

Prof. Etheredge

[The following excerpt is from Friedrich Nietzsche's, The Genealogy of Morals (1887)]:

"It needs only a glance at our [German] ancient penal codes to impress on us what labor it takes to create a nation of thinkers... Germans have resorted to ghastly means in order to triumph over their plebeian instincts and brutal coarseness. We need only recount some of our ancient forms of punishment: stoning (even in earliest legends millstones are dropped on the heads of culprits); breaking on the wheel (Germany's own contribution to the techniques of punishment); piercing with stakes, drawing and quartering, trampling to death with horses, boiling in oil or wine (these were still in use in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries), the popular flaying alive... By such methods the individual was finally taught to remember five or six "I won'ts" which entitled him to participate in the benefits of society; and indeed, with the aid of this sort of memory, people eventually "came to their senses." What an enormous price man had to pay for reason, seriousness, control over his emotions -- those grand human prerogatives and cultural showpieces! How much blood and horror lies behind all "good things"!"