



Affecting Grace: Theatre, Subject, and the Shakespearean Paradox in German Literature from Lessing to Kleist (German and European Studies)

Kenneth S. Calhoon

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Affecting Grace examines the importance of Shakespeare's poetry and plays within German literature and thought after 1750 – including its relationship to German classicism, which favoured unreflected ease over theatricality. Kenneth S. Calhoon examines this tension against an extensive backdrop that includes a number of canonical German authors – Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Lessing, von Kleist, and Nietzsche – as well as the advent of Meissen porcelain, the painting of Bernardo Bellotto and Francesco Guardi, and aspects of German styles of architecture.

Extending from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1597) to Kleist's *The Broken Jug* (1806), this study turns on the paradox that the German literary world had begun to embrace Shakespeare just as it was firming up the broad but pronounced anti-Baroque sensibility found pivotally in Lessing's critical and dramatic works. Through these investigations, Calhoon illuminates the deep cultural changes that fundamentally affected Germany's literary and artistic traditions.

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