



German Poetry in the Age of the Enlightenment (The Penn State Series in German Literature)

Robert M. Browning

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New light is cast on German intellectual and literary history in the 18th century through this critical analysis of poets usually neglected - unjustly so, in the author's view. The main formal and thematic manifestations of German poetry after the Baroque Age, and before the rise of Sturm und Drang, are presented in a comprehensive form nowhere else available. Through close examination of the poems themselves and through reference to the poets' pronouncements on their intent and poetic theory, Professor Browning gives a sense of their work, its atmosphere, its means of achieving effects, and its intended intellectual and emotional content. Emphasis is on lyric and didactic poetry. Among the poets discussed between Brockes and Klopstock are Haller, Gellert, Gleim, Uz, Gotz, Ewald von Kleist, Gottfried Arnold, Tersteegen, Zinzendorf, and Pyra. Although the author does not shrink from judgements, he pushes no thesis except that German Enlightenment poets deserve serious attention. His conclusion is based on a reexamination of the evidence of the texts not on opinion about the poems as handed down in histories of literature.

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