**GOETHE OR FAUST?**  
(1749-1832)

* **Introduction:** Goethe's impact: Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche...  
  - *Conversations with Eckermann:* "The best German book"  
  - **Faustean Man:** powerful modern symbol: promethean, secular, superior

I. Crucial methodological consideration: "new perspective": life and work studied together as an organic unity and in terms of development

II. Text-analysis (1): structural, foundational

A. Vast scope of the text: (1) breadth of G's experience; (2) resultant ambiguity, complexity ("riddle"); (3) underlying vision of reality: NATURE: all-encompassing, creativity, activity…  
  - Pantheism, not monotheism (Deus Sive Natura – Spinoza)  
  - Deism, agnosticism, atheism, remythologization

B. Faust and Mephistopheles: bi-polarity of man and nature

1. Faust: creative impulse, endless experience, "love": ceaseless striving, insatiable; creator (promethean)  
3. fundamental struggle in man and cosmos  
4. no radical evil: integrate, not eliminate

C. View of Morality: what is it to be fully human? freedom?

1. Bentham: seek to maximize pleasure, minimize pain  
2. Kant: duty: reason: dignity of man, the limit of freedom  
3. Faust: ceaseless striving (love): self-realization: no limit to freedom  
4. Dante: natural love and rational love (morality)

* Is 'Faustean' morality really a-moral?

D. Some conclusions about some "riddles":

1. Why is Faust "saved"?  
2. Why a "tragedy"?  
3. What is the relationship between G and F?  
   * Is G a ‘pure Faustean’?  
4. The case of Margaret (Gretchen): the “sinlessly sinning”...  
   * an exception to all of the above?
III Text-analysis (2): developmental approach: exploring Goethe's complex views of man and morality

* Three-stage evolution

A. URFAUST: Storm and Stress: romantic: 1773-75
   1. anti-Wagner: 'inert' book-knowledge
   2. insatiable appetite for 'feeling' and 'experience'
   3. ends with "Margaret (Gretchen) tragedy"

B. From URFAUST to “Fragment” to FAUST I
   1. anti-romantic: strict classicist: noble simplicity and tranquil grandeur; lofty themes and a tireless harmony of soul: WEIMAR, 1775
   2. 1786: "fateful" trip to ITALY: discovered the classics: rebirth
   3. 1788: return to WEIMAR: strict classicist mellowing: publishes URFAUST minus "passionate" ending (I: 122-end): a "Fragment", 1790
   4. 1797-1806: further work on F I: Prologue in Heaven
   5. anti-Faustean: hexenprodukt: Farewell, 1800
   6. published F I, 1808: returned ending

C. FAUST II 1825-1831
   1. classicist: classic: classic-romantic as final position.
   3. back to beginning... final break-through 1831: end of play... published 1832

D. Textual illustrations of the development in G’s attitude beyond the ‘Pure Faustean’ (romantic)
   1. F I: 28 ‘scenes’ ; F II: 5 ‘Acts’
   2. heaven: beginning and end: classic symmetry, order, clarity, natural love
   3. Prologue in Heaven: "I will soon lead him into clarity"; "man errs as long as he strives"
   4. F II opening scene: healing: break with S & S
   5. Poets and the Vampire (II:23): unlimited experience
   6. Homunculus-Mephisto (II: 72-76)
   7. Classical (vs. Romantic) Walpurgis Night
   8. Helen-scenes (II:151ff.): wedding of classic with romantic
   10. Act V: ambiguity and irony: Lynceus’ speech (16lines)(II:214)
E. Further light on "riddles"

1. Why is F saved? the 'classic' completes the 'romantic'
2. Is G a convinced Faustean?
   . need consider whole play
   . G's view of morality: romantic vitality and classic form, self-limitation, clarity
   . compare with Kant: more place for feeling etc.
   . compare with F: more place for reason, order etc.
3. How G is not F:
   . two types of striving: absolute and conditional
   . insatiability: practically impossible, creatively wrong
   . creativity and serenity: not incompatible

* Nietzsche: "A Homer would have created no Achilles, a Goethe no Faust, had Homer been an Achilles or Goethe a Faust." (Genealogy. III, sec 4)
* Faust's revenge: The independent life of the poetic creation