Written in four weeks (although Goethe makes plain in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* that the mental preparation for *Werther* extended for long periods before the actual writing began), "without a plan of the whole work, or the treatment of any portion of it having previously been put to paper," 1 *The Sorrows of Young Werther* gives evidence of extraordinary symmetry of form. A product of the Bastille era, an era of revolt, and dealing with "die Einschränkung," 2 that is, social restrictions as they conflicted with Werther's instinctive sense of individual freedom, the book's tightly woven symmetry, in contrast to its emotional context, illustrates the thematic issue.

Robert T. Clark, Jr., has shown that Goethe probably received orally from Herder, in 1770–71 or in later meetings, the tenets of Herder's psychology and that "Einschränkung" was a basic factor in his "psychology of sensation with specific reference to the arts." 3 "Die Einschränkung," in Herder's view, foredoomed the individual "to perceive always only part of the whole," 4 to see the world only from his own perspective and never to obtain a total vision. Werther himself complains of this restriction, but at the same time tries to ignore it. As Erich Trunz 5 points out, the word *Einschränkung* is a significant one within the text of *Werther*, and Hans Reiss 6 makes note of various ways that it is used: sometimes as a source of delight for Werther when he rejoices in his restricted way of life; at other times signifying distress, when his restrictions seem unbearable; or at others, as a condemnation of his "cocoon of narrow, intense vision." 7 "Werther's conflict," writes Georg Lukács, in a different context, "Werther's tragedy, is already the tragedy of the bourgeois
man, indicating even now the unsolvable conflict between the free and complete development of individuality and bourgeois society itself.  

It is clear that the structure of Werther is far more complex than is commonly recognized. Notable among treatments of the subject is Victor Lange's discussion of speech as the formative element in the novel. Lange states: "Scene, episode, action, imagery—all these structural elements must be brought together at a single emotional level which can be produced and made intelligible only through the fixed medium of speech," and "As goes the first part of the novel, so also the second, with a succession so to speak of experiments in language—to experiments in forms of expression." He further shows how the novel is structured by means of patterns such as: speaking and not being able to speak; dialogue, monologue, and silence; and how these patterns generate feeling that is as much a part of the experience of reading the novel as descriptions of a simple and familiar scene. My own treatment of structure in this chapter will be different, stemming from the basic psychological conflict inherent in Sturm und Drang, but other valid conceptions of structure in Werther are surely not precluded by it. One may speculate that romantic authors, in the face of the exuberance and emotionalism of Sturm und Drang, sought for strong frameworks and for foils for their material. In fact, the romantic preference for poetry and poetic drama over the more loosely structured novel and prose play may spring from this need for form.

We find in the romantic period a new polarity undergirding literary expression, a polarity consisting of idea as opposed to reality and differing radically from the eighteenth-century conflict between reason and feeling and from the Renaissance conflict between the ideal and the real. We have only to contrast Dulcinea, Fanny, and Lotte to understand the differences. Dulcinea, having no existence apart from Don Quixote's perception of her in the ideal world of his high-minded quest, is the opposite of the farm girl, Aldonza Lorenza. Fanny is a woman of feeling
and is contrasted semicomically with Joseph's other mentor, Parson Adams, who sees himself as a man of reason, although Fanny herself is often far more reasonable than the foolish parson. Charlotte, however, like Don Quixote's love, exists in two guises. First, she is for Werther almost a principle rather than a person, a correlative figure representing the possibility for individual freedom in a hypocritical and restrictive social setting. On the other hand, she is a simple country girl who cares for her younger brothers and sisters and tends her father's home. It is again the difference between "la vie écrite" and "la vie vécue." And yet unlike Dulcinea in the mind of Don Quixote, Lotte does not become for Werther a disembodied ideal. Lotte fulfills Werther's idea of the "beloved"; Dulcinea becomes Don Quixote's ideal. In a review of a translation of Spanish romances, Goethe had interpreted the Spanish character as one that transposed idea directly into concrete reality. Werther himself in The Sorrows of Young Werther seems to depend on somewhat the same process.

Goethe's critical remarks on Don Quixote are few, and most of them were written after the sentimental crisis that Werther describes. Well before the revision of Werther in 1787, Goethe had outgrown the period of "Schwärmerei," and we find him ridiculing his romantic novel in Der Triumph der Empfindsamkeit (1777-78), a play incorporating a number of Quixotic features. For example, a doll stuffed with fashionable books, among them Werther, has caused Prince Oronaro's disease of sentimentality. The prince behaves toward this doll as Don Quixote behaved toward Dulcinea, pouring forth his devotion "in long and ardent monologues." The Quixotic tension between the play and life, the role and our true nature, may be found also in Goethe's farce; at the end Goethe's moral reads: "Only then is a fool really deceived when he imagines in his folly to heed the voice of reason or to obey the Gods." Very few Quixotic influences are apparent in Werther, however, even though Werther's irrational behavior is surely abetted.
by Ossian and even though Werther does, in his folly, believe that he heeds "the voice of reason." Nevertheless, basic polarities underlie both books, and both heroes create their own women, embodiments of their own inner faiths; in fact, Don Quixote and Werther, in different ways, author their own books, one by identifying himself as a fictional character, the other through his letters to Wilhelm. That Charlotte has an existence outside Werther's perception of her must be patently clear; likewise, Aldonza Lorenzo led a life outside Don Quixote's pale. Neither Aldonza nor Lotte is idealized by Cervantes or by Goethe: we see Aldonza winnowing wheat and Lotte's vanity and coquetry are evident in her "innocent" encouragements of Werther's passion. Werther, on the contrary, interprets her action always in the light most flattering to him. Thus he commits suicide in the firm belief that one of the three of them must die (p. 108), a notion that surely never enters Lotte's mind. The conflict between idea and reality within Werther is then quite different from that between the ideal and the real as seen in Don Quixote. Charlotte is Werther's friend, a living woman with an identity apart from that bestowed on her by Werther. Dulcinea, on the other hand, is totally the creation of Don Quixote's mind, and her counterpart, Aldonza, is never a real participant in Don Quixote's life. The metaphysical emphasis of the Renaissance and humanism is thus contrasted with the more sociocentric philosophy of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

II

The various structures of Werther serve to underlie the romantic conflict between individual freedom and social restriction. The strong technical unity in the book makes the wanderings and emotional outbreaks of Werther stand out in relief; the contrast thus obtained reinforces the central theme—that of die Einschränkung. The social norm is often hypocritical, insensitive, and meaningless; but
Goethe, like Cervantes, wanted to show that not Werther's ideas but his means of putting them into practice were at fault. Thus the letters of Werther must be "edited," and *Don Quixote* must be "authored" by Cide Hamete Benengeli. For different reasons, neither Werther nor Quixote was capable of accomplishing by himself the reform of the real world.

In order to reinforce the complex relations between structure and theme in *Werther*, it will be useful to examine in more detail some of the literary techniques Goethe employed. To begin with, *Werther* is divided into two books, each one consisting of three distinct parts. Book one, part one, concerns the period before Werther meets Lotte, covers 43 days and 14 pages; part two deals with Werther's meeting with Charlotte and his growing love for her, covers 44 days and 24 pages; and part three treats the period after Albert arrives in Wahlheim, covers 42 days and 19 pages. These three parts are roughly even in terms of elapsed time, each one covering approximately 43 days. However, the central section, describing Werther's happy early days with Charlotte, contains more pages than either part one or part three, suggesting the greater importance of this phase in his life by comparison with the other two phases.

In book two we find an entirely different sort of three-part structure. Part one, describing Werther's stay at the embassy, covers six and a half months and 13 pages; part two, relating Werther's visit to his first home, covers two and a half months and four pages; part three, concerning Werther's return to Wahlheim and to Lotte, five months and 53 pages. Like Werther's state of mind, the patterns here are far more chaotic than in book one, both of times elapsed and pages covered. Furthermore, the total elapsed time is longer in book two than in book one, both in each of the three parts and in the book as a whole, perhaps to parallel the tragic ennui that seizes Werther and the apparently futile and lonely road that he follows, longest of all at the embassy. However, the greatest difference between
the books is seen in the variation in the lengths of the three parts in book two. Only 17 pages are spent on Werther’s life apart from Lotte, whereas 53 are given to his tragic return to Wahlheim, emphasizing, even more critically than in book one, the point that reality for Werther exists primarily in his relation to Charlotte. Thus the divisions of the book are deployed in order that its structure may parallel and reinforce the sensibilities of its hero.

In the same vein, we find certain structural devices, such as parallel situations, digressions, and poetic motifs, used to reinforce the theme of the book. Although book one and book two are closely meshed, each, at the same time, remains a discrete unit. Thus a triangle situation, but one different from that which drove Werther to leave Wahlheim at the end of book one, occurs almost at once at the embassy in book two, where the relations among the Ambassador, the Count, and Werther threaten to explode. The Ambassador appears to Werther to be annoyed by Werther’s liking for the Count and, according to the letter of 24 December 1771, takes every opportunity to discourage the friendship. Werther’s personality, of course, encourages such situations, for his egotism leads him to believe, as with Lotte and Albert, that both Ambassador and Count crave his friendship to the exclusion of the other.

Another triangle situation had arisen in book one during Werther’s brief visit to St. with Lotte on 1 July. Here Herr Schmidt had objected to Werther’s conversation with Friederike, a relationship that was so innocent and so short-lived and Herr Schmidt’s jealousy so exaggerated in proportion to the importance of the incident, that this triangle quickly becomes a parody of triangles in general, including the central one in the novel. In book two, on Werther’s return to St., a different antagonist faces him, in the form this time of a woman, the new vicar’s wife, who has had Werther’s favorite walnut trees cut down. Like Herr Schmidt, the vicar’s wife is a petty person and has had the trees cut for foolish reasons, as foolish as Herr Schmidt’s jealousy. Thus by means of implied compari-
sons between situations that have both similar and dis-
similar elements, Goethe builds up the paradoxes and the
ambiguities of his novel, throwing different shadings and
colorings on corresponding incidents.

Furthermore, Goethe uses digressive material in the
same way. There are three main digressions in Werther: the
story of the woman whose husband is in Switzerland; the
story of the peasant lad who falls in love with his mistress;
and the story of the madman looking for flowers in No-
vember. The first two stories begin in book one and con-
tinue into book two, and each ends, like Werther's own
story, in tragedy. In the third digression, we learn that the
madman, like Werther, had been in love with Lotte her-
sel. The first two digressions reinforce and contrast with
Werther's plight. One tells of a husband who returns from
his travels, empty-handed and sick with fever; the other of
a peasant lad who murders his rival and is apprehended by
the authorities. The digression about the peasant lad was
added by Goethe to the 1787 revision of the novel in order
to help exonerate Lotte and Albert and to place more firmly
the blame for the tragic events of the main plot on
Werther's shoulders. Goethe has Werther identify himself
with the unfortunate peasant lad, who had aggressively
pursued his mistress and murdered his rival. The tale also
was supposed to exonerate Lotte by implying a contrast
between her behavior and that of the widow, who is far
more seductive. In other words, Goethe uses the digres-
sion to establish meaning through both contrast and com-
parison with the main plot (as well as, in 1787, with the
real life situation). As in Don Quixote and Joseph Andrews,
the digressions are part of an intricate counterpoint tech-
nique. Like Ossian, first mentioned in book one (10 July)
shortly after Werther meets Charlotte, they are symbolic
renderings of Werther's experiences in different terms,
and they establish continuity of theme at the same time as
they establish a discontinuity, an increasingly chaotic
structure that marks Werther's downward course.

We find also numerous poetic motifs such as the sea-
sons, trees, Lotte's pink bow, the thunderstorm, and the flood that reinforce, or serve as counterpoint to, Werther's moods. Thus the beauty of nature, which is a powerful stimulus at the beginning of the book, weighs on Werther's spirits at the end when it contrasts with his inner anguish. His meeting with Charlotte and their early pleasure in each other's company occurs at the height of summer; in fact, it is on 21 June, near Midsummer Night, when Werther declares that his days "are as happy as those God gives to his saints" (p. 23). A year and a half later, at the winter solstice, a point at which the sun is farthest removed from the northern hemisphere, Werther commits suicide. The conclusion of Werther's life just before Christmastime is particularly appropriate symbolically. Primitive festivals before the Christian era celebrated at this date the first indications of the return of the sun northward. Werther tragically takes his own life on the eve of the return of light and warmth, at the nadir of the seasons, and at twelve midnight, the moment of the beginning of a new day. With the events of renewal, rebirth, and return all about him, the suicide of Werther gains in tragic significance.  

The first two sections of book one, happy and serene, take place during the spring and early summer of 1771; the third section, after Albert's arrival, is set during the late summer and early fall, a period when Werther's anxieties are beginning to grow. Werther's separation from Lotte in book two occurs during the fall of 1771 and the winter of 1771–72. His return to Wahlheim does not take place until 29 July, almost exactly a year after Albert's arrival on the scene on 30 July in book one, a late summer setting foreboding the end of the growing season. The conclusion of Werther's life is traced from then until the winter solstice. The seasons as such may be seen to be tightly woven into the thematic fabric of the whole book, even though Werther's reactions to any given season vary with his circumstances. Thus the first spring (1771) near Wahlheim has been a glorious period in which he falls into raptures,
declaims, and perishes under the splendor of his visions (p. 3) whereas the second spring (1772) in which he returns briefly to his native home is full of memories of unfulfilled plans, uncongenial companions, boredom, and loneliness. Liselotte Dieckmann’s article in 1962 terms such devices “mirroring” techniques, indicating the self-reflexive nature of structure in Werther. However, I believe, in the case of the seasons, that Goethe uses them both as a means of contrast and as a means of comparison, thereby effecting a skillful artistic variation and augmenting Werther’s sense of “die Einschränkung.”

Trees also play an important role as leitmotifs in the book. To begin with, they represent stability and longevity, neither of which Werther is destined to achieve. Like the trees at St., he will be cut down in his prime as a misfit in society. Yet they also provide shade from the heat of the sun. Werther reads his Homer under the linden trees in Wahlheim; he admires the vicar’s walnut trees at St.; and, on his return to his early home in book two, he notes in particular that the great linden tree is still standing, even though the school he had attended has been converted into a shop. In his instructions to Albert and Charlotte concerning his burial, he asks that he may lie in one corner of the churchyard under two linden trees. “Fear no more the heat o’ the sun, / Nor the furious winter’s rages.” But the protective role that Werther assigns to trees stands in contrast to the opinion of the Vicar’s wife at St., who decides the walnut trees make her courtyard dark and gloomy. Werther’s interpretation of the role of the tree symbolizes his need for protection from the social environment. Shaded from the heat of the sun as he reads his Homer, he is at the same time, like the suitors of Penelope, destined to be consumed by his own fires, against which he has no shield.

Another poetic motif, that of Lotte’s pink bow, supplies further interesting counterpoint. The color pink suggests innocence, frivolity, pleasure, and party clothes. Yet at the end, the pink bow adorns Werther in his coffin. Further-
more, the pink bow is sent by Albert to Werther on Werther's birthday (28 August 1771). Coming from both Albert and Lotte, such a gift must have caused Werther pain. It was a gesture that contained intimations of both condescension and of pity and was clear indication of the end of any lurking claims Werther may have felt he had to Lotte. A bow, besides being an ornament, is a tie; so the gift of this bow from both friends suggests that Werther's "tie" is to them both, not to her alone. Thus the bow, which is employed in a conventional manner in the early part of the novel, becomes in the later pages a source of pain and a macabre decoration for a coffin.

Storms and floods also provide thematic enrichment throughout the novel. The first storm that takes place during the dance (16 June 1771), when Werther meets Lotte, presages the inner turmoil that will later submerge Werther. At the same time, it is Charlotte who manages to keep matters under control, ignoring the storm, much as she later ignores Werther's passion, and turning the attention of the guests from it to a parlor game (a kind of ploy she is less successful in accomplishing with Werther in book two). The storm of 16 June contrasts with the gaiety of the dance and with Werther's high spirits during his first encounter with Lotte, as he kisses her hand "in a stream of ecstatic tears" (p. 22). It is a storm of ecstasy rather than one of pain and destruction, but ecstasy accompanied by rain. Later scenes involving storms in book two are more lugubrious. We listen as Werther reads in Ossian of the winds of autumn arising, of tempests in groves of oaks, of driving snow, sweet as the breathing gale, and of broken clouds (p. 116). These storms, together with the flood that occurs the night that Werther reads Ossian to Charlotte, accompany Werther's final torments. Likewise, the day he meets the madman in the shabby coat, a counterpart of himself, a madman looking for flowers in November, "a cold and damp west wind blew from the mountains, and heavy grey clouds spread over the plain" (p. 91). The storm imagery is used, then, both to parallel and to con-
 contrast with Werther's moods, and like other poetic motifs—the seasons, the trees, and the pink bow—it serves to enrich the novel, to increase its tensions, and to balance its parts. The parallel situations, the digressions, the various poetic motifs are devices that in various ways strengthen the conflict between convention on the one hand and freedom from convention on the other, the central issues of Werther's whole existence.

III

The epistolary form is also particularly well-suited to the treatment of individual freedom and social patterns. Goethe, of course, uses this form in a way entirely different from that of Cervantes or Richardson. The letters in Don Quixote are inserted occasionally as part of the parody, as we see in the one to Dulcinea that Don Quixote entrusts to Sancho or in the letter from Sancho to Teresa, sent from the court of the Duke and the Duchess. The letters from Joseph to Pamela in Joseph Andrews are likewise parody, this time of Richardson, who in Pamela used the letter in dead earnestness and even included some of the replies of the correspondents. But Goethe, as Hans Reiss has shown, is far more compact and economical than Richardson, and more concerned with the letters of one person, to enable the reader to focus on him alone. 18

Moreover, in order to reinforce meaning, tone, and mood, Goethe builds in strong transitional devices between some of the letters, but between others we find abrupt shifts in subject matter or changes in style. Thus in book one, on 26 July 1771, Werther's letter ends with a tale told him by his grandmother about sinking ships and perishing crews; the next letter begins by telling about a different kind of disaster—Albert has arrived. Although on a symbolic level the topics of the two letters are similar, their styles differ. The letter of 26 July contains a lyrical quality that is missing in the series of abrupt simple sentences that compose the letter of 30 July. Toward the end of
book two, we find fewer and fewer transitional elements between the letters to parallel, one supposes, Werther's growing mental disorder.

Because Wilhelm's replies are never included, Goethe is able to concentrate solely on the development of one character and to probe thoroughly into that character's inner world. As Goethe wrote in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, an outpouring of inner life will take place only in letters, where it is not directly confronted by anyone. Furthermore, letters with answers from Wilhelm seen only through the eyes of Werther add to the sense of Werther's isolation, more even than a diary, where no reply would be expected by the reader. But although the epistolary form provides emotional freedom for Werther, it also imposes on both Goethe and Werther a rigid external framework whereon the book is structured. Conventionally, a letter is relatively short, that is, by comparison with the chapter units of a traditional novel. Letters have headings, salutations, and conclusions—abbreviated by Goethe to a dateline. In the interests of clear communication, a letter is usually consistent and logically ordered. Moreover, the letter device serves to do away with Goethe and to replace him with Werther as the author of his own book, as Don Quixote was, in a different way, of his. At the same time, the reader becomes in a sense, like Wilhelm, the silent recipient, thus arousing both his sympathies and his regret at Werther's follies. And although the reader becomes involved, he is, like all recipients of letters, removed by distance. All these effects go hand in hand with the epistolary form to which Goethe commits himself.

A third author of the book, in addition to Goethe and Werther, is of course, the Editor, who must perforce conclude the manuscript. The Editor and Goethe, as well as the silent Wilhelm, provide a series of checks and balances for the extremely emotional Werther. One cannot, however, assume that the Editor and Goethe are one; Goethe's attitudes toward his hero appear more subjective than those of the Editor, who attempts to limit himself to the
facts of Werther's final days. Goethe's presence in the letters is occasionally even an ironic one, ironic in a way not perceived by Werther himself. For example, the utterance of the cacophonous name "Klopstock" at the very moment of the flowering of Werther's love for Charlotte ("she put her hand on mine and said, 'Klopstock'") (p. 22) may be an indication of Goethe's own mild amusement at the scene. In the same letter, on 16 June, the Editor, by contrast, refers to Werther in a footnote "as an unbalanced young man" (p. 17). There is a distinct difference here between Goethe's gentle reservation and the Editor's sterner judgment. A number of days later (8 July), it is apparent that Wilhelm has chastised his friend for unbridled passions because Werther begins: "What a child I am to be so solicitous about a look!" and concludes, "What a child I am!" (pp. 31-32). Goethe's presence may also be seen in this remark, for, although it is clear that Werther does not really see himself as a child, it is implied that Goethe may ironically view him as such.

Another interesting evidence of Goethe's presence in the letters comes on 21 June, when Werther likens himself to the suitors of Penelope, who killed, dressed, and roasted oxen and swine as he himself at Wahlheim gathers his peas, fetches his saucepan and butter, and sits down by the fire to stir the pot. The reader is, however, subtly reminded by Goethe that the suitors of Penelope were interlopers, an indirect comment on Werther's own situation, and, furthermore, that it was Odysseus' swine and oxen that they were roasting, not their own. Perhaps, too, we should note that swine and oxen have been reduced to garden peas, suggesting that our hero lacks something of the heroic mold.

Further ironic comment from Goethe may be observed in places where Werther lectures others on faults that he himself possesses. Thus during the visit with Charlotte to the vicarage at St. (1 July), as we have earlier noted, Herr Schmidt, the suitor of the vicar's daughter, becomes angry when Werther appears to pay her too much attention. Like
Parson Adams, tied to the bedpost, Werther begins to lecture the group on the importance of bearing adversity and of controlling one's temper. Ill humor, Werther continues, "resembles laziness, but if once we have courage to exert ourselves, our work runs fresh from our hands" (p. 28), advice Werther himself would have done well to follow in the closing pages of book two. The ultimate mockery in the scene is developed, however, in the next letter (8 August), when we discover that Wilhelm has taken Werther's sermon on resignation as directed at him. Everyone, except the person Goethe shows us to be most in need of it, hears Werther's speech. Ironically, too, Werther's innocent interference in the affair between Friederike and Herr Schmidt finds its larger and more serious paradigm in his interference in Lotte's and Albert's relationship.

Later, on 11 July, Goethe's irony is once more clear in the transitional material between this letter and the next. Werther concludes the letter of 11 July with remarks on "the incredible blindness of men" in their relations with women. The letter of 13 July, which follows, begins: "No, I am not deceived. In her black eyes I read a genuine interest in me and my life" (pp. 32–33).

This running ironic counterpoint established by Goethe in book one gives the reader a point of reference, a sounding board for Werther's sentimentality, but one that differs radically from the objective and research-oriented point of view of the Editor, who tells us in his first full-length passage that he will "relate conscientiously the facts which our persistent labor has enabled us to collect" (p. 95). Goethe's attitude toward his hero appears to be one of amused indulgence in book one. In book two, as Werther's anguish grows, ironic counterpoint is less frequent and is replaced by Goethe's compassion for his hero. The fact that the Editor in book two no longer passes judgment on Werther's behavior but contents himself with simply reporting it indicates his own concession to Werther's pain. It is apparent that Wilhelm's replies become more urgent
toward the end of Werther's life; although in book one he had advised Werther to find work at the embassy (20 July) or to return to his drawing (24 July), at the end of book two he suggests that Werther turn to religion (15 November). This is a step that would effect more far-reaching changes in Werther's personality than drawing or a job at the embassy. Wilhelm is apparently a man of good sense, a stable influence; but he is, unlike the Editor, not totally objective. Also he represents Werther's mother. By establishing several different kinds of reactions to Werther's dilemma, Goethe enriches the book so that it becomes more than just an account of a young man's conflicts with the society in which he lives. Instead we have various responses, such as the early amused indulgence of Goethe himself, the active concern and distress of Wilhelm, the disapproval and detachment of the Editor. The reader is thus given a number of different perspectives from which to view Werther's plight, in addition to Werther's own perspective. The epistolary form is then not a delimiting one but one able to provide many variations on the main theme of the book. The ways in which others approve or disapprove of Werther's behavior are rendered subtly in the letters themselves rather than stated outright. In the letters Werther is free to give full vent to his emotions, restricted only by the convention of the form and by the character of his correspondent. Because of the distance between writer and recipient, letter-writing is a suitable vehicle for Werther's emotions, which at nearer range tend to create havoc. Letters are, in fact, one of the few means of communication left to one afflicted with a sense of Einschränkung.

IV

Multiple polarities and various paradoxes serve to make up the larger paradox embodied in a sense of Einschränkung in Werther. Individual freedom in conflict with conventional social structures is bound to involve a multitude of other oppositions. Thus we find in Werther a conflict
between intellect and the emotions, between the Editor's objective, calm, and superior point of view and Werther's more excitable viewpoint, or the conflict within Werther himself between intellect and passion. Furthermore, the lyric moods in which he revels in his natural surroundings contrast with the emotional states in which his passion for Lotte is expressed. Hans Reiss shows how as the book progresses his "pathological surge of feeling" increases, gradually crowding out the earlier idyllic scenes.

Different styles of writing also characterize Werther's letters. Lyrical style turns into melodramatic prose as Werther's moods fluctuate. Hans Reiss further points out that quasi-lyrical and epic moods are interjoined and that exclamatory and interrogative sentences vary with expository ones. And Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby explain how, in the letter of 10 May 1771, Goethe created "the very semblance of the Neo-Platonic soaring of the soul towards its creator and its sighing despair of ever being able to express the divine affinity it feels." It is "a pure analogue of the felt life within" the hero of the novel, for through the rise of the words followed by the ominous despair of the conclusion ("I shall perish under the splendour of these visions" [p. 3]), we view the seeds of destruction embedded in Werther's ecstasy. All of these contrasting styles reflect the underlying contradiction in Werther's character and thus in his letters. Goethe sets Homer against Ossian; reason against passion; society against the individual; desire against despair.

It is of interest to note that Odysseus' guardian goddess was Athene, goddess of the intellect and of wisdom, and it is to the *Odyssey* (rather than to the *Iliad*) that Werther usually turns. After the famous snub, when Werther is forced to retire from the assembly of Count C., he drives to M. to watch the setting sun and to read a passage in the *Odyssey*. The passage that he reads describes the swineherd entertaining Odysseus (p. 69), a swineherd who in the aftermath of Werther's snub must seem superior to all
the fashionable court snobs at Count C.'s. Paradoxically, Homer supports organized society and the family by showing in the following scenes the terrible punishment inflicted on the suitors. Thus Werther turns for comfort to a book that argues the opposite of his own position. Later on it is Aphrodite and not Athene by whom he is governed. Werther is an intruder, not only at the assembly but in the lives of Albert and Lotte. Homer's Odyssey provides then for the reader several interesting points of contrast. Odysseus in returning to Ithaca and seeking shelter from the swineherd is reestablishing his home, whereas Werther by intruding at the assembly and in the love affair of two friends sets himself up against the social order. His need for freedom from social restrictions is far better expressed in the unfettered emotions described in Ossian, to which he turns frequently in the latter pages of the book. And yet the pathos of his isolated state is emphasized by the comfort he takes in reading of Odysseus' welcome by the swineherd. Goethe's use of the paradox is both subtle and complex.

Another paradoxical element lies in the selection of Lessing's Emilia Galotti as the book found open on Werther's desk after his suicide. Some critics have claimed that the play does not fit in any way with Werther's own story and that Goethe included it only because Kestner had mentioned it in his letter to Goethe about the death of Jerusalem. Treatments of the topic are, of course, innumerable. Among them, Georg Lukács's points to the social significance of choosing Emilia Galotti, calling it "until now the high point of revolutionary bourgeois literature." Wilkinson and Willoughby see the significance of Lessing's play in Werther's and Goethe's response to its total import, that is, its portrayal of the effects of Schwärmerei, "not intensity of feeling, but a tendency to exalt that which is within at the expense of that which is without," ignoring the claims of the factual situation. Still others see parallel elements in Werther and the Lessing drama, which represents for Edward Dvoretzky the Entblätterung theme,
"the rose prematurely bereft of its petals," and symbolizes Werther's loss of identity and his mental attitude in his last days. Somewhat more complex is Leonard Forster's reading of the Prince in *Emilia Galotti* as a Wertherian character. According to Forster, it is because Werther himself saw parallels between himself and the Prince that he chose suicide as expiation for his sin (his love for Lotte). Furthermore, killing Albert might leave Werther alone as the Prince was alone at the end of *Emilia Galotti*. Thus the play serves as an object lesson for Goethe's hero. Robert Ittner also feels that there are strong parallel elements, such as Emilia's and Werther's common sense of guilt. Because Emilia wishes to atone for the death of her fiancé, for which she feels twice over guilty, Ittner draws the conclusion that the play furnishes a motif for the end of *Werther*, that it suggests that Werther too recognizes his guilt in ignoring the institutions of this world and acknowledges them by sacrificing his life.

I would suggest, on the other hand, that *Emilia Galotti*, like the *Odyssey*, provides a contrary meaning. Rather than guilty and atoning, Goethe sees his hero as quite the opposite of Emilia. Thus on 21 December Werther tells Charlotte that "I must sacrifice myself for you. One of us three must go" (p. 108); but after this expression of love and sacrifice for Lotte, he does not scruple to place her in the most painful situations—appearing when she does not expect him, involving her in emotional scenes in Albert's absence, and writing her alarming letters filled with references to their "love." The final sign of his lack of true concern is sending to Albert for the pistols, unforgivable behavior in one who wishes to spare Lotte pain. His final actions are all directed to involving her emotionally in his suicide—last desperate attempts to draw her attentions from Albert to him, to make her suffer his death. Furthermore, he is overjoyed when his boy informs him that it was Charlotte who handed the boy the pistols, not considering the anguish it cost her to do so. It is difficult to reconcile such behavior with atonement or an understand-
ing of the unhappiness he has caused others. As Anna Karenina died hoping thus to win the attentions of Vronsky, so Werther dies in the vain hope of winning Charlotte’s affections. Emotional hypocrisy was one of the chief characteristics of “Wertherism,” whose devotees pretended concern for others but lavished it on themselves.

Therefore, Emilia Galotti, who recognizes her guilt, serves as the final and ultimate opposite of Werther; she is Goethe’s concluding image, inspired by Lessing’s play found open on Werther’s desk. She makes clear to the reader the irony and pathos with which Goethe himself views those whose egocentric world bears no relationship to the world as seen by those around them. Emilia is seen as one who can make amends, whereas Werther serves only his own interests and sees reality only from his own special perspectives. Emilia’s fiancé is dead; he cannot grieve for her as Werther hopes Charlotte will grieve for him. Emilia Galotti provides another one of the oppositions with which Goethe constructs the book. It is appropriate and ironic that in his last moments he should turn to Emilia Galotti, a figure who could have, if he had read her right, provided him with a positive solution to his dilemma. Emilia comes to terms with the conflict inherent in “die Einschränkung” in a way that Werther never can.

And finally it is of interest to note that Goethe’s idea of morphology in nature fitted perfectly with his sense of artistic form. Form itself, for Goethe, was the principle at work in the living organism, and not simply a receptacle or “purely passive configuration.” Furthermore, by the time he was twenty, he had learned from Herder about “the morphological approach to the study of cultures” derived from Vico in his Scienza Nuova, Vico who was to be a profound influence on the structure employed by James Joyce over a hundred years later. The artist, Goethe saw, manifested in his activity the same process accomplished by natural creation, and the laws of creation were inherent within it, not “absolute
norms, external to the individual work." Nor is the organism, any more than Werther himself, separable from his environment, that protaean environment in Werther which changes in significance and shape, color and tone, texture and meaning with every transformation of the Wertherian mood.

4. Ibid., p. 275.
6. Reiss, pp. 36-37.
7. Ibid., p. 37.
10. Ibid., p. 269.
11. Ibid., p. 270.
13. Ibid., p. 318.
14. Ibid.
16. Liselotte Dieckmann, "Repeated Mirror Reflections: The Technique of Goethe's Novels."
17. *Cymbeline*, 4.2.258.
18. Reiss, p. 23.
19. Ibid., p. 57.
20. Ibid., p. 31.
21. Ibid., p. 36.
22. Ibid., p. 31.
24. Lukács, p. 28.
27. "Werther's Reading of Emilia Galotti."
30. Ibid., p. 176.
32. Ibid.