

*A literary celebrity by the age of 25, Goethe was ennobled by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Karl August in after taking up residence there in November following the success of his first novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* ().*

These give an intimate account of his stay in the fictional village of Wahlheim based on Garbenheim, near Wetzlar ,[ citation needed ] whose peasants have enchanted him with their simple ways. There he meets Charlotte, a beautiful young girl who takes care of her siblings after the death of their mother. Werther falls in love with Charlotte despite knowing beforehand that she is engaged to a man named Albert, eleven years her senior. He suffers great embarrassment when he forgetfully visits a friend and unexpectedly has to face there the weekly gathering of the entire aristocratic set. He is not tolerated and asked to leave since he is not a nobleman. He then returns to Wahlheim, where he suffers still more than before, partly because Charlotte and Albert are now married. Every day becomes a torturing reminder that Charlotte will never be able to requite his love. She, out of pity for her friend and respect for her husband, decides that Werther must not visit her so frequently. He visits her one final time, and they are both overcome with emotion after he recites to her a passage of his own translation of Ossian. Even before that incident, Werther had hinted at the idea that one member of the love triangle – Charlotte, Albert or Werther himself – had to die to resolve the situation. Unable to hurt anyone else or seriously consider murder, Werther sees no other choice but to take his own life. After composing a farewell letter to be found after his death, he writes to Albert asking for his two pistols, on the pretext that he is going "on a journey". Charlotte receives the request with great emotion and sends the pistols. Werther then shoots himself in the head, but does not die until twelve hours later. He is buried under a linden tree that he has mentioned frequently in his letters. The funeral is not attended by any clergy, or by Albert or Charlotte. The book ends with an intimation that Charlotte may die of a broken heart. The novel was published anonymously, and Goethe distanced himself from it in his later years, [2] regretting the fame it had brought him and the consequent attention to his own youthful love of Charlotte Buff , then already engaged to Johann Christian Kestner. He wrote *Werther* at the age of twenty-four, and yet this was all that some of his visitors in his old age knew him for. He even denounced the Romantic movement as "everything that is sick. Yet, Goethe substantially reworked the book for the edition [2] and acknowledged the great personal and emotional influence that *The Sorrows of Young Werther* could exert on forlorn young lovers who discovered it. As he commented to his secretary in , "It must be bad, if not everybody was to have a time in his life, when he felt as though *Werther* had been written exclusively for him. Copycat suicide *The Sorrows of Young Werther* turned Goethe, previously an unknown author, into a literary celebrity almost overnight. Napoleon Bonaparte considered it one of the great works of European literature, having written a Goethe-inspired soliloquy in his youth and carried *Werther* with him on his campaigning to Egypt. It also started the phenomenon known as the "Werther Fever", which caused young men throughout Europe to dress in the clothing style described for Werther in the novel. After some initial difficulties, Werther sheds his passionate youthful side and reintegrates himself into society as a respectable citizen. This argument was continued in his collection of short and critical poems, the *Xenien* , and his play *Faust*. Alternative versions and appearances[ edit ] This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. This is taken to be the first Italian epistolary novel. The German film *Goethe!* Thomas Carlyle , R. *The Sufferings of Young Werther*, tr. Harry Steinhauser, New York: Elizabeth Mayer, Louise Bogan; poems transl.

### 2: Project MUSE - Character, Silence, and the Novel: Walter Benjamin on Goethe's Elective Affinities

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His first, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, had inspired a fashion craze and copycat suicides, and had fired the heart of a young Napoleon. His latest effort, on the other hand, received befuddled notices from critics and little love from the coterie of writers and philosophers drawn to the Great Man. Everyone from the Brothers Grimm to Achim von Arnim to Wilhelm von Humboldt agreed that the book was a bore, that its plot made nearly no sense, and that its treatment of adultery bordered on the distasteful. At sixty, Goethe was not one to let bad reviews get him down. The universally beloved *Faust* had appeared in , and by , Goethe was to have completed his *Theory of Colors* as well as his autobiography, *Poetry and Truth*. Nonetheless, in the correspondence he sent out around the time of publication, Goethe found himself compelled to admit that he had as little idea as anyone else of what he was trying to accomplish with his most recent book, or of what it had finally become. Then as now, *Elective Affinities* is an incredible, deeply mystifying read, the headstone of a man who hoped to groom the wilderness of life into an English park where even loss, pain, and death have finally found their proper place. In fact, *Elective Affinities* is the rare book that opens by spelling out what will happen by its end. The protagonists, Eduard and Charlotte, are aristocrats who have overcome loveless marriages to find true love with each other. Soon after his arrival, the Captain, a dilettante scientist, explains the principle of elective affinities to the couple—how the elements of a seemingly stable compound, such as limestone, will separate and form a new combination when introduced to sulfuric acid. No points for guessing what happens next. Chemistry is, to be sure, hardly the most inventive metaphor for romantic feeling. And yet, as Charlotte observes, we often forget just how much of natural science, which we take to be the inalienable reality of our existence, is informed by the human experience it is meant to illuminate. All the while, Goethe reminds us, via the supporting cast, how often we misread the world in order to dress up self-serving behavior for which we are reluctant to take responsibility. By the time of *Elective Affinities*, he dictated his works entirely to his secretary. The privy councilor to the Duke of Weimar was simply too busy to spend the day trying to decide if scarlet sounded better than vermilion. Their music-playing and constant replanning of the grounds of their estate seem straightforward enough; before long they are reorganizing their graveyard, examining old Germanic weapons, and planning birthday parties with all the seriousness of imperial coronations. When that gets boring, she pages through an illustrated book of monkeys and compares each one to someone in the room. Occupation, in the middle-class sense that would come to define the nineteenth century—making things, buying things, selling things—held little interest for Goethe. His great ambition, in his life and in his art, was to take the indefatigable work ethic of the bourgeoisie and apply it not to business, but to life itself, as only an eighteenth-century aristocrat could. The object of their artistic aspiration—as their fascination with botany, landscape architecture, and tableaux vivants attests—is reality itself. There is no surer sign that we are to admire one of his characters than when we learn that, through tireless labor, they have restored some room or building that has fallen into disuse, or that, by applying their considerable expertise, they have revealed the beauty dormant in a grove of plane trees or a garden path. The great mystery, then, is that despite its fixation on death, loss, and the inscrutability of fate, *Elective Affinities* never wavers in its optimism. At no point does the narrator ever concede his claim to the final truth of life, which he offers to the reader piece by piece, in one brilliant aphorism after another. To take just one example: But in his first work to his last, renunciation has always gone hand in hand with emotion—as when Ottilie, in a sign of devotion to Eduard, hands him the portrait of her father she wears around her neck. For Goethe, true happiness is not simply a religious or ethical abstraction, but something palpable and real. The highest feeling in *Elective Affinities* is not ecstasy, but serenity. Railroads, the post, steamboats, and all possible modes of communication are the means by which the world overeducates itself and freezes itself in mediocrity. Michael Lipkin is a student and writer living in New York City.

## 3: The Sorrows of Young Werther | novel by Goethe | [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.*

Die Leiden des jungen Werthers, which gained him enormous fame as a writer in the Sturm und Drang period which marked the early phase of Romanticism. Dichtung und Wahrheit From My Life: Poetry and Truth which covers his early life and ends with his departure for Weimar, his Italian Journey, and a series of treatises on art. His writings were immediately influential in literary and artistic circles. Goethe admitted that he "shot his hero to save himself": The novel remains in print in dozens of languages and its influence is undeniable; its central hero, an obsessive figure driven to despair and destruction by his unrequited love for the young Lotte, has become a pervasive literary archetype. Suicide is considered sinful by Christian doctrine: He said he "turned reality into poetry but his friends thought poetry should be turned into reality and the poem imitated. The next work, his epic closet drama Faust, was completed in stages. The first part was published in and created a sensation. Goethe finished Faust Part Two in the year of his death, and the work was published posthumously. The work subsequently inspired operas and oratorios by Schumann, Berlioz, Gounod, Boito, Busoni, and Schnittke as well as symphonic works by Liszt, Wagner, and Mahler. Faust became the ur-myth of many figures in the 19th century. Later, a facet of its plot, i. In, the world premiere complete production of Faust was staged at the Goetheanum. He is also widely quoted. Epigrams such as "Against criticism a man can neither protest nor defend himself; he must act in spite of it, and then it will gradually yield to him", "Divide and rule, a sound motto; unite and lead, a better one", and "Enjoy when you can, and endure when you must", are still in usage or are often paraphrased. Some well-known quotations are often incorrectly attributed to Goethe. Creativity and crisis[ edit ] Goethe overcame emotional turmoil, relational conflicts and mood swings through self-reflection, political and scientific work, and writing. To no one was the faculty for so doing more necessary than to me, for by nature I was constantly carried from one extreme to the other". Goethean science As to what I have done as a poet, I take no pride in it But that in my century I am the only person who knows the truth in the difficult science of colours"of that, I say, I am not a little proud, and here I have a consciousness of a superiority to many. Goethe also had the largest private collection of minerals in all of Europe. By the time of his death, in order to gain a comprehensive view in geology, he had collected 17, rock samples. His focus on morphology and what was later called homology influenced 19th century naturalists, although his ideas of transformation were about the continuous metamorphosis of living things and did not relate to contemporary ideas of "transformisme" or transmutation of species. Light spectrum, from Theory of Colours. Goethe observed that with a prism, colour arises at light-dark edges, and the spectrum occurs where these coloured edges overlap. During his Italian journey, Goethe formulated a theory of plant metamorphosis in which the archetypal form of the plant is to be found in the leaf "he writes, "from top to bottom a plant is all leaf, united so inseparably with the future bud that one cannot be imagined without the other". The ever-changing display of plant forms, which I have followed for so many years, awakens increasingly within me the notion: The plant forms which surround us were not all created at some given point in time and then locked into the given form, they have been given According to Hegel, "Goethe has occupied himself a good deal with meteorology; barometer readings interested him particularly What he says is important: He claims to deduce from it that the barometric level varies in the same proportion not only in each zone but that it has the same variation, too, at different altitudes above sea-level". In it, he contentiously characterized colour as arising from the dynamic interplay of light and darkness through the mediation of a turbid medium. After being translated into English by Charles Eastlake in, his theory became widely adopted by the art world, most notably J. Goethe, Theory of Colours, Some of the Venetian Epigrams were held back from publication due to their sexual content. Goethe clearly saw human sexuality as a topic worthy of poetic and artistic depiction, an idea that was uncommon in a time when the private nature of sexuality was rigorously normative. He continued, "Pederasty is as old as humanity itself, and one can therefore say, that it resides in nature, even if it

proceeds against nature What culture has won from nature will not be surrendered or given up at any price. His later spiritual perspective incorporated elements of pantheism heavily influenced by Spinoza , humanism , and various elements of Western esotericism , as seen most vividly in Part II of Faust. In old age, he explained why this was so to Eckermann: How could I write songs of hatred when I felt no hate? And, between ourselves, I never hated the French, although I thanked God when we were rid of them. How could I, to whom the only significant things are civilization [Kultur] and barbarism, hate a nation which is among the most cultivated in the world, and to which I owe a great part of my own culture? In any case this business of hatred between nations is a curious thing. You will always find it more powerful and barbarous on the lowest levels of civilization. In many respects, he was the originator of many ideas which later became widespread. He produced volumes of poetry, essays, criticism, a theory of colours and early work on evolution and linguistics. He was fascinated by mineralogy , and the mineral goethite iron oxide is named after him. He would argue that Classicism was the means of controlling art, and that Romanticism was a sickness, even as he penned poetry rich in memorable images, and rewrote the formal rules of German poetry. His poetry was set to music by almost every major Austrian and German composer from Mozart to Mahler , and his influence would spread to French drama and opera as well. Beethoven declared that a "Faust" Symphony would be the greatest thing for art. Liszt and Mahler both created symphonies in whole or in large part inspired by this seminal work, which would give the 19th century one of its most paradigmatic figures:

## 4: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Strange, Elusive Third Novel

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe - The Book of Life is the 'brain' of The School of Life, a gathering of the best ideas around wisdom and emotional intelligence.*

Early life[ change change source ] Goethe was born in Frankfurt am Main , Germany. His father was well-educated and very strict. His mother was only eighteen when he was born. When Goethe was a young boy, he began to write stories and plays for his friends. In his youth, he learned Greek , Latin and French. He studied law in Leipzig from to He also wrote some letters that are seen as beautiful, and that showed his promise as a writer. He continued his studies in Strasbourg from to He joined other young men who wanted to change the way that Germans were writing. He thought that people like Johann Christoph Gottsched were too strict about writing poetry. Instead of the ideas of the Enlightenment , he wanted poets to be creative and make their own rules. One man who had many new ideas was a poet named Johann Gottfried von Herder. Herder liked the plays of Shakespeare which he had learned in German as well as folk poetry. These ideas were exciting for Goethe, and he helped Herder to collect folk poetry. Goethe fell in love with several women during his lifetime. During the early period of his life, he was in love with a girl named Friederike Brion, the daughter of a pastor. Several of his poems are inspired by her. He felt extremely sad when they split up. They are all based on his own experience. His disappointment in love inspired him when writing about Werther in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* and Gretchen in his great play *Faust*. His poems also show his ideas about science and philosophy. Werther is a young man who falls passionately in love with a girl called Lotte who is married to someone else. Werther kills himself in the end. The book was very successful all over Europe. He spent most of his life working at it. He was writing the first version of *Faust* at this time. Based on a legendary character, it tells of a man called Faust who is tired of studying and wants to have the greatest possible happiness. The devil called Mephistopheles in the play tells Faust he can help him to do this, but that in the end Faust must give him his soul and go with him to hell. Faust uses magic in the hope that it will tell him everything about life. Along with writing, Goethe was developing a career in law. In , he spent four months in Wetzlar at the Imperial Law Courts. Here he made new friends, including a young girl who was already engaged to someone else. Arrival in Weimar until death of Schiller [ change change source ] Goethe had been well-educated and was good at organizing and getting on with important people. For eleven years he worked at the court of Weimar for a young Duke called Karl August. He had to organize road-building projects, and look after parks and buildings. He studied geology , mineralogy , botany and anatomy. He fell in love with a woman called Charlotte von Stein who was married and had several children. He wrote love letters to her, and she inspired him to write many poems. The heroes of his books at this time were often ordinary people instead of geniuses. After a time he realized that all his work on governmental duties were not giving him time for his writing, so he went to Italy for 18 months. He loved the landscape and made lots of sketches , and he read the ancient poets and books on the history of art. He wrote a play in rhyme called *Iphigenie auf Tauris* which combines the beauty of Classicism with great poetry. When he returned from Italy he settled once more in Weimar. He visited Italy a second time. He became great friends with the famous poet and playwright Friedrich Schiller. The two men talked about many of their ideas and helped one another by offering criticism of their works. He wrote short works such as *Hermann und Dorothea* which is about life in a small German town at the time of the French Revolution. Two works of the greatest importance works occupied him at this time. One is the novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. It means a novel which shows a person growing up and developing his character and learning about the world. This book was a very important influence on the 19th century Romantic novel and on all German autobiographical novels ever since. Goethe spent many years working on this book. The second work of enormous importance was his play *Faust*. He made changes to the original version, putting all the small bits together into one great play. Schiller gave him advice while he was writing it. Faust enters into a pact with the devil, Mephistopheles who promises him all his soul can wish for: He signs the pact with his blood. Later life [ change change source ] Napoleon was fighting wars all over Europe at this time. Germany, which was still made up of lots of small countries, was an enemy of France.

Goethe always thought of Napoleon as a hero. His ideas about politics were still based on 18th century ideas. He hated war and so he did not take part in politics but concentrated on science and literature. He wrote a book called *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* Elective Affinities which is about a divorce problem. Some of his scientific ideas are used in the story as he talks about the way that two chemical compounds can break up and form new unions. He compares this to the people in his story. He uses ideas from Persia and other Eastern countries together with ideas from the West. It has a lot of parables about human life. Many interesting things that Goethe said were written down in a book by his friend Eckermann, who published them in a book called *Conversations with Goethe*. Goethe also wrote about his own life in his autobiography which he called *Dichtung und Wahrheit* Poetry and Truth. The book tells us about his youth up to the time of his arrival in Weimar. It is in four parts. The fourth part was published after his death. He chose the title to show that he was telling us the truth about his life, but that he had changed the order of some events to make it into a poetic book. It consists of several sections which are like separate stories. At the end of his life he finished a second part of *Faust*. It is quite hard to read, and is more of a long poem than a dramatic play. It talks of his ideas about allegory, science and philosophy. Goethe died in Weimar on March 22, He had started as a great Classical writer of the 18th century and finished as a young Romantic of the 19th century. No one else had such a big influence on art and literature of that time.

### 5: The Sorrows of Young Werther - Wikipedia

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Unlike most of his contemporaries, he had no need, at least in the first half of his life, to seek princely patronage of his writing or employment as an official or an academic. The Frankfurt in which he was born and in which his social attitudes were formed was, as it is now, a wealthy commercial and financial centre, but it was also virtually a self-governing republic, a city-state within the Holy Roman Empire. His father, Johann Caspar Goethe 1759, the son of a wealthy tailor-turned-innkeeper, was a man of leisure who lived on his inherited fortune and devoted himself, after studying law in Leipzig and Strasbourg and touring Italy, France, and the Low Countries, to collecting books and paintings and to the education of his children. Goethe was the eldest of seven children, though only one other survived into adulthood, his sister Cornelia 1777, for whom he felt an intense affection of whose potentially incestuous nature he seems to have been aware. Goethe was educated with his sister at home by tutors until he was 17. His father had very definite ideas about his education and intended that Goethe should follow the pattern he himself had pursued as a young man: In 1771, therefore, Goethe left home to study law in Leipzig. His emotional state became hectic, and his health gave way—he may have suffered an attack of tuberculosis—and in September he returned home to Frankfurt without a degree. Another bout of illness then brought him apparently near death, and in the aftermath he underwent a brief conversion from freethinking to evangelical Christianity. However, he had now emerged from his Christian period, and for his dissertation he chose a potentially shocking subject from ecclesiastical law concerning the nature of ancient Jewish religion. The dissertation, which questioned the status of the Ten Commandments, proved too scandalous to be accepted, as perhaps he intended, and he took instead the Latin oral examination for the licentiate in law which by convention also conferred the title of doctor. His legal training proved useful to him at various points in later life: But Strasbourg was also the scene of an intellectual and emotional awakening that came over Goethe with something of the force of a conversion. In the winter of 1771 Johann Gottfried von Herder, already a famous young literary intellectual, was staying in Strasbourg for an eye operation. During their long conversations in a darkened room, Goethe learned to look at language and literature in a new, almost anthropological way: To cap it all, he fell in love again. In the little village of Sessenheim, not far from the Rhine River, and on the smallholding of its Lutheran pastor, Goethe found a rustic paradise that seemed an embodiment of all that Herder had inspired him to think of as the German way of life. Once he had taken his licentiate at the university, he left Friederike rather abruptly and returned to Frankfurt. In Frankfurt Goethe started a legal practice but found the new literary possibilities to which Herder had opened his mind running away with him. It also contains, however, an invented love-intrigue, focusing on the weak-willed Weislingen, a man who is unable to remain faithful to a worthy woman and betrays his class origins for the sake of a brilliant career. A little later he heard that another young Wetzlar lawyer he had slightly known, Carl Wilhelm Jerusalem, had shot himself; it was rumoured he had done so out of hopeless love for a married woman. This publication made his name overnight, even though it was a financial disaster. In an even greater literary success brought him European notoriety. *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, written in two months early in the year, appeared that autumn, at Michaelmas, and captured the imagination of a generation. It was almost immediately translated into French and into English. Much moral outrage was generated by a work that appeared to condone both adultery and suicide, but for 35 years Goethe was known in the first instance as the author of *Werther*. He at once attracted visitors from all over Germany—among them the year-old prince of Weimar, Charles Augustus Karl August, who was about to come of age and so take over the government of his duchy and who was bowled over by the electric personality of the poet when he met him in December. *Clavigo*, a tragedy on the Friederike theme, was written in a week, and the plays *Stella* and *Egmont* were begun. The year was one of decision for Goethe, and the issue was crystallized for him once again in an unsatisfactory love affair: But he was still afraid of being

pinned down, and in May, without a word to Lili, he suddenly set off with some admiring visitors, whom he had never met before, on a journey to southern Germany. The ostensible purpose was to visit Cornelia, his sister, who was now married, but Goethe also intended to go on if possible to Switzerland, widely regarded at the time as the home of political and personal freedom. At Gotthard Pass he contemplated the road down to Italy but turned away toward Lili and home. Evidently, his hometown had come to seem suffocatingly provincial to him, its horizons too narrow for anyone interested in a truly national German literature. He had an invitation to visit the court of the young new duke of Weimar. Perhaps the Germany of the enlightened despots, he may have thought, might offer a better theatre for his talents. But through the autumn he waited in vain for the coach Charles Augustus had promised to send to collect him, and by agreement with his father he set out instead for Italy. Just after he had left, the long-awaited coach arrived, chased after him, and caught up with him in Heidelberg. All his plans were changed, and he arrived in Weimar on November 7. Eleven years were to pass before the journey to Italy was completed. First Weimar period 1786 In Weimar Goethe could take a role in public affairs that in Frankfurt would have been open to him only after 40 years, if then. It was soon clear that more was wanted of him than supplying a passing visit from a fashionable personality. The duke bought him a cottage and garden just outside the city walls and paid for them to be restored. Although at first Goethe had few duties beyond accompanying Charles Augustus and arranging court entertainments, he soon began to accumulate more prosaic responsibilities and was, initially at least, motivated by the idea of a reformed principality governed, in accordance with Enlightenment principles, for the benefit of all its subjects and not just of the landowning nobility. Weimar, which consisted mainly of large tracts of the Thuringian Forest, had almost no industry and few natural resources, but in the hills near Ilmenau there had once been a silver mine, and Charles Augustus entrusted to Goethe his ambition to get it working again. For over 20 years Goethe struggled—preparing the legal work, getting together shareholders, equipment, and expert staff, informing himself about mining and geology—only to be defeated by repeated flooding of the shafts and, most decisively, by the poor quality of the ore that was eventually recovered. This post made him virtually—though not in fact—prime minister and the principal representative of the duchy in the increasingly complex diplomatic affairs in which Charles Augustus was at the time involving himself. Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. He felt destined for her even before he met her, and, for 10 years during which they were lovers in everything except a physical sense, he allowed her to exercise over him an extraordinary fascination. With his ennoblement Goethe might be thought to have reached the pinnacle of his career. However, his literary output had begun to suffer. Until he continued to produce original and substantial works, particularly, in 1787, a prose drama in a quite new manner, *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (*Iphigenia in Tauris*), which shows the healing process he attributed to the influence of Frau von Stein in the context of an emotionally charged brother-and-sister relationship and as a profound moral and theological reeducation. Thereafter, however, he found it increasingly difficult to complete anything, and the flow of poetry, which had been getting thinner, all but dried up. He kept himself going as a writer by forcing himself to write one book of a novel, *Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung* (*The Theatrical Mission of Wilhelm Meister*), each year until 1799. In a rough-and-tumble, ironic way, reminiscent of the English novelist Henry Fielding, it tells the story of a gifted young man who aims for stardom in a reformed German national theatrical culture. For 10 years Goethe turned away completely from publishing; the last lengthy work of his to be printed before the silence was *Stella* in 1799. Goethe was never entirely at ease in his role of Weimar courtier and official. In December 1799, uncertain whether staying in Weimar with increasing responsibilities was compatible with his literary vocation, he set off secretly to the Brocken, the highest summit in the Harz Mountains and the centre of much superstitious folklore, and determined that if he could climb it when it was already deep in snow—something no one had attempted in living memory—he would take this as a sign that he was on the right path. In 1800 he decided to mark his 30th birthday and his entry on more serious official duties with a long trip to Switzerland in the company of Charles Augustus. For a second time he came to the St. Gotthard Pass, where he once more turned away from the road to Italy so as to pursue his duty in Germany, hoping that events would show his life was coherent and he was doing the right thing. By 1801, however, that hope had worn thin. In that year Goethe withdrew from the Privy Council and his most onerous responsibilities in the ducal Exchequer, with little to

show for all his effort and with fundamental reform out of the question. His 40th birthday was coming into sight, and he was still unmarried. Worst of all, perhaps, his extra leisure seemed unable to revive his poetic vein. He had become increasingly interested in natural science: From onward he was also interested in botany. But these were substitutes for his literary activity, and, though some of the professors in the local university at Jena showed a polite interest, he could not achieve in science the recognition he had won in poetry. He would travel incognito, breaking, if only temporarily, all his ties with Weimar—even with Frau von Stein—and taking with him only the task of preparing his eight volumes for publication. Italian journey 1788 On September 3, , Goethe slipped away from the Bohemian spa of Carlsbad and traveled as rapidly as he could by coach to the Brenner Pass and down through the South Tirol to Verona, Vicenza, and Venice in Italy. The warm autumn, the scenery around Lake Garda , and the architecture of Andrea Palladio promised to fulfill all his hopes. There may also have been some unsatisfactory encounters with prostitutes, his first sexual relations in many years, if not in his life. But his real aim was to reach Rome, the centre of the civilized world and origin of the Holy Roman Empire; the Eternal City had become a symbolic goal for him, like the Brocken or the St. Gotthard Pass, and he expected from it some crowning revelation. On October 29 he arrived at last, only to find its ruinous state a painful disappointment. After finishing the rewriting of *Iphigenia*, which he was putting into blank verse before publishing it, and after sitting for what has become his best-known portrait by Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein , he decided in the spring of to move on to Naples, as his father had done before him. Tischbein, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm: But none of this could provide the culmination that Goethe had failed to find in Rome. Goethe never went to mainland Greece, but in Sicily he thought he had seen the setting of Greek culture, and with some justification. He circled the island from Palermo, seeing the unfinished Doric temple at Segesta and the ruins of ancient Agrigentum, cutting across the interior to see Enna where, according to myth , Proserpine was taken down into Hades , visiting the Greek amphitheatre at Taormina, and climbing one of the lesser peaks of Mount Etna , the place where the philosopher Empedocles was said to have ended his life. During this tour he drafted some scenes for a drama, *Nausikaa*, which was never completed but contains some of his most beautiful verse, evocative of the Mediterranean islands and, flitting about them, the almost audible ghosts of Classical antiquity. From Messina he returned to Naples, from which he visited the best-preserved of all Doric temples, at Paestum. Together with the Sicilian landscape, these temples provided him with the satisfaction for which he had been looking: He left Naples in June expecting to pass quickly through Rome and to be in Frankfurt in August to spend the last months of his leave with his mother. What Goethe came to value most about this time, though, was not the opportunity of seeing ancient and Renaissance works of art and architecture firsthand but rather the opportunity of living as nearly as possible what he thought of as the ancient way of life, experiencing the benign climate and fertile setting in which human beings and nature were in harmony. He was also pretending to be one of the colony of expatriate German artists in Rome he was particularly friendly with the Swiss-born painter Angelica Kauffmann and arranging there with a young widow of whom little is known his first protracted sexual liaison. His return to Weimar in June was extremely reluctant. Goethe was to be relieved of virtually all routine administrative tasks and freed to concentrate on the task of being a poet. She bore Goethe a son, August, on December 25, She was a busy and very competent housewife, but Weimar aristocratic society was merciless to her and grew suspicious of her lover. Goethe refused to undergo the church ceremony that was the only way of being legally married, and so her very existence could not formally be acknowledged. Frau von Stein suffered a kind of nervous collapse, and all but the most superficial communication between her and Goethe ceased. In literary terms the Italian journey had not been a particularly successful time: *Egmont* had been completed, though with a shift of focus that blurred its political point, and some minor plays had been rewritten and ruined in the process. Almost no lyric poems had been written. His misery at leaving Italy found an outlet in the play *Torquato Tasso* ; Eng. *Torquato Tasso* , the first tragedy in European literature with a poet as its hero, which was written largely in 1789, though it had been begun in In richly plangent verse but at inordinately untheatrical length, Tasso descends into madness, uncomprehended by the court around him. In old age Goethe acknowledged the closeness of this story of self-destruction to that of *Werther*. The erotic poems Goethe wrote in the first months of his love for Christiane, some of the earliest German imitations of Classical elegiac couplets, are

among his most remarkable achievements.

### 6: Books by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (Author of The Sorrows of Young Werther)

*Elective Affinities*, also translated under the title *Kindred by Choice*, is the third novel by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, published in 1809. The title is taken from a scientific term once used to describe the tendency of chemical species to.

### 7: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe - Wikipedia

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe has books on Goodreads with ratings. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's most popular book is *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.

### 8: Project MUSE - Goethe, Rousseau, the Novel, and the Origins of Psychoanalysis

*The Sorrows of Young Werther*, novel by J.W. von Goethe, published in German as *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* in 1774. It was the first novel of the *Sturm und Drang* movement. The novel is the story of a sensitive, artistic young man who demonstrates the fatal effects of a predilection for absolutes—whether those of love, art, society, or thought.

### 9: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe - Simple English Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

*The Sorrows of Young Werther* (German: *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*) is a loosely autobiographical epistolary novel by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, first published in 1774. A revised edition followed in 1787.

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