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The *Werther-Tracht* and the American War of Independence

Even a rather superficial study of German literature will make the student aware of Goethe's second great and even international success after his stunning conquest of the national German stage with *Götz von Berlichingen* in 1773. This was the epistolary novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*.[1] According to the author's own memoirs it was written within one month in the summer of 1774—according to some of the secondary literature it actually took him three months—and appeared in print just in time for the Leipzig book fair in the fall. It became a huge bestseller, not only in Germany, but all over Europe as editions in all major European languages followed within a few years. In Germany alone, ten additional printings of the book were needed to satisfy the demand in 1774 and the first half of 1775 before a new, slightly modified edition came out later in 1775.[2] The 25-year old author became an instant celebrity in Europe's literary circles.[3]

The main reasons for this surprising success were, first of all, Goethe's ability to voice the feelings of a whole generation of young adults who saw their problems and social condition convincingly reflected in the protagonist's actions and thought and, secondly, that the young author was perfectly in tune with the re-emergence of sentiment over what was felt by many to have been a rather cold rationalism which had dominated the larger part of the century of enlightenment.[4] This sudden turn towards a new sentimental spirit in European society in the 1770s is not unlike the equally sudden surge of right-wing populism in our day, not least by the speed of the spread. At first sight, it would seem that these phenomena should be vastly different in almost every respect, but a recent study by Pankaj Mishra on Western social history reveals surprising parallels between the sharp criticism of the "ancien régime" in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's seminal essays on the art and sciences

of 1750 and on the causes of human inequality of 1755 and the political and social revolutions set in motion by them and the revolt against globalization and the liberal world order in our own time when, again, inequality is one of the watchwords.[5] The publication of *Berlichingen* and *Werther* mark the onset of "Sturm und Drang" in Germany or possibly—so it could be claimed—of the age of romanticism all over Europe.[6]

Many literary critics and especially clergymen of the older generation were scandalized by a literary work that seemed to excuse, even glorify suicide and that—as

George Washington in the blue-and-buff uniform of a general of the Continental Army, 1776; by Charles W. Peale (1741–1827), Wikimedia.

they saw it—was marked by a sickly feebleness of moral fiber. The book was banned by the city council of Leipzig in 1775 because it supposedly endangered morality by promoting suicide, and wearing the *Werther-Tracht* was prohibited, as well; these bans remained effective until 1825.[7] Perhaps the most vociferous of these critics was Johann Melchior Goeze (1717–1786), "Hauptpastor" at St. Catherine's church in Hamburg, an ardent champion of a strictly orthodox Lutheranism and an influential newspaper editor; he had also clashed with Lessing in the "Fragmentenstreit," one of the most talked about religious disputes of the 18th century in Germany.[8] For him, the novel was "die Lockspeise des Satans" [Satan's lure]. Another powerful opponent was Christian Garve (1742–1798) who is practically forgotten today, but was a highly respected and very influential philosopher at that time.[9] On the other hand, most of the famous men of letters of the time in Germany, e.g., Lessing, J. M. R. Lenz, Merck, F. H. Jacobi, Matthias Claudius, C. D. Schubart, W. von Humboldt, and Wieland supported Goethe when he was attacked by these conservative critics.[10]

Of course, the critics' and clergymen's antagonism made the work even more appealing to its mainly youthful readers and, in all likelihood, increased its sales even more. How precisely the novel had hit the nerve of contem-

Ernst II Ludwig Prince of Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg in Werther Dress, presumably 1776. This picture shows how even the highest strata of society were struck by the Werther fever; by Johann Georg Ziesenis (1716 -1776); Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; photo: Christoph Schmidt.

porary society can be seen from the wave of young men's suicides which, according to most studies on the social impact of *Werther*, rolled through Europe; there is a two-digit number of known incidents.[11] Even quite unlikely people, such as Napoleon Bonaparte who certainly does not fit our idea of a sentimental dreamer, confessed to having read *Werther* several times and to having had the book constantly in his pocket for years.[12] How long-lasting its impact has been—reaching into our time and into regions as distant as the Far East—can be seen from the fact that one of the giant South Korean "chaebols," the Lotte company, is named for Werther's beloved, Lotte (short for "Charlotte" in German).[13]

Goethe also tried to come to terms with some personal experiences, most of all the failed love affair with Charlotte Buff (married Kestner, 1753–1828), in his new novel;[14] all of its protagonists are modeled on real people whom he had met in Wetzlar. Lotte thus is Charlotte Buff, except for one detail of her personal appearance: the black eyes ascribed to her were really those of Maximiliane von La Roche (1756–1793), another one of the young women—she was 16 when he first met her—whom Goethe courted in these years. This courtship did not go anywhere, but put Goethe in an awkward position.[15] "Maxi" was to become the mother of Clemens Brentano and Bettina von Arnim (née Brentano), both important exponents of the German romantic school. The novel's central personality, Werther, is modeled on Goethe himself only to a certain extent, however, much more so on one of his colleagues at the "Reichskammergericht" [Court of the Imperial Chamber], Carl Wilhelm Jerusalem (1747–1772).[16] We have to take a closer look at him, not only because of his central importance for the novel, but also because some of the observations to be made about him give us a first clue on why *Werther* could have impacted the European society of the late 18th century society so strongly.

Jerusalem was the son of a well-known protestant theologian of the time, the court preacher of the dukes of Brunswick.[17] In 1765/66 he was a law student at Leipzig, like Goethe, and the two were acquainted, but not close friends. They met again at Wetzlar in 1772 where Jerusalem was secretary to the duke of Brunswick's representative at the law court mentioned above, a job that he was mostly bored by (just like Goethe who worked in a similar position at the same court in that year). He was good-looking, well educated, had a sharp mind and a sharp tongue,[18] too, and also dabbled in belles-lettres. On the other hand, he was introverted and could be morose at times. He was deeply offended when a group of nobles did not admit him to their circle because he was only bourgeois.[19] He felt unjustly treated by his boss as well and he was in love with a woman he knew would never be his because she was married to another colleague. In desperation, he committed suicide on October 30, 1772, with a gun borrowed from Johann Christian Kestner, Charlotte Buff's fiancé.[20] Kestner informed Goethe—who had left Wetzlar a few months earlier—about the incident in a long letter. So Goethe knew all about the circumstances under which Jerusalem had been found and buried, also what clothes he had worn at the time of his suicide.[21] This leads us to the main point to be discussed in this essay.

Our fictional student of Goethe's literary success will have gained the impression, as well, that the young author had not only written a bestselling novel, but had—at the same time—become a very successful fashion designer. Literary, historical, and social studies on Europe at the end of the 18th century unanimously state that, after the appearance of *Werther*, almost every young European male with an affinity to "Sturm und Drang" was gripped by the "Werther-fever" and dressed in what was called "Werther-Tracht" in German or Werther uniform in English, i.e., a blue frock coat with brass buttons, yellow waistcoat and trousers, brown top-boots, and a round felt hat.[22] A recent—and also bestselling—publication on that age, Andrea Wulf's biography of Alexander von Humboldt touches on the impact of the *Werther-Tracht* while discussing Goethe's influence on Humboldt and seems to believe that Goethe had really invented it.[23]

This is, however, not the case. Any quick research in specialized Goethe studies, in Wikipedia, other encyclopedias or any history of fashion and dress will show that Goethe had not created a new style of men's dress, but had rather popularized an existing one. Werther's "Tracht" as described by him simply were the clothes Jerusalem was found in after his death. And these were not an expression of Jerusalem's own personal style, but rather show us a fashion which had spread from England to the European continent in the second half of the 18th century. Goethe never claimed to have invented it; in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* he lets us know that "Seine [Werther's] Kleidung

war die unter den Niederdeutschen, in Nachahmung der Engländer, herge-
brachte: blauer Frack, ledergelbe Weste und Unterkleider, und Stiefeln mit
braunen Stolpen" [it was the traditional dress of the North Germans, in imi-
tation of the English: a blue frock coat, leather-yellow waistcoat and trousers,
and brown top boots].[24] Goethe himself, after the success of *Werther*, seems
to have dressed like that quite often, e.g., on his trip to Switzerland with the
counts of Stolberg and later in Weimar where he made this style fashionable.[25]

If we have said that these clothes did not represent Jerusalem's personal
style in the sense that he had not personally created this combination, this
should not be understood to mean that they did not have any special signifi-
cance to him; they most certainly did. The style had come from England, and
as a native of Wolfenbüttel, the residential city of the dukes of Braunschweig-
Wolfenbüttel, close relatives of the electors of Hanover who simultaneously
reigned as kings of England at that time, Jerusalem picked up English fash-
ions more readily than, say, a Bavarian subject would have.[26] He probably
knew, as well, that in England this style of clothing showed one's opposition
to the royal court and to some controversial policies of King George III. We
remember that he had felt deeply offended by having been socially slighted
by some noblemen.[27] Goethe definitely understood the statement of social
protest made by Jerusalem by wearing these clothes and it perfectly suited his
purposes, too; *Werther* is intrinsically a statement of the unease and feeling of
futility which pervaded many young people in his day. That is why his style
of dress became so popular so quickly; we could compare it to the social state-
ment made by wearing jeans and sneakers at school or at work in the 1950s
and 1960s. It is, by the way, no accident that Goethe, in his own words,
described Werther's waistcoat and trousers as "ledergelb," leather-yellow, not
just yellow. In English, the colors are called "blue and buff," buff being the
color-tone of un-dyed ox-hide. Where ox-hide was not normally used for
trousers or waistcoats a dullish yellow cloth could take its place.

It is necessary, at this point, to have a look at what people in England pro-
tested against with their choice of clothing style. After the accession of George
III in 1760, a long period of Whig rule had come to a sudden end.[28] Both
Whigs and Tories of those years—the names had been in use since the 1660s
and were both derived from derogatory words of Celtic origin[29]—were not
the fully organized political parties of today, but somewhat looser groupings
of politicians, lobbyists and civic-minded people. But there were clear differ-
ences: the Whigs generally stood for a constitutional monarchy, a powerful
House of Commons, able to choose prime ministers to its own taste, for reli-
gious freedom, i.e., equal rights for all Christian denominations, but also for
protective customs tariffs, surprising in men who mostly followed the ideas
of Adam Smith, John Locke, and Edmund Burke in the later part of the 18th

century.[30] All of this may make one think that most of the Whigs should have been middle-class people who were in business or in the professions, but that would be far off the mark around 1760. The truly influential Whigs belonged to a clique about 70 rich families of the high aristocracy. They more or less ran the House of Commons and the cabinet.[31] There was a lot of corruption and graft in the way Whig politics were transacted, but at least they tended to settle disputes by appealing to the courts of law, not by violent means. This made for an unusually peaceful time in British politics from the Glorious Revolution to the end of George II's reign.[32] The Whigs had been supporters of that revolution in 1688, of the accession of the Hanoverians to the English throne, and were enemies of the Jacobites who had supported the Stuarts and were supposedly plotting for a return of the country to Roman Catholicism. That is why the first two Georges had reigned with mostly Whig governments although there had been a few Tory ministers in their cabinets, too.[33]

George III who was very popular in England at the time of his accession[34] ". . . was determined to free the monarchy from what he took to be its servitude to the Whigs . . . , and to form his administration from the best men of all parties. The bogey of Jacobitism, with which Walpole and the Pelhams had terrified the first two Hanoverian monarchs into employing . . . Whigs and proscribing the crypto-Jacobite Tories meant nothing to him . . . He hated them [the 'old corps' Whigs] and their political arts and was determined to play the political game to [new] rules."[35] At the same time, he wanted to be generally less constricted by Parliament and by his cabinets, he wanted to instal prime ministers and cabinets of his own choice, regardless of their political "connections" and, thus, to have more say in national politics.[36] That is why he turned towards the Tories who seemed to be more likely to support these plans. Tory became the name for what had been the "court party" before, conservative men who supported the divine right of kings, their prerogatives over Parliament, and their right to govern independently. Instead of plotting for the country's return to catholicism, as had been alleged, they favored a strong Anglican church—meaning that members of the Church of England had legal and social advantages over dissenters. They were also—somewhat unexpectedly—in favor of free trade. The landed gentry and the country squires were the Tories' main supporters and that is why the Tories also went by the name of "country party" at the time.[37]

Soon after George III's accession the Whigs—feeling aggrieved by their loss of political power—began to spread rumors that the new king wanted to suppress the traditional rights of the House of Commons and to install a tyrannical government in England and in the English colonies, as well. There was only a limited amount of substance to these suspicions. Modern historical research tends to believe that George III did not really exceed his

constitutional powers which were not very clearly defined at the time, any-
way; just like the political parties, the British system of government by prime
ministers and cabinets responsible to parliament and not to the monarch was
only developing at that time.[38]

What was important in those years—and for our argument, as well—was
the fact that a large part of the English colonists in America sided with the
Whigs and thus opposed the government in London. And, of course, Lord
North's government which vainly tried to impose new taxes on the American
colonists and to suppress their spirit of independence in the 1760s and 1770s,
was Tory.[39] That is why most of the Whigs in England supported the Ameri-
can cause. The political rule of "no taxation without representation" was first
elevated to a sacrosanct principle of government by the American "patriots"
and it became the decisive argument against the Tory policies.[40] It seems that
both in the colonies and in England people began to show their opposition to
these by wearing the kind of clothes that Goethe had chosen for his Werther.
Whether Goethe who describes that style of dress as traditionally English
fully understood what its colors were meant to show is not clear, but that
does not really matter in this connection. We should remember, though, that
the "Werther-Tracht" as described by him became the expression of a feeling
of general social and cultural unease on the European continent, whereas in
England and in the American colonies, it symbolized a much more narrowly
circumscribed political opposition.

By a strange coincidence, Goethe's description of Werther's dress and the
enthusiasm with which it was taken up on the continent may have sped up
its spread in England as well. Charles James Fox (1749–1806), the arch-op-
ponent of George III and the Tory government and not only one of the most
flamboyant Whig leaders from the 1770s to the end of his life, but also one
of the most influential English politicians of his time, supposedly always—
which probably means after the war in the colonies had begun—dressed in
the blue-and-buff clothes of the American insurgents.[41] At least that is what
the very well-informed and reliable Nathaniel Wraxall tells us about him.[42]

As he explains the political meaning of certain styles of dress, it seems
useful to quote the whole passage pertaining to it: "At five-and-twenty I have
seen him [i.e., Fox] apparelled "en petit maitre," with a hat and a feather, even
in the House of Commons (He and Lord Carlisle wore "les talons rouges" or
shoes with red heels, the distinguishing marks of the privileged orders at Ver-
sailles); but in 1781 he constantly, or at least usually, wore in that assembly
a blue frock-coat and a buff waistcoat, neither of which seemed in general
new, and sometimes appeared to be threadbare. Nor ought it to be forgotten
that these colours, like the white rose formerly worn by the adherents of the
family of Stuart, or the Corsican violet of more modern times, then consti-

tuted the distinguishing badge or uniform of Washington and the American insurgents."[43]

As Fox supposedly had been in Paris in 1775, there is a very small possibility that it was here where he first saw Werther fans dressed in Werther style. As a young, rich, aristocratic gentleman he had, as we have seen, preferred the more elegant and elaborate clothes worn at court before 1774 (he was "five-and twenty" in 1774), and may only then have understood the power of a style of dress as a social and political statement. But Wraxall who would have known about *Werther* from his frequent trips to the continent describes his dress as that of the American "insurgents" and not as Werther's, and therefore—especially since the French edition of *Werther* first appeared in 1776 and very few Frenchmen would have dressed like Werther before that—it is practically certain that Fox did not have Werther in mind when dressing in these colors. The first English edition of *Werther* came out in 1779.

The blue-and-buff had probably been worn by some Whigs in England from the time of George III's accession, at least. This seems to be what Goethe assumed, too. Wraxall seems to think that this style of dress may have originated in the American colonies. This is a question which has not been answered so far, not least because we cannot really state that the Continental Army's uniforms were all in these colors. That army was created in 1775 and uniforms of different colors were in use then; many of the rank-and-file soldiers did not have real uniforms at all, even as late as 1781.[44] On the other hand, George Washington, as well as his his trusted lieutenant, Major-General Nathanael Green, and his aide-de-camp Tench Tilghman are wearing blue-and-buff uniforms in all known portraits depicting them as officers of the Continental Army.[45] In later years, Washington's presidential portraits usually show him wearing a black coat and a white frilled shirt.

As an amusing aside to this question of dress: Lady Georgiana Cavendish (née Spencer), Duchess of Devonshire (1757–1806), and her sister, the viscountess Duncannon, who scandalized their contemporaries by publicly campaigning for the Whigs (women had never before stood on the hustings in elections) also dressed in blue-and-buff or at least wore favors in those colors when campaigning.[46]

Like many other things that originally symbolized weighty and serious social or political events—in our case both the onset of "Sturm und Drang" in German literature and of the American War of Independence—the blue-and-buff returned in literature a generation later as a farce. In Charles Dicken's first great success, the *Pickwick Papers* of 1836/1837,[47] Mr. Pickwick and the members of his eponymous club take a trip to the fictitious East Anglian town of Eatanswill in order to observe the elections for the office of mayor there. This is what they found:[48]

"It appears, then, that the Eatanswill people, like the people of many other small towns, considered themselves of the utmost and most mighty importance, and that every man in Eatanswill . . . felt himself bound to unite, heart and soul, with one of the two great parties that divided the town—the Blues and the Buffs. Now the Blues lost no opportunity of opposing the Buffs, and the Buffs lost no opportunity of opposing the Blues; and the consequence was . . . that everything in Eatanswill was made a party question. If the Buffs proposed to new skylight the market-place, the Blues . . . denounced the proceeding; if the Blues proposed the erection of an additional pump in the High Street, the Buffs rose as one man and stood aghast at the enormity. There were Blue shops and Buff shops, Blue Inns and Buff Inns—there was a Blue aisle and a Buff aisle in the very church itself."

In this vein, Dickens paints a very funny picture of small-town politics and social life in England in the first half of the 19th century. It seems, by the way, that in satirizing the blue-and-buff Whigs, the forerunners of the liberals of his day, Dickens who had liberal leanings was making some fun of contemporary politics and of himself, as well. Of course, the hilarious satire of the election campaign also has a serious background, as so often in Dickens' novels, because it is a devastating indictment of the abuses of election procedures before secret balloting was introduced.[49] We learn much about them in the rest of the chapter on the Eatanswill elections, but taking a closer look at them would mean to open up a completely new and different topic.

Würzburg, Germany

Notes

[1] The novel's original title had a genitive-s at the end of Werther's name [*Die Leiden . . . Werthers*] which was dropped with the jubilee edition of 1825; cf. Gero von Wilpert, *Goethe-Lexikon* (Kröners Taschenausgabe 407, Stuttgart 1998), 614 [hereafter: Wilpert]. The original form would be considered grammatically wrong today. *Werther* is an epistolary novel, but not one of a correspondence, as it only has the letters written by Werther to his friend Wilhelm.—The full title of the *Götz*-drama is *Götz von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand: ein Schauspiel.*

[2] Wilpert, 614, thinks that the novel was written between Feb 1st and the end of April, 1774. He mentions 10 new printings which appeared between the publication of the original one and the fall of 1775 when the second, slightly modified edition came out, ibid. A French edition appeared in 1776, an English one in 1779, Russian and Italian ones in 1781, translations into other languages followed later; Wilpert, 616.

[3] *Werther* was so successful that the first parody came on the market about six months after its publication (others, as well as imitations, were to follow). It was published by the Berlin bookseller and writer Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811) under the title *Die Freuden des jungen Werthers* [the pleasures of young Werther] and has him living a normal, successful life, married and with children. Nicolai was a conspicuous figure among Germany's "literati" of the time. He corresponded with almost every notable man of letters (the edition of his correspon-

dence—which is not even complete—has 89 volumes!), had a private library of over 16,000 volumes (a rarity at that time), and was a good businessman. He parodied others as well, e.g., the Schlegels, Herder, Kant et. al.; *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, ed. by Historische Kommission an der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (22 vols., Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1953–2005), vol. 19 (1999), article: Horst Möller [hereafter: NDB].

The NDB has been used here for practical reasons: there is no need of in-depth information on most of the persons mentioned in this article, and NDB was the German biographical dictionary closest at hand; reliable information on almost everyone mentioned here can also be found in Wikipedia (which will be quoted, as well) or in *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie* (DBE), 2nd enlarged edition, ed. by Rudolf Vierhaus (Saur, München, 2005–2008).

[4] Thus, e.g., Wilpert, 616, cf. also *Metzler Goethe Lexikon. Personen—Sachen—Begriffe*, 2nd enlarged edition, ed. by Benedikt Jeßing, Bernd Lutz, and Inge Wild (Metzler, Stuttgart—Weimar, 2004).

[5] Pankaj Mishra, *Age of Anger: A History of the Present* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 2017); economic inequality became a topic of public attention mainly by the publication of Thomas Piketty's *Le Capital au XXIe siècle* (2013 in French, 2014 in English and in German). The author claims that growing economic inequality will be the inevitable consequence of liberal capitalism and foresees—correctly, in the light of current events—grave dangers for the social equilibrium of capitalist countries.

[6] "Sturm und Drang" definitely began with *Götz* (1773) and Schiller's *Die Räuber* (1781); cf. J. G. Robertson, A *History of German Literature*, 5th edition by Edna Purdie (Edinburgh and London 1966, William Blackwood & Sons), 262. Robertson gives the years 1797 or 1798 as the beginnings of the Romantic period in Germany, ibid., 349-351. Pat Rogers (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature* (Oxford Univ. Press 1987), 274 f., has 1780 as the beginning of English and German Romanticism (the end around 1830).

[7] Cf. Wilpert, 616; see also "Werther-Effekt": https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Werther-Effekt; the ban meant that the book could not legally be sold in Leipzig.—For the Werther-Tracht, see below.

[8] Goeze, a native of Halberstadt, had been called to Hamburg in 1755 and soon became quite prominent as a prolific writer and editor of a local news magazine; from 1760 to 1770, he served as the elected "senior" of the "spiritual ministerium," the college of pastors at the city's churches. Hamburg at that time had five "Hauptkirchen" (head or main parish churches), and Goeze was the pastor of St. Catherine's. A stout defender of orthodox Lutheranism, detractors ironically entitled him "Hammoniens Papst" [Hamburg's pope, "Hammonia" being the city's Latinized name]. The dispute with Lessing (who was director of the Hamburg theater then) was centered on the question of deism and occurred at the same time that *Werther* caused such excitement, i. e., 1774/1775. It is remarkable that, in spite of their grave theological differences, Lessing and Goeze held each other in high personal esteem, and the dispute never turned disparaging or nasty; NDB, vol. 6 (1964), article: Georg Daur.

[9] The contemporaries viewed Garve as "einen ihrer großen philosophischen Lehrer" [one of their great teachers of philosophy], on a level with Mendelssohn; see NDB, vol. 6 (1964), article: Kurt Wölfel.

[10] All of these are listed as Goethe's supporters by Wilpert, 616. Most of them are well-known and would not need an annotation, but additional explanations may be welcome for some of them. As we have seen Lessing supported Goethe at a time when he had a dispute of his own with Goeze.—Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz (1751–1792), a friend of Goethe in Straßburg, fell in love with Friederike Brion after Goethe had left her, and was especially obliged to Goethe in 1774 for helping him to get his works published; cf. NDB, vol. 14 (1985), article: Wolfgang Wittkowski.—Johann Heinrich Merck (1741–1791), was not a close friend of Goethe and was not impressed by *Werther*, but wrote a satire defending it nonetheless; on the other hand, he also wrote a friendly review of Nicolai's parody of *Werther* (cf.

above, fn. 3); NDB, vol. 17 (1993), article: Arnold Elschenbroich.—Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819) who was to become the president of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences was on a friendly footing with Goethe although he disliked the "Geniekult" [adoration of genius] of the "Sturm und Drang"; NDB, vol. 10 (1974), article: Klaus Hammacher.—Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1733–1791) was the editor of the widely read "Deutsche Chronik" in Augsburg in 1774 and, as a fellow writer of the Sturm und Drang and decided enemy of absolutism, defended *Werther*; NDB, vol. 23 (2007), article: Michael Myers.

[11] Cf. Volker Faust, *Psychosoziale Gesundheit von Angst bis Zwang. Selbstmord als Nachahmungstat. Der "Werther-Effekt" als medien-induzierte Selbsttötung*, under: http://www.psychosoziale-gesundheit.net/psychiatrie. That there were hundreds of cases, as has been claimed, cannot be proven and does not seem likely; their actual number seems to have been somewhere between 10 and 20.

[12] Cf. Gustav Seibt, *Goethe und Napoleon. Eine historische Begegnung* (C.H.Beck, München 2008), 126, 131-134. Seibt describes the meeting of Napoleon and Goethe in Erfurt, 2 October 1808, in almost excessive detail quoting Goethe's own diary as well as other sources. The important point is that Napoleon evidently knew *Werther* in and out and was able to point out a weakness in some small detail of the narrative that nobody else had noticed. So it is easily possible that Napoleon had read the book seven times, as mentioned in one of these sources, and that he even took it along on the Russian campaign and into exile in St. Helena, too.

[13] "Chaebol" is the Korean word for the giant, usually family-owned South Korean business conglomerates operating world-wide; the largest of them currently is Samsung; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaebol.

The Lotte company is one of the smaller "chaebols"; its main activities are in food processing, esp. confectionery, hotels, construction, chemicals, and financial services. Its founder, Shin Kyuk-ho, was so impressed by the Lotte character in *Werther* that he named his company for her. Https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotte_(conglomerate).

[14] It is hardly necessary to quote any particular Goethe study on this as all of them agree on this point; so also Wilpert, 614.

[15] Maximiliane von La Roche was a daughter of Sophie von La Roche (1731–1807), the first female German novelist of note. Sophie's book *Die Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim* (1771) [English translation: *History of Lady Sophia Sternheim*, 1776] was quite important as a model for *Werther*: It was an epistolary novel, too, a form Sophie had taken from contemporary English novels; it dealt mostly with the internal development of the protagonist's sentiment and character and it had been quite successful, as well. Goethe, at that time Sophie's admirer (he called her "die wunderbarste Frau und ich wüßte ihr keine zu vergleichen" [the most wonderful woman, I do not know a comparable one], see *Metzler Goethe Lexikon*, 290) came to visit her famous literary salon after having left Wetzlar in 1772, and there he met Maximiliane for the first time. "Maxi," as she was called in the family, was 16 years old and she struck him as very charming and pretty. He met her again in Frankfurt in 1774 after her marriage to the wealthy Frankfurt merchant and councillor to the elector of Trier, Peter Anton Brentano (1735–1797), scion of a noble Lombard family, who had recently lost his wife and needed a mother for his six children. Although she was married now Goethe courted her quite assiduously which provoked strong jealous reactions of her husband and let Goethe look rather silly as a mere would-be cicisbeo (on the other hand, he felt sorry for a formerly carefree girl now tied to a much older man and thrown into the role of a wife and stepmother); this courtship and the husband's jealousy appear as a topic in *Werther* as well. Maximiliane had 12 children and died shortly after the birth of her last child. Her son Clemens (1778–1842) and her daughter Catherina Elisabetha Ludovica, nicknamed Bettina (1785–1859), married von Arnim, became famous as authors of the German Romantic school. For her, see Https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximiliane_von_La_Roche, See also Wilpert, 605 f.

For her mother, see NDB 13 (1982), article: Günter Häntzsch.

For her husband, see https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Anton_Brentano.

[16] Cf. Wilpert, 533 for Jerusalem as model for Werther; for his life, see also NDB, vol. 10 (1974), article: Adalbert Elschenbroich. His first name is often spelled with a "K" at the beginning as "Karl."

[17] His father was Johann Friedrich Wilhelm Jerusalem (1709–1789) who had studied at Leipzig and Wittenberg, had traveled in the Netherlands and in England where he stayed for three years before having an impressive career in the service of the dukes of Brunswick, see NDB, vol. 10 (1974), article by Fritz Myers.—The family had come from Holland where many people of that name are living today, but it does not seem to have had a Jewish background, see: http://www.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/diglib/seiler/werther.

[18] This is what he said about Goethe when he met him in Wetzlar: "Er war zu unserer Leipziger Zeit ein Geck, jetzt ist er noch außerdem Frankfurter Zeitungsschreiber" [He was a fop in our time at Leipzig, now he is a Frankfurt newspaper writer, to boot]; the quote is taken from a website of the university of Bielefeld's digital library: http://www.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/diglib/seiler/Werther.

[19] This incident is important in the novel, and it is evidently based on a real occurrence, see NDB, vol. 10 (as fn. 16), it also gets special mention in *Metzler Goethe Lexikon*, 259.

[20] See Wilpert, 533.

[21] Kestner informed Goethe about the incident very soon after it had happened, in November 1772; Goethe who knew Jerusalem quite well styled the protagonist of his novel mostly on him; the clothes which he had been found in were explicitly mentioned by Kestner, see NDB, vol. 10, and Wilpert, 533. According to *Metzler Goethe Lexikon*, 264, the end of *Werther* is practically a verbatim quotation of Kestner's letter to Goethe.

[22] For that, see Wilpert, 616.

[23] The German edition of Wulf's book was used here: Andrea Wulf, *Alexander von Humboldt und die Erfindung der Natur* (Bertelsmann, München 2016), 48-49 [part I, ch.2, which would be the same in the English edition]; the book was originally published in English under the title: *The Invention of Nature. The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt—The Lost Hero of Science* (John Murray, London 2015). Wulf mentions another indicator for the enormous spread of *Werther's* fame: Chinese potteries began to produce "Werther-china" for export to Europe.

[24] Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Aus meinem Leben. Dichtung und Wahrheit*, ed. by Klaus-Detlef Müller (Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke, Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*, 40 vols., ed. by Dieter Borchmeyer et.al., Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1986), 592.

[25] See Wilpert, 1171.

[26] It is interesting to note, in this connection, that he had—unsuccessfully—applied for a job at the duke of Brunswick's legation in London which means that he seems to have been specially interested in developments in England, cf. NDB, vol. 10. On the other hand, he may just have followed a tradition set by his father.

[27] See above, fn. 19.

[28] George Macaulay Trevelyan, *Illustrated History of England* (Longmans, Green & Co., London 1962), 509, [hereafter: Trevelyan] called the reigns of George I and George II the time of "Whig oligarchy". Trevelyan is quoted here as a well-known expert on the history of English political parties, especially the Whigs; his reliable studies have not really been surpassed by more modern ones. He sees the Whigs mostly as being former Roundheads, i.e., followers of Cromwell, the Tories as the old Cavaliers, ibid, 449, but see below for the characteristics of both the Whigs and the Tories in the time discussed here.

[29] These party names were fully established in the dispute over the Exclusion bill 1678–1681 by which the Stuarts were excluded from the succession to the English throne, not least because they were openly Catholic (unlike king Charles II who was a Catholic in private,

but publicly an Anglican); cf. G. M. Trevelyan, 462-464.—According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word "Tory" is derived from an Irish word for robber, also used for Irish farmers turned robbers after having lost their land to English settlers; the word "Whig," of Celtic origin, too, first signified the Scottish Covenanters, i.e., religious dissenters; it may ultimately derive from a word for "horse thief".

[30] According to Trevelyan, 452 "This 'Whig' party, as it was eventually called, had religious affinities in its rank and file with the latitudinarism and rationalism of the new age. Puritan and Rationalist were drawn together into common opposition to the dominant High Churchmen." Socially and economically, he sees the Whigs not only as the "unprivileged Dissenters" but as composed mainly of the "mercantile and middle classes," but "arrayed under a section of the higher aristocracy" (alluding to the great families mentioned in the following note); ibid, 465.

[31] "When we speak of the Whig oligarchy under the first two Georges, we mean . . . about seventy great families who, in alliance or in rivalry among themselves, exercised the power and patronage of the State, on condition of retaining the constant support of the House of Commons. The heads of the great Whig families mostly sat among the Peers, and their cadets in the Commons. . . . The Peers were unofficially but very effectually represented in the House of Commons, and had no objection to the constant increase of its power," Trevelyan, 511-512.

[32] Cf. Trevelyan, 512: "Although from 1714 to 1760 the patronage and the executive power of the State rested in the hands of the Whig magnates, they were as far as possible from being absolute and arbitrary rulers like the 'Venetian oligarchs' to whom Disraeli compared them. It was the era of the rigid reign of law in England . . . The citizens . . . enjoyed an amount of personal freedom that was the envy of all Europe."

[33] Trevelyan, 501, sees the accession of the House of Hanover mostly as a victory for the Whigs, but more generally for moderates of both parties, as it had been a moderate Tory, Robert Harley, earl of Oxford, who, in 1701, had led his party to pass the Act of Settlement which fixed the succession on the House of Hanover, ibid, 497.

[34] George III, popularly nicknamed "farmer George," "gloried in the name of Briton" when he succeeded his grandfather, see Trevelyan, 547-548. His accession was seen by some as the advent of a "patriot king" which would usher in a golden age; ibid, 548. (George I did not speak any English at all and was not much interested in his newly acquired kingdom, except for the income from it; he was happy to let his Whig cabinets govern for him. His son George II was still seen as basically German, but George II's grandson George III was accepted as a native Englishman by his people.) George III's popularity declined very rapidly after his accession and only recovered in the last twenty years of his reign; cf. *The Historical and the Posthumous Memoirs of Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall 1772–1784, edited with notes and additional chapters from the author's unpublished ms[manuscripts]*, by Henry W. Wheatley, F.S.A., with numerous portraits, in 5 volumes (Bickers & Sons, London 1884), vol. III, 133.

35 Frank O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two-Party System 1760–1832* (Edward Arnold, London 1982), 1-2. [Hereafter: O'Gorman]. By 'old corps' Whigs he means the members of the rich aristocratic families who had so far directed Whig policies.

36 George III governed—or at least tried to govern, for a while—without a party, making the cabinet a mere instrument of the royal will and Parliament the pensioner of the royal bounty; Trevelyan, 548.

37 "The Tory party . . . was in its heart of hearts the party of the landowners and of the Anglican clergy and their adherents, though often with strong allies in other classes," cf. Trevelyan, 465. "Government relied for its working not on a paid and dependent bureaucracy, but on a political understanding with the local gentry. . . . In *Tom Jones* Squire Western is a strong Tory, but he holds his commission as Justice of the Peace by the good will of the Whig Lords and the 'Hanoverian rats' whom he is always abusing;" cf. ibid, 513.

38 While many of the Whigs depicted George III's attempts at governing independently as an unconstitutional plot against Parliament, a large number of contemporaries saw George II as having been too much in the grip of the great Whig magnates who had usurped many of the royal powers. In Victorian times historians tended to assume that George III had been trying to put the clock back, trying to reign unconstitutionally and endeavoring to reintroduce arbitrary royal government. The 20th century view of the matter has been reported above, cf. Dorothy Marshall, *Eighteenth Century England, A History of England in Ten Volumes*, ed. by W. N. Medlicott, vol. VII (Longmans, Green & Co., London 1962 (5th impression 1966), 322-324 [hereafter: Marshall].

[39] For the growing crisis in the relationship with the colonies in America, cf. Marshall, 362-373 ("The Stamp Act"), 384-387 ("The American Colonies"), 417-421 ("The Growing Crisis in America"), and 421-431 ("English Politicians and American Resistance").

40 For this question, see Marshall, 368, 371, 386.

[41] Charles James Fox (1749–1806) was one of the most important British politicians in the reign of George III, but this is not the place to attempt an extensive evaluation of his life's achievements. Suffice it to say that he was in lifelong opposition to the king, that he supported the American patriots (as well as the French revolution), that he forced the king to yield to the House of Commons the right to elect the prime minister and thus decisively shaped the British constitution, laid the groundwork for the Parliament reform of 1832, and successfully reorganized the Whig party which had been in full decline after 1760 (historians even use the term "Foxite" Whigs for the reinvigorated party after 1794; see O'Gorman, 27, or Trevelyan, 565.).

For Fox' life in general: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition (William Benton, Chicago, London et al., 1974), Macropedia, vol. VII, 578-579.

[42] Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall (1751–1831) traveled widely in Europe, had a limited role in diplomacy, and became a much-read author of travel accounts and reports on life at European courts. He also wrote *Historical Memoirs of my own Time, from 1772 to 1784*. These were published, together with his *Posthumous Memoirs,* after his death. Because he made public many things that influential people would rather have kept secret he had many detractors and was seen as a controversial author, but the authoritative *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 63, ed. by Sidney Lee (Smith, Elder & Co., London 1900), concludes that "his portraits of the minor actors on the political stage between 1772 and 1784 are of real historical value," and Sir George Osborn, for 50 years equerry to king George III, stated (quoted at the end of the article on Wraxall in the DNB): "I pledge my name that I personally know nine parts out of ten of your [Wraxall's] anecdotes to be perfectly correct." So it would seem that Wraxall's reports are generally reliable.

[43] Wraxall, *Historical and Posthumous Memoirs*, vol. 2, 2-3; [the text in (. . .) is a footnote in the edition].

[44] For uniforms in different colors, see Marko Zlatich, *General Washington's Army (2) 1779–83* (Men-at-Arms 290, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 1995); for lack of proper uniforms, even as late as 1781, i.e., at the end of the War of Independence, see Jane A. Baum, Hans-Peter Baum, Jesko Graf zu Dohna (eds.), *The Adventures of Friedrich Reinhard count of Rechteren-Limpurg in the Mediterranean and the American War of Independence 1770–1782*, Mainfränkische Hefte 115 (Spurbuch-Verlag, Baunach 2016), 110.

[45] Nathanael Greene (1742–1786), one of the best strategists of the Continental Army, closely collaborated with Washington in several campaigns, cf. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition (Chicago 1974) Micropedia, vol. IV; Tench Tilghman (1744–1786) was a lieutenant colonel; see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tench_Tilghman; both Greene and Tilghman are shown in blue-and-buff uniforms in portraits by Charles Willson Peale who is best known for his portraits of Washington. See also: Zlatich, *General Washington's Army* (cf. fn. 43), 6-8.

[46] For her, see the prizewinning biography by Amanda Foreman, *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* (Harper Collins, London 1998). Georgiana, by the way, was a great-great-great-

aunt of Lady Diana Spencer, Princess of Wales (1961–1997). The methods by which she and her sister supported Fox in an election in 1784 where he was by about 100 votes behind his competitor towards the end of the election [which stretched over several weeks then] would be considered scandalous in our day, too. This is how Wraxall, *Historical and Posthumous Memoirs* [cf. fn. 43], vol. III, 346-347, describes what they did: ". . . these ladies, being previously furnished with lists of outlying voters, drove to their respective dwellings. Neither entreaties nor promises were spared. In some instances even personal caresses were said to have been permitted, in order to prevail on the surly or inflexible, and there can be no doubt of common mechanics having been conveyed to the hustings . . . by the Duchess in her own coach." The result of this unusual way of electioneering was that, in the end, Fox won the election by about 235 votes.

[47] The full title of this book is *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, but it is usually quoted just as *Pickwick Papers*; it came out as a serialized story in a news magazine and made the 24-year old Dickens instantly famous.

[48] The visit to Eatanswill is described in chapter XIII of the *Pickwick Papers*; the edition used here is Everyman's Library, vol. 235 (Dent & Dutton, London & New York, 1959), where the following quotation is on 160.

[49] See, e.g., the descriptions of keeping prospective voters locked up and drunk or of the methods used to prevent unwanted voters from actually voting, 163 or 170 in the same edition.—Secret balloting was introduced in the UK in 1872, and there are reports from quite a few places that poor voters were dismayed at not being able to sell their votes any more.