

ABSTRACT

Underneath The Skin: The Wound Through The Psychoanalytic Theory

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This research sets out to study the connotative meaning of the corporal wound in the context of psychoanalytic theory through the Christian iconography and the representation of the wound on Christ's chest at the scene of Crucifixion. This study analyzes the transformation of the wounded body into an uncanny entity by virtue of the connotation of the visual representation of the wound as a vulva. The wound as an corporal opening, threatening the integrity of the skin that covers the body, excoriates and flays the skin and so redefines the conventional definition of the body as an unknown and unfamiliar entity. The concept of "uncanny" that theorized by Sigmund Freud, highly corresponds to the redefined interpretation of the wounded body. As a result of tearing the skin and violating the main function of the psychic envelope, now the body with its openings literally is an 'uncanny body'. The French psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu declares that skin is not only tangible, but also a representation that surrounds and covers the psyche, through his innovative concept 'Skin-Ego'. The skin is where the disturbances are kept as a memory on in the form of skin disorders and/or bruises and wounds, and also is where the perception of the body appears for the first time; this is also where the Ego arises, through Freudian discourse. The wound, by blocking the function of the Skin-Ego, undermines and/or eliminates the familiar perception of the body. Through removing the boundary between inside and outside, and through the visibility of the representation of the open wound as female genitalia, body transforms itself into a unusual, unfamiliar and unknown form. This transforming body is now an uncanny body itself.

Keywords: Skin, Skin-Ego, Wound, Uncanny, Psychoanalysis.