

The Vertebral Theory of The Skull. Some Notes

Manuel Torres Fernandez

PhD Student at University of Salamanca, Spain

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***Corresponding author:** Manuel Torres Fernandez, PhD Student at University of Salamanca, Spain

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SHORT COMMUNICATION

It is well known that JW von Goethe (1749-1832) not only made a decisive contribution to the history of European literature, as a member of the Weimar movement Classicism, basically as a precursor of it, along with Schiller, Wieland and Herder, but also his research has extended to the world of natural sciences, specifically to the field of comparative anatomy, very often linked to names such as Karl Gegenbaur (1826–1903) with his work *Grundriss der vergleichenden Anatomie*, important along with other works in the dissemination of Darwin's Theory of Evolution, which has earned him widespread recognition for his contributions to evolutionary biology, and Lorenz Oken (1779-1851).

epistolary work. In *Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers*, specifically in the letter of March 16, 1772, in which Werther states that he would like to open a vein to achieve eternal freedom, although it must be considered that this work has as its main theme the world of passions, and unrequited love, some references to the human body can be appreciated, but his studies of anatomy will have a completely different dimension.

What we are interested in recovering in this short communication is the vertebral theory of the skull, *Wirbeltheorie des Schädels*, initially attributed to Goethe, according to which the skull would be formed by a set of modified vertebrae. Authors such as C. Bruch published research results that conclusively confirmed this theory, as in the case of the study of a Salmon skeleton, presented in the publication *Wirbeltheorie des Schädels am Skelette des Lachses Geprüft*, in Frankfurt AM in 1862 to mention important researchers such as Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) or George Cuvier (1769-1832) who were critics and opponents of this theory.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.