indelible mark of how identity is formed and reinforced through the practice of marking the body. Through each chapter, he builds a platform of thoughtful examinations of native culture formation, constructed from individual threads of complex issues of gender, taboos, spirituality, medicine, warrior culture, status, and power, and even the importance of dreams to indigenous cultures, all through the discourse of tattooing. It is a gentle reminder of the holistic nature of identity expression to not only the ancestors but also contemporary native people.

“Tattoo Traditions of Native North America. Ancient and Contemporary Expressions of Identity” begins to fill the void in the global record of traditional tattooing practices. Pulling together historical records and illustrations, Krutak balances the predominant outsider authority with contemporary indigenous voices. This volume provides a depth of cultural understanding rarely seen in conversations about tattooing in North America.

Rhonda Dass

**Laidlaw, James:** *The Subject of Virtue. An Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 258 pp. ISBN 978-1-107-69731-7. Price: \$ 29.99

As an undergraduate I decided between philosophy and anthropology as majors, finally settling on anthropology for its positivist methodology in addressing life’s “big” questions. Philosophy seemed to me a fascinating but impractical world of ideas hampered by a database rooted in a narrow Western worldview. In the intervening years – after years of fieldwork in Sudan and North Africa – I engaged with ethics and anthropology in 1990 as a guest of Dartmouth College’s Institute for the Study of Professional Ethics and resident philosopher Bernard Gert who was intrigued by my words in the fellowship application that American anthropology’s code of ethics was silent on the matter of informed consent. I spent a year as a fellow discussing philosophy, religion, and anthropology sponsored by the college’s Rockefeller Foundation. In 1993, I published an article, “Anthropology and Informed

Consent. We Are Not Exempt” and in 1998 the first language on informed consent was introduced into the AAA Code of ethics.

Unsurprisingly, the major questions and ideas we debated nearly a quarter-century ago are still with us, as the present work attests to their durability and timelessness. However, American anthropology has habitually avoided philosophy and instead wrung its professional hands over controversies and matters of public science, e.g., the alleged ill-treatment and representation of indigenous peoples in the Amazon in the controversy after the publication of “Darkness in El-Dorado” (Tierney. New York 2000), and over anthropology and the military Human Terrain Teams which employed social scientists in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Each time such conflicts erupt, American anthropology turns to its code of ethics, often revising its language and/or format. It is just one mark of the difference in discourse between European and American anthropologists that codes of ethics are not addressed at all in Laidlaw’s treatise.

Instead, eternal questions of what is virtue and how to live a virtuous life; morality, freedom, and responsibility and others are treated in six chapters by the author, an early advocate for an anthropology of ethics. Discussed in the various chapters of this work are ideas of a Western “us” and an exotic “them”; of universalism and relativism; of the distinction between morality and ethics; and other subjects that are treated in the context of a prodigious reference to anthropological classics and a host of younger scholars, including Mahmood’s study of piety and feminism in Cairo (*Politics of Piety*. Princeton 2005) and Robbins’ work in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia (*Becoming Sinners*. Berkeley 2004).

Laidlaw asks “what is the place of the ethical in human life?” and he responds that this is not just an academic question, but a matter of how one should live. The book’s stated goal is to set out a groundwork for the anthropology of ethics, a field that has been developing over the past several decades. He draws upon major philosophical traditions from Marx to Durkheim, to Mill’s anthropology and morality, to Westermarck’s “ethical relativity.” Of relevance is Durkheim’s notion of morality as “the social,” embedding morality in social relations over an emphasis on the individual that is so much a part of “rights” and morality discourse in the West. Laidlaw generally rejects Durkheim’s moral collective and its opposition to the “natural” individual, which can be seen as inhibiting anthropological examination of the ethical dimensions of the moral life (Strhan, Review of “An Anthropology of Ethics” by J.D. Faubion [2011]. *Anthrocybib* 2013). Rather, his intellectual predilections follow Durkheim to Mauss and thence to Foucault and Bourdieu. These social theorists’ ideas address knowledge and power as a means of social control and are often lumped together as “post-modernist.”

Laidlaw argues that Western concepts, such as “Us and Them” represent a false, illusory opposition (33). Instead of being misguided by such metaphysics, anthropologists should be working as partners with the people whom they study in developing together well-formulated