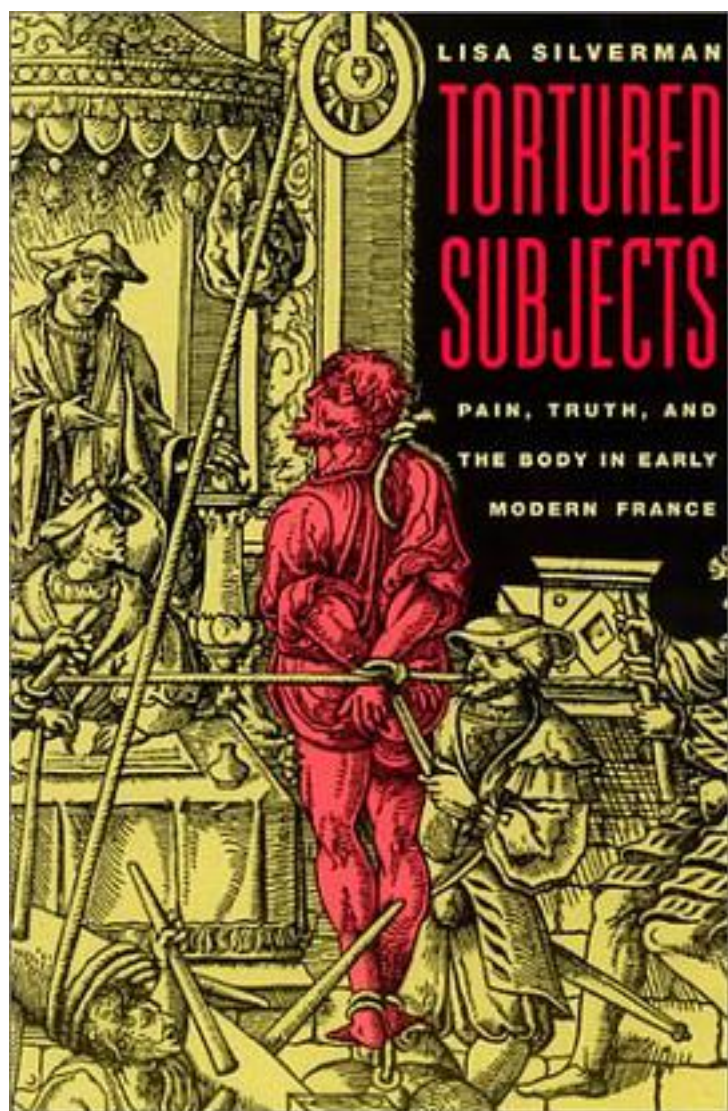


Tortured Subjects



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著者:Lisa Silverman

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This text tells the story of how the idea that physical suffering could be a path to redemption became a fixed part of the French legal system during the early modern period. Lisa Silverman looks at the theory and practice of judicial torture in France from 1600 to 1788, the year in which it was formally abolished. Silverman studies criminal cases, through dossiers and transcripts of interrogations conducted under torture, through the writings of physicians and surgeons concerned with the problem of pain, and through diaries and letters of witnesses at public executions, to finally contend that torture was at the centre of an epistemological crisis that forced the French to reconsider the relationship between coercion and sincerity, and freewill and evidence.

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