

The Horrors of the Roman Catholic Church

Against Oneness Apostolics And the Fruit of the Holy Trinity

A Companion Pictorial to *The Horrors of the Roman Catholic Church Bible Study* by Pete Wierzbicki

This companion pictorial is presented alongside our full Bible study and historical article, **The Horrors of the Roman Catholic Church**, for one purpose: to pull back the cloak of darkness from the atrocities committed under the authority and influence of the Roman Catholic system against those it branded as heretics. This is not legend, exaggeration, fantasy, fiction, or sensational invention. It is the documented record of religious persecution preserved in historical books, old engravings, museum references, trial histories, and accounts of the Inquisition and related systems of religious persecution. To some degree, even Catholic historical documentation acknowledges that the Inquisition was an ecclesiastical institution created for the suppression of heresy, and that its process involved imprisonment, interrogation, confiscation, torture, surrender to civil authority, and death by torture, fire, mutilation, and even beheading.

Note: These images are reproductions of historical depictions recorded by eyewitnesses and preserved through woodcut and steel-plate printing methods of their time. Because some of the original images were extremely graphic, a number of them have been toned down in this presentation.



Most people today have never truly seen this history. Many have never heard the details of the Inquisitions, the torture chambers, the public burnings, the drownings, the gallows, the racks, the chains, the iron devices, the prison cells, and the instruments of terror used against men and women who refused to submit their conscience to Rome. For centuries, this history has been softened, buried, rewritten, minimized, contextualized, or explained away. The language has changed. The images have disappeared from public memory. The victims have often been forgotten. Yet the facts remain. These things happened. People were tortured. People were imprisoned. People were burned. People were drowned. People were hanged. People were executed. Families were destroyed. Writings were confiscated or burned. Whole groups were labeled, misrepresented, hunted, and in many cases erased from history by the very institution that condemned them.

The purpose of these horrors was not ordinary criminal justice. These punishments were inflicted upon people accused of **heresy** — men and women who refused to submit to the doctrines, authority, sacraments, and religious rule of the Roman Catholic Church. That word, *heresy*, became the religious weapon by which Rome justified its violence. A heretic was not merely someone guilty of murder, theft, or civil disorder. A heretic could be someone who rejected the doctrines, sacraments, authority, or supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church. To reject Rome's doctrine was to become dangerous. To reject the Pope of Rome was to become rebellious. To reject Catholic baptism, Catholic sacraments, Catholic priestcraft, Catholic authority, or Catholic definitions of God was to risk being branded an enemy of the Church and, therefore, an enemy of the state.

For Apostolic believers, this history is especially sobering. Among the central doctrinal issues was the question of **who God is** and **how a believer is to be baptized**. The Roman Church came to defend the Trinitarian formula and the authority of its own sacramental system, while Apostolic believers have always maintained the biblical pattern of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. In many settings, one of the revealing ways used to expose a supposed heretic was to examine his baptism, his confession, his doctrine of God, what name had been invoked over him, and whether he accepted the formula and authority of the Roman Church. Those who rejected the Trinitarian formula, rejected papal supremacy, or stood for baptism in the name of Jesus Christ stood outside Rome's system and could be treated as enemies of the faith.

The issue was never merely academic theology. The conflict over baptism, the Godhead, and the authority of Rome was written in blood. Those who would not confess Rome's doctrines could be interrogated, imprisoned, stripped of property, humiliated, tortured, burned, drowned, hanged, mutilated, beheaded, or handed over to civil authorities for death. Their writings were often destroyed.

Their testimony was often preserved only through the accusations of their persecutors. Their true beliefs were frequently distorted by the very powers that condemned them.

This pictorial does not claim that every persecuted group in every age was doctrinally identical to modern Oneness Apostolics. But it does insist on this: Rome controlled much of the surviving narrative. Many groups branded as heretics were accused of doctrines they may not have actually held, because their own writings were burned, their teachers were killed, their congregations were scattered, and their histories were later told through hostile Catholic sources. Once their writings were destroyed and their people were silenced, the Catholic record often became the dominant voice left to describe them. When a religious empire burns a people's books, kills their teachers, scatters their congregations, and then writes the history of what those people supposedly believed, honest readers must proceed with caution. The persecutor's label is not always the victim's confession.

That means every accusation of "heresy," "witchcraft," "Manichaeism," "false doctrine," or "fanaticism" must be read carefully. The persecutors wrote the labels. The victims often did not survive to answer. Whole groups may have been misrepresented terribly. Their doctrines may have been distorted, exaggerated, or deliberately recast in the language of Rome's accusations. When the condemned are denied the right to preserve their own testimony, the surviving record must be handled with caution.

It must also be remembered that spiritual manifestations outside Roman control were often treated with suspicion. People who spoke in tongues, prophesied, or moved outside the sanctioned Catholic order could be accused of fanaticism, demonic influence, witchcraft, or religious madness. In some periods, accused persons were subjected to cruel ordeals, including trial by water, where the logic was horrifyingly absurd: if the accused drowned, they could be considered innocent; if they floated, they could be judged guilty. Such practices reveal the darkness of a system that claimed to defend truth while using fear, superstition, bodily torment, and terror as instruments of judgment.

The images and descriptions that follow are not presented for shock value, morbid curiosity, or sensational display. They are presented as evidence. They are visual witnesses to what religious power becomes when it abandons the Spirit of Christ and joins itself to coercive authority. These devices and punishments testify to what happens when a church claims authority over conscience and then uses the power of the state to enforce its doctrines.

The apostles preached truth; Rome prosecuted dissent.

The apostles reasoned from Scripture; Rome built tribunals, prisons, and torture systems.

The apostles baptized in the name of Jesus Christ; Rome punished those who defied its formulas.

The apostles suffered persecution at the hands of religious and civil rulers; Rome became a persecuting power.

Today the Roman Catholic Church and its defenders often attempt to minimize the Inquisition, contextualize it, excuse it as a product of its time, or present it as necessary to preserve religious unity and protect the purity of the faith. That argument is an abomination. Truth does not need torture. The Gospel does not need a dungeon. Jesus Christ never commanded His Church to force confessions through pain, drown the accused, burn dissenters, mutilate the condemned, or deliver men and women to death for refusing religious submission to an earthly hierarchy.

This pictorial is therefore a witness. It is a visual indictment against religious tyranny. It is a reminder that the history of Rome is not merely cathedrals, councils, vestments, ceremonies, and claims of apostolic succession. It is also racks, stakes, chains, iron devices, prison cells, confiscations, interrogations, drownings, flames, and death. The world has tried to forget. Rome has tried to explain. History has tried to soften the edges. But the blood of the persecuted still speaks.

These images are presented so that the reader may see, remember, and understand what happens when a church abandons the apostolic pattern, joins itself to political power, and claims the right to enforce doctrine by coercion.

This is not apostolic Christianity. Oneness Apostolics never committed such horrors against anyone.

This is the horror: not merely that men were cruel, but that cruelty was committed in the name of God, in defense of doctrine, and under the banner of a church claiming to be the one true Church.

This is **The Horrors of the Roman Catholic Church Upon Oneness Apostolics**.

WARNING: The Following images may be disturbing; they are not for the squeamish.

PLATE I

INQUISITORIAL DEVICES OF TORTURE

Historical Instruments of Interrogation, Punishment, and Fear



A — Cat's Paw:
A clawed tearing instrument used to rip flesh and strip tissue during interrogation or punishment.



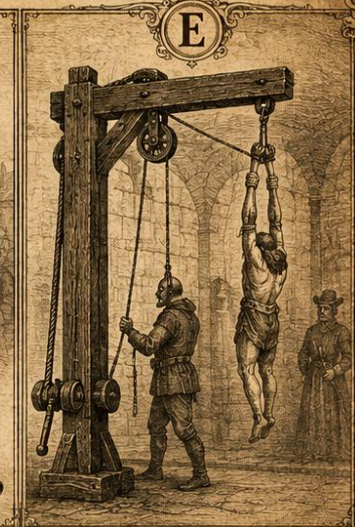
B — Pear of Anguish:
An expanding metal device inserted into the mouth or body cavity and widened by a screw mechanism.



C — Breast Ripper:
A hooked instrument used to tear the breasts of accused women, especially in punitive or inquisitorial contexts.



D — Scold's Bridle:
An iron bridle or shaming mask used to silence, humiliate, and publicly punish the wearer.



E — Pendulum:
A suspension method in which the victim was hoisted by bound arms, often causing excruciating pain and dislocation.

PLATE II

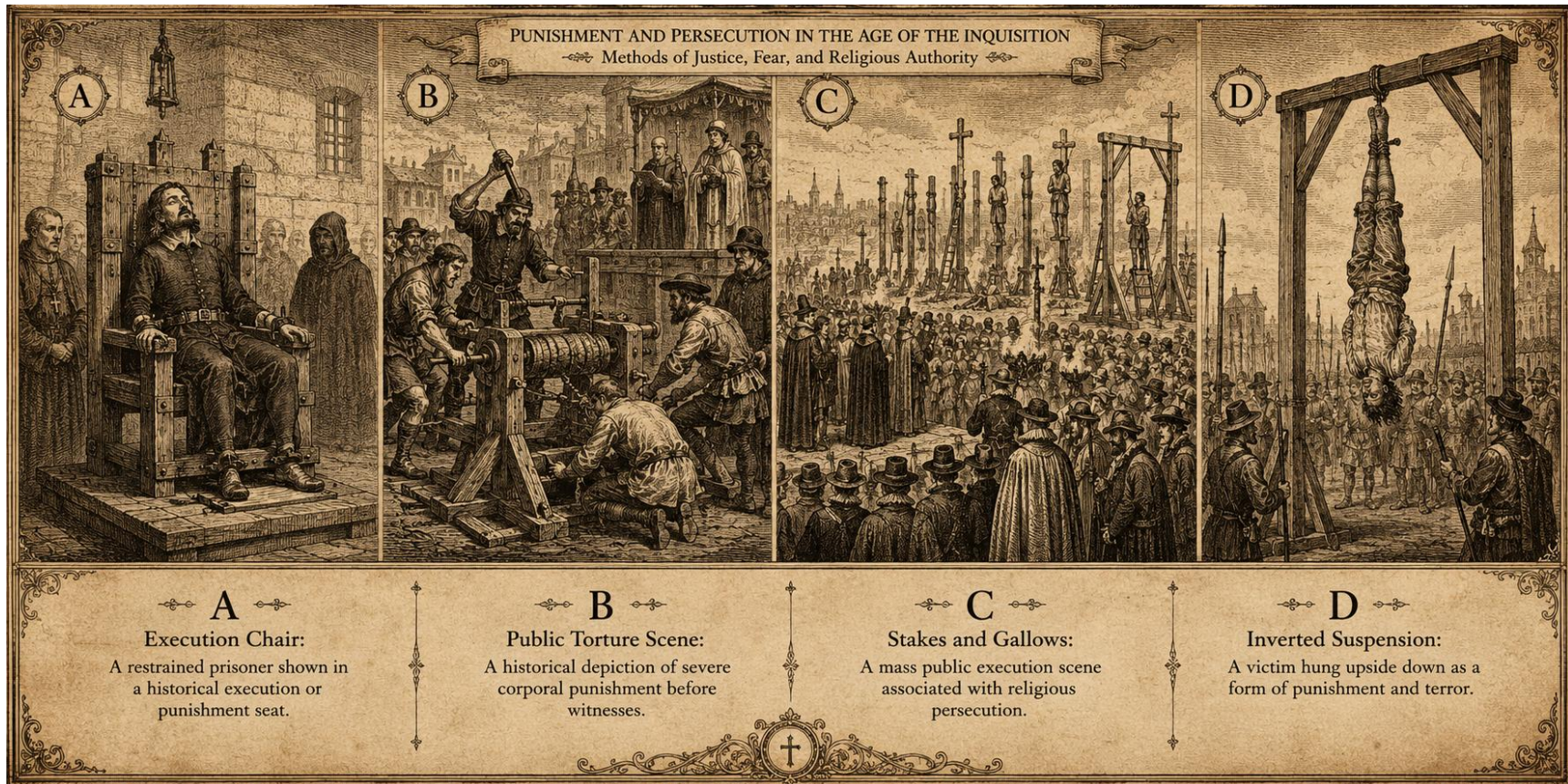


PLATE III



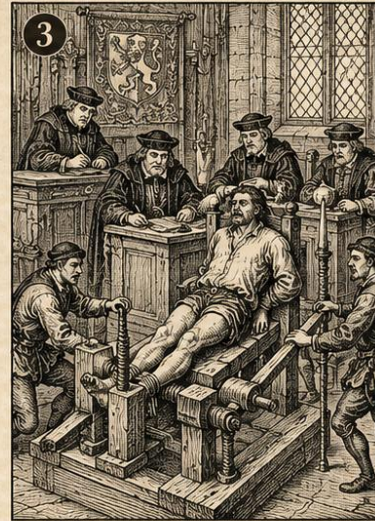
1 MULTIPLE PUNISHMENTS IN ONE SCENE

A composite scene showing several forms of corporal punishment used as public spectacle. Such images summarized the range of judicial cruelties inflicted on the condemned.



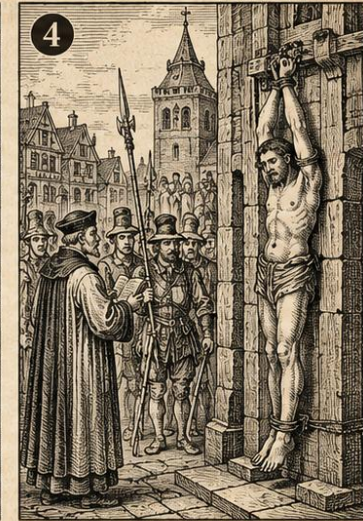
2 TWISTING WITH CORDS

This scene depicts tightening cords or similar restraints used to compress and torment the limbs. The method relied on pressure, suspension, and controlled tightening during interrogation.



3 CRUSHING OF LEGS AND KNEES

A punishment scene centered on crushing or compressing the lower limbs. These procedures were designed to inflict extreme pain while officials supervised the sentence.



4 PUBLIC JUDICIAL TORTURE

A severe punishment carried out under public or semi-public authority. The scene reflects how torture and execution were displayed as instruments of fear and control.

Rendered as a historical reference plate on judicial torture and public punishment in early modern Europe.

PLATE IV

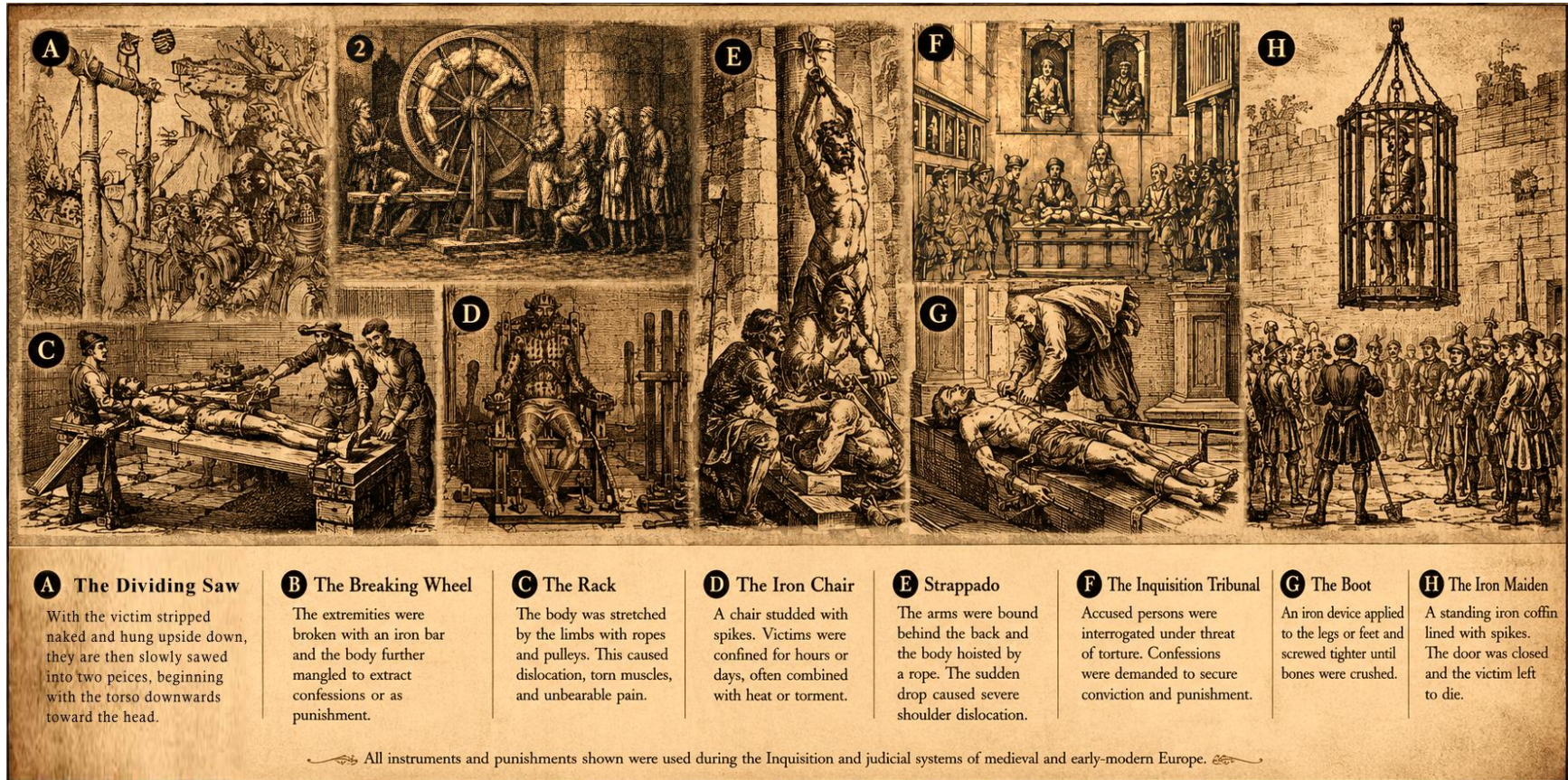


PLATE V

SCENES OF PUBLIC PUNISHMENT AND PERSECUTION

Historical Engravings of Judicial Cruelty and Public Terror



A — *Public Beating:* A condemned person is whipped with a rod before onlookers as corporal punishment for a crime.

B — *Burning at the Stake:* A person is burned alive at the stake, often for heresy or other religious or political offenses.

C — *The Rack:* The body is stretched upon a rack and the limbs extended by turning the winches to inflict severe pain.

D — *Flaying or Skinning:* The skin is stripped from the body as an extreme form of judicial punishment.

E — *Hanging:* Two individuals are executed by hanging before the public from a wooden gallows.

F — *Public Flogging:* A person is lashed with whips by multiple executioners in a public setting.

G — *Pillory:* A punished person is secured in the pillory or stocks for public shame and humiliation.

H — *Dragging and Banishment:* A condemned person is dragged through the streets before exile.

PLATE VI

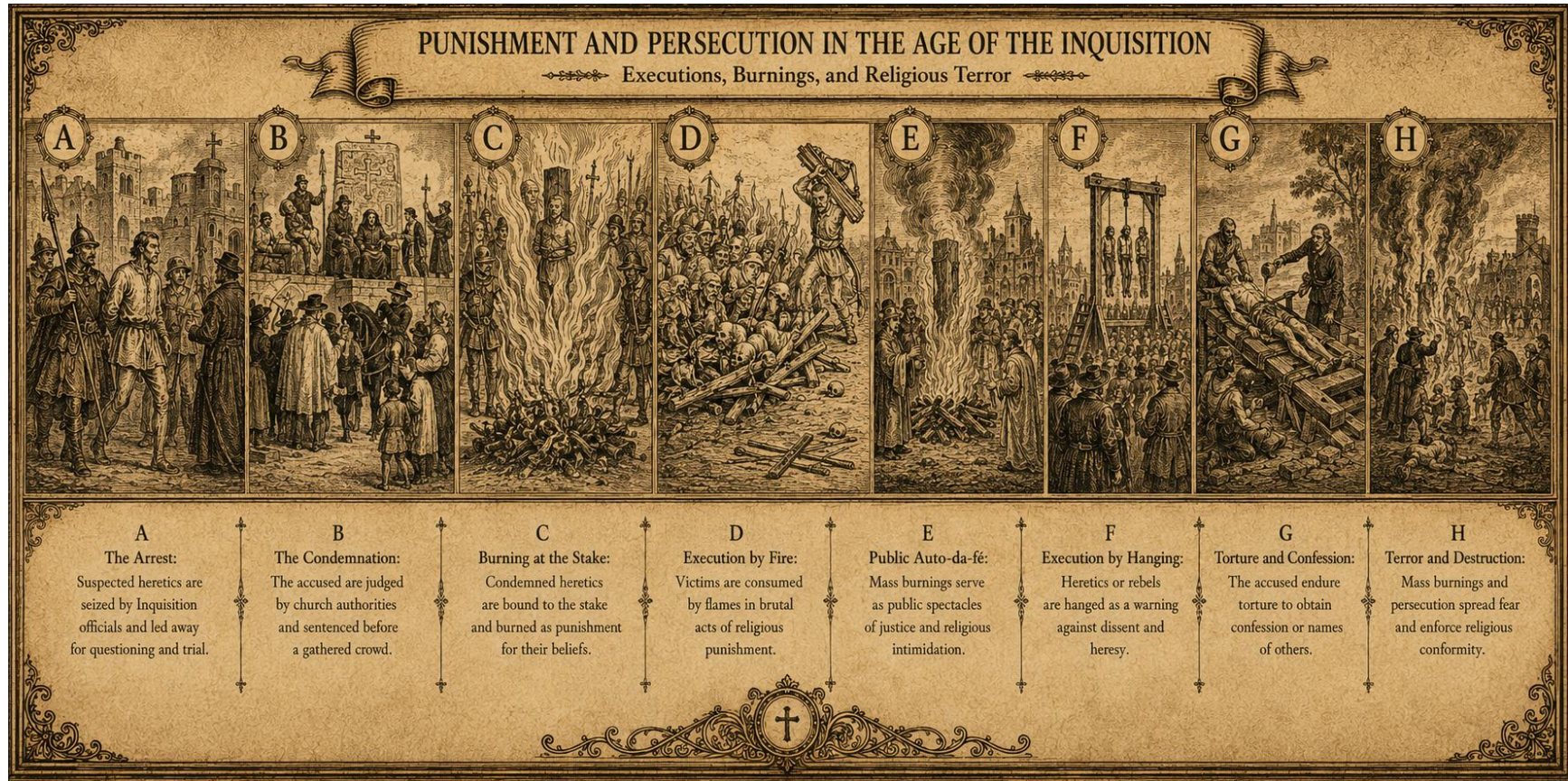


PLATE VII

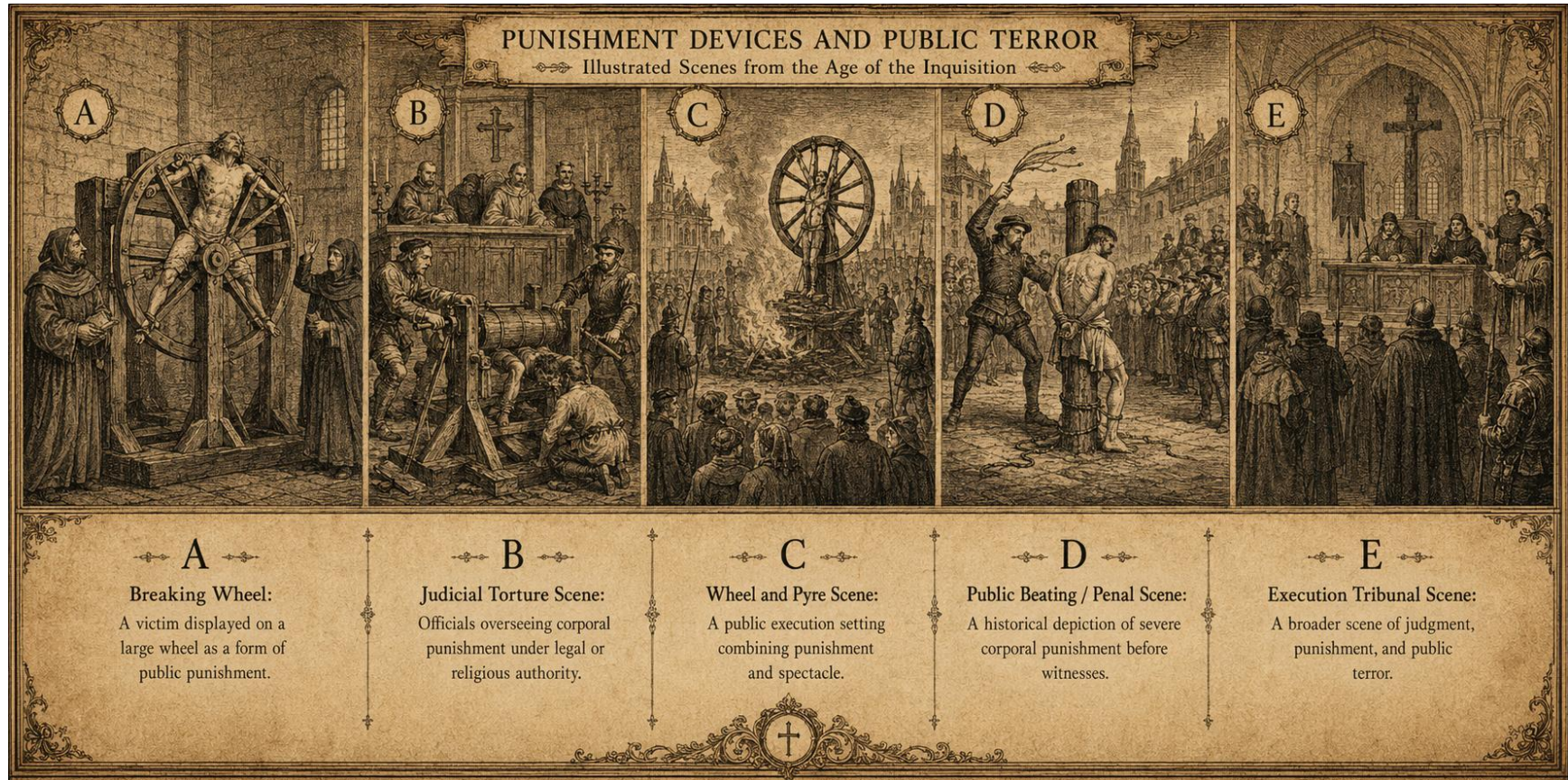
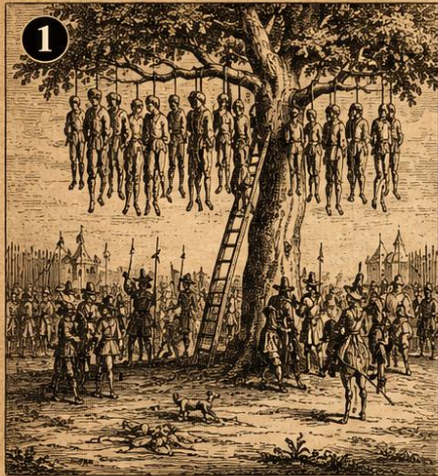
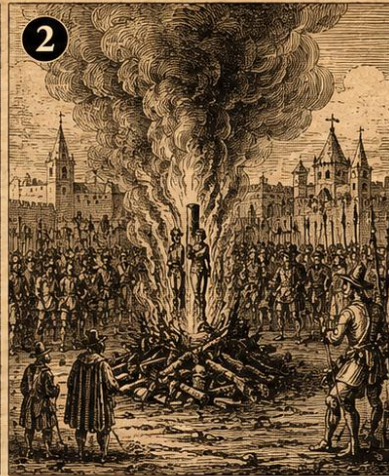


PLATE VIII



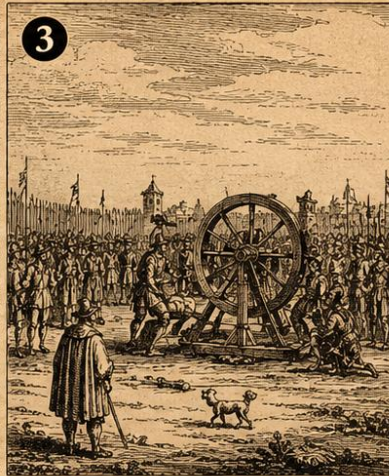
1 MASS HANGING

Condemned persons were hung in large numbers from a tree or scaffold as a public warning. The bodies were often left on display for days or weeks to deter others from similar "crimes."



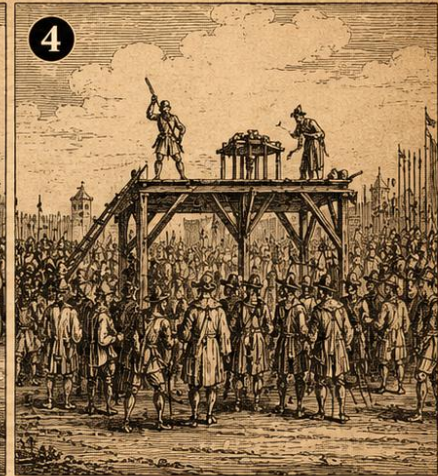
2 BURNING AT THE STAKE

Those convicted of heresy or related offenses were tied to a stake and burned in the presence of large crowds. The flames symbolized both punishment and the purification of the community.



3 EXECUTION BY THE WHEEL

The victim was bound to a large wheel and struck with a bar or club to break the limbs. This penalty was carried out in public as a severe example of justice and a deterrent to others.



4 PUBLIC GALLOWS EXECUTION

Condemned persons were executed by hanging on a raised gallows before large crowds. The public nature of the execution was meant to reinforce authority and the consequences of defying the law.

These scenes reflect public punishments associated with inquisitorial and early modern persecution, designed to enforce religious and civil authority through fear, spectacle, and example.

PLATE IX

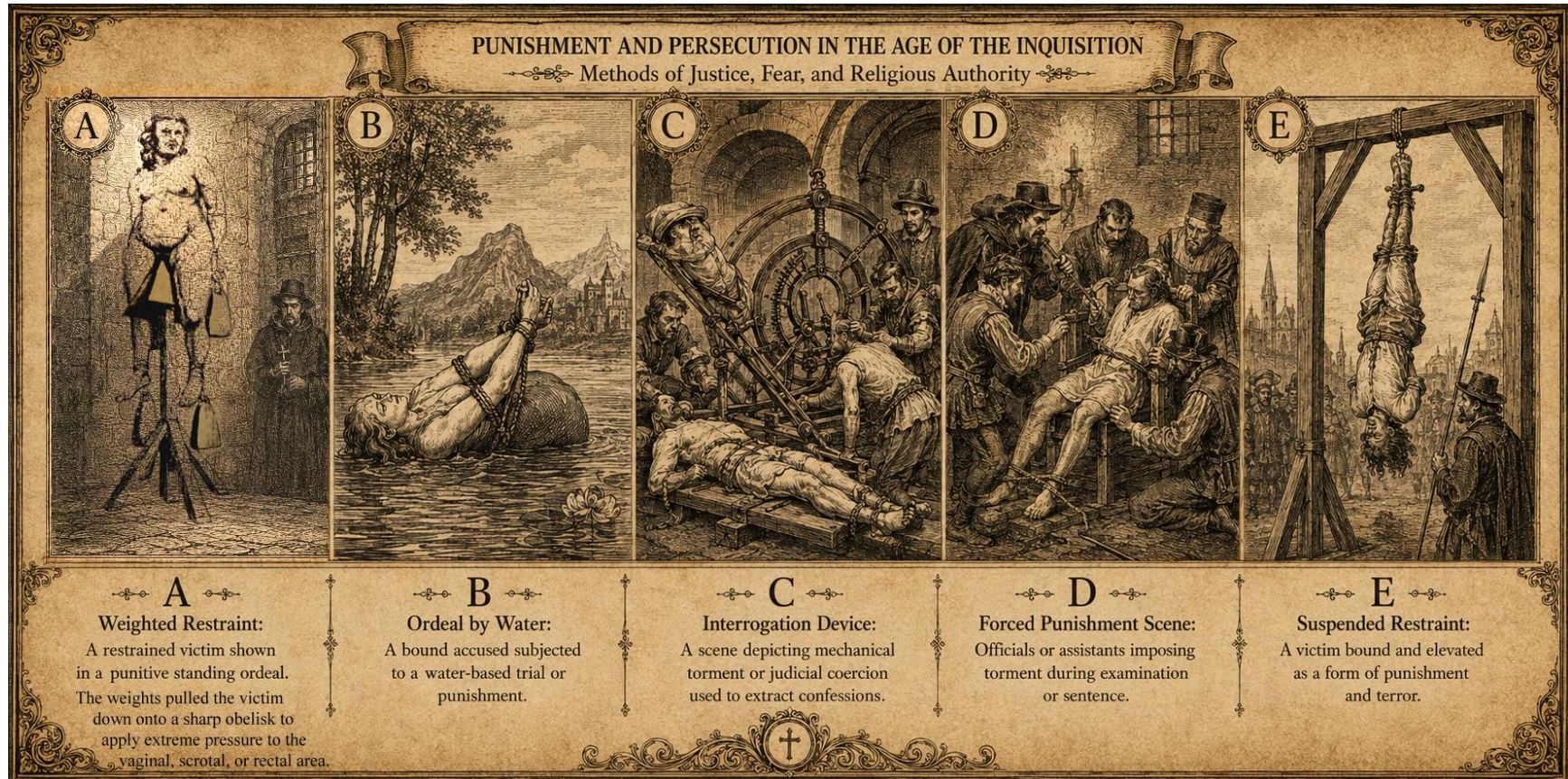
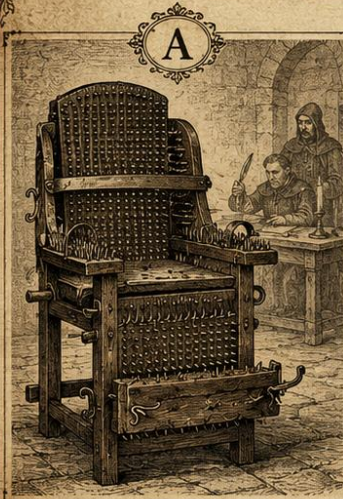


PLATE X

INQUISITORIAL DEVICES OF TORTURE

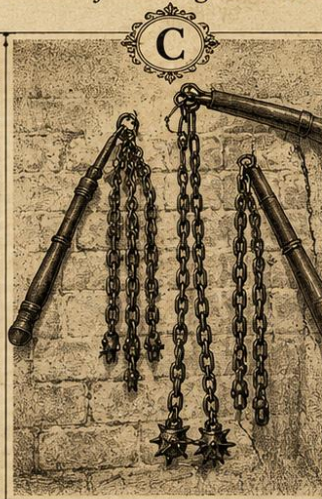
Historical Instruments of Interrogation, Punishment, and Fear



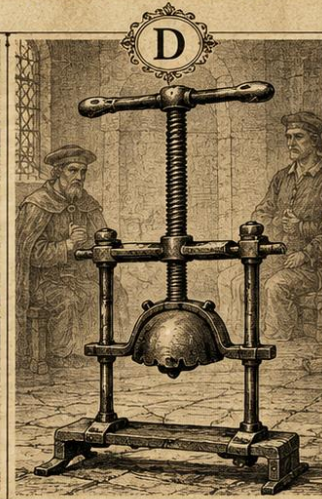
A
INTERROGATION CHAIR
A spiked chair used to immobilize and torment the prisoner during questioning.



B
JUDAS CRADLE
A pyramid seat used to inflict severe pain through forced suspension and pressure.



C
CHAIN SCOURGES
Weighted chain flails used for brutal corporal punishment.



D
HEAD CRUSHER
A screw-driven device used to compress the head and jaws under extreme pressure.



E
HERETIC'S FORK
A double-pronged metal fork fixed between chin and chest to prevent speech or sleep.

PLATE XI

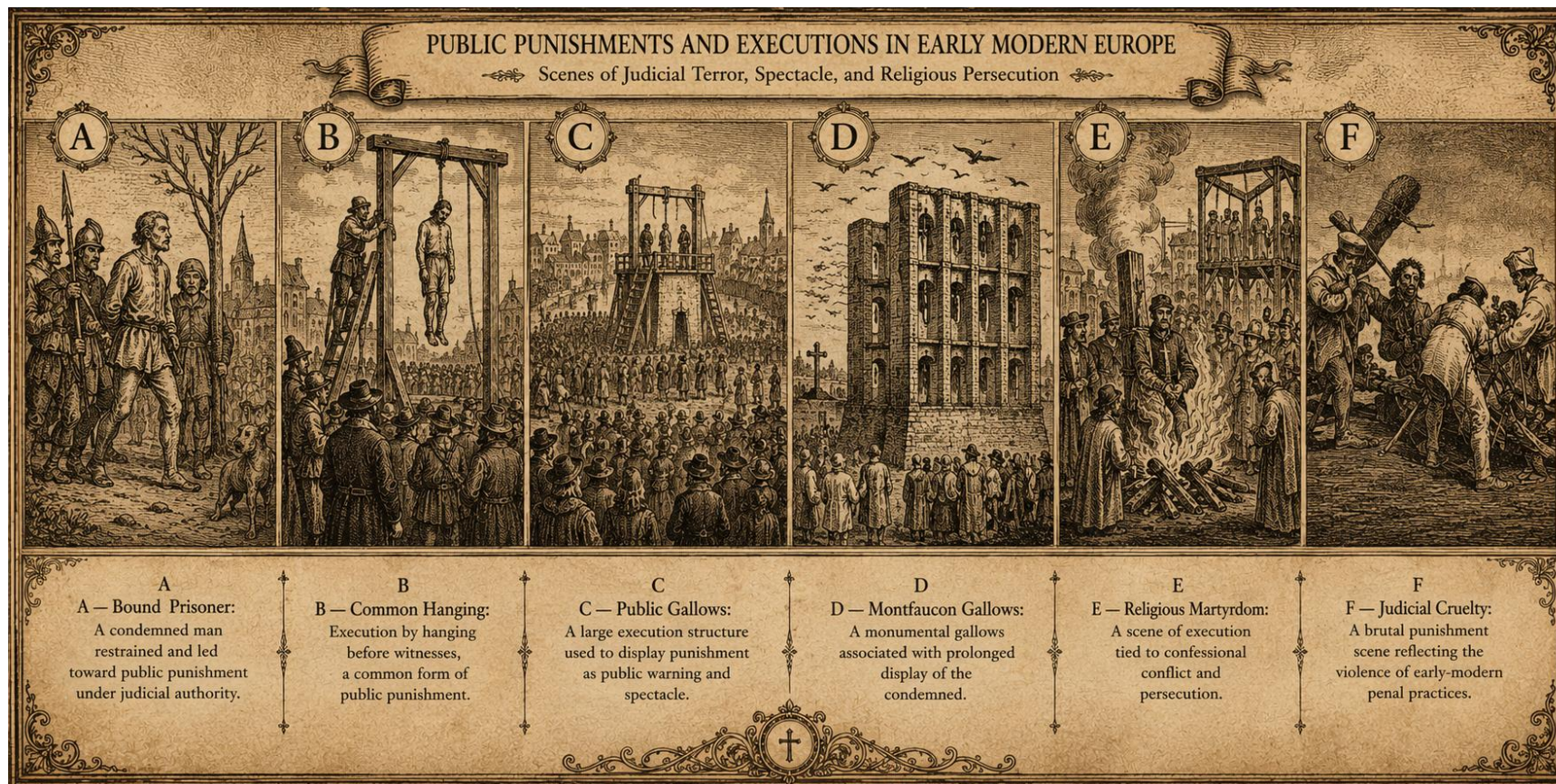
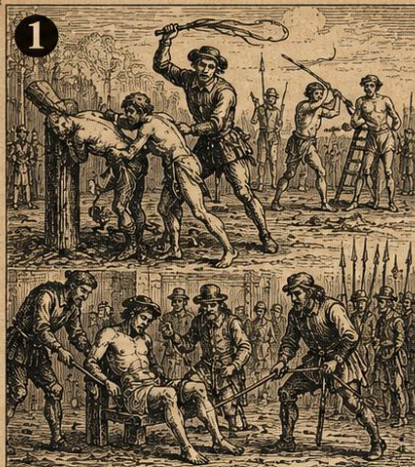
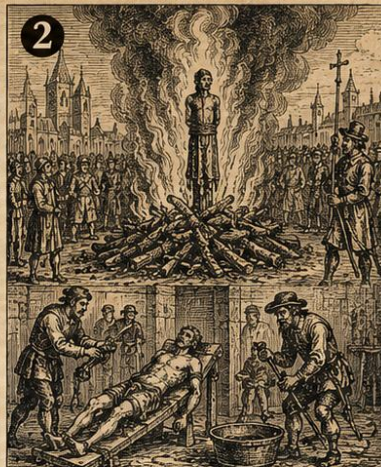


PLATE XII



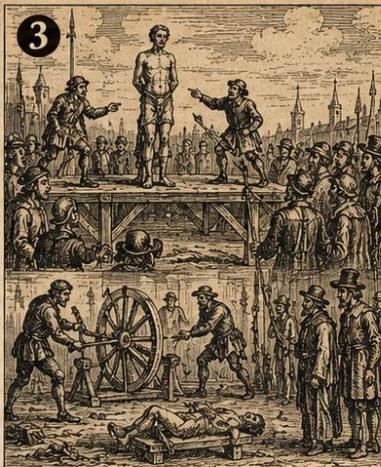
1 SCOURGING AND BEATING

Victims were publicly whipped, beaten with rods, or struck during interrogation and punishment. These scenes reflect corporal punishment used to terrorize and humiliate the accused.



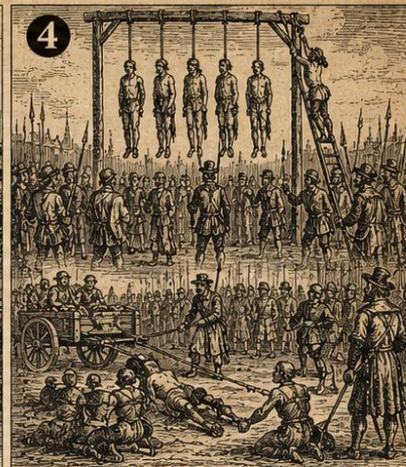
2 BURNING AND MUTILATION

Some victims were burned, mutilated, or subjected to painful bodily punishments as examples to others. These punishments were carried out as spectacles of fear and domination.



3 PUBLIC HUMILIATION AND EXECUTION

The condemned were displayed, bound, mocked, and executed before witnesses. Public punishment was intended to reinforce religious and civil authority through shame and terror.



4 HANGING, DRAGGING, AND MASS PUNISHMENT

Historic martyrdom scenes also depict hanging, dragging, and group punishments carried out against perceived enemies and dissidents. The suffering was often made public to intensify fear.

These scenes reflect the cruelty of public punishment, martyrdom, and persecution in early modern Europe, rendered here as a historical reference plate.

PLATE XIII

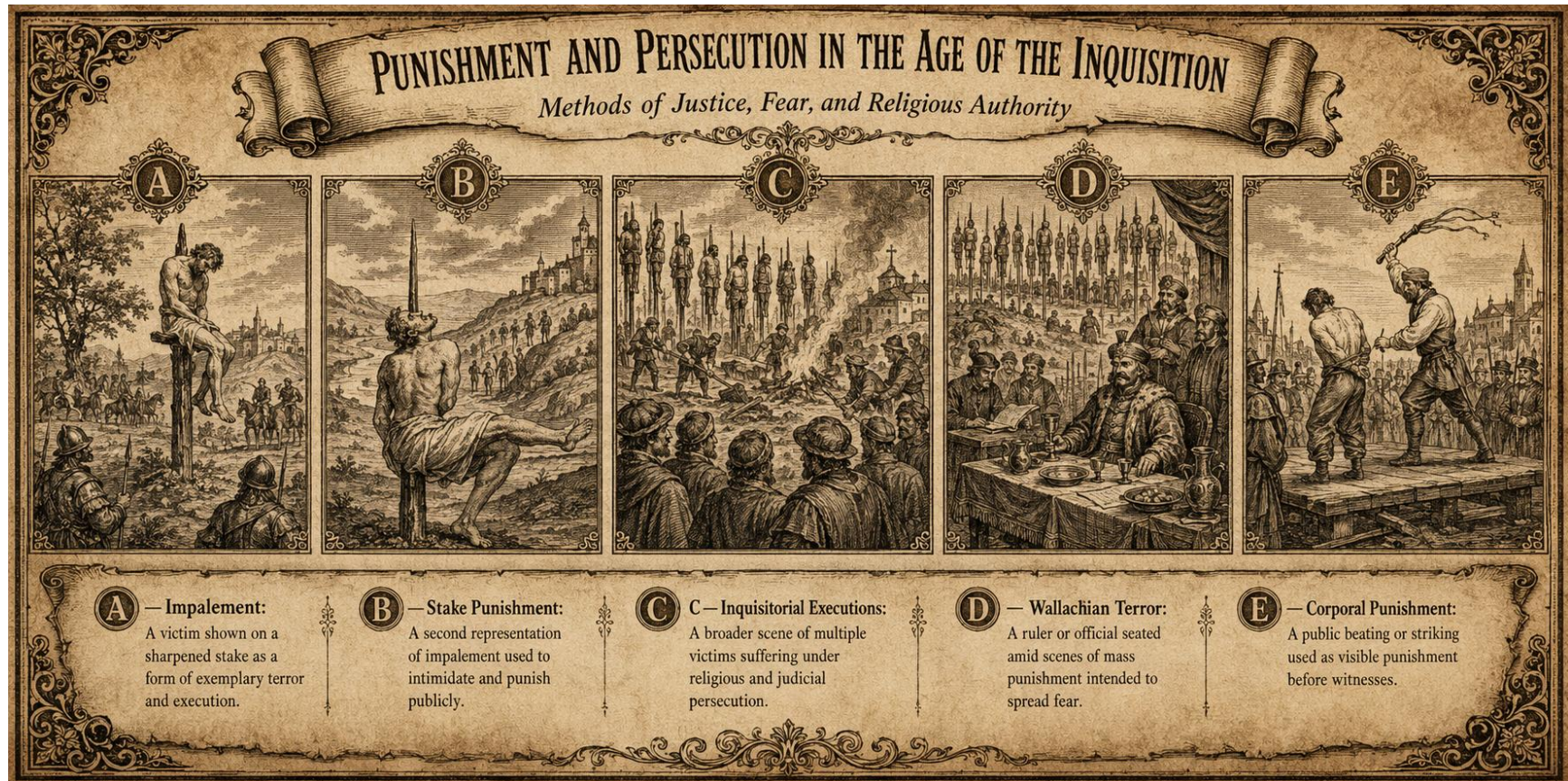
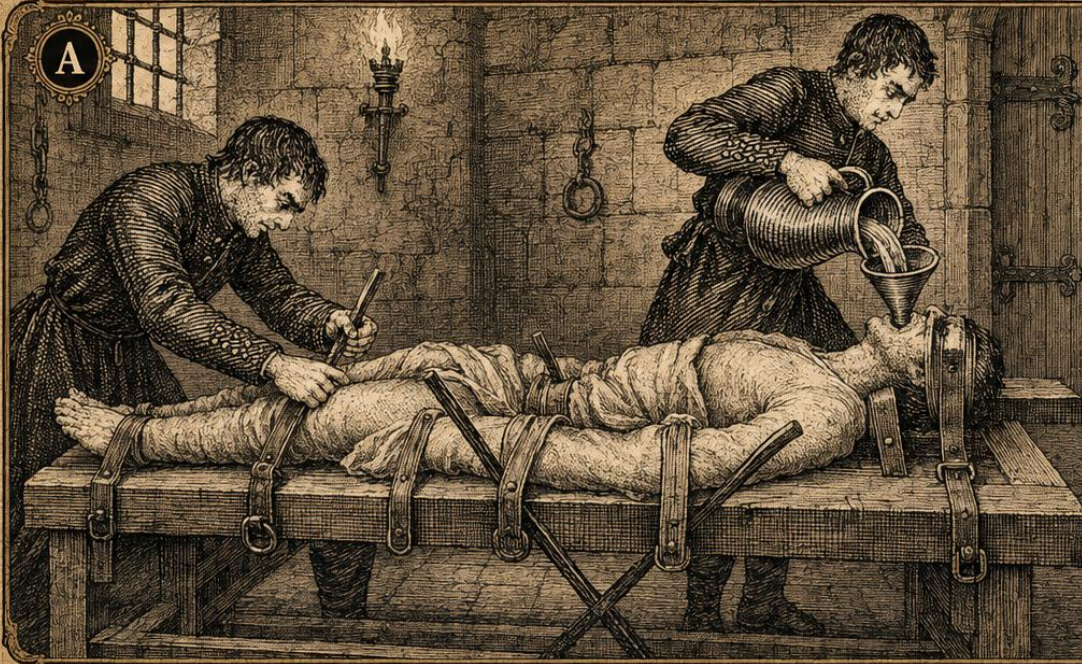
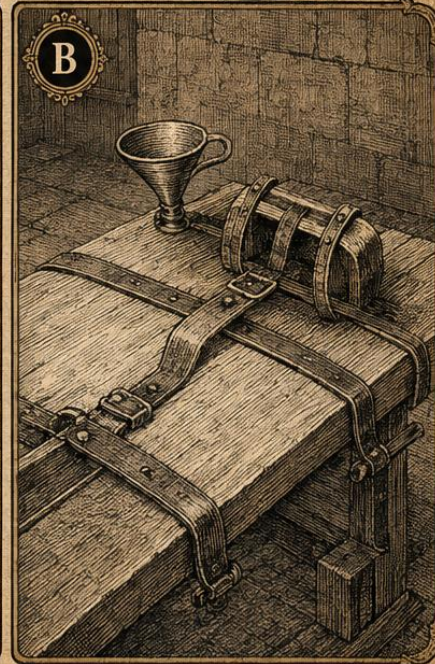


PLATE XIV

PUNISHMENT AND PERSECUTION IN THE AGE OF THE INQUISITION *Methods of Justice, Fear, and Religious Authority*



A — **Forced Water Torture:** A prisoner was bound to a bench while liquid was poured through a funnel into the mouth to intensify suffering and compel confession.



B — **Restraint Bench:** The victim's body was immobilized by straps and clamps while attendants administered the torment.