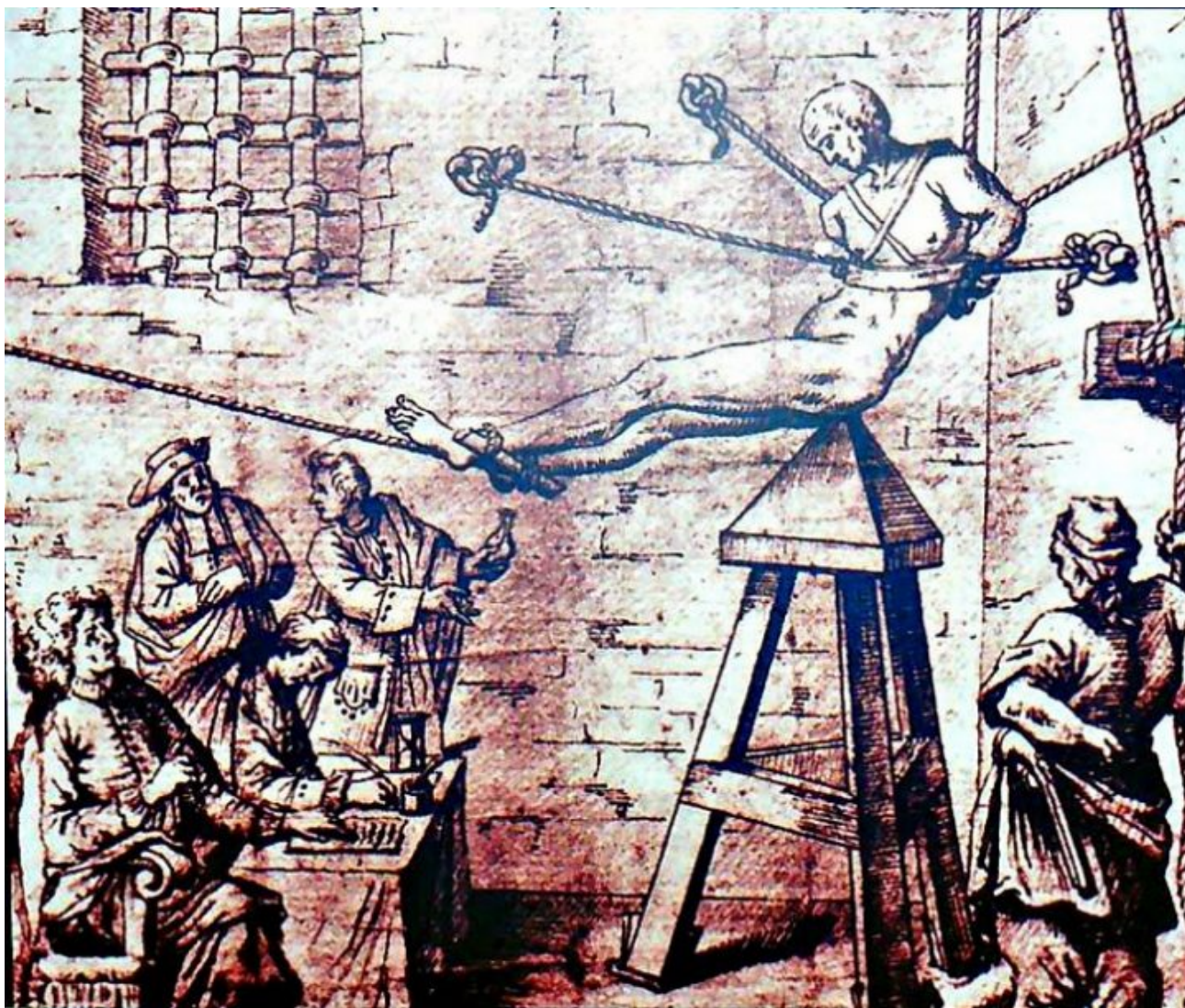



10 Torture devices used by the Catholic Church in the Inquisition

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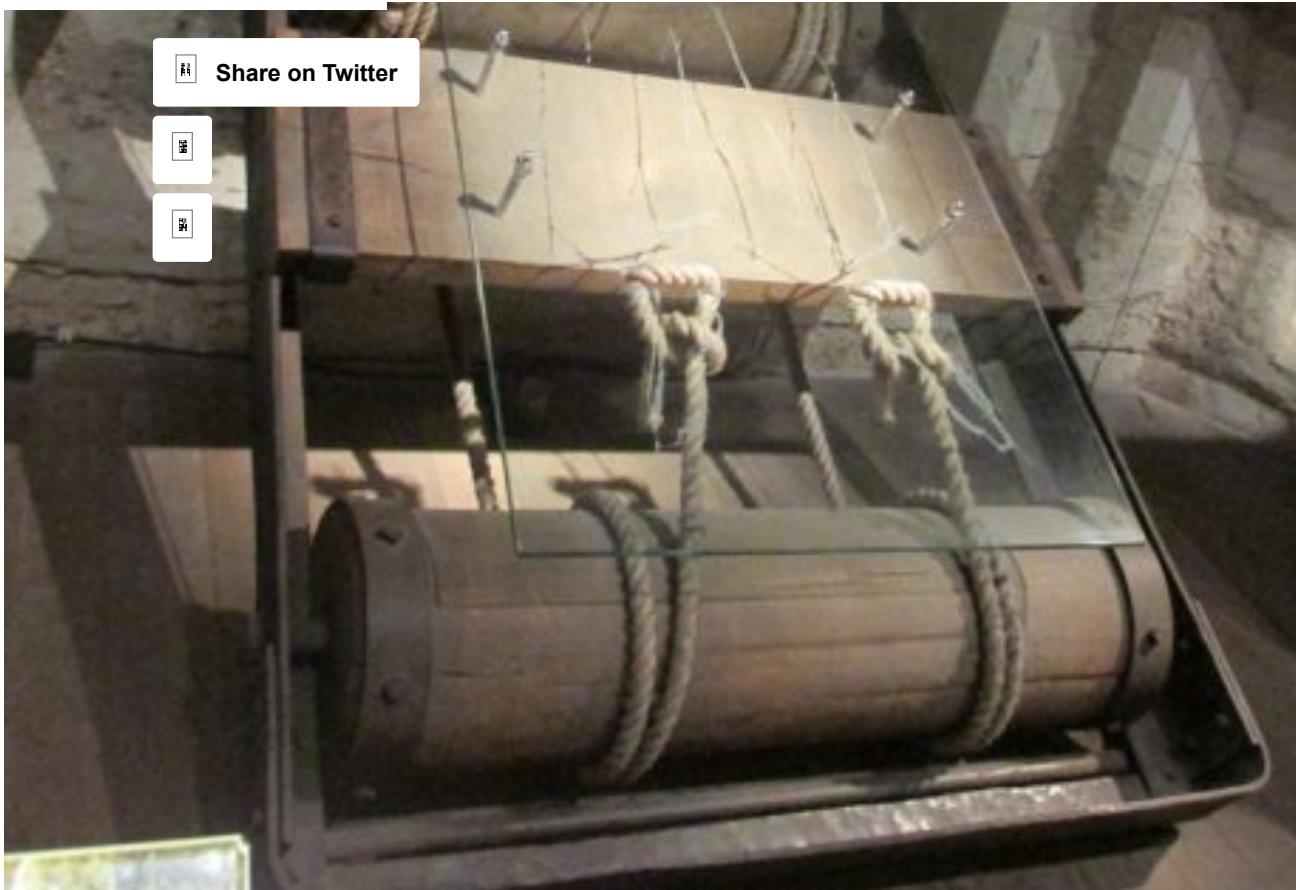
In 12th century torture became an integral part of all capital legal proceedings. Also, it was often practiced by the inquisition in most European countries in cases of heresy, blasphemy, adultery and many other similar 'crimes against God'. Beside common means of torture like beating, suffocating and burning Roman-Catholic Church used others, more depraved ways of extracting confessions and execution of its victims...

1. The Rack

This torture device was often used by the Church in Middle Ages as a quite effective way of confession extraction. Tortures would strap their victims across a board, bounding them by the ankles and wrists and then turning two wheels on each end in opposite direction of each other to the point where dislocation of every joint occurred. Besides regular one, an even gruesome version of the rack, with a grater-like surface going under the victim's back, was used for heavier offenders.



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2. The Stocks

The stocks are two large wooden planks used to keep victim's ankles (sometimes applied to head and wrists also) locked in place. This was an outdoor, public punishment, where the subject was a victim of both the weather conditions as well as the acts of spitting, kicking, defecating and urinating of anyone willing and present.



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3. Water Torture


In water torture victim's nostrils were first pinched shut, and then about 8 liters of water was forced down the victim's throat with a funnel. In some cases boiling water or vinegar was used to inflict even greater suffering. In the end, victim's stomach would rupture, leading to painful and gruesome death.

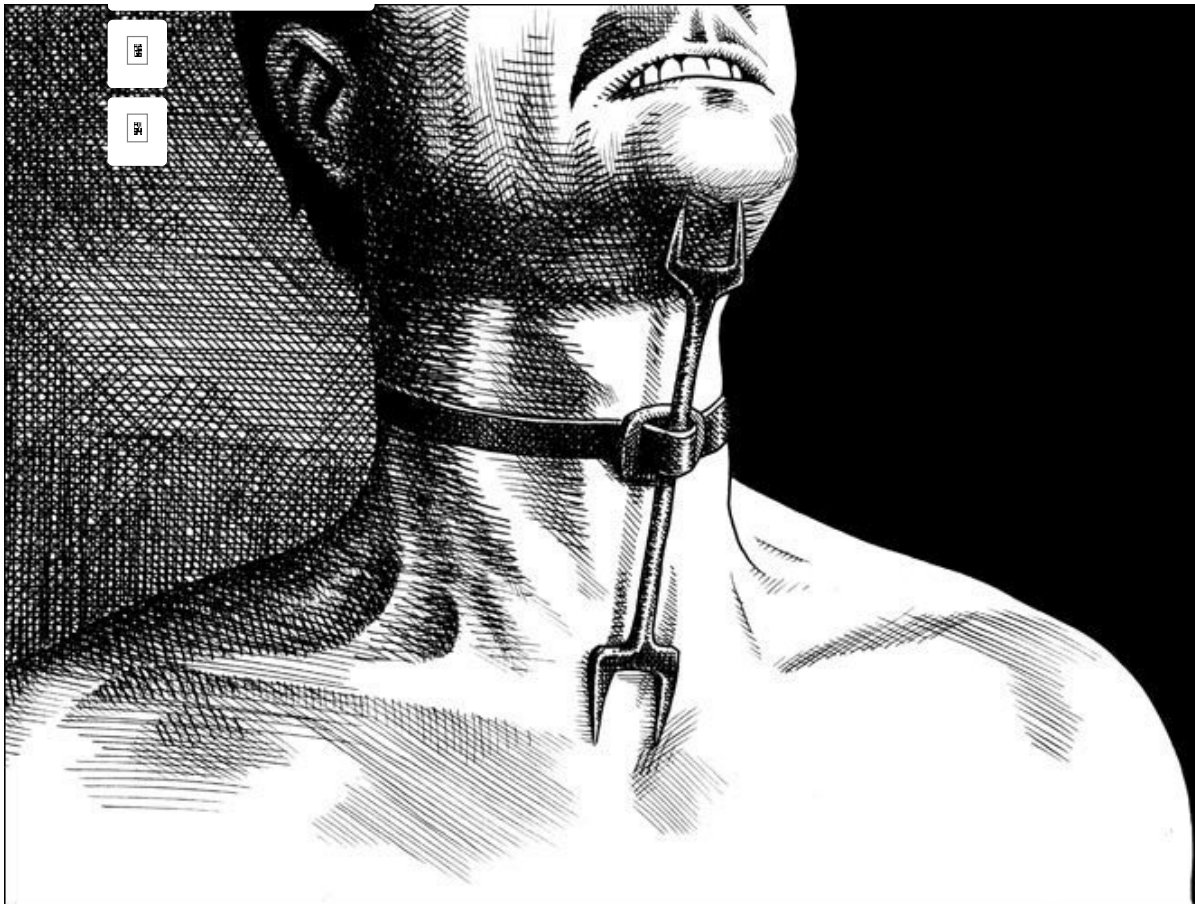


4. Heretic's Fork

This simple yet effective instrument consisted of two metal forks set one against the other, was to be placed under the chin of the accused's, on end resting just above the larynx and the other end above trachea. Forks forced the subject of the torture to hold his head erect at all times in

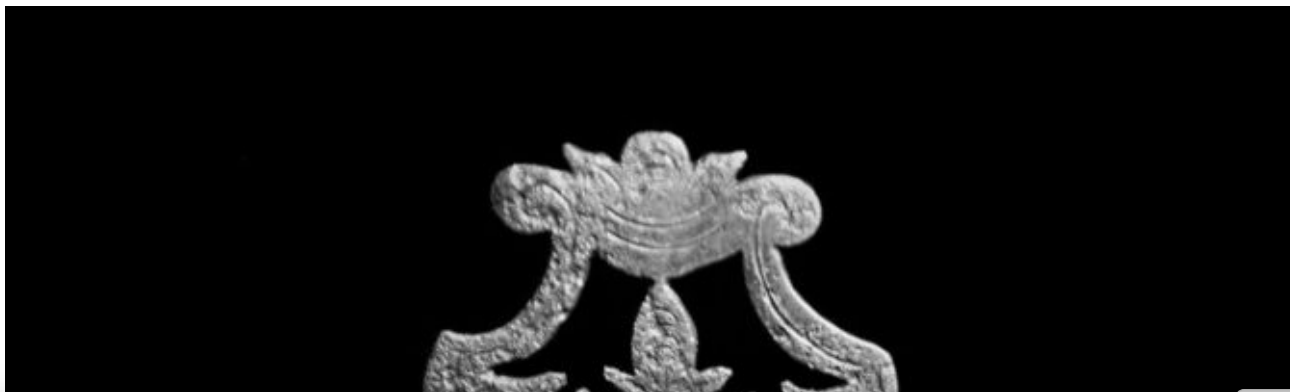
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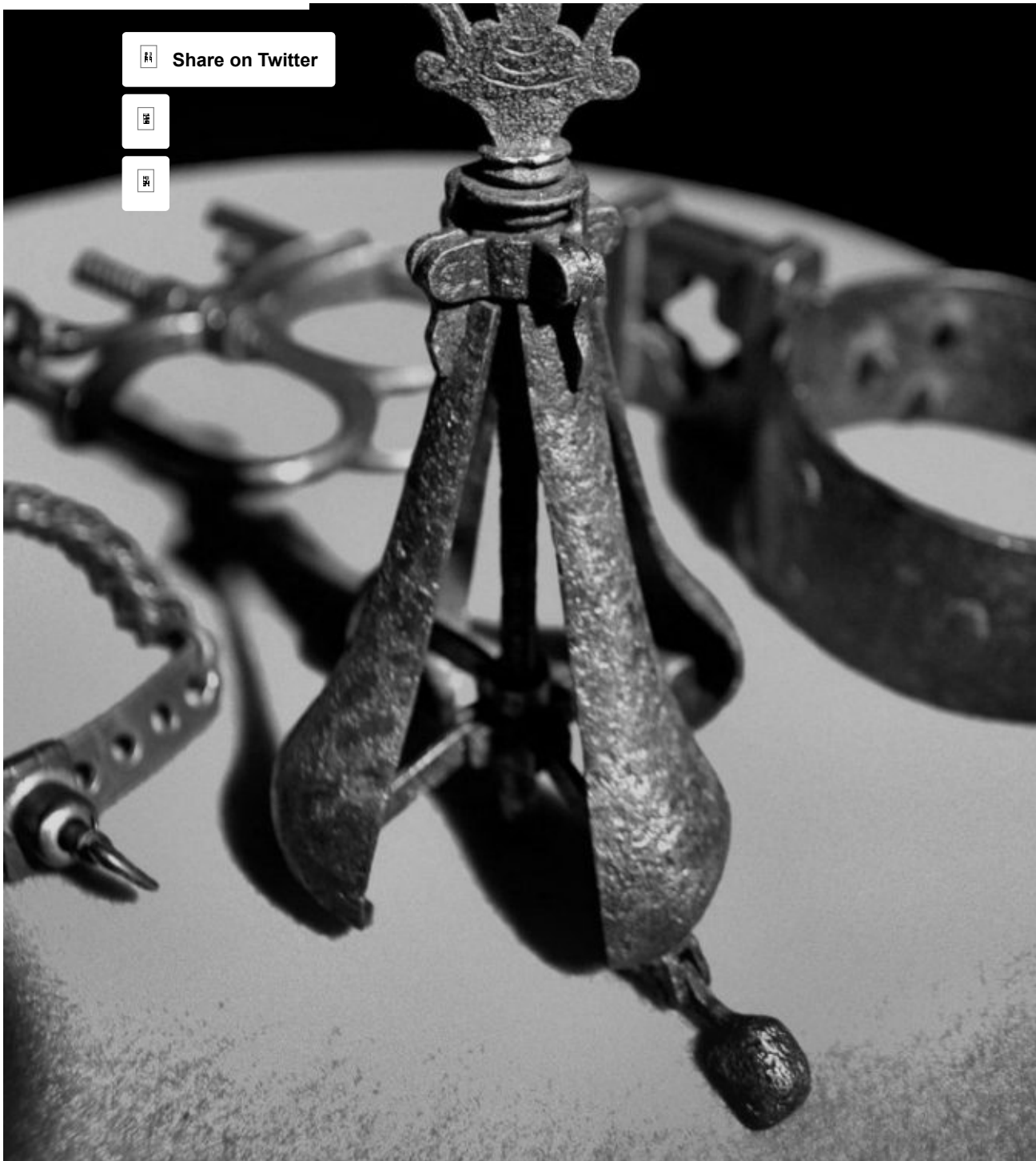


5. The Pear

Another device favored by the Spanish Inquisition was the Pear. Mostly used on female victim's, device was inserted into the subject's vagina or mouth, and then expanded by twisting the screw on the outer end, lacerating and ripping the inside. Torture sessions that involved the Pear almost always had a fatal end.



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6. Scold's Bridle

Scold's Bridle is a metal mask with implemented mouth gag that was used mainly on women married to clergy up until 19th century. Clergymen who accused their wives of disregarding their decisions had the right to use the Scold's Bridle. After the mask was applied women were walked on a leash or chained to a marked cross where they were exposed to public ridicule.

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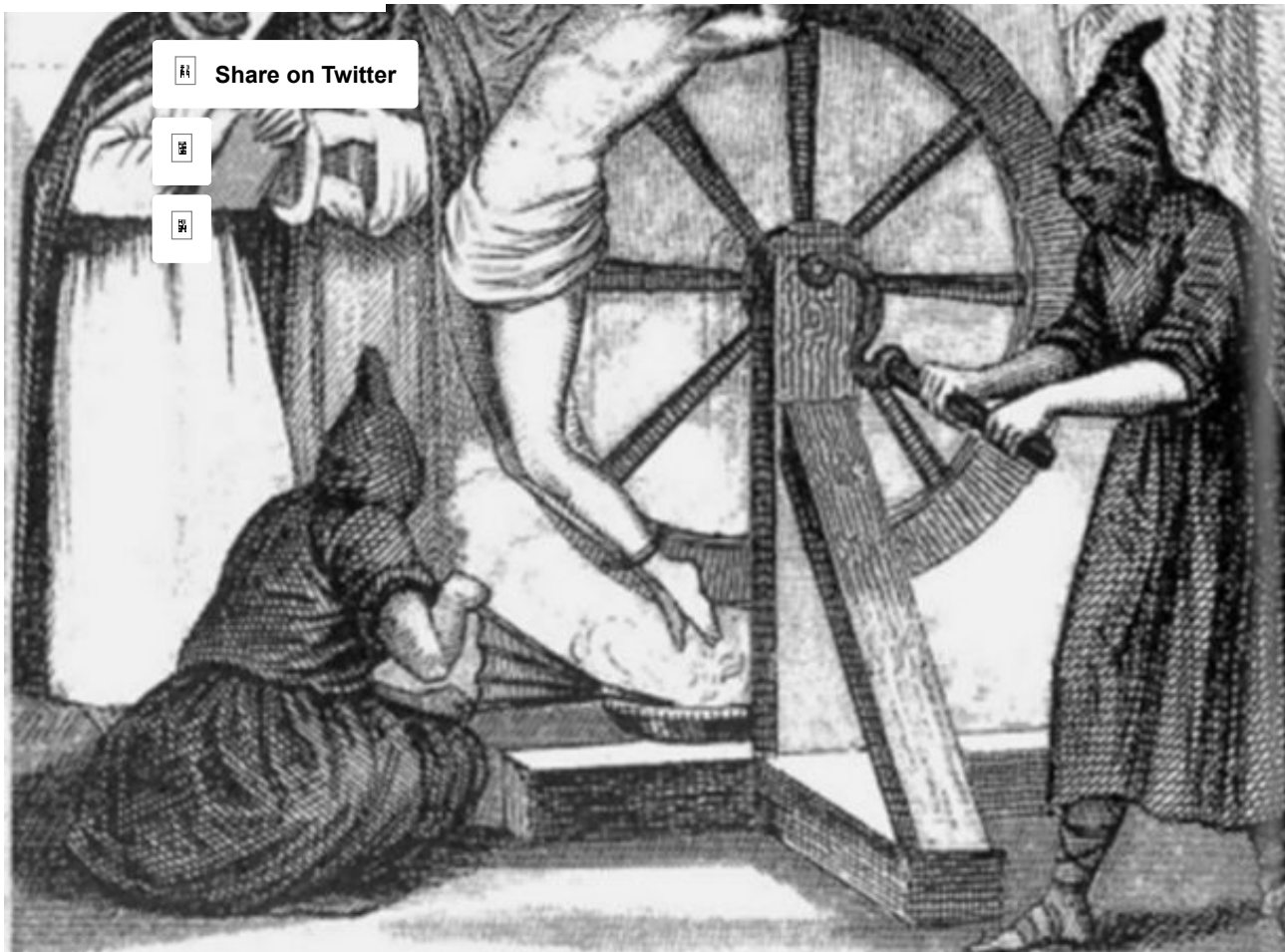


7. The Wheel

One of the most popular and cruelest torture (and execution) methods ever practiced is The Wheel. This giant spiked wheel had to be operated by several men and was able to break literally every bone in victim's body as it turned, causing agonizing and slow death.



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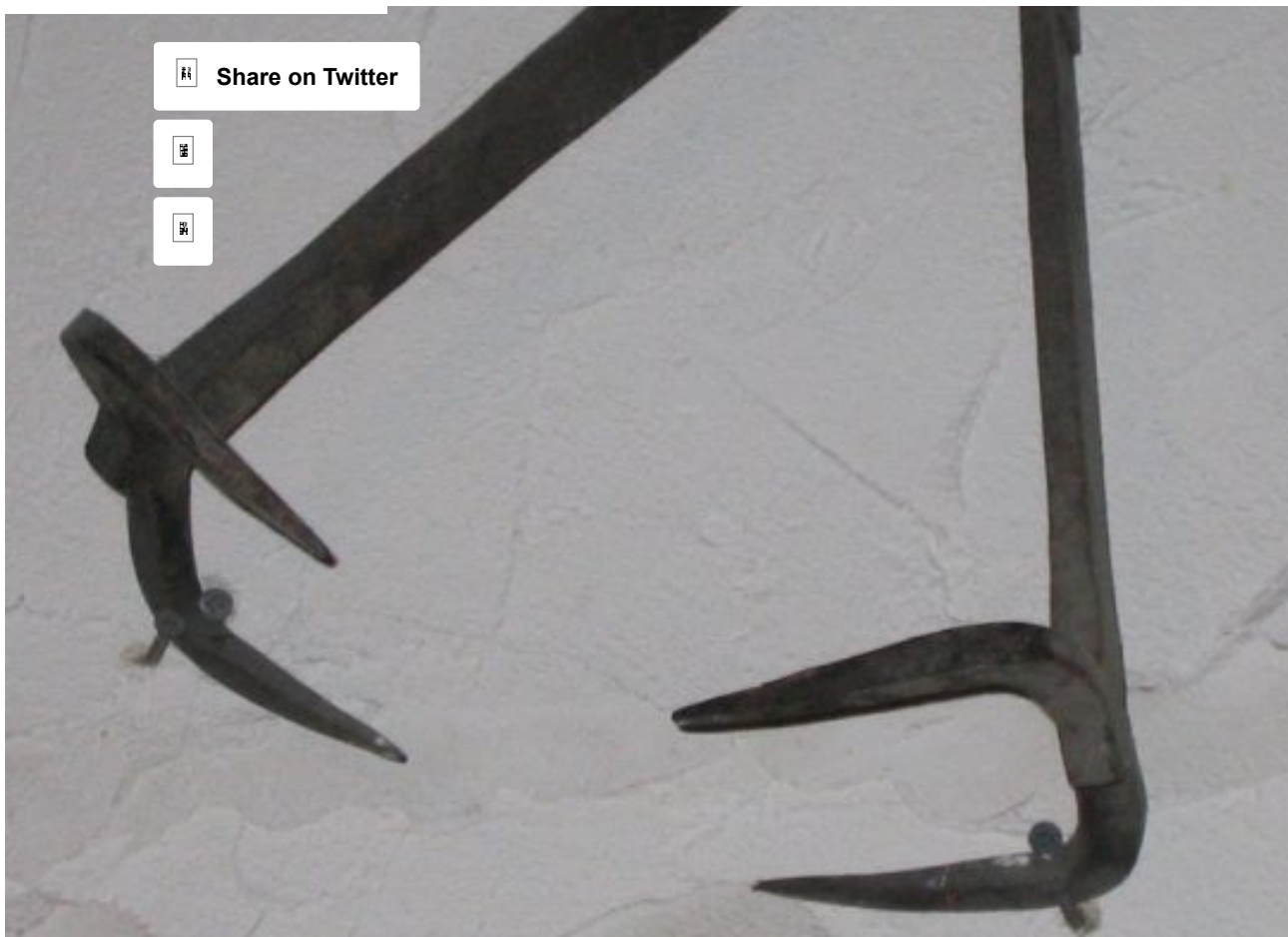
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8. The Breast Ripper

Inquisition used breast rippers almost exclusively on women. Victims that were accused and condemned for adultery, heresy, witchcraft and blasphemy were often treated with this hellish pronged-like device whose main purpose was to tear breasts off the chest.



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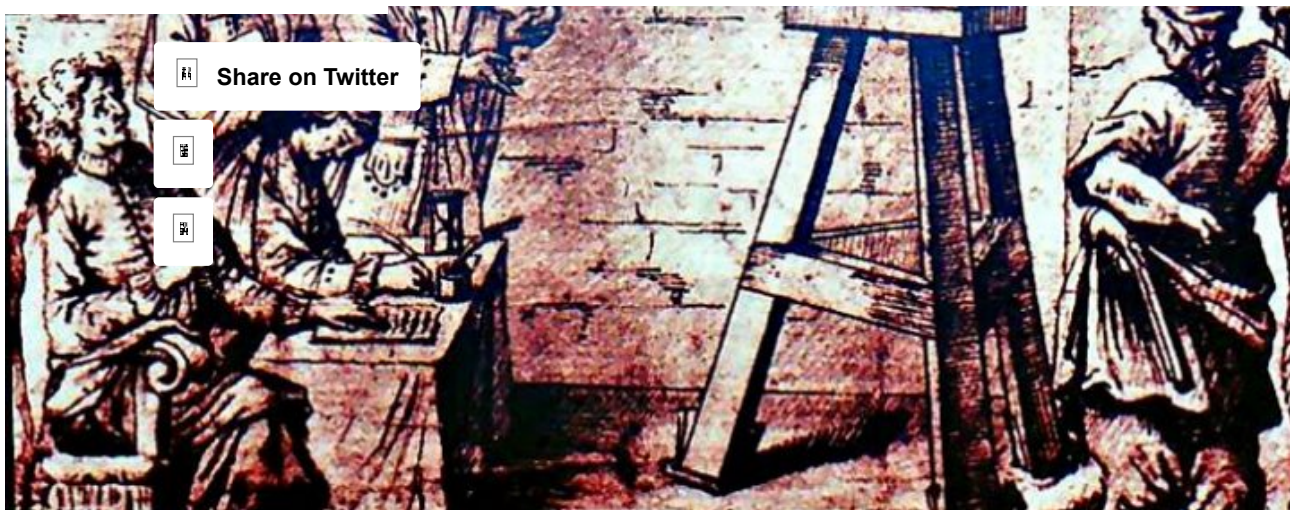


9. Judas Cradle

The victim was stripped, hoisted and hung over this pointed pyramid with iron belts. Their legs were stretched out frontwards, or their ankles pulled down by weights. The tormentor would then drop the accused onto the pyramid penetrating both orifices. With their muscles contracted, they were usually unable to relax and fall asleep.



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10. Hanging Cages

These cages were usually hung around the outsides of town halls and ducal palaces, they were also near the town's hall of justice and surprisingly cathedrals. The victim, naked and exposed, would slowly wither from hunger and thirst. The weather would second the victims death by heat stroke and sunburn in the summer and cold in the winter. The victims and corpses were usually previously mutilated before being put in the cages to make a more edifying example of the punishment. The cadavers were left in the cages until the bones literally fell apart.

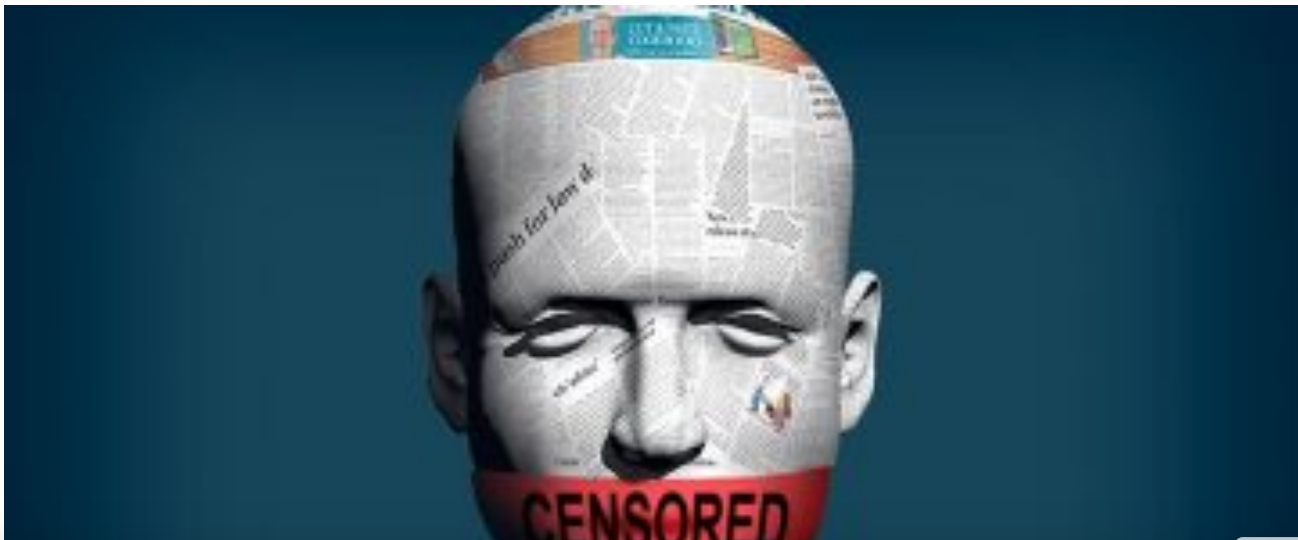


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