

## 1: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe Biography

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Modernism Post Modernism st Century In this post, all the major ages are focused on. Moreover, the PDF version of every age is uploaded singly. Old Literature People communicated the poems and literary works orally during the period under consideration. Writing was not given much importance. The Anglo-Saxon age comprises about years. Beowulf is one of the most important works of that age. It is an epic poem which throws light on a young warrior in Geatland who fought for his people. It was probably completed in the 8th Century. Invasion of the Normans in England in the year They brought the French language to England. French was adopted as the new language for the parliament. Later they also picked up the French language. You can download the Old literature PDF from here. Middle Ages The most respected and famed writer of the middle age was Geoffrey Chaucer. In the 13th century, the English literature prospered at a distinguished rate. Chaucer introduced the Iambic Pentameter. Medieval theatre included Mysteries, Miracle and Morality plays. We will be discussing the Miracle and Morality plays only because these two are the ones which are widely discussed upon. A Miracle plays â€” They are also known as Saints play as they present a real or fictitious account of their life. They are the principal kind of vernacular drama of European Middle Ages. By the 13th century, they became vernacularized. In miracle plays, the actual story revolves around the main characters and on the other hand, the other characters were short reckoned or undervalued. Comic scenes were also a part of Miracle plays. Moreover, there were devil characters present in those plays. The structure of the play is basically unpleasant. It is based on the biblical story of the life of the religious persons. The Miracle plays were banned in England because of the teachings of the Roman Catholic. The language of the play shifted to English because that made the play less religious. Moreover, they were performing in town festivals. Most plays were about Saint Nicolas and Virgin Marry. B Morality Plays â€” In morality plays, the protagonist of the play generally meets various moral attributes through personification. The other characters in the play signify moral qualities and the hero of the play represents mankind and humanity. Supporting characters in the play are personifications of either good or bad. So, moral lessons can be learned from these plays. The hero or the protagonist shows the difference between good and bad. These type of plays were developed at the later 14th c. It gained more popularity in the 15th c. Download the Middle Ages Literature from here. Renaissance The word Renaissance implies the rebirth of culture and learning. Renaissance was initially started at Italy in the late 14th century. The European scholars and writers found that Renaissance was doing good at Italy. So, at around they brought the Renaissance literature in England. This age is one of the most important in the History of English Literature. There are several factors for the coming of Renaissance literature in England. The first primary factor is the introduction of the printing press. It made it possible for the writers to produce written works. Moreover, for a century and a half, after Chaucer passed away the English literature became stagnant in England. The standard of literature became low. So, people have to adopt Renaissance which was doing really great in Italy. Talking about the famous writers, the first person to come on the list is William Shakespeare. Besides him, there are few other writers who gained popularity due to their writings like, Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson etc. Shakespeare coined a lot of words by his own. According to scholars, he is responsible for coining around words. His works are said to be universal for which it got more prevalent. He made the English vocabulary damn rich. According to some scholars, Marlowe and Shakespeare were rivals in this field. People also suspected Marlowe to be a secret agent of Queen Elizabeth. He died when he was The third popular dramatist or playwright was Ben Jonson. He is well known for his satirical plays. Some of the famous works of him are Volpone, The Alchemist etc. Elizabethan Era â€” This era was the period of new ideas and new thinking. Various other works like fine arts endured support and assistance from the Queen. The age saw a great flourishing in literature. The poetries and dramas were prospered more, in particular. Three most important and remarkable writers of that period are William Shakespeare, Christopher

Marlowe, and Ben Jonson. Sir Wyatt brought Sonnet from Italy which was later popularized in England. Later, they gave a different style to the sonnets. It was being changed by Shakespeare. He divided the Sonnet into 3 quatrains summed by a couplet. Shakespeare, in his career, wrote sonnets. He dedicated of them to a young man and the others to a woman. Even though this age produced a lot of prose works, essentially it was an age of poetry. Moreover, the theatre became central to the Elizabethan era. During that era, drama shifted from religious to secular. They came in this period. Some of the characteristics or features of play are: Plays were presented quickly. The actors use their voice, bodies expressively to convey feeling and meaning. Plays were generally performed at the time of the afternoon. It is because there were no light facilities available. Special effects were a part of the show. Women were not allowed to perform as there was the existence of gender inequality. The males only played as females. The Wealthy people bought the best seats. Sometimes they even sat on the stage itself. Even the illiterates could understand the play. The theatre is also seen as a good mode of business in that period. The two primary contribution of this age in English literature is the Revenge play and Metaphysical poetry. Revenge play signifies the plays where the victim is retaliated or avenged. These type of plays often results in the death of both the murderer and the avenger. Some of the best writers of plays of this kind are Thomas Kyd, Shakespeare etc. Secondly, there was the wide popularity of metaphysical poetry. This type of poetry is witty and ingenious. They are also highly philosophical. Similie, metaphors, imagery and other literary elements are used in writing these poems. One of the greatest lyricists of that era was John Donne. He was famous for his unconventional and metaphysical style of poetry. He wrote short sonnets and love poems.

**2: GOETHE, JOHANN WOLFGANG von " Encyclopaedia Iranica**

*Goethes Knowledge of English Literature by Boyd, James. Very Good. Used book in very good condition. Some cover wear, may contain a few marks. % guaranteed.*

According to this reading, Faust is the archetypal Modern Western Man who, by dint of his ceaseless striving, creates himself and his world by an act of sheer will. But this is not the only interpretation. In view of the lavish use of traditional Catholic themes and imagery which pervade the play, one is led to discover in Faust a more traditional view of man and the purpose of his life. Thus Faust becomes an absolute, so it is said, whose will is sovereign. In view of the lavish use of traditional Catholic themes and imagery, which pervade the play, one is perhaps led to discover in Faust a more traditional view of man and of the purpose of life. As far as the Catholic atmosphere of the play is concerned, Goethe presents us with one exception reminiscent of Martin Luther, to be discussed in a moment not only with the thoroughly Catholic milieu of Germany on the eve of the Reformation, but a Catholic ambience on the transcendental plane as well. The play begins and ends in heaven, which forms the frame for the earthly action. The beginning celestial scenes are based on the first chapter of The Book of Job, verses No Puritan paucity here! But let us turn now to Dr. Faust himself and chart his development in the sense of what was said a moment ago about the purpose of this paper. He is at the end of his tether and has decided to commit suicide. Faust had committed himself to what might be called the gnostic quest. Let us hasten to remark that Faust thought he could attain this vision by his own efforts, unaided by grace, and without recourse to divine revelation. What prevents the senescent scholar from drinking the poison he has put to his lips? He has forgotten that it is the night of Holy Saturday. In the church next door the Easter Vigil is being celebrated. When Faust hears the resounding chant, "Christ is risen! The crisis overcome, Faust now begins his quest anew. If before he had sought absolute knowledge first through the conventional means of academic study, and then, when this tack failed him, through magic, the chastened Faust now turns to revelation. How is he to render the Greek logos of "In the beginning was the word"? He rejects "Word," then "Sense," then "Power" before settling on "In the beginning was the deed. Goethe has keenly transformed the traditional pact with the devil of the Faustus legend into a more dynamic, less cut-and-dried wager. Faust will be doomed. Thou art so fair! His new life with Mephisto can now begin! The temptations the devil offers Faust are three: Here too there are three facets. Faust is tempted first with Gretchen, who represents the epitome of pure, innocent German maidenhood, then with raw lust at its most orgiastic in the Walpurgisnacht scene, when the devil holds his annual conclave with all his witches. Faust rejects the debauch with the witches; he is not so crude as to be gotten at by such means. But with Gretchen and Helen it is a different story, and Mephisto almost succeeds. Towards Gretchen he feels real love, albeit not so strongly as to prevent him from abandoning her when she becomes pregnant with his child. And Faust sees in Helen not just an object of his carnal desire, but also an ideal, the quintessence and incarnation of the beautiful. But in the last analysis neither feminine purity nor womanly beauty can be the source of ultimate satisfaction for Faust. To settle down with Gretchen as a family man and burgher within the narrow confines of German town life would be too constraining. And as for Helen, it is significant that she is but a shade or ghost. She is too ethereal; she lacks concreteness and reality. As the ideal of beauty she is, as it were, too much form and too little content. The beautiful, that is to say, must be the purveyor of the true and the good. This Helen lacks and so she cannot fulfill Faust. This he cannot accept. He must be a sovereign in his own right, so Faust is given a fief. Nominally, of course, he is still subject to the emperor, but on his territory Faust is absolute lord. We will see in a moment how this situation does ultimately satisfy Faust, but in such a way that he does not lose the wager with Mephistopheles. Again there are three aspects to be considered, three ways in which Faust attempts to appropriate the absolute. Let us examine each of these approaches in turn. His greatest feat in this regard is his conjuring up of the Spirit of Nature, the Erdgeist himself. Since Geist is a masculine noun, we are tempted to call the Erdgeist not Mother Nature, but "Father Nature" if that was allowed. But far from revealing his secrets to Faust, the Erdgeist contemptuously rejects the would-be adept as too puny. Faust can have no power over such a great spirit. If his intellect cannot comprehend the Erdgeist, the Spirit of Nature, perhaps Faust can

reach his goal from the opposite side, through feeling, emotion. In a marvelous scene called "Forest and Cavern" we see Faust the pantheist. In an expansive and mystical mood his soul reaches out to nature and he feels at one with it; *hen kai pan*, all is one, as the philosophers say. Perhaps Faust can possess the natural through the love of the unspoiled innocence of a pure, virginal maiden. But instead of returning her pure love, Faust the despoiler seduces the young woman as we have said, The experience of beauty via the liaison with Helen of Troy also fails because in the aesthetic realm, feeling alone is, as we have seen, insufficient. Not even their son Euphorion has enough substantiality to remain long on earth. Helen returns to Hades to be with him. As for poor Gretchen, her fate is tragic. In the ensuing duel Faust fatally runs her through. Now Gretchen feels that not only has she killed her mother, but that her brother was killed because of her as well. With this burden of guilt, and Faust having fled, she faces the birth of her illegitimate child utterly alone. Alone, that is, on the earthly plane. Gretchen does turn to the Blessed Mother for help in a poignant scene at a small Marian shrine, and we learn at the end of the play, when we meet her in heaven, that her prayer has been answered. Nevertheless, Gretchen cracks under the strain, and in an attempt to hide her shame she drowns her newborn. Of course in her small community the infanticide cannot be kept a secret for long. Gretchen is arrested, tried, and sentenced to death. But Gretchen refuses to budge. She has accepted her death as a just punishment for her sins; she offers her life in expiation, praying for forgiveness. When the ever-cynical Mephistopheles presumes to usurp the divine role and judge Gretchen by saying that she is condemned, a voice from heaven contradicts him and pronounces that she is saved. Part One ends with this scene. The scene at the beginning of Faust: Faust awakens from what seems to have been a long therapeutic slumber after the Gretchen tragedy. He is lying on a lovely meadow by a stream and waterfall. As he awakens he attempts to gaze at the rising sun, but it blinds him painfully. He turns his back on the sun and notices that the spray of the waterfall, which had been behind him, refracts the sunlight, creating thereby a beautiful rainbow. The symbolic significance of the rainbow dawns on Faust with the power of an inspiration: He realizes that these attempts of his, be it through academic study, magic, feeling, nature, feminine innocence or female beauty, were all misguided, and he renounces them. But does that mean that man can never know truth? That the relationship between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds, between, that is, things as they really are in themselves and as they appear to us, is, as many students of Kant have believed, the tenuous one of subjective impression determined by the very structure of the mind? Or that truth is just a creation of our mind? It is in this empirical world, Faust now realizes, that man contacts the absolute symbolically. Goethe believed only that to be real which is symbolic and vice-versa. Thus the ultimate message of Faust is that the real world, as we perceive it, is the symbol, the epiphany, the quasi-sacrament, of the Divine, just as the refraction of a rainbow is the "symbol" of pure sunlight. But Faust does not stop here. He is not satisfied with merely knowing this new truth. Faust will apply this insight, live it out in life. Here is exactly where "In the beginning was the deed" comes in. Faust, through the deed. Faust, who once sought the absolute via the gnostic quest, now finds it through creating new land for his people, in building dikes, draining swamps, founding cities and sending out ships laden with goods. In the humility of this acceptance lays also, Faust realizes, acceptance of the fact that the human project will never achieve consummation and perfection here on earth. All human endeavour, he learns by bitter experience, will be accompanied by sorrow, by want, guilt, worry and care; and by suffering. The devil has failed; Faust has won the wager. For even though he does finally, and in the last moment of his hundred-year life, utter the crucial words, "O tarry yet, thou art so fair," announcing that his striving has reached its goal and can cease, this is said not about the present moment as such, but in anticipation of a time yet to come. For Faust, as he speaks, sees a vision of the future. His fief will be a whole province inhabited by a free, industrious and prosperous people. With his dying breath Faust proclaims: And so, ringed all about by perils, here Youth, manhood, age will spend their strenuous year. Such teeming would I see upon this land, On acres free among free people stand. I might entreat the fleeting minute:

## 3: History of English Literature (PDF Included) - Periods of Literature

*Goethe's Knowledge of English Literature [James Boyd] on www.enganchecubano.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. An exhaustive and definitive treatment of the influence of Shakespeare on Goethe and Goethe's use of Shakespeare in his work.*

He is considered one of the greatest contributors of the German Romantic period. However, he managed a grasp of Greek, Latin, French, and Italian by the age of eight, and his mother taught him well in the art of story-telling. At the age of sixteen, in 1771, Goethe went to Leipzig University to study law as his father wished, though he also gained much recognition from the Rococo poems and lyric he wrote during this period. In 1772 he fell in love with Anne Catharina Schoenkopf and wrote his joyfully exuberant collection of poems *Annette*. In 1773 Goethe wrote his Leipzig Songbook --ten poems to melodies composed by Bernhard Theodor Breitkopf--while he was convalescing from a severe lung infection. In 1774 Goethe continued his law studies in Strasbourg as well as attending lectures in history, political science, anatomy, surgery, and chemistry. He met daily with philosopher, poet, and theologian Johann Gottfried Herder avant-gardist of the Sturm und Drang movement. *Sesenheimer* was published, followed by *Neue Lieder in Melodien gesetzt von B. Goethe* earned his degree and was promoted to licentiatatus juris in 1775. It would become his first dramatic success. That same year he was invited to the court of Duke Karl August at Weimar, where he remained for the majority of the rest of his life producing melodramas, operettas, and plays including *Erwin und Elmire*. *Ein Schauspiel mit Gesang*, for entertaining the court. Goethe wrote his first version of *Iphigenie*, a play published later in 1779 as *Iphigenie auf Tauris* which is based on Greek mythology. In 1780 Goethe was conducting mineralogical studies and lectures about human anatomy at the Liberal School of Drawing in Weimar. Around this time he moved to a house at the "Frauenplan" in Weimar which remained his home until his demise. As part of his on-going studies in anatomy, in the year 1784, Goethe discovered the human intermaxillary bone. In 1786, he travelled to Italy and was impressed by Greek and Roman sculpture, architecture, and literature. Though she did not accompany him into society, they finally married in 1788. In 1789 Goethe was busy pursuing geological and botanical studies in Naples and Sicily and climbed Mount Vesuvius; but he continued to write and next penned his first version of *Faust*. During a congress of monarchs in Erfurt in 1794, Goethe met with Napoleon Bonaparte, an avid reader of his works. In 1796 Goethe brought *Faust* to an end, sealing the manuscript and ordering it to be published only after his death. Fully expecting to recover from yet another fever and infection, Goethe died unexpectedly on 22 March in Weimar; it is said his last words were a request to a servant to open another shutter to let in more light, whilst Goethe traced letters in the air. In honour of these two famous German men of letters, a statue of Goethe and Schiller now stands at the German National Theatre in Munich. Biography written by C. Merriman for Jalic Inc. Copyright Jalic Inc. The above biography is copyrighted. Do not republish it without permission. There is just one more reference attributing the quote to Lonnie Beckham, which seems much more reasonable to me. Hi Everybody, does anybody know, which is the original German title of this poem from Goethe. Bind the motto to thy breast; Bear it with thee as a spell; Storm or sunshine, guard it well! Heed not the flowers that round thee bloom, Bear it onward to the tomb. Ponder well and know the right, Onward, then, with all thy might! Life is sweeping by, Go and dare before you die Something mighty and sublime Leave behind to con Posted By Amylian in Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 0 Replies Quote by Goethe Can "so divinely is the world organized that every one of us, in our place and time, is in balance with everything else" be accredited to Goethe? I assume his advice is also applicable today to young writers as it was some years ago. Thus he y-urges Eckermann to found his poems on actual experiences and to seek inspiration in realities -- not in large and vague reflections. Apprehend the individual is his counsel: Or if it even exists today? Any help would be very much appreciated! Maybe just because I like to think widely taking in process all deliberated subjects and ideas. His *Faust* is incredible. Putting on the stage all questions of Creation Goethe solves them in a very striking way. This work of him is one of my most favourite. Would like to know what you think about it. Or maybe, it would be better if we study it, eh? I mean, what if I place here some excerpts of *Faust* and we could think together about them? And surely you can say what you think about the work on

the whole. So, tell me what is better to do? It called "Der Kolo There was a time when Goethe was widely read, both in the German-speaking lands and also much further afield, too. For quite a long time c. He probably did more than anyone else to put German literature on the international map, so to speak. It occurs to me that it may be of some significance that this seems to be the very first post on him.

## 4: GK Questions and Answers on Literature |GK Quiz

*Goethes knowledge of English literature. 8. Goethes knowledge of English literature. by James Boyd Print book: English. Reprinted: New York, Haskell 9. Goethe.*

See Article History Alternative Titles: Doctor Faustus, Faustus Faust, also called Faustus, or Doctor Faustus, hero of one of the most durable legends in Western folklore and literature, the story of a German necromancer or astrologer who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge and power. There was a historical Faust, indeed perhaps two, one of whom more than once alluded to the devil as his Schwager, or crony. One or both died about 1540, leaving a tangled legend of sorcery and alchemy, astrology and soothsaying, studies theological and diabolical, necromancy and, indeed, sodomy. Contemporary references indicate that he was widely traveled and fairly well known, but all observers testify to his evil reputation. Contemporary humanist scholars scoffed at his magical feats as petty and fraudulent, but he was taken seriously by the Lutheran clergy, among them Martin Luther and Philippe Melancthon. Ironically, the relatively obscure Faust came to be preserved in legend as the representative magician of the age that produced such occultists and seers as Paracelsus, Nostradamus, and Agrippa von Nettesheim. Faustus, illustration by Edwin Austin Abbey. In the Faustbuch the acts of these men were attributed to Faust. The Faustbuch was speedily translated and read throughout Europe. Faustus by Christopher Marlowe, who, for the first time, invested the Faust legend with tragic dignity. This association of tragedy and buffoonery remained an inherent part of the Faust dramas and puppet plays that were popular for two centuries. Faust, detail from the title page of the edition of The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus by Christopher Marlowe. Courtesy of the trustees of the British Library; photograph, R. The books included careful instructions on how to avoid a bilateral pact with the devil or, if need be, how to break it. The German writer Gotthold Lessing undertook the salvation of Faust in an unfinished play. This was the approach also adopted by Goethe, who was the outstanding chronicler of the Faust legend. In the end Goethe saves Faust by bringing about his purification and redemption. This work, first performed in 1808, is also staged as an opera. It was first performed in Paris in 1830. Faust was the figure in which the Romantic age recognized its mind and soul; and the character, in his self-consciousness and crisis of identity, continued to appeal to writers through the centuries. They feared that the Faustian spirit of insatiable scientific inquiry had been given modern expression. Learn More in these related Britannica articles:

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*English] Goethe's theory of knowledge: an outline of the epistemology of his worldview, literature that makes philosophical claims. Seldom has philosophy.*

Aesthetics, Politics, and Theology 1. With Goethe, however, his poetry, scientific investigations, and philosophical worldview are manifestly informed by his life, and are indeed intimately connected with his lived experiences. Goethe had four siblings, only one of whom, Cornelia, survived early childhood. He did, however, learn Greek, Latin, French, and Italian relatively well by the age of eight. There he gained a reputation within theatrical circles while attending the courses of C. In he fell in love with Anne Catharina Schoenkopf and wrote his joyfully exuberant collection of nineteen anonymous poems, dedicated to her simply with the title Annette. After a case of tuberculosis and two years convalescence, Goethe moved to Strassburg in to finish his legal degree. Herder encouraged Goethe to read Homer, Ossian, and Shakespeare, whom the poet credits above all with his first literary awakening. Inspired by a new flame, this time Friederike Brion, he published the *Neue Lieder* and his *Sesenheimer Lieder*. Though set firmly on the path to poetry, he was promoted *Licentiat* *Juris* in and returned to Frankfurt where with mixed success he opened a small law practice. Seeking greener pastures, he soon after moved to the more liberal city of Darmstadt. His next composition, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, brought Goethe nearly instant worldwide acclaim. On the strength of his reputation, Goethe was invited in to the court of then eighteen-year-old Duke Carl August, who would later become Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach. From to Goethe took his *Italienische Resie*, in part out of his growing enthusiasm for the Winckelmannian rebirth of classicism. There he met the artists Kaufmann and Tischbein, and also Christiane Vulpius, with whom he held a rather scandalous love affair until their eventual marriage in . Although Goethe had first met Friedrich Schiller in , when the latter was a medical student in Karlsruhe, there was hardly an immediate friendship between them. When Schiller came to Weimar in , Goethe dismissively considered Schiller an impetuous though undeniably talented upstart. In , the pair became intimate friends and collaborators, and began nothing less than the most extraordinary period of literary production in German history. Working alongside Schiller, Goethe finally completed his *Bildungsroman*, the great *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, as well as his epic *Hermann und Dorothea* and several balladic pieces. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe died on March 22, in Weimar, having finally finished *Faust* the previous year.

**Philosophical Background** The Kultfigur of Goethe as the unspoiled and uninfluenced genius is doubtless over-romanticized. Goethe himself gave rise to this myth, both in his conversations with others and in his own quasi-biographical work, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. No disciple of any particular philosopher or system, he instead borrows in a syncretic way from a number of different and even opposing thought systems in the construction of his *Weltanschauung*. In logic it seemed strange to me that I had so to tear asunder, isolate, and, as it were, destroy, those operations of the mind which I had performed with the greatest ease from my youth upwards, and this in order to see into the right use of them. Of the thing itself, of the world, and of God, I thought I knew about as much as the professor himself; and, in more places than one, the affair seemed to me to come into a tremendous strait. Philosophy apparently held just slightly less interest than good pastry. Notwithstanding this estimation, indelible philosophical influences are nevertheless discernible. But it is clear that there are philosophical reasons besides these practical ones. Only through the interplay of these oppositions, which Rousseau never came to recognize, could one attain classical perfection. Although educated in a basically Leibnizian-Wolffian worldview, it was Spinoza from whom Goethe adopted the view that God is both immanent with the world and identical with it. While there is little to suggest direct influence on other aspects of his thought, there are certain curious similarities. Both think that ethics should consist in advice for influencing our characters and eventually to making us more perfect individuals. And both hold that happiness means an inner, almost stoically tranquil superiority over the ephemeral troubles of the world. Yet Goethe only came to read him seriously in the late s, and even then only with the help of Karl Reinhold. While he shared with Kant the rejection of externally imposed norms of ethical behavior, his reception was highly ambivalent. The critique of reason was like a literary critique: **Scientific Background and Influence** Goethe

considered his scientific contributions as important as his literary achievements. But court life in Weimar brought Goethe for the first time in contact with experts outside his literary comfort zone. His directorship of the silver-mine at nearby Ilmenau introduced him to a group of mineralogists from the Freiburg Mining Academy, led by Johann Carl Voigt. His discovery of the intermaxillary bone was a result of his study with Jena anatomist Justus Christian Loder. Increasingly fascinated by botany, he studied the pharmacological uses of plants under August Karl Batsch at the University of Jena, and began an extensive collection of his own. He has alternately been received as a universal man of learning whose methods and intuitions have contributed positively to many aspects of scientific discourse, or else denounced as a dilettante incapable of understanding the figures—Linnaeus and Isaac Newton—against whom his work is a feeble attempt to revolt. Positivists of the early twentieth century virtually ignored him. Plants were classified according to their relation to each other into species, genera, and kingdom. The problem for Goethe was two-fold. Although effective as an organizational schema, it failed to distinguish organic from inorganic natural objects. And by concentrating only on the external characteristics of the plant, it ignored the inner development and transformation characteristic of living things generally. Goethe felt that the exposition of living objects required the same account of inner nature as it did for the account of the inner unity of a person. But whereas their versions dealt with the generation and corruption of living beings, Goethe sought the common limitations imposed on organic beings by external nature. But he only fully lays out the position as an account of the form and transformation of organisms in the *Zur Morphologie*. In the plant, for example, this determination of each individual member by the whole arises insofar as every organ is built according to the same basic form. As he wrote to Herder on May 17, "Any way you look at it, the plant is always only leaf, so inseparably joined with the future germ that one cannot think the one without the other. Through the careful study of natural objects in terms of their development, and in fact only in virtue of it, we are able to intuit morphologically the underlying pattern of what the organic object is and must become. The morphological method is thus a combination of careful empirical observation and a deeper intuition into the idea that guides the pattern of changes over time as an organism interacts with its environment. While the visible transformations are apparent naturalistically, the inner laws by which they are necessary are not. To do that, the scientist needs to describe the progressive modification of a single part of an object as its modification over time relates to the whole of which it is the part. Polarity between a freely creative impulse and an objectively structuring law is what allows the productive restraint of pure creativity and at the same time the playfulness and innovation of formal rules. But rather than a fanciful application of an aesthetic doctrine to the nature, Goethe believed that the creativity great artists, insofar as they are great, was a reflection of the purposiveness of nature. As with a plant, the creative forces of life must be guided, trained, and restricted, so that in place of something wild and ungainly can stand a balanced structure which achieves, in both organic nature and in the work of art, its full intensification in beauty. The early drafts of *Torquato Tasso* begun in the 1770s, for example, reveal its protagonist as a veritable force of nature, pouring out torrential feelings upon a conservative and repressed external world. By the time of the published version in 1780, the *Sturm und Drang* character of Tasso is polarized against the aristocratically reposed and reasonable character of Antonio. Only in conjunction with Antonio can Tasso come into classical fullness and perfection. As the interplay of polarities in nature is the principle of natural wholeness, so is it the principle of equipoise in the classical drama. Only from the polarized tension does his drive to self-formation achieve intensification and eventually classical perfection. I take no pride in it. At the same time, it was the source of perhaps his greatest disappointment. Like his work on morphology, his theory of colors fell on mostly deaf ears. Thus, while Goethe esteems Newton as a redoubtable genius, his issue is with those half-witted apologists who effectively corrupted that very same edifice they fought to defend. The refraction of pure white light projected at a prism produces the seven individual colors. Pragmatically, this allowed Newton to quantify the angular bending of light beams and to predict which colors would be produced at a given frequency. That frequency could be calculated simply by accounting for the distance between the light source and the prism and again the distance from the prism to the surface upon which the color was projected. But by reducing the thing itself to its perceptible qualities, the Newtonians had made a grave methodological mistake. The derivative colors produced by the prismatic experiments are identified

with the spectrum that appears in the natural world. But since the light has been artificially manipulated to fit the constraints of the experiment, there is no *prima facie* reason to think that natural light would feature the same qualities. Effects we can perceive, and a complete history of those effects would, in fact, sufficiently define the nature of the thing itself. The colors are acts of lights; its active and passive modifications: A light beam is no static thing with a substantial ontological status, but an oppositional tension that we perceive only relationally. Through careful observation of their interplay alone do we apprehend color. Color arises from the polarity of light and darkness. Darkness is not the absence of light, as both Newton and most contemporary theorists believe, but its essential antipode, and thereby an integral part of color. Through a series of experiments on his thesis that color is really the interplay of light and dark, Goethe discovered a peculiarity that seemed to confute the Newtonian system. If Newton is right that color is the result of dividing pure light, then there should be only one possible order to the spectrum, according to the frequency of the divided light. But there are clearly two ways to produce a color spectrum: Something bright, seen through something turbid, appears yellow. If the turbidity of the medium gradually increases, then what had appeared as yellow passes over into yellowish-red and eventually into bright-red as its frequency proportionally decreases. Something dark, seen through something turbid, appears blue; with a decreasing turbidity, it appears violet. The color produced also depends upon the color of the material on which the light or shadow is cast. If a white light is projected above a dark boundary, the light extends a blue-violet edge into the dark area. A shadow projected above a light boundary, on the other hand, yields a red-yellow edge. When the distances between the projection and the surface are increased, the boundaries will eventually overlap. Done in a lighted room, the result of the overlap is green. The same procedure conducted in a dark room, however, produces magenta. If Newton was correct that only the bending of the light beam affects the given color, then neither the relative brightness of the room, the color of the background, nor the introduction of shadow should have altered the resultant color. Alongside the physical issues involved with optics, Goethe thus also realized the aesthetic conditions in the human experience of color. The perceptual capacities of the brain and eye, and their situatedness in a real world of real experience must be considered essential conditions of how colors could be seen. His reification of darkness, moreover, remains difficult to conceptualize coherently, much less to accept. His call to recognize the role of the subject in the perception of color does have positive echoes in the neo-Kantian theories of perception of Lange, Helmholtz, and Boscovich. Traces can also be found in twentieth century thinkers as divergent as Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty.

## 6: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe - Wikipedia

*Goethe was fascinated by Kalidasa's Abhijñānaśākuntalam, which was one of the first works of Sanskrit literature that became known in Europe, after being translated from English to German. [33] Goethe-Schiller Monument, Weimar ().*

Throughout a long and full life he demonstrated his prolific genius in many different areas. Goethe composed literary works and established artistic principles that had a profound influence on his contemporaries throughout Europe, and which are still looked to as models. The position he holds in the development of German literature and thought is like that which Shakespeare has in the English-speaking countries. Goethe was born August 28, 1749, in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, to a wealthy, middle-class family. Goethe had shown his literary talent even as a child. While at Leipzig he began to write brilliant lyric poetry and completed his first two full-length plays, although these were not produced until some years later. After a serious illness and an extended convalescence at home, Goethe resumed his legal studies at Strasbourg and completed the course in 1771. He continued his literary activities there and became acquainted with several of the younger German poets and critics. Following his graduation, Goethe returned to Frankfurt. His mind was filled with many exciting ideas, and he devoted himself to philosophical studies, mainly of Spinoza, and literature. It was here that he wrote his first important metrical drama, *Gotz von Berlichingen*, and then the superb short novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. During this period he also began work on the earliest version of *Faust*, Part One now known to scholars as the *Urfaust*. In 1775 Goethe was invited by the young Duke Karl August of Weimar to accept a position at his court. In the next ten years Goethe held several responsible administrative and advisory posts in the government there, serving at various times as privy counselor, and as head of the Ministries of Finance, Agriculture, and Mines. He showed much skill in the problems of government administration, and his practical knowledge and good sense were soon respected, even by those who had originally resented his presence at court. Goethe and the Duke became good friends, but the poet always maintained his independence of thought and action, and did not allow his sovereign to dominate him. Karl August was an enlightened ruler who gathered many talented writers and artists at his court. The atmosphere at Weimar was stimulating, but Goethe was a conscientious public servant and gave most of his energy to official business. The security and responsibility of his position at court was an asset to him in solving some of his personal problems, but he eventually found that it interfered too much with his literary work. During this period he was often unable to complete manuscripts he had begun or to bring to maturity many pressing ideas. Finally in 1786 he left Weimar on a two year trip to Italy in order to come to terms with himself and his art. On his return to Germany Goethe lived in a state of semi-retirement and concentrated on his studies and writing. His friendship with the Duke continued and he kept his affiliation with the Weimar court, but aside from the directorship of the Weimar State Theatre and other cultural matters, Goethe was no longer involved in public matters. Despite this the Duke went on paying all the emoluments to which Goethe had formerly been entitled, thus giving him the material security his work required. Goethe continued to cultivate his wide interests. His scientific studies included original researches in botany, anatomy, geology, and optics. He also maintained an active interest in current political and social developments, and accompanied the Duke on a military campaign against the French in 1792. Later on he wrote commentaries on the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. In 1794 Goethe married the woman who had been his mistress for many years, and by whom he had a son. His material and domestic stability, as well as an intimate friendship with the poet Schiller, helped Goethe to maintain his emotional serenity and artistic dedication. As the years passed he became acquainted with many of the most prominent men of his time and was highly regarded by all. This diverse collection contains *Faust*, Part One completed in 1798, *Faust*, Part Two completed in 1808, and many other dramatic works, including *Torquato-Tasso*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Egmont*, and *Pandora*. He also found time to translate many foreign works into German and participated in the editing and publication of several literary reviews. In addition, numerous sizeable fragments of works which he never completed still survive. By the time of his death, Goethe had attained a position of unprecedented esteem in the literary and intellectual circles. His works and opinions made a deep

impression on most of the writers and poets of the early 19th century. His great work, Faust, is still deemed the most important masterpiece of German literature. Because of the breadth of his thought, his comprehension of human nature and optimistic faith in the human spirit, and his intuitive grasp of universal truths, Goethe is regarded by many as the outstanding poet of the modern world. He died March 22, 1832, but his work lives in its meaning and value for modern day readers. Invade a nearby country. Raise taxes on the poor. Sell off pieces of the kingdom.

**7: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe - Biography and Works. Search Texts, Read Online. Discuss.**

*The aim of this paper is to investigate how Goethe and Mary Shelley portray knowledge in Faust and Frankenstein. My choice of investigating this specific theme in these two works originates from the fascinating contrast in opinions that the authors express in their works, even though the two.*

Goethe, the most renowned poet of German literature, was already from his youth deeply interested in the East and in Islam. But it was not until later, during his period of romanticism, that the poet devoted his attention to the literature and history of Persia. Goethe considered literature language and religion as the best aids to discovering other cultures. In addition to Persian literature, he also learned the Arabic language and script and studied the teachings of Zoroaster as well as those of Islam. The translator was the Austrian Orientalist Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, whose translations and commentaries played a major role in acquainting Germans with the East. Between 1793 and 1797, the year when the *Divan* appeared, several successive phases of development took place. Since certain passages seemed to be incomprehensible to his readers, Goethe decided to supplement them with commentary Goethe, 1797, pp. Among the main activities of Orientalists was translating from Oriental languages; Goethe ends his *Divan* with a chapter reflecting on the problems of translation. This edition includes forty-three new poems. The twelve books of the *Divan* Goethe had originally intended there to be thirteen; Schaeder, pp. In his *Noten und Abhandlungen* Goethe paid tribute to several other Persian poets: In his *Zwillingsbruder* he had discovered a poet whose inspiration awakened in him a feeling of rejuvenation. His *Divan* is generally considered as an east-western work containing both foreign and native elements Richter, pp. The last great collection of poems by the classicist Goethe thus marks a major stage in the development of lyric poetry in general. Hendrik Birus, 2 vols. Erich Trunz, Munich, John Whaley as *Poems of the West and East: Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall*, 2 vols. Hildesheim and New York, Ernst Gurmach, Berlin, David Lee, *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, 1977, pp. Katharina Mommsen, *Goethe und Diez: Quellenuntersuchungen zu Gedichten der Divan-Epoche*, Berlin, Solbrig, Hammer-Purgstall und Goethe: Ursula Wertheim, *Von Tasso bis Hafis*;s: Hamid Tafazoli Originally Published: December 15, Last Updated: February 9, This article is available in print.

**8: Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy**

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe () Goethe is a great writer because he shows the interconnectedness of all things, because he fuses the personal and the universal, and because he has such a light touch, or as Eric Blackall puts it, a golden touch (see reading list below).*

The addition of "erster Teil" "Part One", in English was only retrospectively applied by publishers when the sequel was published in with a title page which read: The two plays have been published in English under a number of titles, and are most usually referred to as Faust Parts One and Two. Faust, Part One[ edit ] Main article: The demon Mephistopheles makes a bet with God: He suspects, however, that his attempts are failing. Frustrated, he ponders suicide, but rejects it as he hears the echo of nearby Easter celebrations begin. He goes for a walk with his assistant Wagner and is followed home by a stray poodle the term then meant a medium-to-big-size dog, similar to a sheep dog. Faust makes an arrangement with him: Mephistopheles will do everything that Faust wants while he is here on Earth, and in exchange Faust will serve the Devil in Hell. In the end, Mephistopheles wins the argument and Faust signs the contract with a drop of his own blood. Faust has a few excursions and then meets Margaret also known as Gretchen. Gretchen discovers she is pregnant. Gretchen drowns her illegitimate child and is convicted of the murder. Faust tries to save Gretchen from death by attempting to free her from prison. Faust, Part Two Rich in classical allusion, in Part Two the romantic story of the first Faust is put aside, and Faust wakes in a field of fairies to initiate a new cycle of adventures and purpose. The piece consists of five acts relatively isolated episodes each representing a different theme. Ultimately, Faust goes to Heaven, for he loses only half of the bet. Angels, who arrive as messengers of divine mercy, declare at the end of Act V: Relationship between the parts[ edit ] Throughout Part One, Faust remains unsatisfied; the ultimate conclusion of the tragedy and the outcome of the wagers are only revealed in Faust Part Two. In contrast, Part Two takes place in the "wide world" or macrocosmos. Faust] who was accepted by his people as their ideal prototype. Roger Paulin , William St. In 1971, Bayard Taylor published an English translation in the original metres. In the Irish dramatist W. Calvin Thomas published translations of Part 1 in and Part 2 in Philosopher Walter Kaufmann was also known for an English translation of Faust, presenting Part One in its entirety, with selections from Part Two, and omitted scenes extensively summarized. The attack read in part, But I have a contract to do the second part as well!

## 9: - Goethe's Knowledge of English Literature by James Boyd

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German poet, playwright, novelist, scientist, statesman, and critic who was considered the greatest German literary figure of the modern era. He is especially known for the drama Faust, considered by some to be Germany's most significant contribution to world literature.*

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 (1710-1782), 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 (1747-1807), 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 1768, 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, 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.

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