



5-1-1980

## An Epistemological Study of Goethe's Novel The Sufferings of Young Werther: An Examination of Goethe's Educational Philosophy as Reflected in an Analytical Study of the Character Werther

Mark A. Beckham

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AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL STUDY OF GOETHE'S NOVEL THE SUFFERINGS  
OF YOUNG WERTHER: AN EXAMINATION OF GOETHE'S  
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AS REFLECTED IN AN  
ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE CHARACTER WERTHER

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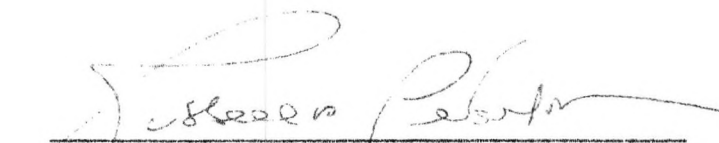
A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of the  
University of North Dakota  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

Grand Forks, North Dakota

May  
1980

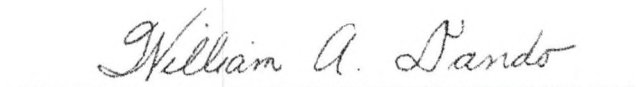
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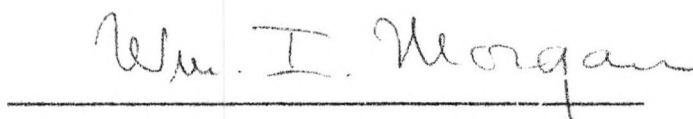
  

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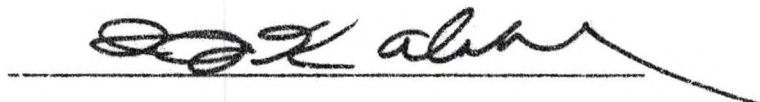
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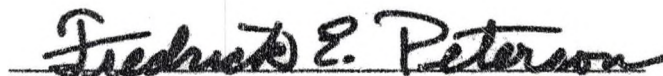
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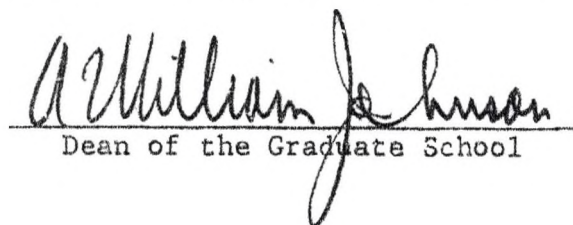
  

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This dissertation meets the standards for appearance and conforms to the style and format requirements of the Graduate School of the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

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AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL STUDY OF GOETHE'S NOVEL THE SUFFERINGS OF  
YOUNG WERTHER: AN EXAMINATION OF GOETHE'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY  
Title AS REFLECTED IN AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE CHARACTER WERTHER

Department Center for Teaching and Learning

Degree Doctor of Education

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Russell A. Peterson who generously shared many hours of himself in the growth and development of this doctoral student.

I am also grateful to Dr. Ivan J. K. Dahl, Dr. Fredrick E. Peterson, Dr. William I. Morgan, and Dr. William A. Dando for their critical reading of this study and subsequent commentary on the nature of its presentation.

A special thanks is also extended to Dr. Donald V. Poochigian whose genuine interest in this student and his study was a constant source of encouragement.

## ABSTRACT

The research problem is to examine Goethe's educational philosophy as identified through an analytical study of the character Werther in Goethe's novel The Sufferings of Young Werther.

The purpose of this study is to reveal the epistemological premises of the learning construct that are within the context of the novel, and to derive from these premises specific learning principles that can be applied to educational theory. Goethe's concepts of the human will, the self, responsibility, choice, and growth are defined and subsequently utilized as the skeletal frame from which to construct the working principles of his thought process. By focusing on Goethe's actual thinking and how he comes to know, the novel becomes a means, or mode, with which to illustrate the epistemological functioning of his mind.

Within this short novel, the inherent potentiality for learning theory is substantial. Goethe was offering his reading public a learning construct by means of the relationship he established with himself and his literary creation. The nature of the relationship was such that both he and his readers would be provided with a learning methodology. To determine the premises of the learning construct from the medium of the novel and then to apply these premises to the formulation of specific learning principles becomes the means by which to isolate the educational application of Goethe's epistemology.



Six educational principles have evolved from Goethe's epistemological premises as they were examined within the context of the novel. These principles of learning are identified and their significance as a totality for learning theory is considered.

1. Goethe realized that the subject matter of education is man, and he emphasized the nature of man and his characteristics as a self-determiner. The focus of education must therefore center upon the learner and his individuality.

2. Because the self is a unity and functions as a totality, learning becomes an experience of each distinct, or unique, self. Being a composite of the effects of its choices, the self perceives learning as an extremely personal matter. This means that education must recognize the value that man places on his self in his demand for self-cultivation.

3. Goethe knew that the self can choose to educate itself and actually proceed to bring this process about. Through determining the validity and reliability of that which it seeks to know, the learner is provided with an empirical base from which to begin his instruction. In this manner, the self becomes its own teacher and the learning act is identified as a process of self-examination.

4. It is the self that exerts its own inherent potentiality for knowing and learning. Goethe recognized the internal, or intrinsic, motivation of the self to seek knowledge and truth, and he demanded that the self actively confront its learning object. Education must acknowledge that the learner does indeed possess an inner vitality of his own.

5. Man is always in relation to that which confronts him as a determiner. All learning is creative because the learner is the creator of further learning. In his role as creator, the learner makes a multitude of decisions and must subsequently accept the inherent responsibility for the choices made and their implications. Goethe was fully aware that in actualizing its choices through application of their meanings, the self becomes an active agent in the process of learning.

6. In order to actively participate in the educational process, the learner must understand the social nature of man. A relationship of mutuality, based on dialogue and intercommunication, is a learning process. This process of learning is the application of knowledge in quest of meaning in a social context.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The research problem is to examine Goethe's educational philosophy as identified through an analytical study of the character Werther in Goethe's novel The Sufferings of Young Werther.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the epistemological premises of the learning construct that are within the context of Goethe's novel Werther, and to derive from these premises specific learning principles that can be applied to educational theory.

#### Need for the Study

This study is needed in order to understand the educational philosophy of Goethe, because neither an intensive nor extensive examination of his theory of learning has as yet been done. The epistemological framework that Goethe constructed for the novel Werther was the permanent structure upon which he built his literary corpus. As a result, Werther is the prototype for Goethe's theory of knowledge.

#### Delimitations

The scope of this study will be confined to Goethe's premises concerning the human will, the self, responsibility, choice, and

growth in relationship to the learning process. Implications for a humanistic learning theory are subsequently examined.

### Limitations

The assumption is made that the reader will be intimately acquainted with Goethe's novel in English translation.

English translations of Goethe's writing appear solely in this dissertation unless it is deemed appropriate to include a word or phrase in the original German to avoid ambiguity or misunderstanding. Publication dates of the original German texts have therefore been excluded from the citation of references. Authoritative editions of German texts of Werther and the Autobiography were referenced, however, in order to determine the accuracy and clarity of the English translations used in this dissertation.

Works by Goethe that are referenced in this study are limited to those primary sources that are cited in the bibliography.

### Approach to the Problem

The methodology of this study is as follows: (a) a critical examination of the character Werther based upon Goethe's concepts of the human will, the self, responsibility, choice, and growth, (b) an analysis of Goethe's epistemological premises from the context of the novel, (c) the derivation of six principles of learning theory from the epistemological premises, and (d) the educational implications and applications of the six principles of learning theory.

### Background of the Problem

Goethe was an epistemologist. Although he is most often portrayed and reviewed as a latter eighteenth- and early nineteenth-

century German litterateur, he also possessed tremendous potential for philosophical theorizing. To elaborate on those concepts that pertain to educational theory becomes a pivotal concern in any analysis of Goethe's intellectual process. In order to distill only the essential ingredients from his thought, certain questions must be posed. What made Goethe an epistemologist? What constituted his perspective as an epistemologist? What were the inherent principles of his epistemology? By seeking a response to such questions as these, the potentiality of Goethe as an epistemologist is realized.

#### Design and Organization of the Study

Goethe's method of learning and his subsequent determination of the validity and legitimacy of knowledge is at the core of any examination of his creativity. It is precisely within the context of his writings that Goethe revealed the functioning of his mind. He built a thought process based on a continuing and expanding dialogue between himself and his literary creations. Every facet of the relationship which he constructed and the stance which he determined was for his own sake. Goethe's entire methodology began with this relationship to himself; he recognized his own needs and then proceeded to validate them. Because he demanded growth in his relationships, Goethe was aware that every meaningful relationship was a potential learning process.

Through recognition and understanding of his own self, Goethe never permitted himself less than total command of any situation that confronted him. This ability allowed him to transfer any potentially domineering or harmful forces onto a literary self-construct that could

then be manipulated and controlled. In this manner, Goethe made certain that the results of his actions were exactly what he willed them to be. This was a means for inventing his own future and making sure of the product, which was himself. What is actually being presented within his poetry and prose is that which can be internalized by the self. Goethe identified the self as that embodiment of totality through which the individual lives. By selecting any of his major literary productions, Goethe's readers are thereby provided with an access to their own self.

Man is always in relationship to that which confronts him as a determiner. As long as he maintains a fully functional mind and recognizes the element of choice, then man is a self-determiner in relation to that which is seeking to determine him. Goethe used the self in order to define and give meaning to the self. He sought to determine the nature of every meaningful relationship between the self and that which it confronted. In his quest for meaning and control, Goethe acknowledged that the self was the most salient confrontation of all.

Because the self wills a relationship to the self, the individual establishes a relationship based on criteria validated as a self-determiner. Goethe structured his epistemology from criteria that were truth and he determined the nature of that truth. It is the nature of that truth which is going to free the self from all of the inroads that rationalization insists upon making. Whereas rationalization employs criteria based on untruth, Goethe demanded that the self be confronted with truth and honesty. Honesty is the principle according to which the individual must evaluate, or validate, a value.

A self-determined mind is a mind that has willed to choose. The self always has choice and the freedom to exercise that choice as long

as it has control over its relationship with whatever the mind happens to confront. Self-determination refers to either the original cause or to the effect of that over which the self has control. This is the realization by the self-determined mind that it always has confronting it the implications of that choice upon which the self must act. In either circumstance, the relationship of the self to the question or problem of choice and what constitutes freedom remains unchanged.

A value construct is built by the will so that the element of choice can convey meaning and purpose. The will determines what is of greatest value for the self and this becomes the individual good. Self-determination, based on internal determination and will, is necessary to validate what has become the good. In order to actualize that which carries a supreme value for the individual, the motivation must be intrinsic. The resulting implication of the self's relationship to whatever it wills becomes extremely significant.

Self-determination requires a will that is validated in order to counter the process of rationalization. This is the action that the self has taken in its relationship to the will in order to determine the will's legitimacy, meaning, and value. In other words, it is through validation that the self actualizes the potentiality of the will. But the self can validate rationalization too, because it rationalizes only after it has validated. Rationalization is untruth because the self has not made use of or listened fully to the cognitive, or empirical, factor. Not only must the self validate the value, it must validate the criteria used to determine the validity. A fully functional mind requires the self to use an empirical base that it controls. Then the

self can enter into a legitimate relationship with itself in order to prevent dishonesty. The self has a responsibility to itself to do that which is good, but the problem lies in determining the nature of the true good. Validating criteria and the responsibility to be honest are the factors with which to solve this dilemma. Goethe demanded that the self go through the osmotic process of absorbing the validated good and making it a part of the self. This is the heart of the self's relationship to that which it values.

Intentionality is that which has been declared and validated as the good by the self. What are the implications of this statement for self-determination? Learning is possible only if a relationship exists, and a confrontation is necessary for any relationship. Mutuality is the process of dialogue that occurs in the relationship between two distinct selves. It is the interaction and cross-fertilization between that which each self brings to the relationship. Because of the specificity of certain demands which Goethe placed on every relationship, they each acquired a significant potentiality. By making a determination through the validation process, Goethe knew what his self needed. In other words, Goethe intended that which he had validated as the good. Goethe recognized his own self as it was expressed in his intentionality.

Perception influences both the validation process and intentionality. The individual wills to see in a specific way because of what he brings to that perception. A responsibility inherent in the type of relationship established must be accepted by the self. This will in turn carry over and determine the nature of perception. As a



result of this factor, a particular significance is assumed in the discussion of value. Every confrontation implies a decision and inherent within that decision is choice. Choice is determined by what carries a significant value and the subsequent implications of that value. Such decisions arise from movement within the human mind that allows the self to become transcendent. New relational dimensions and their implications are recognized. What the self permits itself to see and experience is determined by the honesty of the self. Willing is free only when a properly validated choice is based upon the self-internalized criteria of honesty and truthfulness.

Inherent within all responsibility is choice. To make a choice means acting upon knowledge of the implications of that choice. It is the means by which the mind gathers a further sense of knowledge of the object with which it is interacting. In essence, the potentiality of choice means the potentiality for freedom. Choice becomes a means to an end in which is seen the potential to transcend this end. A great deal of responsibility is implied in such a process. To begin with, the self has a responsibility to determine the meaning and validity of responsibility. The self must bring itself to the point of movement in which it not only feels obligated but wills to act upon that sense of obligation. In other words, the self must actualize and fulfill its responsibility. Goethe taught that responsibility is first realized within the self. This means that the intellectual process of the mind must be continually feeding the self so that it can be responsible. It also implies that the character of a relationship determines the nature of the responsibility. In order to attain an awareness of self-

responsibility, the development of depth within the totality of consciousness is necessary. Only then will an obligation be realized and its potentiality actualized.

Goethe was able to validate the specificity of certain things for himself because of his understanding of the human will. The will is unique to each self. It is represented by the cognitive, the affective, and the conative domains of the intellect. Only as a totality does the self make a determination; that is, the individual serves himself as the embodiment of his will and thereby establishes the premise of totality. From within the totality of the self the will functions and receives its direction. The source of the will is within the self, and it is fed by the intellectual process which gives it an empirical base from which to act. This empirical base, which is shared by each of the three intellectual domains, is essential because it is always the internal which brings about that which a person wills. Goethe was certainly aware of the cognitive elements inherent in the affective domain. What he required, therefore, was the legitimacy of that feeling and emotion. Goethe demanded validation by means of his own mind. This implied an empiricism, to be sure, but it was an empiricism based on the relationship between the cognitive and affective spheres of the intellect.

Goethe remained concerned with the ontological quest for the totality of beingness. Man realizes that he cannot define his responsibility to someone else until he has defined it within himself. This ontological quest is the process of the self experiencing what it has validated for itself as the good. It is recognition of the will and

the element of determination in the sense of validation. This process of evaluation is an integral part of the totality of the self and a vital component of that which makes the human mind fully operational.

The human mind must have something upon which to work. Unless the a priori (the given) exists, the mind cannot function. Regardless of the nature of this given, the mind must continually determine its validity or nonvalidity prior to internalizing the object of confrontation. Goethe suggested that the self begins with the given. It is the self which has to place some value on, as well as determine the validity of, this given. Meaning is derived from validation and to understand meaning is to perceive an object in terms of its potentiality. The object does not become an end in itself because the individual sees what it can do for his own self as well as for others.

Goethe experienced the growth and development of a consciousness that is found in the a priori. Man is constantly building an evolutionary consciousness which becomes a part of the human relationship. That which Goethe did and did not allow to confront him (his historicity) was directly controlled by his relationship to the a priori. In this way, Goethe could transcend the limitations that man insists on imposing upon himself and that can destroy man's true insight. He thereby remained in control and knew what he had and what he needed. This totality of experience brings into being the full potential of the given. It is evident that the will experiences the a priori, but only when it has first experienced the good and knows that it is the good. Man continually builds the nature of the a priori by means of the validation process. As a result, the totality of the

self recognizes that the intention of the a priori is to bring about the fulfillment and completion of the validated good.

Above everything else, Goethe recognized that he was a human being. As he internalized, Goethe expressed and demanded a basic faith in himself. Faith is an expression of the ultimate act of freedom. Choice is, therefore, affected by faith because it is dependent on the nature of the individual's beingness as a self-determiner. Man has a responsibility in self-learning to start with faith and to recognize it as such because he cannot be a self-determiner without it. There is no freedom if man does not have faith in himself and the concurrent determination to validate this faith. This implies that faith does indeed have an empirical base. Goethe insisted that all men must establish a relationship to their own selves. What is the nature of that relationship? Is it purposive and honest, or does the self try to fool itself? Faith implies both a sense of self-respect and trust in the self.

Goethe realized that knowledge is learned and possessed only in terms of the certainty and fulfillment of totality. Consequently, the self has to move on one of two premises. Either there is a proven absoluteness (certainty) in what is known or else this certainty of knowledge is not possessed and it must be hypothesized. Until the self is certain, everything remains open-ended and it brings no closure. In the search for the true potentiality of the absolute, the question must be posed as to whether the self determines absoluteness through validation or whether this absoluteness is already determined for the self. Knowledge is that which is a part of the self, which the self develops and designs, which it internalizes, and which the self comes to

recognize in relationship to fact. It must be remembered that the self always moves from a given. The potentiality of what comes to be the given, the totality, implies that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Epistemological considerations of Goethe provide insight into the factor of transparency. It is the ability to see through the object of confrontation based on the empirical evidence obtained. Transparency allows the self to make use of externalities for what they are, with their potentialities as well as their limitations. Goethe demonstrated that it is only through dialogue that an individual can reveal himself; that is, make himself transparent. In order for learning to occur, another self must be confronted if the individual is to fully know and understand his own self. This process of mutuality is established between Goethe and his reading public through the medium of his voluminous writings. In his short novel, The Sufferings of Young Werther, the vitality of the character Werther comes from Goethe himself. It is exactly what the author intentionally permits Werther to do or not to do that is injected into this literary creation. Knowledge, growth, and learning are the end results of such reciprocal interaction between Goethe and his audience.

Within the context of the novel Werther, Goethe presented a learning construct and its methodology. He placed the same demands upon himself that he placed upon the internal development of the novel. Goethe positioned this responsibility upon the self, since it makes the ultimate determination and choice. The subject matter of education, which Goethe validated, is man and his relationship to himself. Testimony to this principle is given by the novel.

Goethe equated the creative act with the learning act. To stop the growth process would be suicide, because man dies when he no longer grows. Goethe realized that man, as a self-determiner, is constantly involved in the process of designing his future. Learning and living are recognition of the need to never stop. Education, therefore, is an experiential process. Man has the inherent epistemological responsibility of determining and giving essence to the inner world of the self so that the self wills to live in order to experience. Werther's failure as a man, in contrast to Goethe's affirmation of life, sustains the validity and perpetuity of this premise.

#### Selection of the Novel

An analysis of the reasons for choosing this particular novel of Goethe's will serve to reveal its epistemological significance and its potentiality as a learning construct. General comments and observations will precede an examination of specific clues which Goethe intentionally positioned in the opening pages of this work in regard to the problem he confronted.

There are two levels from which to approach this novel. It can either be read and studied as a piece of literature or received as the medium, or vehicle, for transmitting Goethe's epistemological premises. If defined as a mode of conveyance, the reader assumes the responsibility of extracting from the novel whatever is present in the form of epistemological input by Goethe. It must always be remembered that Goethe wove his philosophy into the context of his writings rather than letting it stand in isolation. His philosophy can be understood only in terms of relationships, taking into consideration all of the

subtle implications of the human mind. The context, or nature, of relationships along with the humanity within which these relationships are allowed to grow become an integral part of Goethe's philosophy of living.

Within this short novel, there is substantial potentiality for learning theory. Goethe was offering his reading public a learning construct by means of the relationship he established with himself and his literary creation. The nature of the relationship was such that both he and his readers would be provided with a learning methodology. To determine the premises of the learning construct from the medium of the novel and then to apply these premises to the formulation of specific learning principles becomes the means by which to isolate the educational application of Goethe's epistemology. Questions such as the following can then be posed for consideration: What is it that is learned about learning theory from this novel? What are the implications for learning theory? How is learning theory structured?

By alerting the reader to the true potential for defining Goethe as an epistemologist, the novel serves as a means, or mode, by which to illustrate how the mind of Goethe worked. Delineating the functions of Goethe's mind was a significant factor in choosing this particular work for examination.

Goethe attracts his reader with even more strength by suggesting, through references to characters and events in his Autobiography, a special relationship between The Sufferings of Young Werther and the Autobiography. In a brief and succinct statement, it can be said that this relationship refers to the process of self-examination. On its surface, the novel appears to be structured around the self of Werther

and his relationship with others. Yet, if approached from a different attitude and depth, Goethe can be seen depicting a possibility of action which he may well have considered himself. Consequently, it can be posited that he wanted to learn what the end result of that action carried to its extreme would be. Werther became a learning process, a sort of experiment or test, to see whether or not this was what Goethe wanted to do, where he wanted to go, what he wanted to be.

In every facet of the novel, the totality of Goethe's mind is to be found. What Goethe thereby implies is that man is the subject matter of education. The accent is on man and how he comes to know. What Goethe is really talking about is the fully educated man. How must he educate himself? What must be made use of? What must be willed in order to guarantee this to himself?

For a more specific consideration of Goethe's intended purpose, the first page or two of Werther (depending on the edition) will be closely examined. As Goethe (1969) claims in the thirteenth chapter of his Autobiography, the novel itself "enlightens and instructs" (Vol. 2, pp. 219-220). Riggan (1973) correctly identifies Geist (mind, spirit), Charakter (character), and Schicksal (fate) as being the "three facets" (p. 266) which "form the focus of the story" (p. 262). These three words are incorporated into the editor's remarks preceding the opening paragraph of the first letter dated May 4, 1777 (Goethe 1971, p. 2). In his analysis of Goethe, Ortega (1949/1968) develops a body of thought which, if applied in this instance, may well clarify Goethe's intention with regard to his choice and conspicuous placement of terminology.



Ortega (1949/1968) offers the following observation:

Life means the inexorable necessity of realizing the design for an existence which each one of us is. This design in which the I consists, is not an idea or plan ideated by the person involved, and freely chosen. It is anterior to (in the sense of independent form) all the ideas which his intellect forms, to all the decisions of his will. Our will is free to realize or not to realize this vital design which we ultimately are, but it cannot correct it, change it, abbreviate it, or substitute anything for it (p. 141).

Continuing in an explanatory manner, Ortega insists:

A man possesses a wide margin of freedom with respect to his I or destiny. He can refuse to realize it, he can be untrue to himself. Then his life lacks authenticity. If "vocation" is not taken to mean what it commonly does--merely a generic form of professional occupation, of the civil curriculum--but to mean an integral and individual program of existence, the simplest thing would be to say that our I is our vocation. Thus we can be true to our vocation to a greater or lesser degree, and consequently have a life that is authentic to a greater or lesser degree (p. 143).

In other words, it is the individual himself who designs the realization or nonrealization of his vital design for an existence. This conception of a vital design is synonymous with destiny, vocation, and the I. It is an a priori that the self structures, validates, and experiences. To be authentic, it is a design the self must be true to. Ortega then goes on to reveal the very problem that Goethe confronted himself with and wove into the fabric of Werther. He states the following:

It is our life-design, which, in the case of suffering, does not coincide with our actual life: the man is torn apart, is cut in two--the man who had to be and the man he came to be. Such a dislocation manifests itself in the form of grief, anxiety, ennui, depression, emptiness; coincidence, on the contrary, produces the prodigious phenomenon of happiness (pp. 152-153).

It is now possible to suggest the correlation of Ortega's "life-design" and "authentic I" with Goethe's Geist. In similar fashion, the term Charakter can be considered as representing the actual life of the

individual; that is, the manner in which he designs the realization of his Geist. It is a question of what the individual actually wills to design, or realize. Ortega approaches this matter by suggesting that "man's life . . . is having to decide every moment what he must do the next moment, and, therefore, having to discover the very plan, the very design of his being" (p. 153). This is the realization of the self-determining characteristic of the will as manifested by an individual's character. In Goethe's novel Werther, the author depicts the fate (Schicksal) of Werther whose Geist and Charakter do not coincide. Yet Goethe transcends this surface incongruity by presenting a learning construct and methodology that analyzes the creative relationship between Geist and Charakter. The subsequent examination of Goethe's novel will explore the resulting implications of such an epistemology for learning theory.

One further reason for having selected Werther as a novel worthy of an analytical study must be mentioned. Contained within the very first paragraph of the first letter (May 4, 1771) are three pivotal concepts which carry epistemological significance (Goethe 1971, p. 3). Goethe considers the nature of the human heart, personal relationships, and man within just a dozen sentences. The heart represents the affective, or emotion and feeling. As one of the domains of the intellect, its relationship to the human will is of great importance. Personal relationships are a prerequisite for the growth process, and probing into the nature of man demands an individual responsibility to know one's self. It now becomes even more evident that Goethe has utilized the structure of a short novel to immediately confront both the reader and himself with questions of profound epistemological implication.

## Definition of Terms

A priori. The a priori is the starting point, or given. It is what the mind acts on in order to function. This means that the self is placing a value on, and the will is determining the validity of, that which is given. Because the will is constantly structuring the nature of the a priori, the self recognizes that the intention of the a priori is to bring about the fulfillment and completion of the validated good.

Affective. The affective is the intellectual domain of emotion and feeling.

Awareness. Awareness enables the self to develop, expand, and generate a greater depth within the totality of consciousness. It is a growing realization of the specificity of the empirical aspects of the knowledge possessed.

Choice. Choice is inherent within decision. It is a process of selection in which means are selected to satisfy ends in which is seen the potential to transcend the end. Choice carries a significant value which implies that the self must realize and evaluate the implications of that value.

Cognitive. The cognitive is the empirical, or rational, domain of the intellect.

Conative. The conative is that domain of the intellect identified by the interaction of the will with the cognitive and the affective domains of the intellect.

Consciousness. Consciousness exists the moment the function of the mind begins to operate. It is a totality whose degree of depth is determined by the inherent awareness, or knowledge factor, generated

within the consciousness. The specificity of these empirical thrusts in consciousness is what permits the self to assign a value to perception.

Creativity. Creativity is the development of new potentiality between relationships. It is the process of designing the future as a self-determiner. Creativity becomes growth as potentiality is actualized.

Dialogue. Dialogue is communication between two distinct selves. To dialogue, or to engage in dialogue, is to experience mutuality. It is to build and experience a creative relationship. Dialogue reveals the self through recognition of the transparency factor.

Empiricism. Empiricism is the means by which the self acquires knowledge. The will must act from the cognitivity of an empirical base in order for it to validate the specificity of the object of confrontation. This implies that empiricism carries within itself the nature of the relationship between the cognitive and affective domains of the mind.

Epistemology. Epistemology is concerned with the actual thought process. It is the study of how the self comes to know and to determine the validity and legitimacy of knowledge. Mind and its function define the scope of epistemology.

Evaluation. To evaluate is to validate a value. It is the empirical thought process of determining the specificity of that object which the mind confronts.

Experience. Experience is the process by which the perceptive ability of the conscious mind confronts and interacts with an object. The nature of the subsequent relationship becomes a willful search for meaning in order that the object of value may be made an integral part

of the totality of mind. Since the acquisition of knowledge results in the modification, or transformation, of its antecedent state, the mind becomes aware of the meaning of what the object can come to be (the significance of its potentiality).

Fact. Fact is the certainty of knowledge. It is an absolute-ness which the self has validated. Facts are the means by which the self moves toward a totality, because it is only in the fulfillment of the certainty of totality that the self can know. It is the nature of the relationship between the fact and the whole which establishes its value.

Faith. The ultimate act of freedom is faith in the self. Faith validates the self's relationship to itself and thereby establishes an empirical base. It intrinsically motivates the self and permits the mind to function with a willingness as a self-corrector. It determines the nature of freedom because it affects the choice made by the self. Without faith in himself, man cannot assume the responsibility of self-determination.

Freedom. Freedom is the awareness of the degree of consciousness permitted by the mind. It is the transcendent act of freedom that allows the mind to function so that it can determine meaning and purpose. Freedom enables the mind to realize both limitations and values inherent in whatever is confronted.

Good, the. The good is that which carries a supreme value for the self as determined by the will. It is the self-realization of meaning and purpose. Self-improvement becomes the good as it is realized in the nature of relationships (between the self and the object of confrontation) that are learning constructs.

Growth. Growth is the process of the self experiencing the inherent potentiality of a relationship. Although the self is continually transformed, it moves only as a totality. This integration of experience allows for a cycle of growth that transcends any notion of finality.

Historicity. Historicity is the autobiographical signature of the self. It is the nature of the self as determined by what it has and has not allowed itself to confront.

Intellective Process. The intellective process is the totality of the thought process. It is what permits the self to think by making use of the wholeness of the relationship between the brain and the process of the mind. Unity and interdependence give rise to a totality of consciousness within this mental process.

Intentionality. Intentionality is that which the self has declared and validated as the good. It is an intrinsic motivation that makes a determination through the validation process so that the self knows what it needs and proceeds to act from this base.

Knowledge. Knowledge is the meaningfulness experienced by the self in the type of relationship established to the object of learning. The potentiality of knowledge is realized in its relationship to that which is the given.

Learning Process. Learning is the realization of new relationships and the subsequent actualization of their potentialities. In order to learn, the self must first experience a meaningful relationship with whatever the subject/object of confrontation is. The process of learning, then, is the creative act of self-examination by means of which the self establishes the structure of growth.

Meaning. Meaning is the significance determined by the self in its relationship to an object. As the self acts upon (experiences) the object of confrontation, meaning is experientially internalized in terms of the object's potentiality. The object is not an end in itself because the individual sees what it can do for himself and others.

Mind. Mind is the self-generating process of intellectual movement toward consciousness. To function as a self-determiner, the mind (intellective domains) must be balanced, be conscious of the object that it confronts, and continually determine the validity or nonvalidity of that which it seeks to internalize. It is the will which demands this self-corrective motivation of the mind.

Mutuality. Mutuality is the process of dialogue that occurs in the relationship between two distinct selves. It is the interaction, the cross-fertilization, and the reciprocating flow of communication between that which each self brings to the relationship. In order for learning to take place and for the self to know itself, mutuality is essential.

Ontology. Ontology is the metaphysical quest for the totality of beingness. It is man looking at himself and defining his responsibility to what he finds within the self.

Perception. Perception is that which brings understanding to the self as determined by the will. As such, perception consists of the uniqueness and totality of each self with its consciousness. This means that the self must accept a responsibility for the nature of the relationship established between itself and the object it confronts.

Relationship. A relationship, whether internal or external, implies confrontation and subsequent growth. This means that the self

recognizes and utilizes a learning object for what it is, both in terms of its potentialities and limitations. Learning is possible only if a relationship exists.

Responsibility. Responsibility means that the self must bring itself to the point of movement so that it not only feels obligated but wills to move on that sense of obligation. It is the actualization of the potentiality of a relationship. The self becomes responsible (accountable) to itself through the process of self-determination as it is being fed by the intellectual process of the mind. Responsibility is the element of control in the process of choice.

Self. The self is the totality of beingness. It is the embodiment of unique experience that identifies the singularity of each organism.

Self-Determiner. A self-determiner determines the nature of every relationship between the self and that which it confronts. Man is a self-determiner to the extent that he establishes a valid relationship to that which is seeking to determine him. Self-determination implies the existence of a fully functional mind and the recognition of the element of choice.

Totality. Totality is the holistic manifestation of the singularity of purpose. The unity of purpose transcends the diversity and particularity of its structural elements which allows for the realization of the full potentiality of that which a totality confronts.

Transcendence. Transcendence of the self is achieved by means of honesty. It is the ability to rise above the limitations that the self may choose to impose upon itself which can destroy insight, meaning, and potentiality. To transcend is for the self to be in control,



to determine meaning, and to know what it has and what it wants. This is a totality of experience that brings into being the full potential of the a priori.

Transparency. The factor of transparency is a realization of what is true based on the empirical evidence. It is the ability to read and see through an object with the knowledge that the self brings with it. Transparency implies the responsibility of finding meaning in relationships. This means that it is only through dialogue that the self can be revealed and made transparent. The penetrative nature of transparency leads directly to a transcendence which allows the self to determine the meaningfulness of the object's potentiality.

Truth. Truth is the validating and self-corrective process-structure of knowledge. The reality of truth is realized by the self as it experiences and determines meaning. In the learning process, it is the cognitive, or empirical, domain of the intellect that guides the search for truth.

Validation. Validation is the process of determining the legitimacy and reliability of knowledge. The self acts to realize the correct meaning of that with which it is interacting from the potentiality of meaning inherent in the object. By means of the nature of the relationship existing between the self and that which it values, criteria are established for use in the validation process.

Value. Value is the experience of meaning with its potential for self-enhancement. The will determines what is of value for the self based on what the self has validated as a need.

Will. The human will originates within the totality of the self. It functions as it is fed by the intellectual process which

provides the will with direction and an empirical base from which to act. Self-determination is predicated on the evaluative and applicative dimensionality of the will. The will structures the value construct through validation and then determines the significance of meaning for the self and for the self's relationship to others. The will is the embodiment of the unique totality of self as it becomes conscious of purpose through realizing the inherent meaning in that which is caused.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### The Novel and Its Categories of Analysis

Although there exists a multitude of articles, critiques, essays, and reviews on the subject of Werther, it is possible to identify four distinct approaches to the novel. These four categories are structured as follows: (a) psychological and sociological interpretations, (b) thematic representations, (c) the identification of specific motifs within the novel, and (d) the content and structure of the work as an example of a particular literary genre. A sample of the diversity of material found within each of these major divisions will provide an insight into the nature of the research which has and has not been conducted with regard to Goethe's short novel.

#### Psychological Interpretations

Psychological interpretations frequently include the notion of Weltschmerz. Rose (1924) states that Weltschmerz is "the feeling of dissatisfaction, from the unsolved conflict between the ideal and the actual" (p. 4). He continues by defining this concept as "the psychic state which ensues when there is a sharp contrast between a man's ideals and his material environment, and his temperament is such as to eliminate the possibility of any sort of reconciliation between the two" (p. 5). Rose believes that "Werther is the analysis of a soul

that comes to grief through inability to attain harmony with the outer world" (p. 19). The novel is defined in the following terms:

[It is] a symbol of the struggle of the human spirit against its material restrictions. Its essential significance is that it pictures the disintegration of a cultured and sensitive mind which is unable to adjust itself to the outer world when compelled to cope with concrete problems. Goethe has given us a psychological novel (Rose 1931, p. 155).

Reiss (1959) suggests that "Werther's life is determined by the polarity between man's limitation [Einschränkung] and his urge for freedom" (p. 88). Consequently, a condition develops in which "Werther opposes to the demands and happenings of the external world the conditions of his own inner being" (p. 85). Werther becomes "a man who is finally broken by the tensions between the demands of external life and the desires of his inner life" (p. 91). Kuhn (1976) proposes that Werther represents "a universal human trait, a dissatisfaction with reality that produces a certain longing after something beyond the mortal condition, a restless striving that, at least in life, is condemned to remain unsatisfied. The background of unfulfilled aspirations is ennui" (p. 168). Thorlby (1976) intends to discuss Goethe's creative process, or genius, and points to Werther as a means to illustrate "the distinction between reality and imagination" (p. 150), "the relationship of the outer to the inner world" (p. 151), "the relationship of imagination--and in particular the literary imagination--to life" (p. 151). According to his analysis, "the blurring of the distinction between literature and life is what Werther is all about" (p. 155). In an essay by Steinhauer (1974), Werther is acclaimed as "a magnificent psychological study of a modern type: the neurotic artist-intellectual" (p. 9). Steinhauer (1970) interprets Werther as "the destruction of

an extreme idealist by his contact with inexorable reality" (p. 118).

It is described in the following language:

Werther is not primarily a novel about a tragic love, but a profound character study of a psychological type who has become more and more central in our Western culture: the disillusioned or frustrated man, who cannot find a place for himself in society; for whom all life turns sour and the world becomes a prison; in whom these sentiments or attitudes assume pathological intensity (p. 108).

Atkins (1948a) perceives Werther's suffering in terms of a sort of idleness or inactivity (Trägheit). Werther's tragedy is that he has "a highly developed inner life not balanced by any corresponding degree of external activity" (p. 549). Atkins maintains that "the disproportion between speculation and activity . . . is fatal for Werther" (p. 549). He also believes that the novel should be analyzed as a process of behavior and comments that "the interest of the novel is not in why Werther behaves as he does, but in how he will behave under given conditions" (p. 568). In a later analysis, Atkins (1949) labels the novel as an "objective study of self-destructive speculation" (p. 1). Clark (1947) writes that Werther is physically normal but that his "trouble is strictly psychic. He thirsts to know the innate constitution of things, the whole; but that constitution . . . is unknowable" (p. 275). Werther manifests an unwillingness to recognize that "the individual is foredoomed to perceive always only a part of the whole, since the whole itself is absolutely unknowable" (p. 275). Molnár(1969), in a related line of thought, states that man is able to know the world within certain limits but that "the price of knowledge is isolation from the pure object, from the objective totality for which he never ceases to yearn" (p. 232). Werther is an individual who "translates this yearning into

a search within his own limited realm which he may conduct . . . with resigned despair tempered only by the thought that the farce may be discontinued at will as soon as its futility becomes unendurable" (p. 232). Bragg (1976) assumes that "Werther is an exposition of Goethe's basic theories of psychology" (p. 132). The novel, he concludes, "is a delineation of the functions of the human brain and the social ramifications of unequal endowment with these powers" (p. 137). Morgan (1957), in the introduction to his translation of Werther, declares it to be "the first psychological novel in German" (p. vii), and Weigand (1962) is of the opinion that "the story has a powerful appeal for the psychologically oriented reader who follows the stages of the hero's mental disintegration with rapt fascination" (p. viii). Brinkmann (1976) stresses the concepts of individuality and subjectivity, and Graham (1973) emphasizes that "Goethe's novel is concerned with inwardness, with its tragic uncreativity as well as with the undying glory of its impulse" (p. 118). Riggan (1973) thinks he has found in Werther "the artist, the man of powerful sensibility and sensitivity and of sudden passion, the man of the present" (p. 253). He reports on the following effect of the novel:

[Werther] firmly established in world literature a new hero-type: the young man of extreme emotionalism, of subjectivism bordering on the narcissistic, of sensibility . . . of an inner dichotomy prefiguring that which was later to erupt in Faust, and of profound loneliness and Weltschmerz (p. 252).

Fricke (1950, pp. 33-39) emphasizes the intensity of Werther's emotionally created world and the meaning of the eighteenth-century Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang) conception of genius for young Goethe. Goodheart (1968) identifies the subservience of Werther to his heart and makes the following remark:

This is the blasphemy of the cult of feeling: the implicit belief that personal suffering has no boundaries. God, society, mortality: all give way to an all-encompassing suffering. Werther's suicide is a supreme manifestation of this exaltation of suffering (p. 73).

Goodheart then adds that "the self (the I) is the ultimate referent of all of Werther's feelings and actions" (p. 66). He suggests, in reference to Werther, that "the real theme of the book is his uncertain self-esteem" (p. 67). Introductory remarks to Stahl's (1942/1964) translation of Werther suppose that "the problem of the self is presented as a tragic conflict between the equally justifiable, but irreconcilable values of self-expression and self-control" (p. ix). Werther is depicted by Goethe as "a man diseased by his own introspectiveness, rendered impotent by extreme self-esteem" (p. xix). He is a character who disintegrates "through a lack of balance in the exercise of both rational and emotive powers" (p. xx). Korff (1954, p. 297) is attracted to the idea that the power of the self can create its own conception of the world. In other words, the world for Werther is represented by his own way of looking at, or perceiving, things. Blackall (1976) contends that "the work is to be concerned with man's attempt to construct an artificial world as a surrogate for reality" (p. 21). What Werther creates is "an artificial order based not on any relationship of the individual to what lies outside himself, but on a total absorption in his own thoughts" (p. 23). Blackall concludes that "his dilemma is his inability to accept any reality outside of and independent of himself" (p. 27). Lange (1949/1962) discusses the novel in terms of "the condition of a supremely sensitive, but supremely unstable human being" (p. vi). He perceives Werther to be "a young man who is crushed and destroyed by the unbearable weight of

his own passions" (p. vi). Dieckmann (1974), in a complimentary observation, assumes that "it is the total abandonment to his emotion which makes Werther so disturbing to the reader. No struggle, no attempt to control his love, no sense of responsibility--all these terms are phantoms in the presence of his sweeping emotion" (p. 117). Dieckmann speaks of "the shockingly self-centered quality of his emotions" (p. 119) and declares that "Werther's egocentricity . . . knows no bounds" (p. 119). Reiss (1971) concurs with this stress on the emotions and writes that "the centre of the work is Werther's inner experience, and his experience is determined by his emotions" (p. 24). He explains that "emotion dominates Werther's thought and activity. He is neither able nor willing to master his feelings" (p. 26). Reiss believes that Goethe has presented "an analysis of a neurotic personality" (p. 45). His conclusion is that "Werther is the work in which Goethe sought to come to terms with the role and function of feeling in life" (p. 52). Maurer (1958-1959) maintains the psychological thread by interpreting the conflict within Werther as "the clash of passion ending tragically in face of the realities of life" (p. 378). Trilling and Engelberg both focus on the element of consciousness. Trilling (1972) speaks in Hegelian terms of "the conception of the disintegrated, alienated, and distraught consciousness" (p. 47). Of the two main divisions in Werther, "the first is an account of the hero's effort to ward off the encroachment of disintegration, to remain an honest soul; the second tells of his free choice of disintegration" (p. 48). Engelberg (1972) addresses the question of Werther's sufferings and is convinced that they "are precisely those of a man whose conscience cannot confront his consciousness when



it reveals to him the process of accelerating the failure of achieving all goals" (p. 67). Wilkinson and Willoughby (1962), however, maintain that "Werther exhibits the psychical structure of the Schwärmer" (p. 46). They explain the novel as follows:

[It exhibits] the calamitous effects of what the eighteenth century called Schwärmerei, or Enthusiasm; by which it understood, not intensity of feeling, but a tendency to exalt that which is within . . . at the expense of that which is without, to press impatiently for immediate realization of what the mind can envisage while ignoring the claims of the factual situation (p. 43).

Feise (1914) is convinced that "Werther is personified youth" (p. 289) and that for him to be even considered as a married man would be contradictory (1926, p. 222). Fairley (1947) has determined that Werther is merely an extension of young Goethe's state of mind. It is an adolescent mind that "is a state of confusion, of darkness, of emotion running riot, of complete and acknowledged unintellectuality" (p. 47). Fairley states the following with regard to the immature Werther:

He affects us rather as one who is at the beginning of life and who fails as yet to perceive any order in it whatsoever. He finds himself surrounded by chaos or by illimitable forces that he cannot comprehend and it is these forces that overpower him at the last (p. 47).

#### Sociological Interpretations

Lukács (1968) is a contemporary European author who espouses a sociological interpretation of Werther. Lukács emphatically claims that "Werther is the culmination of young Goethe's struggles for the free and universally developed man" (p. 44). He explains that "Werther's conflict, Werther's tragedy is the tragedy of bourgeois humanism and shows the insoluble conflict between the free and full development of personality and bourgeois society itself" (p. 45). Leppmann (1961)

says that Goethe's novel "combines the appeal of a superbly written love story with the analysis of a quite specific sociological case history: that of a man for whom the fashionable prejudices of the time loom as tragic obstacles which cannot be overcome" (p. 17). Hatfield (1963) writes that Goethe's intention "to portray a suicide with such empathy and power, to contrast the delicate, charismatic young man to the unfeeling world of bourgeois respectability and aristocratic pride, was a defiant challenge to the age" (p. 38). Silz (1972) focuses on the middle-class limitations of Lotte. He suggests the following:

The middle-class mind, so sure of its decisions within accepted norms, soon becomes helpless when confronted with the extraordinary. One of its dubious resources is silence, a stubborn or timid failure to communicate. This is a factor in typical bourgeois tragedies, and is illustrated by Lotte's later course (p. 130).

Fiedler (1951/1955) finds Werther to be "the first anti-bourgeois novel" (p. 183) and "an attack on the role of woman in the middle-class world" (p. 183). Fiedler believes that "the essential subject of the Werther novel is always innocence and decadence--what is innocence and how can it be preserved in a corrupt world?" (p. 186). Ames (1977) identifies the bourgeois notion of competitiveness as a key element in the novel. Werther "competes to surpass Albert, the ultimate bourgeois, in both emotional capacity and practical success" (p. 138). Apparently, the sorrows of Werther "result from his inability to achieve in this life unity of emotional and practical superiority which would prove to himself and to others that he is truly an extraordinary man" (p. 138). Hazard (1954) presents the following judgment in reference to eighteenth-century European thought:

When he created Werther, the youthful Goethe had a new human type in mind. In Werther's case love would be but one more addition to the intolerable burden of one whom society irritated and life embittered, one whose dearest wish was to mingle, beyond the grave, with the spirit of the Universe (p. 281).

Atkins (1949, p. 70) points to the Storm and Stress ideology of anti-social individualism apparent in the novel, and Stahl (1942/1964), in fundamental agreement, adds that "Werther's search is a quest for a society which could not be found in his day--a society in which the individual could be preserved in his rights, yet also merge with others" (p. xv). Korff (1954, p. 303) reports of Werther's negative relationship to bourgeois society, and Lange (1949/1962) represents Werther as a youth who "found himself sadly, even tragically, in conflict with an insensible society, [so] that he could not maintain himself in a world which persisted in its conventional and emotional habits" (p. vi). Goethe had described, according to Lange, the "nearly irreconcilable tension between the creative and irrational powers of the individual and the compulsion of the objective world" (p. xii). In a later essay, Lange (1953) speaks of the "conflict between sensibility and the social order" (p. 44). He concentrates on this assessment of the period in which the novel took form and writes the following:

[Goethe] offers . . . an extraordinarily detailed picture of that spiritual dilemma in which the sentimental mind found itself--to live in an obsolescent and confined society in which yet here and there new and revolutionary energies of feeling and speculation emerged--energies, however, which with all their intensity remained inarticulate because suitable and generally intelligible terms for them had not yet evolved (p. 34).

Müller (1969, pp. 6-8) believes that Werther symbolizes the transition from a feudal to a bourgeois society and that through him are legitimized

the morality and mores of this new world. Müller also claims that Werther is the first novel of eighteenth-century German literature to have depicted and acknowledged the modern world of conflict within the context of society as a whole. To conclude this discussion of psychological and sociological interpretations, Steinhauer (1974) admits of the relationship between these two seemingly diverse approaches to the novel by writing that "Werther is a masterly psychological study of a young man rebelling against society" (p. 6). He is led to assert that "Werther is the first novel that deals mainly with this conflict between nature and culture" (p. 7).

### Themes

Salm (1973) introduces the theme of existentialism into his analysis of Goethe's novel. He contends the following:

When the structure of Werther is seen in the light of those aspects of the novel which tend to place it in the company of existentialist literature, it becomes possible to see a connection between its tragic form and the sense of a futile thrashing about in an absurd world (pp. 54-55).

Salm emphasizes "Werther's alienation from the surrounding life of nature and society and his nightmarish sense of the irrationality that pervades all existence" (p. 51). Dye (1975) alerts the reader to "the accusatory tendency in Werther, the sense of conflict which permeates the book between man and his world and thus man and his Creator, the implicit existential cry" (p. 316). The novel depicts the world in the following manner:

It is the idea conveyed that the world is an intrinsically inhospitable environment for such a creature as man and that God is either non-existent or a mysterious stranger. The book's equation of the unattainable with the most desirable amounted to an assertion of the disharmony in the universe (p. 318).

Dye desired to illuminate what he calls "the work's main challenge: its implicit claim that there is no correlation in the cosmos to man's yearnings" (p. 327). Parry (1963) is of the opinion that "Werther's cry of despair reverberates through literature. When the structure of life becomes disjointed and seems to spin out of control the fragments are terrifying" (p. 92). There is a "sense of terrible abandonment" (p. 96) about Werther as he reveals "the tone of a man whose predicament is existential" (p. 96). Fricke (1950, p. 60), in his essay on Goethe's Werther, offers the generalization that what happens in all eminent poetic creations is the transformation of the world as it is into grandiose images of what it could and should be. Boerner (1968b, p. 264) senses this tragic conflict of the individual with the inevitable course of events in life. He attributes Werther's downfall to the disproportion between the world and the man of sentimentality and inspiration. Werther is broken by the excess of his feelings and his inherent nature. Atkins (1949), in expressing his views on the theme of Werther and the world, states the following:

A frustrated generation sensed in the novel the poetic representation of its own spiritual crisis, for Werther's suicide was the outstanding expression, in the form of an action, of the doubts which many had about the value of life in what was no longer felt to be the best of all possible worlds (p. 65).

Another indictment of the world in which man finds himself is given by Butler (1958) who feels that Werther represents "an individual isolated from society by the misery of its suffering and finding no redress in the universe which appears totally indifferent" (p. 258). Korff (1954, p. 296) is convinced that Goethe has presented the unrequited love of a sentimental man for a world which everywhere refuses to grant the

infinite demands of his inner self. To reinforce this notion, Korff (p. 307) asserts that the suffering of Werther ultimately brings before God a mute accusation against the world. Feise (1914) writes that Goethe depicts a "Werther who, living in his own world of ideals, is shipwrecked in the encounter with hostile reality" (p. 257). Blackall (1976) contends that "the novel . . . is concerned with the 'sufferings' of a man attempting to find some order of existence into which he can integrate himself without losing himself" (p. 39). The heart of Blackall's position is that "ultimately the book is about the quest for order--order not in the sense of social or domestic order, but as the basic ontological necessity" (p. 40). Lange (1953) decides that the "demonstration of the tragic condition of life is, in varying settings, the central motif of all of Goethe's fiction" (p. 54). Consequently, Werther becomes "the portrait of an eccentric in a world that has itself lost its centre" (p. 37). Goethe strove to convey Werther's "discovery of an inevitable sense of loneliness, the recognition of the void which he must bring himself to accept" (p. 37). Lange speaks of the "Wertherian experience of a dissolving universe, held together only by the intensity of a restless mind, clinging, not to dubious reality, but to remembered, filtered, and reassociated fragments of feeling, observation, and learning" (pp. 38-39). There is in the novel "that predominant element of abysmal loneliness from which only tor-  
rential speech offers relief" (p. 39). Lange concludes that Goethe has written an "account of a crumbling world" (p. 40). It is the tragic state of "a world of ever decreasing vitality" (p. 43). Spann (1972) views the period in which Werther was conceived as "a time of

crumbling values" (p. 77). He defines the sufferings of Werther as the "sorrows of the West" (p. 74) and is persuaded that the concern of the novel is with specific ethical values which remain appropriate even for the modern world of today. Hatch (1974) stresses the theme of human relationships in Goethe's novel. She declares that "Werther's devotion to his friend Wilhelm and his love for Lotte are aspects of his awareness of himself in relation to others, of his sympathetic participation in the experience and being of another person" (p. 110). Hatch is convinced that for Werther "it is the conviction that what matters is being a human being and enjoying intimacy with other human beings" (p. 109). Dieckmann (1962a) investigates Goethe's attitude toward different types of freedom and applies a portion of her findings to Werther. She states that "Werther belongs to the category of unfree characters" (p. 29) and makes the following generalization: "One might almost divide Goethe's characters into those who act according to their own free choice and those who do not. All the demonic characters, the driven ones, belong in the latter category: Werther, Eduard, Orest, Tasso, Faust" (p. 29). Brickman (1949), interested in the educational application of the novel, proposes that "Goethe's basic educational ideals are individualism in Die Leiden des jungen Werthers" (p. 147). In an assessment of Werther by Stahl (1942/1964), it is suggested that "God is the ultimate centre of his thought" (p. xvi). Stahl expands upon this notion by explaining that "it is the relation between Werther and his God rather than between him and his fellow men that gives us the clearest indication of his malady" (p. xvi). Staiger (1952/1960, pp. 166-173) speaks of Werther in terms of the totality of man and of the oneness, or unity, of body

and soul. He considers Werther's passionate speech, as well as his love, to be inspired by the experience that man is an inseparable whole.

Blackall (1976) thinks that the book depicts the following:

It deals with man's struggle for self-fulfillment with reference to what lies outside the self, for realization of self without total retreat into the self. Werther fails: he does retreat into the self and the self disintegrates because nothing outside it really had independent validity for him (pp. 39-40).

Stahl (1949) clarifies what he considers to be the main cause of Werther's misanthropy. He writes that Werther "perishes because he is tormented by the instability of life. Instead of participating in its constant ebb and flow, he is detached from the life-giving force, and remains a mere spectator of the great cycle of change (p. 49). In introducing his translation of Werther, Lange (1949/1962) decides that "in the experience of human insufficiency lies, ultimately, the key to Werther" (p. viii). He also comments upon young Goethe's "assertions of the creative freedom of the individual" (p. vii) and the relevance of this notion for the novel. Reiss (1971) concurs with the emphasis on the theme of freedom and focuses upon elements within the book that imply "the polarity which determines Werther's inner life, the conflict between the limitations imposed upon man and his urge for freedom" (p. 37). Beutler (1969, p. 148) bridges the categories of theme and motif with his reference to Goethe's repetitious use of the word heart. This term emerges again and again in the letters of Werther and is the theme, according to Beutler, that dominates the entire novel.



## Motifs

Of the variety of motifs identified and examined within the novel, suicide is undoubtedly the most recurrent. Diez (1936) emphatically concludes that "Werther's suicide is the principal theme, the most important event and climax of the whole development" (p. 830). Wilson (1975) supposes that "Werther seeks death as the only avenue to freedom and fulfillment of his nature" (p. 105). Wilson asserts that "the freedom which Werther seeks is a release from the prison of his own self-destructive soul, which . . . is overheated and run wild; suicide is thus an affirmation of the conditions of immortality" (p. 106). Feuerlicht (1978) can find no reason for Werther's suicide other than his suicidal drive. Werther's death instinct equates to "an irrational death wish" (p. 479). The relation between suicide and the Oedipus complex is described by Faber (1973). He reports that "the separation that stands behind Werther's tragic behavior, including his suicidal death, is the separation from the mother" (p. 244). Faber is certain that "in the character of Werther we behold a human being whose regressive inability to separate from the maternal figure provokes his regressive attachment to Charlotte and ultimately his suicidal death" (pp. 275-276). Salm (1973) perceives Werther's suicide as an act of metaphysical rebellion. He maintains that "it is possible to see Werther's act not only as a defeat but also as a rebellion against his Einschränkung, his incarceration behind thick walls of illusion which he is vainly struggling to break down" (p. 51). Ittner (1942) discusses Werther's suicide in terms of the feeling of sinfulness for having caused Lotte to endure such great unhappiness. Ittner declares

that "consciousness of guilt and a desire to atone for such guilt form a motif in the novel and this must be considered as the immediate . . . cause of Werther's death" (p. 421). As Werther contemplates and actually accomplishes his own death, Ittner contends that Goethe has created a character "who finally takes cognizance of the institutions and the standards of the world, and who acknowledges them by sacrificing himself" (p. 426). In their observations of Werther, Dukas and Lawson (1969) remark that "having failed to form understanding relationships with the people in day-to-day life . . . the superfluous man, seeks, like Werther, to create a situation from which there is only one escape: death" (p. 151). Viëtor (1949) mentions, in reference to the novel, that "suicide is here presented as the necessary consequence of a passion whose power transcended the 'bounds of humanity'" (pp. 33-34). Borgese (1950) contends that "Werther is the myth of suicide, death in surrender" (p. 3). Korff (1954, p. 296) emphasizes Werther's self-destruction too, and believes this element of suicide to be the innermost idea of the work. Korff points out that Goethe described those "Faustian" men of that time who were bound together in their uncertainty over life by a deep and grave disposition toward suicide. Fetzer (1971) analyzes what he calls "the principal gesture in Goethe's novel: the embrace" (p. 87). The three types of embraces as determined by Fetzer (the cosmic, the concrete, and the empty) all represent stages through which Werther progresses. Schumann (1956) extracts the notion of polarity from the book and discusses in his article "the entire polarity of Werther: Werther the genius of feeling . . . Werther the victim of emotional self-pampering" (p. 535).

Neumann (1973) is curious as to Werther's ability as a lawyer and wishes "to see then if his legal activity, or lack of it at times, in any way contributed to his end" (p. 219). He expresses the opinion that Werther is "a young lawyer whose self-doubts devour him" (p. 222). Diez (1936) is intrigued by Goethe's use of metaphorical language in Werther. He speaks of "the theme which is to dominate both the story and the imagery of its language: the analogy and relationship of physical and mental suffering" (p. 832). Diez further recognizes that "the metaphors taken from death, sickness, and pain saturate and flavor the language of Werther throughout, and when lifted out of the text, form a great cycle of closely related and interwoven imagery" (p. 989). Goethe had apparently realized "the relation of the world of emotions and the mind to the human body and its organs . . . and the importance of the relation for linguistic expression" (p. 1005). From her detailed study of Goethe and Werther, Graham (1977) offers the following insight:

Only in its form had the metamorphosis its author had undergone in the process of composing found its proper precipitate. Only there--not in its Stoff--was he to be found. Not to understand the form of his book was not to understand the book; worse still, it was not to understand the man the author had become in the writing of it (pp. 31-32).

Tobol and Washington (1977) concentrate on Goethe's motif of Homer as read by Werther. They write that "Homer has served his narrative purpose, underscoring with the connotative power of literary allusion the changes in Werther's perception of reality and foreshadowing his demise" (p. 601). Tobol and Washington affirm that "Werther's selective reading of Homer . . . drew his sensitive spirit into delusions from which there was no return" (p. 601). Butler (1958) isolates the element of time and reports that "in Werther . . . time marks and accelerates the progress

of an incurable disease and is one of the actively destructive agents" (p. 248). According to Butler, there is "a double time in the novel. In fact one is almost forced to discriminate between 'real time' and the 'emotional time'" (pp. 248-249). McCormick (1976) argues that the landscape descriptions in Werther are psychologically intended to express aspects of human behavior. He concludes that "to see without being seen . . . and thereby both to enjoy landscape aesthetically and to render it familiar, destroying what is unknown in it, is to appropriate the world. This is, in a broad symbolic sense, what Werther does" (p. 206). Forster, Dvoretzky, and Graham each focus upon the significance of Lessing's drama, Emilia Galotti, to Werther. Forster (1958) assumes that the message of Emilia Galotti "is the message of the whole play, not of any particular scene" (p. 45). He acknowledges the placement of the drama in Goethe's novel with the following assessment:

Werther himself saw the parallels between his own situation and that in Lessing's play. He was in that frame of mind in which one applies everything one reads to one's own case. He cannot well have failed to see the affinity of the Prince's character to his own. . . . And so Werther, conscious of his temptation to murder, sees it reflected in Lessing's play (pp. 43-44).

Dvoretzky (1962) claims that "Werther is, after all, a psychological novel" (p. 25). He then draws the implication that "Emilia Galotti is a symbol in Goethe's eyes for death or its imminent approach" (pp. 25-26). Graham (1962) develops the connection of Lessing's drama to Goethe's novel by discussing the relationship between Goethe and his Werther. She writes the following:

If it [Werther] tells us anything about its author, it is that here is indeed a master of his medium; one who has decisively severed his fate from that of his hero in that

he has conquered both the external medium of his craft and the internal medium of his creative depths. It tells us so by its inner form, and by what we now recognize to be a profoundly ambiguous and ironical poetic symbol: the symbol of Emilia Galotti (p. 24).

### Literary Genre

Goethe's short novel has also been portrayed as representing a specific literary genre. This fourth category in the review of Wertherian literature will be a brief summary concerning two of the more well-known classifications: (a) a story of love, and (b) an example of the eighteenth-century literature of sentiment. Atkins (1949) addresses the former designation by expressing his view that "so long as feeling and suffering are in some sense one, it may be said that Werther has properly been called a book of eternal love" (p. 218). Bullock (1932) included this work in his review of three thwarted romances. Bullock asserts the following about Werther:

[It] described, with a minimum of concrete incident and with a maximum of passionate description and sentimentally speculative digression, philosophical and social, a supersensitive young man's enamourment with an exquisitely virtuous young woman, and the effect wrought upon his battered soul by her marriage to another (p. 431).

Viëtor (1949) is a spokesman for placing the novel in the latter category of literary genres. He announces that "it is the state of his generation's soul which Goethe sets forth in Werther" (p. 28). Viëtor expands upon this statement by observing in the book "the softening and the excess of emotion which we call sentimentality. A tense and idealistic youth found itself cut off from the world of great action, worthy achievement, and lofty striving by an antiquated social order" (p. 29). The result for these young men was that "the fulfillment which they

could not find in active life they were forced to seek in inward existence" (p. 33). Atkins (1949) echoes this opinion when he affirms that Goethe's novel was "an example of the international literature of sentiment which flourished in the latter half of the eighteenth century" (p. 4). He regards Werther as "a sentimental novel in which could be recognized familiar elements of melancholy, pathos, despair, social revolt, and idealized nature" (p. 65). Korff (1954, p. 297) is convinced that Werther embodies the inspired, sentimental man more clearly than any other figure of Storm and Stress fiction. Weigand (1962) assumes that contemporary readers perceive the novel "as a highly illuminating, vivid, and colorful document reflecting the Zeitgeist of the 'age of sentiment'" (p. vii). Gray (1967) is convinced that "Werther's feelings are those of an extreme sentimentalist" (p. 49). He proposes that Goethe "had drawn a picture of a youth from his day, overjoyed at the emotions aroused in him by the scenes of Nature, wide open to every impression, living from moment to moment at an intensity almost unbearable" (p. 49). In a variation on the application of sentimentality to Werther, Dieckmann (1974) explains as follows:

We are not dealing with a "sentimental" work, but rather with a beautifully constructed novel which deliberately presents the tragedy of a sentimental hero in a nonsentimental mode. It is not the author, but his character, Werther, who is sentimental (p. 113).

Trunz (1951/1963, pp. 551-553) is somewhat more general and universal in his comments about the position of the novel in the literary world. He observes that it was by writing Werther that the first modern German novel was brought into being. For Germany, Trunz declares, Goethe's book was the beginning of modern prose.

As is evident from this survey of the literature, there has been neither an intensive nor extensive study of the novel Werther from the stance of Goethe's epistemology. The novel has been approached almost exclusively by way of its literary merit, leaving its potentiality as a learning construct to go virtually unrealized. Research and writing which does relate to the epistemological aspects of both Goethe and the novel will be incorporated into chapter IV of the dissertation. Literature concerning the educational significance of specific learning principles derived from the premises of Goethe's epistemology will be surveyed in chapter V of the dissertation.

## CHAPTER III

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY

Goethe's concepts of the human will, the self, responsibility, choice, and growth will be identified and subsequently utilized as the skeletal frame from which to construct the working principles of his thought process. By focusing on Goethe's actual thinking and how he comes to know, the novel and its interpretation become a means, or mode, with which to illustrate the epistemological functioning of his mind. In looking at the intellectual totality of the man, Goethe's potentiality as a learning theorist is recognized.

Goethe's epistemology manifests itself through an analytical study of the character Werther. In order to define Goethe's theory of knowledge, however, it is necessary to determine its application. This means that the constituent elements of Goethe's epistemology both flow into and out of the novel. It is a cycle that provides for a unified and consistent philosophy of knowledge. The identification of Goethe as an epistemologist is accordingly brought to the novel and provides the basis for its interpretation.

Within the novel Werther, Goethe presents a learning construct. This construct will be defined by means of its premises as determined from within the context of the novel. Learning principles can then be derived from these premises. By thinking through the premises of the construct and setting up a parallelism between the premises and the



evolving principles, attention will be centered on the philosophy inherent in the principles. Employing a methodology that conceives of the novel as a medium from which learning principles are to be distilled and extracted permits the focus of this analysis to be on the movement from the validation of the premises to the unfolding of the principles. From within the novel, the implications for educational theory will be realized through the development of specific learning principles.

Goethe injected the elements of his epistemology into the literary composition of the novel. As a result, Werther became the prototype for Goethe's theory of knowledge. Schaub (1933) addressed the following remarks in observance of the centennial of Goethe's death:

Nevertheless, we may say of him, as of other thinkers who exhibit less change and diversity, that certain of his major doctrines and leading ideas were rooted in and express a nature which was at least relatively permanent and which manifested itself both within and throughout the flux and shiftings of passing years (p. 145).

The epistemological framework that Goethe constructed for the novel Werther was to be the permanent structure upon which he built his literary corpus. In order to pursue a critical examination of Werther's self and his relationships, research questions will be formulated by identifying major learning concepts and premises within the fabric of the novel itself. The nature of the questions posited in this study are as follows: (a) What is the responsibility of the human will in the learning process? (b) What is the responsibility of the self to itself? (c) What did Goethe recognize as being fundamental to the growth process? (d) What are the educational implications of identifying the learning act as a process of self-examination? and (e) What is the nature of the responsibility

inherent in freedom of choice? These questions, based on Goethe's premises concerning the human will, the self, responsibility, choice, and growth will guide the analysis and interpretation of the novel. After revealing the facets of his epistemology, Goethe's educational principles will be brought to the surface and subsequently explained.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH

#### Interpretation of the Novel

If there is to be any understanding of the novel's epistemological structure as erected by Goethe, a critical study of the character Werther is essential. It is Werther's response to events, as well as his relationships with others and with his own self, which reflect the premises of Goethe's theory of learning.

Goethe presents the confrontation of Werther with the problem of the human will and its function in the letter of May 22, 1771.

Werther reflects on the following:

That the life of man is but a dream is a thought which has occurred to many people, and I myself am constantly haunted by it. When I see the limitations which imprison the active and speculative faculties of man; when I see how all human activity is directed toward procuring satisfaction for needs that have no other purpose than prolonging our miserable existence; when I see, moreover, how any comfort we may derive from certain points of inquiry is merely a dream-like kind of resignation, in which we paint our prison walls with gaily colored figures and luminous prospects--all this, Wilhelm, leaves me speechless. I withdraw into my inner self and there discover a world--a world, it is true, rather of vague perceptions and dim desires than of creative power and vital force. And then everything swims before my senses, and I go on smiling at the outer world like someone in a dream (Goethe 1971, pp. 11-12).

Werther is lamenting the fact that his inner world lacks clarity and substance. It is a world of imagination to which is opposed the outer world of reality. Because Werther rejects any relation with reality, he is caught between both worlds. He seems to be acting from premises

that are based upon phantoms of his own fabrication. It is comfortable for Werther to react and respond in such a manner since he has no real conception of his inner nature, and he denies any participation in the external realm of existence. Werther's failure as a man, then, is his refusal to accept the inherent epistemological responsibility for determining and giving essence to the inner world of the self. His bitter complaint in regard to the limitations of mankind has only a scant foundation. In actuality, the confinement that Werther thinks he has uncovered and justly denounced is self-imposed. That the life of man appears as merely an image in the mind of Werther accents the absence of a process of intellectual validation resting upon an empirical base.

A complimentary passage that further reveals the nature of Werther's perception is the episode with the youthful farm hand. Werther immediately empathizes with the country lad's amorous plight. The young man describes with passionate subjectivity the features and qualities of the widow by whom he is employed. Werther is overcome by his emotions and concludes the letter of May 30, 1771, with the following statement:

I shall try to see her as soon as possible, or rather, after giving it a second thought, I shall avoid her. It is better that I see her through the eyes of her lover; she might not appear to my own eyes, in reality, as I now see her; and why should I destroy the lovely image I already possess? (Goethe 1971, p. 20).

Werther is again turning away from what is real toward a world of emotional fantasy. This is the way he intends to keep matters. It is what he is insistent upon if reality is to be fended off. Werther's eventual relationship with Lotze will be based not on the true nature of her own self but rather on his self-conceived image of her inner character.

Werther's reference to the insubstantial quality of the world about him is delineated to his confidant in the letter of July 18, 1771:

Wilhelm, what would the world mean to our hearts without love! What is a magic lantern without its lamp! As soon as you insert the little lamp, then the most colorful pictures are thrown on your white wall. And even though they are nothing but fleeting phantoms, they make us happy as we stand before them like little boys, delighted at the miraculous visions (Goethe 1971, pp. 47-48).

Werther is confronting the domain of reality with that of appearance. Like the shackled prisoners described by Plato (1941/1965, chap. 25) in the cave allegory, Werther observes but does not perceive. He only sees exactly what he wants to see and thereby excludes the will's insistence that his self experience what it confronts. If the legitimacy of its emotions are not questioned and validated, the heart too will provide only reflections and visions. Perception implies a process of evaluation. In other words, there is the empirical need for relationships to develop in order for the mind to become more fully conscious. Confrontation with the reality of existence, rather than a mode of self-acquiescence, is demanded by the will whenever the intellectual process is fully in balance.

In the letter of August 8, 1771, Goethe portrays the extent to which Werther has succumbed to the process of rationalization. Several questions are posed by Werther in the following paragraph:

But can you demand it of the unhappy man whose whole life is slowly and irremediably wasting away of a lingering disease; can you demand that he should make a definite end of his misery by the stab of a dagger? And does not the disease, at the very same time that it burns up his strength, also destroy the courage he needs to free himself from it? (Goethe 1971, p. 54).

Werther wants to convince himself that his malady and suffering are the result of an external determinant. He believes his misfortune to be analogous to the physical problem of disease and desires to feel as if he has no control over the matter itself or its implications. In his essay on Werther, Mann (1941/1968, p. 344) elucidates Werther's situation through an analysis of Goethe's intention with respect to events in the novel. Mann, concentrating on the character of Werther as hero and correspondent, claims that Werther is young Goethe himself. Significantly absent in Werther, however, is the creative talent with which nature endowed the living Goethe. Werther has no other mission on earth besides his suffering in life, concludes Mann, and so he has to perish. Mann's analysis implies that Goethe was equating the creative act with the learning act. Learning is the realization of new relationships and the subsequent actualization of their potentialities. Creativity is the development of new potentiality between relationships. If Werther is, as Mann suggests, the figure of Goethe but without his ability for creativity, what remains is an individual who is minus the will to learn, or grow, or create. The implication is that man dies when he no longer grows. He stops living when he stops growing. To stop the growth process, as in the case of Werther, is suicide. Goethe was aware that all learning is creative in essence because the self, as a self-determiner, is constantly involved in the process of designing its future. Learning and living are the recognition and the acceptance of the need to never stop. The self must will to live by experiencing the learning process. Graham (1973) identified this notion of Goethe's and succinctly wrote that "he lived in order to write"

(p. 135). Writing was a learning process, in the case of Goethe, through which both he and his reading public were educated. Although Werther, in his letter of August 8, 1771, makes reference to the similarity of his condition to that of an individual with an incurable disease, there is actually no physical reason for him to die. Werther has no choice, therefore, but to take his own life if he is to die. His turmoil is self-imposed, and Werther realizes that his sorrows alone are not capable of depriving him of the courage necessary to free himself from such tumult. Mann (1941/1968, p. 348) considers the struggle with this dilemma as one of the strongest motives for Werther's suicide. Although he may strongly desire to relinquish all sense of control to an external force, Werther vaguely recognizes that even the will to be determined has its source within the self. Ultimately it is always the internal which brings about that which the self wills.

In the conclusion of his letter of August 8, 1771, Werther mentions how he happened upon his diary, which he had temporarily disregarded. He writes, "I am amazed how I ran into this situation with full awareness, step by step. How clearly I have seen my condition, yet how childishly I have acted. How clearly I still see it, and yet show no signs of improvement" (Goethe 1971, p. 54). In yet another passage, Werther's heightened sense of awareness and ability to self-analyze is clearly in evidence. The letter is dated November 3, 1772, and occurs in the second part of the novel. Werther declares:

Oh, if I only could have moods, could shift the blame on the weather, a third person, or on an unsuccessful enterprise, then only half the weight of this unbearable burden of discontent would rest on me. Miserable me! I know only too well that the fault is with me alone--not fault! Enough, the source of all my misery is hidden in myself as was formerly the source of all my happiness (Goethe 1971, pp. 113-114).

Werther has an awareness of his condition, but he lacks any control over it. By allowing his self to succumb to the process of rationalization, Werther has willed that he become a fully determined being. He possesses knowledge and, as a result, knows what he should do but refuses to act accordingly. It is the responsibility inherent in awareness to develop, expand, and generate a greater depth of consciousness within the mind in order to realize the meaning and application of knowledge. Peterson (1970) addresses a similar problem when he discusses the "cycle of consciousness" in the following paragraph:

The cycle of consciousness is an important factor in the psychological make-up of the learner. As a construct it carries with it the realization that learning builds upon previous learning, in a sense, gathering momentum as each fact is added to what is in the process of becoming a whole. An integral part of this process is the developing consciousness which accompanies the comprehension of meaning and understanding. To understand meaning is to be conscious of its application and implication. Learning and its spirit is the originator of the value condition. To place value upon a fact is to find relevancy in that fact; this is its condition. From within the cycle of consciousness the value condition prompts the learner to question the reliability and validity of the material of knowledge. It determines the importance of the subject for the learner. To determine importance is to recognize the applicability of the subject to a personal need. Thus, the spirit of learning motivates and permits the cycle of consciousness to fulfill its purpose (pp. 52-53).

Peterson implies a need for the will to act from an empirical base. This recognition of the cognitive domain is entirely supplanted by Werther with a realm of emotion and feeling. The problem, however, is not that of the cognitive in opposition to the affective but rather of determining the legitimacy of that feeling and emotion. There must be a reason, a purpose, and a sense of control in both the cognitive and affective domains. What Werther failed to do was to validate with his own mind and thereby establish a relationship between the cognitive and affective



constructs of the mind. Because he did not build an empirical structure on which his will could act, Werther was incapable of validating the specificity of objects for himself.

Eventually and irrevocably the consumption of Werther's entire being commences. In the powerful and intense letter of December 6, 1772, the link that bridges Werther with the world of reality becomes a mere thread. Werther cries out in his agony over Lotte:

How her image haunts me! Awake or asleep, she fills my entire being. Here, when I close my eyes, here, in my forehead, at the focus of my inner vision, her dark eyes remain. Here! but I cannot put it into words. When I close my eyes, they are there; like an ocean, like an abyss, they lie before me, in me, taking hold of all my thoughts (Goethe 1971, p. 124).

Werther has become a fully determined being; that is, he is being lived by external determinants rather than living according to his own powers of self-determination. Through the process of rationalization, his intellectual processes were not permitted to feed his will with criteria based on honesty. He sealed his own fate by consuming nothing but untruth and therefore relinquished his freedom. At this point of total dishonesty with himself, Werther renounced his responsibility to the self. He had willed that his self become externally determined.

Goethe's method of conveying this message to the reader is to have the "editor," at this particular juncture, assume the responsibility of directly transmitting the final course of events within the novel. Peterson (1977c), in his book on the human will, states the nature of the relationship between the will and responsibility in these terms:

While the learner may be subject to determinants, external or internal in nature, it is intellectual stance (the total intellectual process) which governs whether or not he will allow himself to be determined, or will exert his intellectual and

willful powers of self-determination. It is our contention that responsibility, as we are using it here, is rightfully assumed only when the powers of self-determination are exercised (p. 20).

Of course, Werther's powers of self-determination have been willfully depleted, and Peterson (1977c) reminds the reader of the following:

The degree of responsibility will be in keeping with the degree of awareness found in the consciousness of the learner. How conscious is he of his responsibility as a self-determiner? Without this consciousness, the will will realize that the mind subjects itself to determinants which may assume all responsibility for what is done (p. 20).

In this case, it is the process of rationalization to which the mind of Werther yields. Engelberg (1972) seems to generally concur with this assessment of Werther's predicament as indicated in the following statement:

[Werther is] in quest of the increasing certainty that there is some unity of being, some correspondence, as it was later to be called, between perception (consciousness) and knowledge (conscience), between what a man felt and what he valued. One may put the last point even more emphatically: what a man feels must be of value (p. 74).

In other words, the knowledge that resides in consciousness carries value as its meaning is revealed through the empirical thrusts of awareness (conscience). Rather than will a confrontation with his consciousness in order to validate this knowledge for himself, Werther continues to impose a system of values determined by the rationalization process. He therefore wills a perception which the truth of awareness would deny. Engelberg (1972) acknowledges Werther's self-deception and states the following:

He alone bestows values, and it is the terrible disparity between perception and value that destroys his quest for unity and harmony. After all the point is that Werther's "distemper" is a symptom of his frustration, his inability,

finally, to unite perception and knowledge, for knowledge relentlessly contravenes whatever value he places--or forces--upon his perceptions (p. 75).

Consequently, Werther's will functions upon a foundation of untruth that permits him neither to learn nor to grow.

It is apparent that Werther does not possess a clear sense of responsibility toward his self. Following his initial encounter with Lotte, Werther declares, in the letter of June 19, 1771, that "for me there is neither day or night, and the entire universe about me has ceased to exist" (Goethe 1971, p. 32). Although he has not determined the value or meaningfulness of this relationship, Werther begins to regard Lotte as his sole reason for existence. In fact, several weeks later, on July 1, 1771, Werther exclaims, "O angel, for your sake I must live!" (Goethe 1971, p. 41). If Werther is not even able to live for himself, then how can he live for the sake of another? Since Werther perceives Lotte and the rest of the world not as they really are but as he wishes and desires them to be, he would be living a life of contradiction. By willing to be dishonest with himself, Werther refuses to accept the demands of responsibility. The consequence of such a course of action is obvious. In the second part of the novel, on the evening of October 27, 1772, Werther dishearteningly observes, "I have so much in me, and the feeling for her absorbs it all; I have so much, and without her it all comes to nothing" (Goethe 1971, p. 113). Werther is suffering from his abdication of responsibility toward the self. An observation is offered by Peterson (1977c): "It is only the self-determined mind which is willing to accept responsibility for its actions; and, of course, responsibility accepted as

such, is the working hypothesis from which the intellectual process moves" (p. 99). Werther has willed, however, that the movement of his intellectual process be subject to the demands of external determinants.

A rather peculiar allusion is made by Werther, in the letter of July 16, 1771, when he asserts that "a secret force [eine geheime Kraft] drives me forward again, although everything swims before my eyes" (Goethe 1971, p. 46). A suggestion consistent with Werther's character would identify this concealed force as his will. It is a will that is activated by a mind that lacks its self-corrective measure. Peterson (1977c) provides the following comment:

While it is the mind which rationalizes, it is also the mind which serves as its own self-corrective; one of the largest areas of responsibility lies in studying the many faces of rationalization. This is not to suggest that the mind is at odds with this ever-present activity; it simply demands to be in control of it. The mind, then, makes a distinction between the cognitive process and the processes of rationalization. It is rationalization which must be tested by the cognitive process and ultimately the entire intellectual process, including the affective and conative (p. 15).

Werther is essentially being driven by a will which he has not accepted the responsibility to validate.

A glaring paradox is evident in the letter of July 20, 1771.

In his reply to Wilhelm, Werther asks:

Am I not now active? and does it make any real difference whether I count peas or lentils? As everything in the world amounts after all to nothing to speak of, a person who drudges for the sake of others, for money or honors or what not, without following his own ambition, his own need, is always a fool (Goethe 1971, p. 49).

In order for Werther to realize and validate his own needs and ambitions, it is necessary for him to establish a relationship to the self.

Peterson (1970) writes the following explanation:

For man to be the subject of personal human reaction is to take it for granted that the self exists; but how he exists and why changes his relationship to the self. What is the self then becomes the most important concern of the individual. To ask: who am I? and find the answer is to realize that the goal of the individual is to be able to identify with the self (p. 14).

It is not possible for Werther to know his self because he has denied himself the responsibilities inherent in self-determination. Ortega (1949/1968), in reference to Werther's notion of activity, personifies the phenomenon of life in an imaginary conversation with Werther and exclaims, "'It is not enough to act; you have to make your I, your absolutely individual destiny. You have to make up your mind irremediably. To live fully is to be something irrevocably'" (p. 167). Ortega is speaking of the will to design, or realize, the relationship to the self. As a fully determined being, Werther does not will to experience, to know, or to learn. He devalues the meaning of the world because he places no value on his own existence in it.

Wilhelm has written concerning the strained and precarious relationship between Lotte and Werther. On August 8, 1771, Werther answers the argument of his confidant and maintains the following:

In this world we are seldom faced with an Either-Or; all emotions and modes of actions show as many varieties of shape and shading as exist between a hooked nose and one that is turned up. So you won't be angry with me when I grant your whole argument, and yet continue in my attempt to slip in between the Either and the Or (Goethe 1971, p. 53).

Werther is rationalizing again. He does not comprehend that the need and responsibility to choose is decisive. Peterson (1970) writes the following:

[Man] exists as a man because he possesses the power and insight found in choice. Whatever he does is the result of choice; this is one thing he is unable to escape. It

determines his relationship to the self as well as to others; it is the key of his determinative powers of consciousness. . . . Man creates his own life and does this by finding meaning in all of existence; he does this by means of using the opportunities afforded him in choice (p. 17).

Werther stagnates and decays because his mind is so determined that it lacks the freedom and will to make a valid choice.

On August 22, 1771, Werther astutely comments, "If we fail ourselves, everything fails us" (Goethe 1971, p. 67). He lacks a basic faith in himself and is unable to value and find meaning. Peterson (1970) realizes that "freedom provides the setting out of which values evolve. . . . Meaning is found when value is realized; value is realized only because freedom exercises its responsibilities to the self" (p. 15). Werther has lost his freedom and given up the attendant responsibilities inherent in freedom. In the same letter he continues:

The minister has liked me for a long time, and has frequently urged me to devote myself to some work; and sometimes, for an hour or so, it seems the thing to do. But when I come to consider it a little later, I remember the fable of the horse which, tired of its freedom, let itself be harnessed and was ridden to death (Goethe 1971, pp. 67-68).

Whether he actually works or not is of little concern, for in neither case is Werther free. His self-imposed limitations have in effect "saddled and harnessed" his own self.

As the second part of the novel proceeds, Werther renounces all sense of accountability to himself and others. He writes to Wilhelm, on March 24, 1772, the following words: "And therefore--sugar the bitter pill for my mother. I cannot help myself, and she must put up with the fact that I cannot help her either" (Goethe 1971, p. 93). Werther acknowledges now that he will act, as he previously did, without fully

validating the reasons for his actions. His reactions will be spontaneous and impulsive. Rationalization and dishonesty have reached such a proportion in Werther that he is reluctant to blame himself for what is happening. It is easy for him to make these statements of surrender and deception because all that he has to do is point toward some external factor that has supposedly led to his downfall. Underneath this facade, though, Werther dimly recognizes that it is really what is inside him (the internal) that is out of balance. At the end of the letter of August 18, 1771, he inserts the following message of despair:

My heart is instead worn out by the consuming power latent in the whole of Nature which has formed nothing that will not destroy its neighbor and itself. So I stagger with anxiety, Heaven and Earth and their weaving powers around me! I see nothing but an eternally devouring and ruminating monster (Goethe 1971, p. 66).

What Werther sees, in reality, is a reflection of his self. He is disintegrating and feeding his own consumptive process very rapidly. Werther literally devours himself, and the pace continues until the "editor" finally has to directly continue relating the course of the novel.

Floundering in the emptiness of his self, Werther sends an intense and emotionally charged letter to Wilhelm on November 15, 1772. He asks:

And why must I be ashamed at the terrible moment when my whole life trembles between being and not-being; when the past flashes like lightning over the gloomy abyss of the future and everything around me collapses, and the world is destroyed with me--is it not then the voice of a creature thrown completely on his own resources, who has failed himself and is resistlessly plunging into the abyss, that grinds out the cry, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Goethe 1971, p. 116).

Because he has not established a responsible relationship to his self, Werther is again attempting to transfer the cause of his sufferings onto an external determinant. As a determined and unfree being, he denies almost all responsibility for the condition of his life. Werther feels that he is alone in the world, and his lack of control over the forces that confront him only increase his sense of helplessness and impending doom.

Goethe powerfully depicts the relationship between responsibility and the self in the letter of November 30, 1772. Werther is confronted by a man named Heinrich, who has lost his sanity (because of an unrequited love for Lotte), and he probes the peculiar nature of this man by means of conversation. Heinrich's mother soon arrives in search of her son, and Werther takes this opportunity to ask for an explanation concerning one of Heinrich's statements. Werther wants to know the following:

"What did he mean when he spoke of a time when he was so happy and well off?"--"The foolish fellow!" she cried, with a compassionate smile, "by that he means the time when he was out of his mind; he always praises those days; it was when he was at the asylum and did not know himself" (Goethe 1971, p. 121).

Heinrich had become mentally crippled because he no longer recognized his own self. His happiness was part of the paradisiacal delusion that his self had surrendered to while in the asylum. Werther was now set face to face with the realization that by not accepting the responsibility to know the self, the path leading toward madness or eventual suicide was inevitable. Peterson (1970) makes the following statement in regard to man:



His greatest problem is to know himself. Meaningfully, he cannot know the world of persons and things and understand their implicative values until his studied reactions have affected his experiential constructs. To know himself as an individual means his mind is open to all of the possible confrontations of the morrow; he is aware of the meaningfulness of internal experiences, what is happening around him, as well as those things which may have an effect upon his existence (pp. 16-17).

Werther refused the responsibility of self-confrontation and chose to turn away from it. Ultimately he imprisoned himself in his own world of rationalization and was left with only the expedient of suicide by which to flee his entrapment.

A self-determined mind is a mind that has willed to choose. Inherent in choice is a great deal of responsibility. It is the knowledge that the self can become known and defined only by means of the creative element of choice. Peterson (1970) clarifies this notion with a single question and answer:

What does it mean to assume the role of creation and recognize the underlying responsibilities inherent in making a choice? It is done by questioning the meaning of one's own existence, but first knowing what it means to exist and what is required by the mind to determine its own validity (pp. 14-15).

Goethe deals with this matter in the character of Werther. Very early in the novel, on May 13, 1771, Werther reveals to his friend Wilhelm that, "I treat my poor heart, moreover, as though it were a sick child and satisfy all its desires" (Goethe 1971, pp. 7-8). In other words, it is the heart, or the affective, which is determining the actions and behavior of Werther. He does not understand that it is the nature of the relationship between the cognitive and the affective that permits the will to act. Werther must determine the legitimacy of the affective domain. It is only when the cognitive, affective, and conative domains

of the intellect are in balance that the mind's self-corrective process will properly function. Without the function of self-correction, Werther cannot be assured of making the valid choices required for the process of self-determination.

Peterson (1970) writes that "freedom is the opportunity to think and to act freely" (p. 16). It would appear that Werther is subscribing to such a notion in two of his letters. On May 22, 1771, he concludes with a discussion on mankind and the world by remarking, "And, then, however confined he [man] may be, he still holds forever in his heart the sweet feeling of freedom, and knows that he can leave this prison whenever he likes" (Goethe 1971, p. 13). In the second part of the novel, on March 16, 1772, Werther sends the following description:

Today I have taken up a knife a dozen times, intending to relieve with it my suffocating heart. I have been told that a noble breed of horses, when overheated and hunted almost to death, will by instinct bite open a vein and so recover their breath. I often feel the same. I should like to open one of my veins and gain eternal freedom for myself (Goethe 1971, p. 92).

Are these statements by Werther, however, actually examples of the concepts of freedom and free choice? Peterson (1977c) suggests that "it is the individual who must be free to act, and when he does act, what he has done has been done freely, and the free action then has been chosen. . . . If the action is not free, the choice likewise cannot be free" (p. 88). He explains further that "it is the depth of potential freedom which gives to value its meaning. Then, when a choice is made from among alternatives, it is willed because of what the choice can come to mean because of the degree of freedom it can bring to the mind" (Peterson 1977c, p. 93). Werther does not have enough faith in

mankind to realize that life is confinement and the world is a prison only if man determines it to be so. He is content to be manipulated and controlled by external forces and events, secure in the belief that he can rationalize his own self-destruction. In an explanation applicable to Werther's dilemma, Peterson (1977c) states: "If the mind is not a self-determiner, then it is determined by conditions which take from it both authority and responsibility. This implies there is no freedom of choice, nor is there potentiality for freedom" (p. 93). Werther is not free because he has willed to lead a life based on, and determined by, dishonesty and untruth. In distinction to his reference about the noble horses, Werther's condition is of his own making (choice).

Werther relates a discussion concerning the conflicting sentiments between himself and Albert over the issue of suicide. On August 12, 1771, he writes:

"Why must people like you," I exclaimed, "when you discuss any action, immediately say: 'This is foolish, this is wise; this is good, that is bad!' And what does it all mean? Does it mean that you have really discovered the inner circumstances of an action? Do you know how to explain definitely the reason why it happened, why it had to happen?" (Goethe 1971, p. 57).

Werther seems to recognize that there are causes of certain forces and events over which the self has absolutely no control. Yet, at the same time, he refuses to admit that the self does have control over the implications of cause if it exercises its responsibility of free choice.

Peterson (1970) insists on the following:

To be human is to recognize the potentiality of choice. . . . And to think he [man] can escape any part of existence is not a problem; the problem lies in what he brings by way of mental and spiritual ammunition to the confrontation. To

determine the validity of these needs is to emphasize the futility of even playing with the concept of escape; no one can escape from the self. Rather, to meet every confrontation ably prepared is his task (p. 17).

Werther thinks that he can escape from his self through suicide. He chooses not to accept the responsibility of affecting the implications of cause that confront him. To be a self-determiner would upset the comfort and security of Werther's irrational (in the sense of mentally closed) existence.

When the opportunity for free choice is obstructed, man begins to suffer from a loss of humanness. In a letter dated January 20, 1772, and sent to Wilhelm, Werther confides:

How dried up my senses are getting to be; not for one minute does my heart overflow--not one blissful hour! Nothing! Nothing! I seem to be standing before a sort of raree show, watching the little men and little horses jerk before my eyes; and I often ask myself if everything is not an optical illusion. I join in the play or, rather, I am moved about like a marionette, and sometimes, when I grasp the wooden hand of my neighbor, I shrink back with a shudder (Goethe 1971, p. 84).

This is the despairing plight of a fully determined being. Werther does not have the freedom to assess the value of life or the value of his fellow man. Peterson (1977c) proposes that "man does not possess dignity if he is not free to make choices, and do so as a self-determining mind; the will is free only in the self-determined mind" (p. 101). Werther is unable to dialogue or feel a sense of mutuality in his relationships with himself or others. His will is not free to validate the nature of any of his relationships and, consequently, meaning and purpose have no application for him.

Shortly before the "editor" assumes the obligation of directly relating the final events in Goethe's novel, Werther's facade begins to

weaken. He has a growing awareness of what he is suffering from and cries out to his confidant in the letter dated November 30, 1772, "I cannot, I cannot regain my balance! Wherever I go I am faced with an apparition which completely upsets me. Today! O Destiny! O Mankind!" (Goethe 1971, p. 119). This vision which Werther faces, as if he is looking into a mirror, is a reflection of the truth that he has been denying for too long. It is a truth that lies far below the surface of Werther's self-imposed facade. Peterson (1977c) asserts the following:

It is only the self-determined mind which is free to choose its epistemological destiny. Since it is either determined, or becomes a self-determiner, and what is determined cannot be free, the mind, if it wills to be free must first will to be self-determined. Freedom is the opportunity to make use of the potentialities of the mind; when it makes use of these opportunities, it is exercising its option of responsibility and acts morally (p. 48).

The effect of what this truth would mean and demand if Werther saw it in terms of its reality and its implications would be overwhelming. Werther, in fact, ultimately suffers from this disparity between the freedom of self-determination and the untruth of rationalization.

### Goethe's Epistemology

That Goethe wrote Werther for reasons other than the mere presentation of an entertaining autobiographical novel of unrequited love is of great significance. He himself writes of his intention in the thirteenth chapter of the Autobiography:

It cannot be expected of the public that it should receive an intellectual work [ein geistiges Werk] intellectually. In fact, it was only the subject, the material part that was considered, as I had already found to be the case among my own friends; while at the same time arose that old prejudice, associated with the dignity of a printed book,--that it ought

to have a moral aim [einen didaktischen Zweck]. But a true picture of life has none. It neither approves nor censures, but develops sentiments and actions in their consequences, and thereby enlightens and instructs [erleuchtet und belehrt] (Goethe 1969, Vol. 2, pp. 219-220).

In order to ascertain the manner and content of Goethe's enlightenment and instruction, it is necessary to fit together the epistemological pieces that are dispersed within the context of his short novel.

Goethe's foremost concern in life was the search for, and realization of, his own self. Ortega (1950) is convinced that "Goethe traversed his life in search of Goethe, in search of that figure of himself which he felt called upon to realize, to bring into the real" (p. 356).

Schweitzer (1950/1961) writes, "From adolescence to old age, he [Goethe] is profoundly and seriously concerned with himself" (p. 60). Bacon (1934) is in agreement with these observations and offers the following support:

The education and expression of self were, after all, the dominant interests of his [Goethe's] life and in all his daily activities as well as in all his works, in his plays, novels, conversations, and diaries, in these "fragments of a great confession," we find abundant evidence of this fact (p. 148).

Goethe did indeed mention repeatedly how important knowledge of the self was. In a letter to von Leonhard, dated October 12, 1807, he remarks that "there would be much less disputing about objects of knowledge, their derivation and explanation, I am convinced, if everyone knew himself above all" (Goethe 1949, p. 116). Goethe (1949) similarly declares, in the essay "Shakespeare and No End," that "the highest stage man can reach is to be conscious of his own thoughts and sentiments, to know himself" (pp. 204-205). The sixteenth book of Goethe's Autobiography contains a passage in which are cited the adverse consequences of inhibiting the realization of the self:

Our physical as well as our social life, manners, customs, worldly wisdom, philosophy, religion, and many an accidental event, all call upon us to deny ourselves. Much that is most inwardly peculiar to us we are not allowed to develop; much that we need from without for the completion of our character is withheld; while, on the other hand, so much is forced upon us which is as alien to us as it is burdensome. We are robbed of all we have laboriously acquired for ourselves, or friendly circumstances have bestowed upon us; and, before we can see clearly what we are, we find ourselves compelled to part with our personality, piece by piece, till at last it is gone altogether (Goethe 1969, Vol. 2, pp. 307-308).

This notion of understanding the self was crucial for Goethe's epistemology. It was the foundation from which the structure of his entire philosophy would arise.

Goethe was aware that man's most salient confrontation was with the self. The problem that resulted was that man has got to use the self in order to define it. It is in the interaction of relationships that the self acts most distinctly. Bergstraesser (1960), in an article that considers Goethe's idea of a new society, stresses the concept of relationships and asserts that "his [Goethe's] will to reform begins with man's relation to others and to himself" (p. 38). Goethe (1949) himself maintains that "man knows himself only in so far as he knows the world, becoming aware of it only in himself, and of himself only in it" (p. 207). Willoughby (1950) echoes Goethe's sentiments concerning the nature of relationships and responds that "it is only by finding oneself reflected in others that a man becomes conscious of his own worth" (p. 18). Willoughby (1950) continues and emphasizes that Goethe was definitely aware of "the heightened consciousness of existence which comes from seeing ourselves reflected in the lives of others" (p. 27). Dieckmann (1962b), in accordance with these statements, acknowledges

"Goethe's firm belief that man understands himself only if he sees himself reflected in the outside world" (p. 173). In one of his many aphorisms Goethe (1949) cautions, "Keep a moderate watch upon yourself in order that you may become aware of your relations as regards your fellow-men and the world" (p. 209). He also adds, in a letter to Auguste Stolberg, dated February 13, 1775, "One does not get to know that one exists until one rediscovers oneself in others" (Goethe 1949, p. 159). In the fourteenth chapter of the Autobiography, Goethe reiterates his contention that the self is known only through the nature of the relationships that it establishes with others. He provides the following comment about man:

If he wishes to form a just and independent judgment, he must, before all things, convince himself of the worth of his fellow citizens; he must learn to know them; he must inquire into their sentiments and their capacities; and thus, in aiming to read others, he becomes intimate with his own bosom (Goethe 1969, Vol. 2, p. 242).

Because this confrontation of the self with itself and with other selves is a cyclical process, Goethe had come to the realization that the relationships he participated in with others were totally dependent upon the nature of the relationship he had with himself. Without acknowledging this factor, he could not progress further in his growth and epistemological development.

What does this intensive concentration by Goethe on the self and the qualities of a relationship imply? Goethe himself gives a succinct answer. He replies through the character Otilie, in the novel Elective Affinities, that "the proper study of mankind is man" (Goethe 1949, p. 157). In a conversation with his secretary Eckermann, Goethe (1949) declares:



I have always regarded a man as a self-contained individual whom it was up to me to explore and come to know in his peculiarity, without demanding any sympathetic response on his part. By this means I have learned how to handle all sorts of men; and it is only in this way that one comes to know the varieties of human character and learns how to get on in life (p. 154).

A passage from Goethe's novel Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship concisely states, "The most interesting object to man is man; perhaps he should be the exclusive object of interest" (Goethe 1949, p. 159). The focal point, then, is man and how he comes to know himself through the relationships he establishes in life. Schweitzer (1950/1961), in his 1949 address at Aspen, Colorado, in commemoration of the bicentenary of Goethe's birth, captured the essence of Goethe's lifelong pursuit when he declared, "Goethe's work, therefore, is concerned with the philosophy of a genuine and profoundly healthy human understanding" (p. 42). Goethe is asking man to recognize and understand himself in order that he may be able to assume the human responsibilities of self-examination and self-determination.

To know the self is to realize the good. Goethe (1949) writes, in a letter to von Knebel, dated April 8, 1812, that "we act well, strictly speaking, only in so far as we are acquainted with ourselves. If we are in the dark concerning ourselves we are not likely to succeed in doing what is good in the right way, which amounts to the good not being done at all" (p. 204). In other words, the self must intend the good by recognizing the inherent implications residing in choice. Peterson (1977c) explains that "intention wants me to make the best possible choice. . . . It is intention which constantly suggests the need, not so much to make a choice, as to make the best possible choice,

taking all conditions into consideration" (p. 97). Choice is a means to an end. It is an end not in the sense of finality, but rather it is an end in a mode of continual transformation. The self is saying that it is never going to reach this end because it sees the potential within to transcend, to move beyond the end. It is the realization that choice leads to growth and growth leads to self-enhancement. Schweitzer (1949b) expresses a similar understanding when he claims that "Goethe recognizes that the way he must travel for himself is a way of self-improvement" (p. 44). In terms of his literary creations, "it is he himself who appears ever and again in different forms, striving with an incorruptible sense of reality to find, through all his mistakes and failure, the upward way" (Schweitzer 1949b, p. 44). Schweitzer (1949b) continues by admitting the following about Goethe:

He who saw even before Nietzsche that the great problem is how man's realization of nobility, which is self-realization, and his achievement of goodness are related to each other--and therein lies his own peculiar philosophical significance!--adopted the simple solution, that true self-realization can consist in nothing other than true realization of goodness (pp. 50-51).

Goethe was also aware of the nature of the relationship between knowledge of the self and realization of goodness brought about through learning. Within the novel Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship, he incorporates the following paragraph:

I can take pleasure only in a man who knows what is good for himself and others and who works to limit his arbitrary caprice. Everyone's hands are at work molding his own fortune, like the plastic artist shaping his raw material. But it is with this art as with all others: The capacity is innate, but only learning and solicitous effort bring it to fruition (Goethe 1949, p. 164).

Goethe perceived as the responsibility of choice the creation of relationships that are learning processes. What is the nature of the

realization of this process? Schweitzer (1949a) once again elucidates this matter and concludes:

Therefore, the purpose of the world is fulfilled when every single being fulfills his purpose, and I am free to abandon all thought about the meaning of the world while I simply devote myself to the thought that I must realize the meaning of my own life. And, according to Goethe, the meaning of my life is that I should develop the good that is in me, and subdue the evil that tries to retard the good. This is Goethe's great teaching about the eternal (p. 97).

To attain and act on the good is to make a choice leading toward the fulfillment of purpose in realizing the meaning of the self in its relationship to itself and to whatever it wills to confront in life.

What is needed at this point in Goethe's philosophical evolution is the epistemological connective between what is good and what is truth. Goethe (1949) offers the following maxim: "Love of truth asserts itself in the ability to find and appreciate what is good wherever it be" (p. 212). What is true is good and, conversely, what is good is true. Heller (1971) suggests that "truth is what man is meant to know--this is the center of Goethe's intellectual existence" (p. 30). It is the responsibility of man to search for, validate, and legitimize truth. In another of his aphoristic remarks, Goethe (1949) writes, "If I know my relation to myself and the world about me, I call it Truth. In this way each individual can have his particular truth, and it is nevertheless the same truth" (p. 165). It is the same truth because the self is simultaneously experiencing and constructing the a priori by means of the will. Since the intention of the a priori is to bring about the fulfillment and completion of the validated good, the will rejects any object of confrontation that does not meet this criterion. Schaub (1933) illuminates this aspect of truth and presents his interpretation of Goethe's maxim as follows:

For, each is a self-active and unique being and possesses a world and a life distinctive of himself. On the other hand, this world, however personal and individual, is none the less the same as that experienced uniquely by every other person (p. 147).

This world is a given (a priori) and a totality which the self perceives in its confrontations and experiences in life. As the self experiences, meaning is realized, knowledge is obtained, and truth is identified. Schweitzer (1950/1961) affirms that "truth for Goethe is the greatest of all values. 'Truth is wisdom,' he asserts" (p. 44). To know and validate truth is to realize a major epistemological construct in the structure of growth.

Goethe does much more than just provide the elements from which to erect his philosophy of knowledge. He also provides the clues with which the entire procedure can be set in motion. In his consideration of Goethe's learning theory, Roubiczek (1962) writes:

Our knowledge is never absolute; we have to recognize freedom gradually in the course of experience; thus we can never know whether our aims are entirely right. We can be justified only by continual striving, by a constantly renewed endeavor to reconcile our external actions with those inner laws to which we hold (pp. 134-135).

Through continual striving the self is willing self-determination in its confrontations. By willing to constantly act, the self is able to validate that which it internalizes. It is this process by which the self learns and grows and which Goethe offers for examination and self-utilization.

A key ingredient for further penetration into Goethe's epistemology is offered by Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer. Riemer (1949), who was a professor and librarian at the Weimar gymnasium and later a joint executor of Goethe's posthumous works, makes the following diary entry concerning one of Goethe's novels:

Among the other criticisms which the Philistine reviewers addressed to The Elective Affinities was this, that the book did not make visible the conflict between duty and inclination. Goethe's comment to me was the following: "The conflict takes place behind the scenes, but it is made clear that it must have taken place. The characters behave like civilized people; despite their inner conflict they observe an outer decorum. A moral struggle is never a fit object of aesthetic representation. For either morality triumphs or is defeated. In the first case, there is no reason to represent it; in the contrary case it is shameful to be the direct witness. . . . In all such delinquencies, the sensual triumphs; but its triumph is avenged by fate, that is, by the moral principle which rescues its own freedom by death. Thus Werther had to shoot himself after the senses had become his master. Thus Ottilie and Eduard had to perish after they had given free rein to their inclination. Therein consists the triumph of the moral principle" (p. 172).

To have a duty towards something is to recognize an obligation. In being obligated, the self perceives the inherent potentiality in the nature of whatever relationship it happens to establish. By fulfilling its obligation, the self realizes its responsibility in actualizing this potentiality. Meaningfulness is experienced by the self as it accepts its responsibility of acting on the object of confrontation. What Goethe seems to imply, then, is that the self has a duty, or obligation, towards the moral principle. This moral principle rests upon the foundation of morality. Peterson (1977c) explains the matter in the following language:

Morality is the value placed upon each existent in its creation by First Cause, and which is reflected in each existent as a potential to be known by the human mind as it makes the value its own. Morality is the opportunity to experience the purpose of creation by creation and actualizing its meaning. The power of morality is lodged in the meaningfulness of the learning momentum, by means of which the mind appropriates unto itself the intentionality of First Cause (p. 50).

As a self-determiner, the self wills to experience whatever it chooses to confront. To experience is to have determined meaning which is

resident in cause. Through internalization and the subsequent application of meaning, the self actualizes the potentiality in cause. In this manner, the self can validate that which is truth (the good) and realize the intentionality of cause. It is the absence of this process of evaluation, in the sense of determining a value by experiencing meaning, that led Werther to his impending ruin. The potential for self-enhancement was denied Werther because he refused to accept the demand of the moral principle for growth.

Man, as Goethe well knew, does not live in a vacuum. He does not lead a naturally isolated existence but rather shares in, and is an integral part of, a society. This means that the self comes into persistent contact with other selves. Goethe recognized the epistemological significance and potentiality in the interaction between two distinct selves as he established his relationships throughout life. Hutchins (1950) claims that "communication was the theme of Goethe's life. His friendships were really collaborations" (p. 390). That these relationships were actually learning processes is a fundamental premise of Goethe's epistemology. It is through the character Werther that Goethe provides an examination of a self moving in contradiction to this premise. Wilkinson (1952/1962) provides the following analysis:

For Goethe, communication with the not-self, whether objects or persons, is the task to which man is called and which--as the author of Werther knew only too well--he relinquishes at his peril. The very involvement of subject with world, which is the condition of our existence, he sees as a challenge to objectivity; not indeed as something out there independent of us waiting to be "known," but as something ever to be created--yet only to be created in collaboration with objects. . . . Goethe's interest starts, in fact, where the epistemological statement ends: reality is neither in the subject nor in the object but in the activity between. His preoccupation is with the practical management of that activity (pp. 136-137).

Goethe recognized that as the potentiality residing in relationships was actualized, the self gained a greater depth of consciousness. The meaningfulness of the knowledge possessed by the self increased and allowed for a greater self-awareness. But what was this pivotal activity that permitted the intercourse and reciprocal interaction between two selves? What was this mutual process which led to a collaborative system of learning and growth? Hutchins (1950) replies, "In one good Goethian world the Civilization of the Dialogue might arise. The essence of the Civilization of the Dialogue is communication. The Civilization of the Dialogue presupposes mutual respect and understanding. It does not presuppose agreement" (p. 400). Dialogue is the self-generating source of power in a relationship. It is the self seeing its potentiality realized by interaction with another self. Dialogue does not inhibit self-determination but rather promotes this process through mutuality. One of Goethe's (1949) many aphorisms suggests, "The question to ask is not whether we are perfectly agreed, but whether we are proceeding from a common basis of sentiment" (p. 163). Only through dialogue can mutuality be experienced, and to experience mutuality is to participate in the dynamism of a creative relationship.

Goethe knew that the nature of his relationships were learning processes which enabled the self to grow. The manner in which he chose to design these relationships, however, determined their nature. But how did Goethe realize the kinds of choices necessary for him to grow? What permitted him to then act upon these choices? Schweitzer (1949b) recognizes this apparent predicament and offers the following solution: "Goethe sees that the way he must take is this: not to impose upon

himself anything foreign to his nature, but to let whatever good lives and smolders in him develop and to lay aside whatever is not good in him" (p. 36). In other words, Goethe had to discriminate between that which did and that which did not carry value for him. Goodheart (1968) concurs with this assessment and adds the following:

Goethe is distinguished by his capacity for assimilation and development: his life confirms the legend of his catholicity. He makes rejections, but he absorbed--or tried to absorb--everything of value that he had experienced (p. 74).

To experience that which he validated as having value for the self became a process of osmosis and subsequent growth. Goethe (1969), in the eleventh chapter of his Autobiography, speaks of this matter:

Man may seek his higher destination on earth or in heaven, in the present or in the future: he yet remains on this account exposed to an eternal wavering, to an influence from without which ever disturbs him, until he once for all makes a resolution to declare that is right which is suitable to himself (Vol. 2, p. 78).

By choosing to determine for himself that which had value and meaning in experience, Goethe refused to succumb to the forces of external determinants. He demanded instead a willful validation of whatever was necessary for his self-enhancement. From the tenth chapter of the Autobiography comes this comment: "I knew how to value highly everything that contributed to my own cultivation [Bildung]" (Goethe 1969, Vol. 2, p. 16). That Goethe was aware of the potentiality for learning and growth in the relationships he chose to establish is evident. But what enabled him to actualize this potentiality? Once again, it is Goethe (1969) himself who hints at the answer and provides the following clues in the seventh chapter of his Autobiography:



And thus began that tendency from which I could not deviate my whole life through; namely, the tendency to turn into an image, into a poem, everything that delighted or troubled me, or otherwise occupied me, and to come to some certain understanding with myself upon it, that I might both rectify my conceptions of external things, and set my mind at rest about them (Vol. 1, p. 305).

Goethe had to determine a relationship with whatever he confronted. He had to experience in order to find meaning so that self-improvement and self-understanding would continue. Once the self determined the value of a relationship and then proceeded to internalize that value, it was ready for another confrontation. There was both an evaluative and an applicative process at work. Peterson (1977c) identifies this pivotal agency as the human will and insists that "to will is to determine the value and application of the learning objects' meaningfulness" (p. 47). As the will validates the object of confrontation, it establishes for itself what is of value. To realize a value is to have actualized the object's potentiality. The will determines that which has meaning for the self but also applies this meaning in determining what the object of confrontation itself can come to be. In other words, the will provides the self with the ability to apply that which it has learned. Peterson (1977c) describes this action and explains:

In every object resides learning potentiality; that is, a potentiality to determine what the object is, but also, what it can become when the created mind now becomes a creator, bringing into being new relationships, and, therefore, new being. It is the morality of a knowing which comes from learning the meaning of cause (p. 53).

By applying what it has learned through relationships, the self, as a self-determiner, achieves growth. Goethe's entire philosophy of knowledge thus comes full circle by way of morality and the moral principle.

## Findings

Having isolated the constructs of Goethe's epistemology from the novel Werther, and having examined their content and meaning in terms of a totality, it is appropriate to return now to the novel and complete Goethe's philosophy of learning. Lehrs (1951), in a discussion concerning Goethe and mankind, makes the following comment:

He [man] is not only fitted . . . with a once-for-all given mode of spiritual-physical existence peculiar to himself, but . . . he is endowed with the possibility of transforming his existence by dint of his free will--that indeed his manhood is based on this capacity for self-willed Becoming (p. 364).

To will to become is for the self to transcend itself. It is for the self to take control, to find meaning in relationships, and to know what it possesses and what it requires. It is to realize the meaningfulness of the potentiality of whatever the self confronts. Peterson (1970) describes the process of becoming as follows:

It is a unique process, allowing the individual to transcend the self, take a look at the self and then decide, by means of his choices, how to actualize his potential. To do this requires the whole being; becoming involves the total self. To do this means that as he gathers new facts about himself, they should have only one implicative value, namely, to open new channels of communication with the self in order to envision his own potentiality (p. 19).

Werther tried to transcend both self and world at every available opportunity throughout the entire development of the novel. This notion was apparent to Lange (1952), editor of a collection of German short novels and stories, who wrote, "His whole existence is a desperate struggle to transcend life itself and he desires nothing more than to communicate his extreme state of mind" (p. xi). In the letter of August 18, 1771, Werther himself exclaims:

Oh, the times when I longed to fly on the crane's wings, as it passed overhead to the shores of the illimitable ocean, in order to drink from the foaming cup of the Infinite an elating sensation of life, and to feel, if only for a moment, in the cramped forces of my being one drop of the bliss of that Being who creates everything in and through Himself (Goethe 1971, p. 65).

But transcendence is merely a wish for Werther by which he can escape from himself. Just before the "editor" must assume the narration of events, Werther expresses his sentiments in the letter to Wilhelm dated December 6, 1772. He protests:

What is man, that celebrated demigod! Does he not lack powers just when he needs them most? And when he soars with joy, or sinks into suffering, is he not in both cases held back and restored to dull, cold consciousness at the very moment when he longs to lose himself in the fullness of the Infinite? (Goethe 1971, pp. 124-125).

Werther was unsuccessful in his attempt at transcendence because the nature of the relationships in which he participated were not characterized by the element of self-determination. Transcendence is achieved only when the self assumes the quality of honesty and subsequently rises above the limitations that it may choose to impose upon itself. It is through this process that the potentiality of the human will is realized. In negating the positive functioning of the will by means of the process of rationalization, Werther denied the dynamic structure of growth resident in the transcendent factor. If the self is lost, death is imminent. Closs (1949), in an essay on Goethe and Kierkegaard, expressed the view that "life, not death, was his [Goethe's] deep concern; by life he meant creative activity, not a vegetative existence" (p. 266). Creativity implies growth and growth is the only means for self-transcendence. The sufferings of Werther in failing to recognize this principle validate the essence of Goethe's epistemology.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### Principles of Learning Theory

Six educational principles have evolved from Goethe's epistemological premises as they were examined within the context of the novel. Each principle of learning will first be identified and then followed by a survey of pertinent educational literature. After all of the six principles of education have been introduced and discussed, their significance as a totality for learning theory will be considered.

1. A primary educational principle derived from this study insists that the subject matter of education is man. The emphasis must be placed on the nature of man and his characteristics as a self-determiner. Maritain (1943/1968) admits that "education needs primarily to know what man is, what is the nature of man and the scale of values it essentially involves" (p. 5). The individuality of the learner, then, assumes especial attention. Ortega (1944/1966), in retrospect, makes the following declaration:

In education there are three elemental factors: what is taught (knowledge, wisdom), and the teacher and learner. Yet with peculiar blindness, education had centered about knowledge and the teacher. The learner was no factor in pedagogy. . . . It is the learner and his characteristics which alone can guide us in our effort to make something organic of education (p. 46).

Eaton (1934), in his essay on Goethe's meaning for education, writes that Goethe conceived education as "a being, a growing, a developing

of individuality through adaptation to nature, accepting, discarding, but never reaching a definite conclusion" (p. 149). According to Eaton (1934), Goethe fully acknowledged throughout his life, "the corner stone of his educational ideas, the free development of individuality" (p. 154). Man and his individuality are inseparable from the recognition of the value man places on his self. The next principle of learning expresses this realization.

2. Because the self is always in relationship to the self, the intellectual process can be understood only in terms of the self in relationship to the self. This implies that learning is an experience of each distinct self. Hill (1973) asserts that "the self . . . is a choosing being, and its choices reflect not merely the objective evidence of reason but the subjective passion of existence" (p. 265). In his discussion of epistemology, Marler (1975) recognizes the person who "emphasizes the inescapably personal nature of experience in which our choices define and reveal the self" (p. 116). Marler (1975) continues and states, "His choices, in turn, will indicate what knowledge he has taken unto himself--they will determine what he will become" (p. 135). John Dewey was aware of the impact that such interaction between the learner and the object of confrontation would have for education. Dewey (1938/1968) insisted that "the beginning of instruction shall be made with the experience learners already have; that this experience and the capacities that have been developed during its course provide the starting point for all further learning" (p. 74). Learning becomes an extremely personal matter from the standpoint of the self. As Brubacher (1969) suggests, in reference to epistemological theory

and its application to method, "learning is a profound personal experience, a self-actualizing, a coming to know oneself by his own efforts. One learns, gets to know, what one is" (p. 222). In order for the self to establish such an educative relationship to itself, it must first exist as a unity and function as a totality. Maritain (1943/1968) observes that, "the whole work of education and teaching must tend to unify, not to spread out; it must strive to foster internal unity in man" (p. 45). Goethe himself recognized this requirement for unity if the self was to fulfill its obligation as a self-determiner. The following paragraph was written to an acquaintance of Goethe's (Schubarth) and dated July 8, 1818:

It is a matter of indifference in what circle we begin our work of self-cultivation, it is all the same from which point we orient the progress of our Bildung, provided there is a circle and there is a point of departure. To acquire a productive Bildung that proceeds from a nucleus should be a young man's concern; and even in advancing years, when our development broadens out along historical lines, we must compress the diffusion of our interests and recapture the sense of unity (Goethe 1949, p. 153).

Goethe astutely discusses this notion of unity in conjunction with self-cultivation. The manner in which the self comes to know and legitimize its knowledge becomes the substance of the third learning principle.

3. In order to learn and to know, the self must determine the validity and reliability of that which it seeks to know (confront). Eaton (1934) attests to this principle when he declares that "the chief source of Goethe's educational ideas would seem to have been his passionate desire for self-culture and his view of man's goal" (p. 146). That an individual chooses to educate himself and can actually proceed to bring it about is of great significance. Maritain (1943/1968)

believes that "from the very start the teacher must respect in the child the dignity of the mind, must appeal to the child's power of understanding, and conceive of his own effort as preparing a human mind to think for itself" (p. 26). That the nature of the self is affected by the choices made through the intellectual process is apparent to Hutchins. Hutchins (1936/1962) proposes that "since character is the result of choice it is difficult to see how you can develop it unless you train the mind to make intelligent choices" (p. 29). In order to make choices, value and meaning must be determined by the self. Hook (1946/1967) enunciates this view when he writes that educational institutions "must strengthen the powers of independent reflection, which will enable students to confront the claims of ideals and values by their alternatives" (p. 145). In other words, the self must validate that which it acts upon if it is to counter the demands of the process of rationalization. Scheffler (1965/1971), in discussing aspects of St. Augustine's theory of teaching, provides the following comment:

The pupil who knows, Augustine seems to say, is not just someone who has a belief which is true, even if he has the belief on the highest authority (he uses Biblical examples). He must further have considered within himself whether what has been said is true. He must have engaged in a personal process of evaluating the belief in question. . . . It serves to distinguish genuine knowing from mere true belief, by reference to appropriate evaluation of the belief by the believer: The surplus strength of knowing consists, in short, in the knower's having adequate evidence for the belief in question (p. 316).

What is being suggested is that the self is provided with the empirical mechanism for instructing itself and subsequently determining the validity and reliability of this knowledge. Peterson (1970) calls for the creative teacher "to enable each student to become his own teacher"

(p. 43). This demand is consistent with his conviction that "the aim of all knowledge is to permit the learner to find self-fulfillment" (Peterson 1970, p. 51). If the self becomes its own teacher, then the learning act can indeed be identified as a process of self-examination. The origin, or source, of this self-initiated activity must now be considered and disclosed through an assessment of the fourth principle of learning theory.

4. Thinking requires the interrogative mode of the intellect. This means that to receive knowledge is not nearly as important to the self as is the exertion of its own inherent potentiality for knowing and learning. Brubacher (1977) is in agreement and declares that "acquiring knowledge, hence, is incidental to inquiring into knowledge" (p. 96). In order to inquire into an object, however, the self must actively confront the object. Dewey (1938/1968) elucidates this matter by suggesting that "problems are the stimulus to thinking" (p. 79). He further explains as follows:

Growth depends upon the presence of difficulty to be overcome by the exercise of intelligence. Once more, it is part of the educator's responsibility to see equally to two things: First, that the problem grows out of the conditions of the experience being had in the present, and that it is within the range of the capacity of students; and, secondly, that it is such that it arouses in the learner an active quest for information and for production of new ideas. The new facts and new ideas thus obtained become the ground for further experiences in which new problems are presented (Dewey 1938/1968, p. 79).

Dewey is placing the emphasis upon the learner. It is the self that must be internally, or intrinsically, motivated to continually seek for knowledge and its truth. It is a self which is confronting objects in order to determine value and realize meaning. As Dewey (1938/1968) indicates,



"The most important attitude that can be found is that of desire to go on learning" (p. 48). The self must be aware of a need which it strives to fulfill. Only through recognizing that the self possesses an inner vitality of its own is such a conception possible. Since the self does in fact move upon that which it seeks to know by means of the will, the next educational principle examines the consequences of this activity.

5. Because man is always in relation to that which confronts him as a determiner, all learning is creative. Peterson (1970) expresses his concurrence and states the following:

The learner must possess the ability to create; the patterns of education serve no other purpose than providing the spiritual incentive for using what has been learned. To create anew out of how and what he has learned is an important goal of every learner (p. 45).

Learning becomes the main ingredient for further learning. In the process of this learning is seen the potential for creating that which the self is to become. Ortega (1944/1966) stresses that "our life is not given to us ready-made: in a fundamental sense it is, precisely, what we are constantly and continuously making of ourselves. The process is going on at every instant" (p. 17). This dynamic sense of creativity implies an educational development that sees as its aim, to borrow a phrase from Strain (1971) in his discussion of contemporary educational philosophers, "the becoming of a human person, a person who lives and makes decisions about what he will do and be" (pp. 473-474). But to be a self-determiner and to create is more than just making decisions. It is accepting the responsibility inherent in those decisions. This is what Hook (1946/1967) demands when he replies that "it ['moral' education] is found wherever knowledge is so taught that it

heightens the sense of human responsibility for the inescapable decisions which men must make" (p. 160). The learner is a creator and must accept the responsibility for the choices made and their implications. As Peterson (1970) notes, "The learner is always the active participant in the learning process" (p. 10). This is the applicative dimension in learning theory. It is the learner beginning to actualize his choices through application of their meanings. To understand the method by which this self-realization interacts and communicates with other selves is the function of the sixth principle of learning.

6. A relationship which demands and insists upon a deep degree of mutuality is a learning process. Hill (1973) acknowledges this principle when he declares that "good purposes are defined as those which promote communion between selves, fostering creativity on behalf of such communion" (p. 266). This too is an application of knowledge in quest of meaning, but it occurs within a social context. It is the establishment of a relationship between selves in order to realize a potentiality that was previously nonexistent and which goes beyond whatever each self could accomplish in isolation. Dewey considers this notion of dialogue and intercommunication. He writes, "The principle that development of experience comes about through interaction means that education is essentially a social process" (Dewey 1938/1968, p. 58). Hutchins (1936/1962) affirms the social nature of man but laments the virtual absence in the modern world of "any intelligible basis for the study of man in his relations with other men" (p. 99). If man is a self-determiner, then, it is his nature to constantly make choices. Hill (1973) recognizes this characteristic of man and asserts

that "creativity and dialogue are the channels through which his choices are actualized" (p. 270). As the self creates through its own process of determination, it must certainly be affected by the creative activity of other selves. Peterson (1970) perceives this interactive influence and suggests the following:

There is a dual focus, one beam emphasizing the individual and what he can make of himself through finding the meaning of life (for himself and the good of society), and the other emphasizing the resultant society and what it can mean for the individual (p. 13).

This is the mutuality inherent within the nature of a creative relationship in which experience is shared between two selves. It is the dialogue, the reciprocal interaction, the meeting of ideas, the comparisons, the weighing and the evaluation of all that the self allows to confront it. In this manner, the self can determine its own nature and yet be an integral part of the growth and experience of other selves.

#### Implications and Applications of the Principles of Learning Theory

Now that each of the six principles of learning have been identified and considered individually, it remains to determine what their implication for education is if they are conceived in terms of a total and unified philosophical framework. At this juncture Peterson (1970) offers the following conclusion: "In a sense, education demands more than any one teacher can give; but, to find and give direction will always remain his primary task" (p. 43). It remains to delineate the nature of this direction, but Hill provides an invaluable insight. He suggests the following:

Culture and education are most concerned with the spiritual or distinctively human. . . . By proposing that educational theorizing should focus on the spiritual, I have implied that the desired educational outcome will be a self which is consciously concerned with the problem of making consistently good choices (Hill 1973, p. 270).

The approach of both Peterson and Hill is applicable to learning theory as derived from the six educational principles. Furthermore, a synthesis of their ideas is set forth by Wynne in his introductory remarks to Peterson's Existentialism and the Creative Teacher. Wynne (1970) maintains the following:

Education will actively provide to the person the direction needed and then permit the individual the right to choose. It will place the decision-making emphasis on the individual; it will offer freedom of choice; it will demand that the person who so commits himself takes the responsibility for this action. This freedom of choice is then not license; it is rather a demand for effectual commitment, commitment in the light of a value system that has been developed in a setting of self-determination and an awareness of the "other" (pp. viii-ix).

In order to actualize the implications that are resident in such a conception of education, there must be a consistent application of the principles of learning theory in harmony with this notion of freedom of choice.

To realize the full potentiality inherent in a learning theory derived from these six principles of education requires an educational process that is humanistically oriented. A humanistic education is one which insists that the subject matter of education is the nature of man and his characteristics as a self-determiner. It will be a process that provides each self with the means for attaining the aim, or purpose, of education; that is, growth and self-enhancement. To learn, to know, and to subsequently evaluate the validity of this knowledge will provide

the self with the motivation and vitality necessary in its unceasing pursuit of truth. An important aspect of investigating and determining the nature of truth is that sense of total self-awareness which is constantly striven for. Only when the self is in such a mode does it begin to understand the intellectual process. To be able to think requires the interrogative state of mind. It is the perpetual quest for knowledge and purpose as conveyed through the word why. It is the ability of the self to reason and to develop intellectually. It is freeing the individual from biases, prejudices, and the discrete survey of opinion. Through dialogue and the mutuality of relationships, a humanistic education provides the freedom to allow the individual to look at ideas. It is the freedom to choose as well as the responsibility to discriminate among alternative possibilities of choice. In order to function properly, the self must make a good choice which presupposes the necessity to know. In order to know the good it is essential to think and to be conscious of the process of thinking. Inherently residing within each self is the responsibility to learn, to know, to interact, to experience, to grow. A humanistically educated individual ought to manifest and exemplify each of these qualities.

The search for truth becomes one of the cornerstones in the construction of a humanistic theory of learning. It, too, is based on the ability to think. Without the quintessential ingredient of cognition, there can be no formulation of propositions and concepts and no testing, review, restructuring, or reverification of hypotheses and premises. In other words, self-examination would not be possible. A major presupposition of truth is its legitimacy and validity which implies the process

of thought. Consequently, the self is confronted with the need to discriminate among a multitude of possible choices. By means of a humanistic education, the structuring and subsequent validation and verification of hypotheses ought to be facilitated and enhanced. As a result, this development should culminate in an individual who is aware of certain insights that are basically related to the universal element of choice. This knowledge and recognition of the freedom of choice ought to lead to the actualization of the individual's potentiality and to a continued sense of self-fulfillment.

Having acknowledged the fundamental relationship between freedom of choice and a learning theory structured from humanistic components, a significant factor remains. It is the recognition that not only must choice be consistent with the determination made by the self, but it should also be cognizant of the existing social context. What is being suggested is the notion of ideas and actions occurring within a social medium. It is the applicative dimension of a humanistic educational philosophy which is legitimized through a cycle of continuous evaluation. Within contemporary society, there exists a need to identify why people within the collective structure of the community think and act the way they do. A humanistic education ought to provide the ability to analyze, evaluate, validate, and respond to changing circumstances within society. Furthermore, the ability should exist to determine the true nature of change in order that it may be utilized for the benefit of society. People must not be taught or trained merely to habituate themselves to conditions. Rather than unconsciously reacting to stimuli, the self must first ask why such a response is being made. In other

words, the individual must learn to think and evaluate for himself. It becomes important, therefore, to focus on and understand the process involved in achieving, coping with, responding to, and utilizing change. A humanistically educated individual ought, then, to be able to recognize not only his own needs but those of the society in which he lives and to discern the attitudes and expectations of the community. The consequent logicity of approaching and confronting reality through the social context of interrelationships seems apparent enough. Society also requires the maintenance of a mutual base of common discourse and shared values in order to continue existing, growing, and improving life for its members. A humanistically based learning theory can lend itself to exploring these shared values and in establishing a common understanding about mankind. In essence, this capability to communicate is one of the vital facets of a humanistic education.

It is now appropriate to draw attention to the pivotal role that a humanistic education can play within the multiplicity of disciplines and cognitive systems in order to prepare the self for continued learning. It is the opportunity to enhance the mind's ability to conceptualize (to become conscious of what is revealed by knowledge), to perceive and identify the relationships among a multitude of particulars, and to subsequently grasp the underlying similarities and generalities. A type of interdisciplinary approach is envisioned which recognizes a common framework. That there might well exist a certain commonality or set of presuppositions upon which the various kinds of knowledge could structure themselves is a significant and intriguing proposal. By positing a foundation that serves as the unifying element

in the totality of all the forms of knowledge, it becomes reasonable to always assume relationships rather than presuppose their absence.

A humanistically oriented process of learning, then, is infused with purpose and constantly validated through an evaluative process. It is an education applied within a dynamic, growing, and ever changing social milieu. A humanistic education thus becomes a sort of self-education. It contributes to the individual's understanding of himself in connection with the mutuality of his relationships and the complexity of interrelationships that constitute the reality of the world. To interact with these relationships, to undergo their consequences, to experience, and to grow is to have acknowledged the vitality and perpetuity of the self-determinative potentiality inherent in mankind.

### Conclusions

To recapitulate the educational core of Goethe's epistemology will underscore its applicability to a humanistic philosophy of learning.

1. Goethe realized that the subject matter of education is man, and he emphasized the nature of man and his characteristics as a self-determiner. The focus of education must therefore center upon the learner and his individuality.

2. Because the self is a unity and functions as a totality, learning becomes an experience of each distinct, or unique, self. Being a composite of the effects of its choices, the self perceives learning as an extremely personal matter. This means that education must recognize the value that man places on his self in his demand for self-cultivation.



3. Goethe knew that the self can choose to educate itself and actually proceed to bring this process about. Through determining the validity and reliability of that which it seeks to know, the learner is provided with an empirical base from which to begin his instruction. In this manner, the self becomes its own teacher and the learning act is identified as a process of self-examination.

4. It is the self that exerts its own inherent potentiality for knowing and learning. Goethe recognized the internal, or intrinsic, motivation of the self to seek knowledge and truth, and he demanded that the self actively confront its learning object. Education must acknowledge that the learner does indeed possess an inner vitality of his own.

5. Man is always in relation to that which confronts him as a determiner. All learning is creative because the learner is the creator of further learning. In his role as creator, the learner makes a multitude of decisions and must subsequently accept the inherent responsibility for the choices made and their implications. Goethe was fully aware that in actualizing its choices through application of their meanings, the self becomes an active agent in the process of learning.

6. In order to actively participate in the educational process, the learner must understand the social nature of man. A relationship of mutuality, based on dialogue and intercommunication, is a learning process. This process of learning is the application of knowledge in quest of meaning in a social context. The self is affected by the creative activity of other selves. Experience shared between two selves, as Goethe realized, means that the learner can determine his own nature and yet be an integral part of the growth and experience

of other selves. These relationships with other selves are actually learning processes.

Pivotal to Goethe's epistemology was his awareness that the relationships he participated in with others were totally dependent on the nature of the relationship he had with himself. The focal point, said Goethe, is man and how he comes to know himself through the relationships he establishes in life. As a true humanistic educator and philosopher, Goethe asked man to recognize and understand himself in order that he might be able to assume the responsibilities of self-examination and self-determination.

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