



The Grotesque Body in Early Christian Discourse: Hell, Scatology and Metamorphosis (BibleWorld)

Istvan Czachesz

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Early Christian apocryphal and conical documents present us with grotesque images of the human body, often combining the playful and humorous with the repulsive, and fearful. First to third century Christian literature was shaped by the discourse around and imagery of the human body. This study analyses how the iconography of bodily cruelty and visceral morality was produced and refined from the very start of Christian history. The sources range across Greek comedy, Roman and Jewish demonology, and metamorphosis traditions. The study reveals how these images originated, were adopted, and were shaped to the service of a doctrinally and psychologically persuasive Christian message.



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