



TORTURE^{AND} BRUTALITY

IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

LARISSA TRACY

Torture And Brutality In Medieval Literature

K. Walter



Torture And Brutality In Medieval Literature:

Torture and Brutality in Medieval Literature Larissa Tracy, 2012 A new look at the way in which medieval European literature depicts torture and brutality An ugly subject but one that needs to be treated thoroughly and comprehensively with a discreet wit and no excessive relish These needs are richly satisfied in Larissa Tracy's bold and important book **DEREK PEARSALL** Professor Emeritus Harvard University Torture that most notorious aspect of medieval culture and society has evolved into a dominant mythology suggesting that the Middle Ages was a period during which sadistic torment was inflicted on citizens with impunity and without provocation popular museums displaying such gruesome implements as the rack the strappado the gridiron the wheel and the Iron Maiden can be found in many modern European cities These lurid images of medieval torture have re-emerged within recent discussions on American foreign policy and the introduction of torture legislation as a weapon in the War on Terror and raised questions about its history and reality particularly given its proliferation in some literary genres and its relative absence in others This book challenges preconceived ideas about the prevalence of torture and judicial brutality in medieval society by arguing that their portrayal in literature is not mimetic Instead it argues that the depictions of torture and brutality represent satire critique and dissent they have didactic and political functions in opposing the status quo Torture and brutality are intertextual literary motifs that negotiate cultural anxieties of national identity by situating these practices outside their own boundaries in the realm of the barbarian Other medieval and early modern authors define themselves and their nations in opposition to them Works examined range from Chaucer to the Scandinavian sagas to Shakespeare enabling a true comparative approach to be taken Larissa Tracy is Associate Professor Longwood University

Torture and Brutality in Medieval Literature Larissa Tracy, 2015 A new look at the way in which medieval European literature depicts torture and brutality [Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture](#) K. Walter, 2013-03-20 Skin is a multifarious image in medieval culture the material basis for forming a sense of self and relation to the world as well as a powerful literary and visual image This book explores the presence of skin in medieval literature and culture from a range of literary religious aesthetic historical medical and theoretical perspectives

Dismemberment in the Medieval and Early Modern English Imaginary Frederika Elizabeth Bain, 2020-11-23 The medieval and early modern English imaginary encompasses a broad range of negative and positive dismemberments from the castration anxieties of Turk plays to the elite practices of distributive burial This study argues that representations and instances of bodily fragmentation illustrated and performed acts of exclusion and inclusion detaching not only limbs from bodies but individuals from identity groups Within this context it examines questions of legitimate and illegitimate violence showing that such distinctions largely rested upon particular acts assumed symbolic meanings Specific chapters address ways dismemberments manifested gender human versus animal nature religious and ethnic identity and social rank The book concludes by examining the afterlives of body parts including relics and specimens exhibited for entertainment and education

contextualized by discussion of the resurrection body and its promise of bodily reintegration Grounded in dramatic works the study also incorporates a variety of genres from midwifery manuals to broadside ballads *Medieval Literature* Dominique Battles, 2024-08-28 This is the first book length exploration of the type scenes of western medieval literature from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries spanning both the Latinate and Germanic traditions Type scenes are the recurring stock scenes comprising the basic structure and cognitive guidance for narrative These formulaic scenes enabled medieval poets to express originality while honoring tradition Central to medieval poetic invention type scenes form the vital internal organs of narrative each serving a specialized function while working in concert with other organs to create and sustain the story This accessible and engaging guide to medieval type scenes consists of three parts Part I is a compendium of the type scenes commonly found in medieval narrative including analyses of examples from individual poems Part II explores combinations of type scenes within single works of literature for purposes of chronology characterization or virtuosity Part III examines how a single type scene manifests across multiple poems adapting to a variety of settings and periods while maintaining its original intent This volume kindles in scholars teachers and students alike a new and refreshing awareness of the foundational narrative strategies of medieval literature Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages Larissa Tracy, 2013 Essays exploring medieval castration as reflected in archaeology law historical record and literary motifs Castration and castrati have always been facets of western culture from myth and legend to law and theology from eunuchs guarding harems to the seventeenth and eighteenth century castrati singers Metaphoric castration pervades a number of medieval literary genres particularly the Old French fabliaux exchanges of power predicated upon the exchange or absence of sexual desire signified by genitalia but the plain literal act of castration and its implications are often overlooked This collection explores this often taboo subject and its implications for cultural mores and custom in Western Europe seeking to demystify and demythologize castration Its subjects include archaeological studies of eunuchs historical accounts of castration in trials of combat the mutilation of political rivals in medieval Wales Anglo Saxon and Frisian legal and literary examples of castration as punishment castration as comedy in the Old French fabliaux the prohibition against genital mutilation in hagiography and early modern anxieties about punitive castration enacted on the Elizabethan stage The introduction reflects on these topics in the context of arguably the most well known victim of castration in the middle ages Abelard LARISSA TRACY is Associate Professor of Medieval Literature at Longwood University Contributors Larissa Tracy Kathryn Reusch Shaun Tougher Jack Collins Rolf H Bremmer Jr Jay Paul Gates Charlene M Eska Mary A Valante Anthony Adams Mary E Leech Jed Chandler Ellen Lorraine Friedrich Robert L A Clark Karin Sellberg Lena W nggren **The narrative grotesque in medieval Scottish poetry** Caitlin Flynn, 2022-04-05 The Narrative Grotesque examines late medieval narratology in two Older Scots poems Gavin Douglas's The Palyce of Honour c 1501 and William Dunbar's The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo c 1507 The narrative grotesque is exemplified in these poems which fracture narratological boundaries by fusing disparate poetic forms

and creating hybrid subjectivities Consequently these poems interrogate conventional boundaries in poetic making The narrative grotesque is applied as a framework to elucidate these chimeric texts and to understand newly late medieval engagement with poetics and narratology Arthurian Literature XXXII Elizabeth Archibald, David F. Johnson, 2015-12 Arthurian Literature has established its position as the home for a great diversity of new research into Arthurian matters It delivers fascinating material across genres periods and theoretical issues TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT Monstrosity, Disability, and the Posthuman in the Medieval and Early Modern World Richard H. Godden, Asa Simon Mittman, 2019-11-21 This collection examines the intersection of the discourses of disability and monstrosity in a timely and necessary intervention in the scholarly fields of Disability Studies and Monster Studies Analyzing Medieval and Early Modern art and literature replete with images of non normative bodies these essays consider the pernicious history of defining people with distinctly non normative bodies or non normative cognition as monsters In many cases throughout Western history a figure marked by what Rosemarie Garland Thomson has termed the extraordinary body is labeled a monster This volume explores the origins of this conflation examines the problems and possibilities inherent in it and casts both disability and monstrosity in light of emergent empowering discourses of posthumanism **Visual Aggression** Assaf Pinkus, 2021-01-27 Why does a society seek out images of violence What can the consumption of violent imagery teach us about the history of violence and the ways in which it has been represented and understood Assaf Pinkus considers these questions within the context of what he calls galleries of violence the torment imagery that flourished in German speaking regions during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Exploring these images and the visceral bodily responses that they produced in their viewers Pinkus argues that the new visual discourse on violence was a watershed in premodern conceptualizations of selfhood Images of martyrdom in late medieval Germany reveal a strikingly brutal parade of passion severed heads split skulls mutilated organs extracted fingernails and teeth and myriad other torments Stripped from their devotional context and presented simply as brutal acts these portrayals assailed viewers bodies and minds so violently that they amounted to what Pinkus describes as visual aggressions Addressing contemporary discourses on violence and cruelty the aesthetics of violence and the eroticism of the tortured body Pinkus ties these galleries of violence to larger cultural concerns about the ethics of violence and bodily integrity in the conceptualization of early modern personhood Innovative and convincing this study heralds a fundamental shift in the scholarly conversation about premodern violence moving from a focus on the imitatio Christi and the liturgy of punishment to the notion of violence as a moral problem in an ethical system Scholars of medieval and early modern art history and literature will welcome and engage with Pinkus s research for years to come

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