

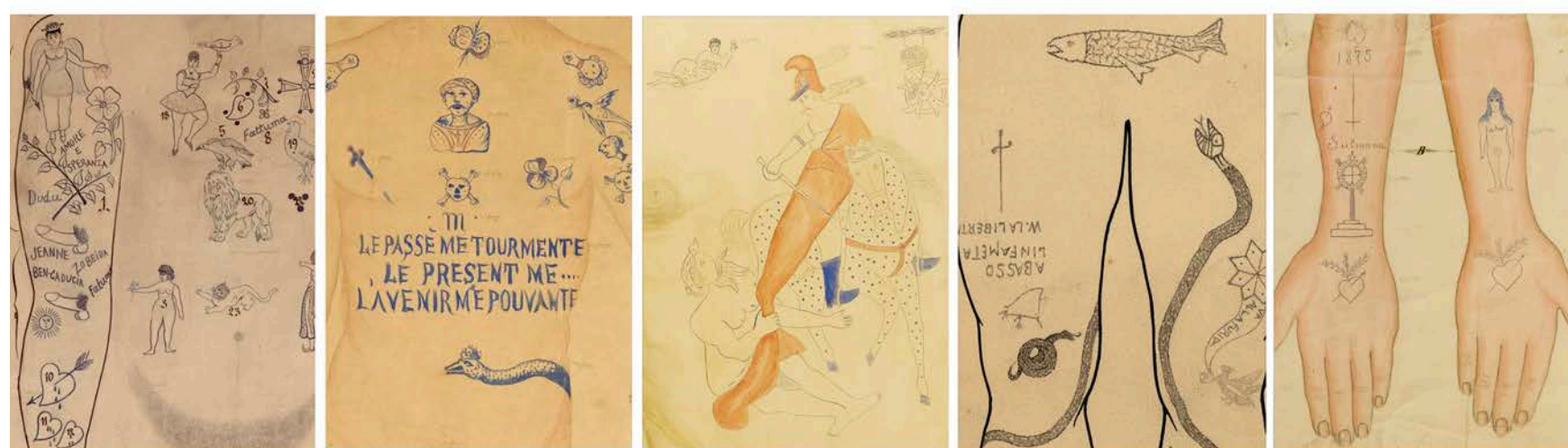
Signs on the skin.

Details of tattoos from the Lombroso's collection



During the 1870s, Cesare Lombroso started to collect drawing reproductions, details and full-figures portraits of the tattooed people that he met throughout his activity as a physician in Turin's jail and as a judicial expert. For the Veronese psychiatrist, tattoo was one of the most striking expression of the *criminal man*, which he considered like *a veritable human variety*.

In 1885, during the first International Congress of Criminal Anthropology in Rome, several panels representing tattooed delinquents were displayed in a temporary exhibition open to the public (children and women excluded). The enhanced collection was proposed four years later in Paris at the *Exposition Universelle*. Thus, a criminal iconography was born that strongly defined collective imagery and attracted the interest of the other criminologist.



Within the collection of the Lombroso Museum it is possible to distinguish six types of documents and findings: the first gathers loose drawings, made in pencil and ink on paper or vellum paper, showing individual tattoo or small groups of tattoos on different parts of the body. The second group consist in four posters that recollect, in a sort of collage, reproductions of tattoos on paper, including the French ones studied by the criminologist Alexandre Lacassagne.

The third category refers to thirty-six fragments of dried tattooed flaps of skin, except one preserved in liquid, removed during autopsies. Among these a rare example of a tattoo belonging to a woman. The fourth typology of documents on tattoo is photographic and only partly attributable to Cesare Lombroso. This photographic collection comprised 95 pictures, mainly silver gelatin prints, in some rare cases albumen ones, covering a period of time from 1906 to 1927. The fifth type is composed by reproduction of tattoos included in police booking cards from the series of Basques' anarchist.

The sixth and last section fully reflects Lombroso's expositive and communicative method. It consists of n.14 paper and cardboard large full-figures panels portraits of naked male bodies, sometimes in natural scale, with drawings of tattoos in their original position. The 16 tattoos details exhibited in the main hall of the Museum refer to this section.