



## Portraits of Human Monsters in the Renaissance

### Dwarves, Hirsutes, and Castrati as Idealized Anatomical Anomalies

by Touba Ghadessi

#### DESCRIPTION:

At the center of this interdisciplinary study are court monsters—dwarves, hirsutes, and misshapen individuals—who, by their very presence, altered Renaissance ethics vis-à-vis anatomical difference, social virtues, and scientific knowledge. The study traces how these monsters evolved from objects of curiosity, to scientific cases, to legally independent beings. The works examined here point to the intricate cultural, religious, ethical, and scientific perceptions of monstrous individuals who were fixtures in contemporary courts.

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