

Nun kommt die Schillerzeit!

A CELEBRATION ON THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POET'S DEATH

A Reader's Guide to *Letters on the Aesthetical*

by William F. Wertz, Jr.

The purpose of this essay is to provide a guide to “the young friend of truth and beauty”¹ in his or her reading of Friedrich Schiller’s *Letters on the Aesthetical Education of Man*, which Schiller wrote in 1793 to a Danish Prince, Friedrich Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenborg, who had come to Schiller’s aid some years earlier. The original letters, of which there were only nine, were destroyed by a fire at the Prince’s palace in 1794. Nearly two years later, Schiller rewrote the whole series, nearly doubling their length, and published them by installments in *The Graces*, a journal he founded and edited.

In the *Aesthetical Letters*, Schiller openly attacked the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, an empiricist turned neo-Aristotelean, who had become in Schiller’s day the favorite of the oligarchical reactionaries, for whom his writings provided ideological support.

In the aftermath of the failure of the French Revolution of 1789 to replicate the American Revolution in Europe, Schiller knew that the philosophy of Kant was an even greater danger to the cause of political freedom than the guillotine. For this reason, Schiller referred to Kant in his essay “On Grace and Dignity” as the “Draco of his day.”² Schiller elsewhere described Draco, who was the dictator of Athens in Greece prior to the political revolution effected by Solon, as “a man bereft of human sen-

timents, who believed human nature capable of nothing good, who saw all deeds but in the dark mirror of his own cheerless soul, and was utterly lacking in indulgence for the weaknesses of humanity; a bad philosopher, and an even worse judge of man, with a cold heart, a narrow mind, and unwavering in his prejudices.”³ This description fit Kant to a tee.

In attacking Kant, Schiller did not engage in a point-by-point refutation of Kant’s constipated *Critique of Pure Reason*, or his later *Critique of Judgement* on aesthetics, but rather he focussed on Kant’s Achilles’ heel, his notion of the “categorical imperative,” which Kant developed in his *Critique of Practical Reason* as the solution to what he refers to as the “fundamental antinomy of practical reason.”

In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant asserts a fundamental antinomy or self-contradiction between man’s self regarded from the standpoint of reason and moral law, and man’s sensuous (physical) nature characterized pathologically by the desires of self-love. Since Kant denies the essential goodness of man’s sensuous existence, he can only define morality as the suppression of man’s evil nature. This subordination of man’s sensuous desires to the moral law is effected by means of the “categorical imperative.” And for Kant, to follow the moral commandments “gladly” would be self-contradictory.

In the fight to achieve political freedom, one must not agitate a population by appealing to its irrational passions and obsessions; rather, one must create within individuals a philosophical, or as Schiller puts it, an aesthetical state of mind. And the task of political organizing is to replicate such a state of mind in others.

Schiller's *Education of Man*



"The Good Samaritan," from a 19th-century German Bible. Schiller uses this parable in the "Kallias Letters" to discuss the ennoblement of man's emotions.

agapē of truth, justice, and beauty, is a "beautiful soul." Moreover, since only such a person is truly free, durable political freedom can only be achieved by deliberately fostering such an *aesthetical education* of man's emotions among the population.

Because Schiller's writings are such a devastating critique of the philosophical basis for continuing oligarchical oppression of humanity, academic agents of the oligarchy, taking advantage of the abstraction of Schiller's argument, have gone so far as to attempt to deny his opposition to Kant, even to the point of lyingly portraying him as a Kantian.⁴

As one reads Schiller's letters, one finds that virtually every letter commences with a paradox. But rather than leaving these paradoxes unresolved as Kant does, Schiller resolves the Kantian antinomies, derived from Aristotelean logic, on the higher level of Platonic, creative reason. And as we shall see, for Schiller beauty is not a matter of subjective, arbitrary taste, as it is for Kant, but rather beauty is his solution to the unresolved contradiction in Kant's philosophy as a whole, which derives from Kant's false notion of man's very nature.

Politically, such a false axiomatic assumption about man's nature, which denies man's capacity for *agapic* love and creative reason, is the ideological basis for the argument in favor of fascist dictatorships, as against the possibility of governments based on political freedom. Hence arose Schiller's determination to destroy the authority of this evil philosophy.

As we shall see, Schiller's solution to Kant's belief that morality can only be achieved by negating man's negative sensuous impulses, is to educate the emotions of man, in order to bring them into harmony with reason. For Schiller, a human being who has achieved such harmony, by transforming his selfish, infantile erotic emotions into

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Thus, what Schiller does, in effect, is to recast philosophy as aesthetics. *The Aesthetical Letters* are not about “art” *per se*. Rather, what Schiller establishes is that the subject matter of philosophy must proceed from his understanding of beauty, and that the truly philosophical mind is the aesthetical state of mind.

In 1830, twenty-five years after Schiller’s death, Wilhelm von Humboldt published an essay entitled, “On Schiller and the Course of His Spiritual Development,” as the introduction to a book containing the correspondence between the two. In that essay, Humboldt lamented that even then Schiller’s *Aesthetical Letters* were not frequently read, despite the fact that their treatment of beauty could not be excelled:

I doubt if these works, “On Grace and Dignity” and the *Letters on the Aesthetical Education of Man*, filled with substantial ideas and expressed in a uniquely beautiful way, are still frequently read, which is regrettable in a number of respects. Indeed, neither work, and, in particular, the *Letters*, can be absolved of the reproach that Schiller, in order to firmly establish his assertions, selected a method too strict and abstract, and too much neglected to treat the material in a manner admitting more fruitful application, without in so doing, really having satisfied the demands of a deduction purely from concepts. But, concerning the concept of beauty, concerning the aesthetic in creation and action, and thus the foundations of art, as well as art itself, these works contain everything essential in a manner which can never possibly be excelled.⁵

On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Schiller’s death, we owe it to Schiller and to ourselves, to ensure that an entire generation of young people who have been deliberately subjected to the culture of ugliness bequeathed them by the Congress of Cultural Freedom, are given the opportunity to fully understand Schiller’s great gift to us: the means to regain our humanity by recreating in ourselves an aesthetical state of mind.

Owing to the abstraction of Schiller’s presentation, it is often the case that those who read these letters fail to work through the argument in detail. This essay is intended to aid “the young friend of truth and beauty” in fully grasping the entirety of Schiller’s argument, by providing such a reader with a guide for working through Schiller’s letters, and hence re-experiencing for himself the process of development of Schiller’s conceptions.

LaRouche on Schiller’s Political Significance

The urgent political necessity of comprehending Schiller’s aesthetical contribution to today’s fight for the political liberation of humanity has been specifically

identified by Lyndon LaRouche in two essays, the first entitled “Russia Is Eurasia’s Keystone Economy,”⁶ and the second, “The Substance of Morality.”⁷ In these essays, LaRouche develops the idea that human progress in the physical domain, or what he refers to as the “*n*-fold manifold,” can only be achieved to the extent that the moral education of the individual’s passions in what he calls the “*m*-fold manifold,” is accomplished through Classical art. Failure to achieve progress in the *n*-fold manifold through the physical sciences, results from dysfunctions within the *m*-fold manifold of culture.

In the first of these two locations, LaRouche writes:

The exemplary case, is Friedrich Schiller’s solution to the problem posed to continental Europe generally by the abomination known as the French Jacobin phenomenon of 1789-1794. Until this French horror-show, the anti-oligarchical forces of Europe had been inspired by the 1776-1783 American War of Independence, as the model upon which the hope of a truly civilized human existence was premised. The Jacobins demonstrated, to paraphrase Schiller’s German, that a moment of great opportunity had, unfortunately, found in the French population, a pathetically little people. Schiller’s remedy followed the Classical tradition of such exemplary, relatively immediate predecessors, and adversaries of Voltaire, as Moses Mendelssohn and Gotthold Lessing. Schiller emphasized the role of great compositions in the Classical art-forms of poetry, tragedy, music, and study of universal history, as the necessary *moral* education of the individual’s passions. This moral education, supplied by great compositions in Classical art-forms, is required to produce a true citizen of a republic; our *m*-fold sub-manifold.⁸

LaRouche’s use of the terminology referring to an *n*-fold and an *m*-fold manifold, reflects both his appreciation of the great Russian scientist Vladimir I. Vernadsky, and his correction of Vernadsky’s failure to fully account for the social aspect of human creativity. Vernadsky identifies three domains, the abiotic (non-living), biosphere, and Nöosphere, the domain of human creativity. Vernadsky correctly identifies the responsibility of the Nöosphere to develop the biosphere. This is the equivalent of LaRouche’s conception of the necessity to achieve progress in the *n*-fold manifold. However, Vernadsky does not identify the role of Classical art-forms in ensuring that individual creativity is socialized—what LaRouche refers to as the *m*-fold manifold—so as to achieve progress in the physical domain.

In the second essay, LaRouche emphasizes that “when and whether progress, or even retrogression occurs, is never automatic, the actual outcome is a result of what we term ‘cultural factors,’ as much as impulses attribut-

able to progress in discovery of higher physical principles as such.”⁹

Today we are faced with the same ontological issue which Schiller addressed using the example of the horrible failure of the French Revolution. As LaRouche puts it: “We are faced, thus, once again, with the fact, that the most powerful technological cultures can be doomed by the kind of moral and cultural ‘paradigm shift’ which has dominated the world, increasingly, since the 1964-72 youth counterculture revolt against both technological progress and rationality generally.”¹⁰

LaRouche writes that there are two great evils—oligarchism, and the moral degeneracy engendered in subject populations. Schiller referred to these evils in respect to the French Revolution as the “barbarism” of the pro-oligarchic Enlightenment elite, and the “savagery” of the uneducated population.

What is required to save a civilization from its own Hamlet-like self-destruction is, according to both Schiller

and LaRouche, the creation of “beautiful souls.” As LaRouche argues, in a Classical tragedy, such as Schiller’s *Don Carlos*, the leading characters apart from Elisabeth, “are each gripped, like Shakespeare’s Hamlet, by a compelling devotion to some fatal degree of relative spiritual littleness in themselves. World-historical roles are more or less evaded out of small-minded attachments to small-minded family and kindred personal considerations.”¹¹

In contrast, in the case of a beautiful soul, the character is no longer an adolescent personality characterized by selfishness, but is rather a conscious, world-historical personality, living and acting lovingly in the simultaneity of eternity. Such a character is capable of helping a population free itself from the self-degradation imbued within popular opinion (*vox populi*), and thus of ensuring continued human progress.

With this introduction to the significance of the intellectual journey upon which we are now to embark, we commence our dialogue with the “Poet of Freedom.”

Letter One



THE FIRST letter initially seems to support the false assertion that Schiller is a Kantian. Here, Schiller writes that, “it is in greatest part Kantian principles, upon which the subsequent assertions will rest.” However, already in the first letter, Schiller sets the task before him as resolving the paradox or antinomy inherent in Kant’s aesthetic and moral writings. As Schiller writes in the first letter, referring to Kant as the analyst: “Is it any wonder, if the natural feeling does not find itself once more in such an image, and the truth appears in the report of the analyst as a paradox?”

The central difficulty with Kant’s moral philosophy, as expressed in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, is his concept that the fundamental antinomy of practical reason can only be resolved through the categorical imperative. This concept reduces morality to the negation of a negation. Moral duty is conceived as necessarily in opposition to man’s sensuous inclinations, which therefore must be negated.

Schiller rejects such a concept of morality as lacking in freedom. Thus, in his essay “On Grace and Dignity,” written in 1793, just before he wrote the *Aesthetical Letters*, Schiller explicitly rejects the Kantian categorical imperative, arguing that such a concept may be appropriate for a servant, but not for the free son of the household.

In his reflection, “On Schiller and the Course of his Spiritual Development,” Wilhelm von Humboldt therefore noted, that with this criticism of Kantian morality, Schiller came forward “as Kant’s opponent.”¹²

In the first letter, one can easily see that Schiller, by his very choice of language, is setting the stage for resolving this Kantian paradox in the course of the letters as a whole. Schiller stresses that, although the request for him to write on the subject makes it a duty for him, he is merely following his inclination. The request is not a constraint, but rather permits him to fulfill an inner need.

Furthermore, consistent with this perspective, Schiller argues that his ideas are derived from his own mind. He does make the above-cited reference to Kantian principles; however, he warns that he will not maintain his own ideas through any external academic authority. His approach will be to respect the freedom of his reader’s mind by addressing it Socratically.

Schiller does not make reference to Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, but rather to his *Critique of Practical Reason*. And here he indicates that his task is to liberate “the practical part of the Kantian system” from its “technical form,” which “must destroy the object of the inner sense,” “put it in the fetters of rule,” and rend the beautiful “to pieces in conceptions.”

In this first letter, Schiller already suggests his solution to the problem of Kantianism. In the “Kallias Letters” written to his friend Gottfried Körner, Schiller locates his concept of beauty in the imitation of the form of practical reason, which is “to be determined not from the outside, but rather through itself, to be determined autonomously or to appear so.”¹³ Thus, he writes: “The

Glossary of Terms

Fundamental antinomy of practical reason. According to Kant, man's nature is self-contradictory. On the one hand, man is free through the moral law which derives from his capacity for reason. On the other hand, man as a creature of nature is characterized by pathological sensuous desires.

Categorical imperative. For Kant, the only way to resolve the antinomy of practical reason is for reason to impose the categorical demands of moral law by suppressing (negating) man's heteronomic, pathological nature.

Barbarian. According to Schiller, man is a barbarian if his narrowly defined rational principles destroy his capacity for the feelings associated with *agapic* love.

Savage. According to Schiller, man is a savage if his infantile egoistic feelings rule over his reason and capacity for love.

Naturwissenschaft. The physical sciences.

Geisteswissenschaft. The arts or humanities, in contrast to the physical sciences.

Beautiful Soul. A person in whom the emotions are in harmony with reason, owing to the fact that his emotions are no longer those of infantile self-love, but rather have been elevated to the level of *agapē*. Such a person does his moral duty freely with joy.

Sublime. A person has achieved a sublime state of mind when even in the face of death, he freely decides to act on the basis of moral principle, rather than for his own physical self-preservation. This proves that man, as distinct from the animals, is characterized by a "supersensuous" moral independence.

Schwärmerei. The mind of a person in a state of *schwärmerei* is literally "swarming." Rather than having a clear perspective for achieving his ideals, his mind is so blinded by self-love that his efforts become self-destructive.

Transcendental. Kant's philosophy is usually referred to as "transcendental," in the sense that it negates the material, since it considers reason and the material as contradictory. However, Schiller uses this term differently, in reference to the derivation of his concept of beauty. Rather than deriving his

concept from empirical experience, he derives it from the realm of ideas, which transcends empirical experience. Schiller's concept of beauty is ultimately derived from his concept of the nature of man, which he in turn derives from his concept of the divine—since man, as Schiller writes, has a "predisposition for divinity in his personality."

Sensuous drive. As a finite (material) being, man is by nature characterized by sensuous desires or drives. Schiller says that the object of the sensuous drive is "life."

Formal drive. At the same time, as a creature of reason, man has a drive to impose a conceptual and moral order upon the sensuous world. Schiller says that the object of the formal drive is "form."

Play drive. Not a third, independent drive, but rather the harmonious, reciprocal combination of the sensuous and formal drives. It is based upon the union of love and creative reason. Schiller says that the object of the play drive—which we call beauty—is "living form."

Empty infinity. Schiller uses this term to describe the condition of the human spirit, before it has been determined by the conditions of its existence; i.e., before acquiring its particular, individual specificity. At birth, before it is shaped by the particular constraining conditions of its upbringing, the human being has a determinability without bounds.

Fulfilled infinity. In contrast to an empty infinity, in which the human being has an absolute capacity to be determined (because he has not yet been determined), the aim of man's "aesthetical education" is to free the individual from particular determinations, which limit his capacity. In that sense, the purpose of beauty is to unite all reality in the person, in order to restore his inner fullness.

Aesthetical state of mind. The state of mind of a beautiful soul, a free state of mind, in which the mind has been freed of all forms of compulsion and of all particular determinations. It is the true philosophical outlook. A person with such a state of mind has regained his capacity as a human being "to impart and receive profound ideas respecting man and nature," in the poet Shelley's phrase.

ground of beauty is everywhere freedom in the appearance. The ground of our *representation* of beauty is technique in freedom.”¹⁴

What Schiller means by “technique,” is the formal skill with which an artist creates a beautiful object. But, beauty is not merely technical perfection in the form of the beautiful object. For, to be beautiful, the object must

have an inner freedom or gracefulness.

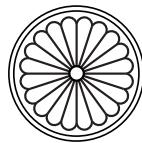
The solution to the Kantian paradox will therefore be for the technique to “appear determined through the nature of the thing, which one could call the voluntary assent of the thing to its technique.”¹⁵ To express this concept less technically: one must voluntarily do one’s moral duty with joy.

Letter Two

FOR SCHILLER, “the most perfect of all works of art” is “the construction of a true political freedom.” However, having witnessed the terror of the French Revolution, Schiller concludes that, “in order to solve the political problem in experience,” one “must take the path through the aesthetical, because it is beauty through which one proceeds to freedom.”

Schiller resists the “alluring temptation” of the day—to focus immediately upon “the political theater of action,” because he realizes that man can not achieve true political freedom unless and until an inner transformation of the population is brought about, counter to the prevailing popular culture or “*Zeitgeist*” (“spirit of the times”), with its false axiomatic assumptions.

The wants and tastes of the *Zeitgeist* are contrary to beautiful art. “Utility is the great idol of the time, for which all powers slave and all talents must pay homage.”



Such a culture of the “noisy market” is antithetical to art, because art is “the daughter of freedom” and receives its prescription from the inner necessity of the spirit, and not from the pressing need of matter, which bends humanity under its tyrannical yoke.

Schiller does not propose that one should escape from the political theater into the theater of beautiful art, but rather that art must “elevate itself with suitable boldness above want,” in order to contribute to true freedom in the political realm. If the political question is to be answered not on the basis of Thrasymachian “blind right of the stronger,” then it must be brought “before the tribunal of pure reason.” The latter is only possible to the extent that the individual is able “to place himself in the center of the whole, and to raise his individuality to that of the species.” To achieve such a world-historical species identity, Schiller argues, requires “beauty to walk in front of freedom.”

Letter Three

THE TASK before man is to transform his natural condition into a moral one, to eliminate the blind necessity or caprice of his physical existence without undermining his physical existence, which is the condition of his humanity.



Man has the capacity through reason “to transform the work of necessity into his free choice, and to elevate physical necessity to a moral one.” Before he is able to act as a “free intelligence for himself,” he finds himself in a natural condition, which Schiller defines as “any political body which derives its establishment originally from forces, not from laws.” Man rightfully abandons the rule of blind necessity through his freedom, “for the work of blind power possesses no authority, before which freedom need bow.”

Man’s transition to the moral must be achieved without “pulling the ladder of nature out from under his feet.” Physical society must be maintained, even as it is transformed into a moral one. There must therefore be “a sup-

port for the continuance of society, which makes it independent of the natural state, which one wants to dissolve.”

According to Schiller, this support can not come from the natural character of man, which selfishly and violently aims for the destruction of society. Nor can it come from the moral, because that has not yet been formed. Therefore, what is required is an as-yet-not-defined “third character,” related to both physical and moral characters, which can prepare the transition from the rule of naked force to the rule of law, by making the physical character harmonious with the moral law by eliminating caprice, and by ensuring that the moral law does not merely negate the sensuous, but that it becomes man’s nature. Conceptual development of this “third character” will be taken up in forthcoming letters.

As should be clear from the above, Schiller breaks entirely from Kant’s *negative* view of man’s natural being.

At the same time, as we shall see, despite the efforts of various British-influenced commentators on Schiller to portray him as influenced by such Enlightenment authors as John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Adam Ferguson in his treatment of the natural and moral states, Schiller's concept of a third character to mediate the transition clearly rejects both the Lockean and Hobbesian notions of man's evil nature, and any kind of social contract based on that false conception of man, which these authors share with Kant.

Nor does Schiller share Rousseau's notion of the noble savage. Although Schiller does not accept Kant's negative view of man's natural being, he does not advocate a return to an illusory primitive state, but rather recognizes that man is selfish in a purely sensual condition, and that

therefore his physical nature must be elevated by beauty, which he defines as the union of reason and love. In his "Aesthetical Lectures," Schiller writes: "The pleasure of beauty arises, therefore, from the observed analogy with reason, and is united with love."¹⁶

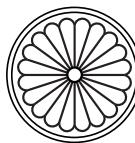
Thus, in "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry," Schiller writes that the sentimental poet "would not lead us backwards to our childhood, . . . but rather would lead us forward to our majority. . . . He would take as his task an idyll, which realizes that pastoral innocence, even in the subjects of culture and among all conditions of the most active, most ardent life, of the most extensive thought, of the most refined art, of the highest social refinement, which, in a word, leads the man, who can now no longer return to *Arcadia*, up to *Elysium*."¹⁷

Letter Four

FOR A transformation of the political state according to moral principles to be both non-injurious and also durable, it will only occur on the basis of such a third character. In a moral state, free will is drawn into the realm of causes. Only in the Absolute Being does physical necessity coincide with the moral. Thus, if the moral conduct of man is to be relied upon, it must *be* nature, i.e., flow from within. The will of man stands perfectly free between duty and inclination. Therefore, the effects of both of these drives must be expressed perfectly equally; that is, his instincts must be harmonious with his reason.

As Schiller writes, every individual man carries a "purely ideal man" within himself. The great task of his existence is to bring himself, with all his alterations, into agreement with the immutable unity of this "purely ideal man." This pure man is represented through the state. There are two different ways in which the man "in time" can relate to the man "in the idea," and parallel to that, how the state can relate to the individual. On the one hand, the pure man can suppress the empirical man and the state abolish the individual, or, the individual can become the state and the man of time ennable himself to become the man in the idea. Reason demands unity, but nature multiplicity. Man is claimed by both legislations.

Schiller's concept of man has nothing to do with the Aristotelean concept of man as a mere rational animal, capable only of deductive logic, and not of cognition. Aristotle denies the very idea of eternal ideas. Schiller, on the other hand, expresses the Platonic idea that since all individuals are created in the image of God, they all have within themselves the capacity for creative reason and *agape*,



and therefore the capacity to be divine (*capax dei*).

Schiller stresses here that the paradoxical relationship between the One and the Many can not be resolved through Kantian suppression or negation of multiplicity. The moral character can not maintain itself with the self-sacrifice of the natural; the political state is imperfect, if it attempts to effect unity through suppression of multiplicity.

As Schiller writes in "On Grace and Dignity," freedom lies in the middle between lawful suasion, as in the case of a monarchy, where the strict supervision of the ruler holds every impulse in check, and anarchy, as in a wild ochlocracy (mob rule).¹⁸

An artist can do violence to his material, as long as the work of art does not show it, but instead has the appearance of freedom. He is not interested in the whole for the sake of its parts; rather, in the parts for the sake of the whole. It is entirely different with the political artist, who makes man into his material and his task. It is only because the whole serves the parts, that the parts may accommodate themselves to the whole. The political artist must spare the peculiarity and personality of his material; he must guarantee the continued existence of the individual in the state.

Schiller makes this same point in "The Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon": "Stone suffers the work of the chisel patiently, and the strings struck by the musician answer him without resisting his finger. It is only the legislator who works upon a material, which is active and resistant of its own accord—human freedom."¹⁹

As to the distinction between Solon and Lycurgus, Schiller writes that Solon "had respect for human nature, and *never sacrificed people to the state, never the end to the*

means, rather let the state serve the people." In contrast, the laws of Lycurgus "were iron chains, in which bold courage chafed itself bloody, which pulled down the mind by their pressing weight."²⁰

As Schiller writes, the state can only be real insofar as the parts have raised themselves to the idea of the whole. If the inner man is one with himself, the state will be merely the interpreter of his beautiful instincts. If not, the state will suppress its citizens in order not to become their victim, and will crush under its feet so hostile an individuality.

Man can oppose himself in two ways. He can be a

savage, if his feelings rule over his principles; or a barbarian, if his principles destroy his feelings. The latter is more contemptible, because he continues to be a slave of his slaves.

The educated man, on the other hand, makes nature into his friend and honors freedom, while he merely reins in its caprice.

Thus, the victorious form is equally far from the uniformity imposed by the barbarian, and the confusion of the savage. The *totality* of character must be found, which is capable and worthy to exchange the condition of necessity for the condition of freedom.

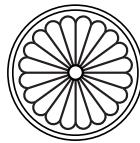
Letter Five

BUT THIS totality of character was lacking in Schiller's day, as it is still today. A majority of people demanded the restoration of their inalienable rights—referring to both the American and French revolutions. "A *physical* possibility seems given to place the law upon the throne, to honor man finally as an end in himself, and to make true freedom the basis of political union."

But according to Schiller, that is a "vain hope," as long as the *moral* possibility is wanting. Referring to the French Revolution, he writes, "the generous moment finds an unresponsive people." The same idea is conveyed in his epigram entitled "The Moment":

A momentous epoch hath the century engendered,
Yet the moment so great findeth a people so small.²¹

Schiller then describes how the lower classes have returned to a state of savagery manifested in "brutal, lawless drives," which hasten to their "animal satisfaction." On the other hand, the "civilized" classes are characterized by a "depravity of character, which revolts so much the more, because culture itself is its source." According to Schiller, the son of nature is a raving madman; the

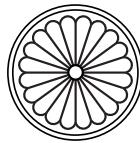


pupil of art, a worthless villain.

He then proceeds to critique the Enlightenment, which "shows so little an ennobling influence on the inner convictions, that it rather strengthens the corruption through maxims." The

Enlightenment denies nature on her legitimate field, in order to experience her tyranny on the moral—in the form of a materialistic ethics. "In the very bosom of the most refined social life, egoism hath founded its system." There is no social heart. Proud self-sufficiency contracts the heart of the man of the world. From a burning city, everyone seeks only to rescue his miserable property. Mockery slanders the noblest feeling. (On this, see Schiller's poem "The Maiden of Orleans," where he attacks Voltaire for dragging the noble image of Joan of Arc, and thereby mankind, in the dust.²²) Fear of losing stifles the fiery drive for improvement, and maxims of suffering obedience are considered to be the highest wisdom of life. The "spirit of the times" wavers between perversity and brutality, between the unnatural and mere nature, between superstition and moral disbelief, and it is merely the equal weight of evils, which at times places limits upon man.

Letter Six



TO THE criticism that the above-described condition of humanity is characteristic of all peoples who are engaged in culture, Schiller rejoins that the Greeks, who were "married to all the charms of art and to all the dignity of wisdom," did so without sacrificing the human heart. "At once full of form and full of abundance, at once philosophizing and creating, at once tender and energetic, we see them unite the youth of phantasy with the manliness of reason in a glorious

humanity." (See Glossary for "formal drive.")

Among the Greeks, the senses and the mind were not rigidly separated. "As high as reason also climbed, so it yet always drew matter lovingly after it . . ." Thus, for the Greeks, reason does not mutilate nature, as is the case with the Kantian categorical imperative.

Here Schiller is also attacking the false dichotomy which resulted from the artificial division of *Naturwissen-*

senschaft (natural sciences) and *Geisteswissenschaft* (arts) during the Enlightenment, under the influence of Kant. In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant goes so far as to argue that we can readily learn science, but we can not learn to write spirited poetry. The artist does not himself know how he has come by his ideas, and can not communicate them. Kant argues, for instance, that Homer can not show how his ideas come together in his head, simply because he does not know, and that therefore he can not teach others. However, according to Kant, in science, the greatest discoverer differs only in degree from the “laborious imitator” and the pupil; but, “he differs specifically from him whom nature has gifted for beautiful art.”²³

In contrast, among the Greeks, poetry was not corrupted by supercilious wit, nor speculation by sophistry, because both honored the truth. This, Schiller emphasizes, is reflected in the humanity of the Greek gods. As Schiller writes, “the whole of humanity was missing in no individual god.” Contrary to the religious fundamentalist, who might argue that Schiller is making an apology for paganism, Schiller’s argument is simply that the Greek gods expressed the humanity of the Greeks themselves. This humanity is in contrast to the fragmented nature of man in our age, in which the individual develops only one-sidedly, rather than in his full, universal potential. Schiller asks: “Which individual modern steps forth, to contend, man against man, with the individual Athenian for the prize of humanity?”

Lyndon LaRouche has addressed this problem from the standpoint of three Greek archetypes: the Dionysian, the Apollonian, and the Promethean. The first two are the equivalent of the savage and the barbarian, as developed by Schiller in Letter Four: The Dionysian is characterized by sensuous license, the Apollonian by an Aristotelean, logical rationality, which merely negates the Dionysian. The Promethean, on the other hand, represents a higher form of reason than mere Aristotelean logic. Prometheus, who operates on the sublime level of cognition and love of humanity, gives the human species, as a whole, the gifts of art and the sciences.

In his essay “Of the Sublime,” Schiller himself also identified with Prometheus, whom he characterizes as paradigmatic of the sublime: “Prometheus was sublime, since, put in chains in the Caucasus, he did not regret his deed, and did not confess that he was wrong.”²⁴

As Schiller says, it was culture itself which ruptured the inner bond of human nature, through, on the one hand, a separation of the sciences and, on the other, a division of ranks and occupations by the state. The disruption which “art and learning began in the inner man” was then reflected in a mechanistic form of government.

“Torn asunder now were the state and the church, the

laws and the customs; enjoyment was separated from work, the means from the end, the effort from the reward. Eternally chained to only a single fragment of the whole, man only develops himself as a fragment” Man “becomes an imprint of his business, of his science The dead letter replaces the living understanding, and a practiced memory guides more safely than genius and feeling.”

“So jealous is the state of the exclusive possession of its servants, that it is easier to be decided thereon . . . to share its man with a Venus Cytherea than with a Venus Urania.” In Greek mythology, the former Venus represents an erotic love not threatening to the state, whereas the latter Venus was the Muse of astronomy and represents an intellectual form of love, which such a state would prefer to suppress.

Such a state remains foreign to its citizens, compelled to relieve itself of the multiplicity of its citizens through classification. Under these conditions, the bond of society falls to pieces; the public power is hated and deceived by those who make it necessary, and respected only by those who can do without it.

The speculative mind becomes a stranger in the sensual world, and prey to an empty subtlety. The spirit of business, on the other hand, becomes prey to a pedantic narrow-mindedness. Thus, the abstract thinker very often has a *cold* heart, and the businessman a *narrow* heart.

Nonetheless, Schiller admits that “the species had been able to make progress in no other mode. The appearance of Grecian humanity was uncontestedly a maximum, that could on these steps neither continue nor climb higher.”

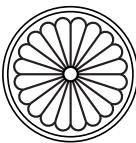
Therefore, Schiller does not propose to return to the past: “One-sidedness in the exercise of its powers leads the individual inevitably to error, but the species to truth.” Such one-sidedness can lead “artificially far beyond the bounds which nature seems to have imposed” on the individual. Schiller cites among other examples of this, Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. But will such a mind be capable of exchanging the severe fetters of logic, for the free action of the power of poetry? This divided cultivation of human powers may have won much for the world, but the individual has been made to suffer the curse of this world aim.

What is missing are freedom and beauty. Gymnastic exercises develop athletic bodies; but only through the free and uniform play of the limbs is beauty developed. Progress was made; but, must it be at the expense of the enslavement and mutilation of our human nature for thousands of years?

Schiller concludes: “It must therefore be false, that the cultivation of individual powers makes the sacrifice of

their totality necessary; or, if even the law of nature yet strove so much thither, so must it stand with us, to reestablish this totality in our nature, which art hath destroyed, through a higher art."

Schiller's entire discussion brings to mind the explicitly Promethean method employed by Plato in his *Philebus* dialogue. There, Plato argues that all things are a mixture of the One and the Many, of the limit and the unlimited. The first conception of such a mixture is the imposition of a limit upon the unlimited, in such a way as to suppress multiplicity and individuality. However, Plato develops a second, higher conception, that of an unlimited sequence of higher-order limits, or higher hypotheses.



BUT SUCH a better humanity can not be expected to be imposed from the top down by the state, since the state has occasioned evil. Rather, humanity must be elevated, so as to bring about the moral improvement of the state. Just as in Letter Five, Schiller said that it was a "vain hope" to think that political freedom could be achieved without the aesthetical education of the population, in this letter, Schiller states emphatically that "one must declare every attempt of such an alteration of state as untimely, and every there-upon-grounded hope as chimerical, until the division in the inner man is once again dissolved, and his nature is sufficiently fully developed, in order itself to be the artist and to guarantee the reality of the political creation of reason."

This is the same paradox as that addressed by Plato in *The Republic*, where the question, "Who will educate the educators?" arises. It is similarly addressed by Nicolaus of Cusa in his *On Catholic Concordance*: On the one hand, government must be by the consent of the governed, in order to be true to man's nature, as created in the image of the Creator, who Himself is free. However, the number of fools is infinite. Therefore, how can the governed give intelligent consent? Cusanus' solution to this paradox is that every rational creature, i.e., every citizen, must come into rational harmony with the *Logos* or Word.

Reflecting again on the French Revolution, Schiller therefore argues that only through beauty is it possible to proceed to true political freedom. One must first becalm the conflict of blind drives, before daring to favor multiplicity: "Where the natural man still abuses his caprice so lawlessly, there one may scarcely show him his freedom; where the artificial man still employs his freedom so little, there one may not take his caprice from him."

This concept in the *Philebus* is Plato's solution to the *Parmenides* paradox, which derives from the false Eleatic notion of a static One, and is coherent with the conception developed by Plato in *The Republic* of a progressive ordering of higher hypotheses.

From this standpoint, as Schiller argues, a one-sided barbarian culture has imposed a limit on an unlimited savagery, thus merely negating man's sensuous nature. The solution is not to return to an Arcadia, but to reestablish the simplicity experienced by the Greeks, by creating a future Elysium by means of a "higher art," or as LaRouche would emphasize, a higher $(m+1)$ -fold manifold, subsuming a lower-order m -fold manifold.

Letter Seven

For this reason, Schiller, writing over two hundred years ago, argues that this is a "task for more than *one* century."

Does this mean either that we should retreat from the political theater altogether, or that the state can not be wielded to achieve good? No, not at all. In this letter, Schiller writes: "Meanwhile, I gladly admit, some attempt in particular can succeed, but nothing will be improved on the whole thereby, and the contradiction of conduct will always be proof against the unity of maxims."

Clearly, it must be argued that the American Revolution succeeded where the French failed. Moreover, it is certainly the case, as in the American example, that government power can and must be used to effect the General Welfare.

However, as the current crisis in the United States makes clear, unless the population is successfully challenged through Classical art to re-examine its false axiomatic assumptions, there is no guarantee that the constitutional power of the state will be employed to effect the common good, or that the efforts of those government leaders so committed will endure.

Schiller, who wrote such plays as *Wilhelm Tell* and *The Virgin of Orleans*, was not a political quietist, but rather a revolutionary. But as a true revolutionary, he realized, as does Lyndon LaRouche, that true political freedom can only be achieved by means of Classical artistic methods.

Without such methods, which transform the inner man, as Schiller writes, the old principles, wearing the clothes of the current century, will remain, and every attempt to achieve freedom will either throw itself "into the arms of a comfortable servitude" (i.e., "comfort zones"), or "escape into the wild license of the natural condition."

Letter Eight

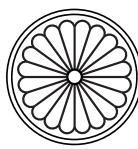
SCHILLER asks, should philosophy retreat from the political domain without hope? In reaffirming that political freedom is the “most important of all goods,” he asks, should it be abandoned to formless chance? His answer: “Not in the least.”

However, true political freedom will never be accomplished by means of reason engaging “directly” in combat with egoism. Referring to the *Iliad*, Schiller writes that the son of Saturn (Cronos), i.e., Zeus, did not act on his own on the battlefield, but rather “be clothes his grandson [Achilles] with godly arms” to bring about the great outcome.

Thus, reason can promulgate laws for society, but they must be executed by the “courageous will and the living feeling.” If truth is to triumph, it must become “force” and advance a “drive.”

The reason man is still a barbarian, is because there is something subjective in the minds of men, a neurotic distortion of his creativity, which stands in the way. The solution is located in the expression: *sapere aude*, embolden thyself to be wise.

Energy of courage is needed to combat the inertia of nature, as well as the cowardice of the heart. Schiller alludes to Athena, goddess of wisdom, who emerged in full armor from Zeus’s head. Unfortunately, the more numerous part of mankind is too exhausted by the daily struggle for existence to rally itself against error, so it gladly defers to the state and a priesthood to do its think-



ing for it. The others, who are better off, prefer the delusions upon which the “entire edifice of their happiness” is based. Will these be willing to fight for a truth that takes from them everything upon which their current false happiness is based?

What is required is the wisdom to love wisdom, as Schiller says: “They had to already be wise, in order to love wisdom,” a truth implied by the very name philosophy. Here, Schiller introduces that “force” or “drive” required to win the battle—the Platonic conception of *agapē*, or love of wisdom and truth. (See Plato’s *Republic*, Book II, and the Apostle Paul’s 1 Corinthians 13.)

Schiller concludes by emphasizing that, not only must enlightenment of the understanding flow back upon the character, but “it proceeds also to a certain extent from the character, since the way to the head must be opened through the heart.” Therefore, the most pressing need of the time is to develop man’s “capacity of feeling,” i.e., his capacity to love truth and justice.

In his inaugural lecture as a professor at the University of Jena, “What Is, and To What End Do We Study, Universal History?,” Schiller made the same point to students, when he distinguished between the student who only studies for bread (i.e., for money), and the student with a philosophical mind, who “has always loved truth more than his system.” As Schiller writes: “What greater gift than truth has any man to give to man?”

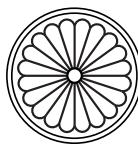
Letter Nine

NEXT, Schiller poses the following paradox: “All improvement in the political should proceed from the ennoblement of the character—but how can the character enoble itself under the influence of a barbarous state constitution?” The instrument Schiller proposes to use to resolve this paradox is “beautiful art.”

As Schiller writes in “On the Pathetic”: “Poetry can become to man, what love is to the hero. It can neither advise him, nor strike for him, nor otherwise do work for him; but it can educate him as a hero, it can summon him to deeds, and to all that he should be, equip him with strength.”²⁵

It is true, Schiller argues, that the political lawgiver “can banish the friend of truth, but the truth subsists; he can degrade the artist, but he can not falsify art.” True art, like science, enjoys “an absolute *immunity* from the caprice of man.”

“The artist is indeed the son of his time, but bad for him, if he is at the same time its pupil or even yet its favorite,” Schiller writes. Therefore, the true artist must



derive the form of his art not from the prevailing popular opinion (*vox populi*) of the *Zeitgeist*, but from a nobler time, “beyond all time, from the absolute immutable unity of his essence.” Thus, he must be a strange form to his own century. His objective should not be to please his contemporaries, but frightful as Agamemnon’s son Orestes, to purify it.

Noble art is capable of inspiring a noble nature in man before it exists in him, and also, even when humanity has lost its dignity, noble art, produced before such a degeneration, has the power to revive that lost dignity and to effect a renaissance. As Schiller writes: “Yet, before truth sends her triumphing light into the depths of the heart, the power of poetry intercepts her beams, and the summits of humanity will glisten, when a damp night still lies in the valleys.”

The artist can preserve himself before the corruptions of his time only “if he despises its judgment.” Schiller polemicizes against both an adaptation to the fleeting

moment, and an “impatient *schwärmer* spirit, which employs the measure of the unconditioned to the miserable offspring of time.” Instead, the artist must strive to produce “the ideal from the bond of the possible with the necessary,” to stamp this “on the play of his creative power,” and to “hurl it silently into infinite time.”

In this letter, Schiller introduces, for the first time, the concept of “play,” and he does so in connection with “creative power.” This critical concept will be developed at length beginning in the Fourteenth Letter.

Otherwise, he introduces a polemic, which was first seen in his “Letters on Don Carlos” and was later developed in “On Naive and Sentimental Poetry.” In the former, he criticizes the character Marquis Posa for an idealism that exceeds enthusiasm. He writes: “Finally, I do not intend to have thoroughly absolved the Marquis of *schwärmerei*. *Schwärmerei* and enthusiasm touch one another so closely, their line of demarcation is so fine, that it can be overstepped, in conditions of passionate excitement only all too easily.”²⁶

In his “On Naive and Sentimental Poetry,” Schiller writes: “We have seen, that the naive genius is indeed not in danger of overstepping this sphere [human nature], but rather *not to realize it completely*, if it gives too much room to an external necessity, or the accidental need of the moment at the expense of inner necessity. The sentimental genius, on the contrary, is exposed to danger, on account of the endeavor to remove all limits from it, to

annul human nature altogether, and not merely, as it may and should, to rise and to *idealize*, beyond every fixed and limited reality up to absolute possibility, but rather to pass even beyond possibility or to *schwärm*.²⁷

As Schiller writes in this letter, in contrast to the *Schwärmer*, who engages in flight-forward out of self-love, his own advice to the young friend of truth and beauty is to give the world “the *direction* towards the good,” by elevating its thoughts to the necessary and eternal, and transforming the necessary and eternal into an object of its instinct. “The structure of delusion and arbitrariness will fall, it must fall, it hath already fallen, as soon as thou art certain that it inclines; but in the inner, not merely in the outer man.” Thus Schiller advises: “Live with thy century, but be not its creature; give to thy contemporaries, but what they need, not what they praise.”

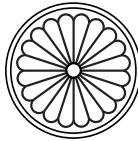
Finally, he stresses that the earnestness of principles will tend to frighten people away. Therefore, it were better to flank their defenses by engaging them in play. “Their maxims wilt thou storm in vain, their deeds condemn in vain, but thou canst try thy forming hand upon their idleness. Chase away the caprice, the frivolity, the roughness from their pleasures, so wilt thou banish them imperceptibly too from their actions, finally from their character. Where thou findest them, surround them with noble, with great, with ingenious forms, enclose them all around with symbols of excellence, until appearance overcomes reality, and art, nature.”

Letter Ten

SCHILLER has now established that man can deviate from his destiny by two opposing roads, roughness and enervation, and can only be led back to his destiny from this two-fold aberration through beauty. But the question arises as to how beautiful culture can simultaneously “put nature in the savage in fetters, and place the same in the barbarian in freedom”?

Moreover, there are some who think not so badly of the savagery of uncultivated people, and not quite so favorably of the refinement of the cultivated. In fact, in Antiquity there were those who thought beautiful culture was not a benefit, and attempted to prohibit its entrance into society.

Based on experience, they argue that while the beautiful in good hands can effect laudable ends, in bad hands it can effect just the opposite. The seductive power of beauty gives man’s disposition the dangerous direction to neglect all reality, and to sacrifice truth and morality to a charming exterior. Moreover, in well-nigh every epoch of history where the arts blossom and taste rules, mankind is found sunken, and not a single example can be produced, that a higher degree and a great universality of



aesthetical culture among a people had gone hand in hand with political freedom and civic virtue.

After citing several examples from historical experience that are most frequently used to support this argument, Schiller writes, “perhaps *experience* is not the tribunal before which to decide a question such as this.” Moreover, we have to be certain that what is called beautiful in experience is the “same beauty” of which Schiller is speaking. What we need is a concept of beauty that has a source other than experience, by which we can judge whether that which is called beautiful, bears this name justly.

Schiller argues that a *pure rational conception* of beauty can not be inductively derived from experience, but rather must be inferred from the very nature of man as a *sensuous-rational* being. He describes the methodological course that must be taken as “transcendental.” Only by starting from the epistemological standpoint of the idea of man, as created in the image of God, can one discover the “absolute and enduring,” and cast away “all accidental limitations” respecting one’s concept of beauty.

Letter Eleven

IN THE first letter, Schiller had written that his ideas derive primarily “from uniform intercourse with my self.” Through this process of self-conscious reflection, Schiller ascends Socratically above sense perception and logic to the level of ideas, to arrive at “two ultimate conceptions.” In man, there is something which endures, and something which changes incessantly. The enduring is his *person*, the changing is his *condition*, the self and its determinations.

In the Necessary Being or God, these are one and the same; however, in man as a finite being, they are two. Only in the Absolute Subject do all the personality’s determinations persist with the personality, because they flow from the personality. “Everything that divinity is, it is for that reason, *because* it is; it is consequently everything for eternity, because it is eternal.”

However, in the case of man, since he is finite, person and condition are distinct. By “person,” Schiller is referring to man’s immortal soul, his capacity for cognition. By “condition,” he is referring to man’s mortal, and therefore changeable, physical existence. The person can not be grounded upon the condition, because then the person would have to change. Nor can the condition be grounded upon the person, because then the condition would have to persist.

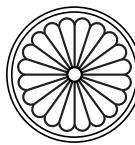
The person must thus be its own ground, for the enduring can not flow from the changeable. This is the origin of the idea of the Absolute Being grounded in itself, i.e., *freedom*. Condition, on the other hand, is not absolute, it must *result*. It is “dependent being or becoming.” Time is the condition of all becoming.

The person, which manifests itself in the eternally persistent I, and only in this, can not become, nor commence in time, because time must, on the contrary, commence in it, because something persevering must lay the basis for change.

Man, as a determinate existence, as phenomenon, arises in time; however, “the pure intelligence in him is eternal.”

Man must first *receive* his material existence from the Highest Intelligence. This matter, which changes, is accompanied by his never-changing I. “Man, conceived in his perfection, were accordingly the persistent unity, which in the flood of alteration remains eternally the same.”

An Infinite Being, a Deity, can not become, but “man carries the predisposition for divinity in his personality within himself; the way to divinity, if one can name as a way, one that never leads to the goal, is



open to him in the *senses*.”

Schiller thus makes the Platonic distinction between Being and becoming, a distinction reflected as well in the Mosaic concept of God as “I am Who Am,” and in the Johannine concept of Christ as “I am.” Man, despite the fact that he is finite, has the predisposition for divinity, for the infinite, in his personality. He is created in the image of the Creator. Thus, even though he can never become Absolute Being, “the pure intelligence in him is eternal,” or immortal.

However, this personality alone “is merely a predisposition to a possible infinite expression.” It is an “empty capacity.” Without sensuousness, man is mere form. His sensuousness, without the self-activity of the mind, can do nothing further than make him matter, but does not unite matter with him. So long as he merely desires and acts from mere appetite, he is nothing more than *world*, the “formless content of time.”

“His sensuousness it is alone, which makes his capacity effective power, but it is only his personality, which makes his action his own. Therefore, in order not to be merely world, he must impart form to matter; in order not to be mere form, he must give the predisposition, which he bears within himself, reality.”

In other words, if man is not to be merely the product of external sense perceptions, he must conceptualize the world which he experiences. At the same time, if he does not act on the sensuous world, his conceptual power will remain unfulfilled.

From this ontologically paradoxical concept of the nature of man, flow two opposite demands upon him, the two fundamental laws of sensuous-rational nature. First, he must make everything into world which is mere form, and bring all his predispositions into appearance; second, he should extirpate everything in himself which is mere world. In other words: He should externalize everything internal, and give form to everything external.

Schiller concludes: “Both tasks, considered in their highest fulfillment, lead back to the conception of divinity; from which I have proceeded.”

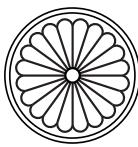
This is what Schiller means by the “transcendental course” necessary to define beauty. Ultimately, Schiller derives his concept of beauty from his conception of human nature as being in the image of the Creator. That is what he means in the tenth letter, when he says that “beauty had to exhibit itself as a necessary condition of mankind.” And to accomplish this, he argues, we must elevate ourselves to the pure conception of humanity.

Letter Twelve

FROM the very nature of man as a “finite infinite” or as sensuous-rational, Schiller derives the existence of “two opposite forces” or drives. The first of these is the sensuous drive; the second is the formal drive (see Glossary).

The sensuous drive places man in the limits of time, and makes him matter. Matter is nothing but alteration or reality which fills time. Everything in time is *successive*. Thus, where this drive works exclusively, man is nothing but a unity of magnitude, a filled moment of time. Thus his personality is annulled as long as sensation alone rules him. Although the sensuous drive is necessary to “unfold the predispositions of mankind,” alone it “makes their perfection impossible.”

The formal drive proceeds from the “absolute existence of man, or from his rational nature, and strives to set him free,” to “maintain his person despite all changes



of condition.” As Schiller writes, “since we are we to all eternity,” the formal drive encompasses the whole succession of time: It annuls time, it annuls alteration.

Here Schiller uses language similar to that employed by Nicolaus of Cusa. The formal drive encompasses or enfolds that which is unfolded by the sensuous drive. Moreover, the formal drive, in annulling time, can be characterized as “timeless time,” to use another term employed by Cusanus.

As Schiller writes, where the formal drive exerts dominion, man arises to a unity of ideas, from the unity of magnitude in which the sensuous drive confined him. The unity of ideas then contains the entire realm of phenomena under itself. We are “no more in time; rather, time is in us with its entire never-ending succession. We are no more individuals, rather species . . .”

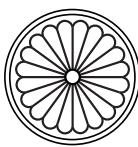
Letter Thirteen

THESE two drives, the sensuous and the formal, appear to contradict one another. Moreover, a third fundamental drive, which could mediate between both, is “absolutely unthinkable.” However, as Schiller maintains, these two tendencies do contradict one another, but not in “the same objects.” The sensuous drive does not demand alteration in the person. The formal drive does not insist upon unity and perseverance in respect to the condition. Therefore, they are not opposed to one another by nature, as Kant assumes. Thus, if they appear to oppose one another, it is through a “transgression of nature.”

If one maintains that there is a necessary antagonism between these two drives, then there is no means to preserve man’s unity, other than to subordinate the sensuous to the rational. This is precisely what Kant does with his “categorical imperative.”

Thus, Schiller writes: “In a transcendental philosophy, where everything depends thereon, to liberate the form from the content and preserve the necessary pure of everything accidental, one is easily accustomed to think of the matter itself merely as hindrance and to represent sensuousness, because it stands directly in the way of *this* business, as in a necessary contradiction with reason. Such a mode of representation lies indeed in no way in the *spirit* of the Kantian system, but it could very well lie in the *letter* of the same.”

As Schiller emphasizes: “The subordination must by all means be, but reciprocal . . . Both principles are



therefore at once subordinated to one another and coordinated, i.e., they stand in reciprocity; without form no matter, without matter no form.”

The task of culture is therefore twofold: *firstly*: to secure sensuousness against the encroachments of freedom; *secondly*: to secure the personality against the power of sensations. The former it achieves through the education of the capacity of feeling, the latter through the education of the capacity of reason.” The perfection of the capacity of feeling requires the greatest possible mutability and extensiveness; the perfection of the capacity of reason, the greatest possible self-reliance and intensity. The more many-sided the receptivity, the more potentialities does he develop in himself. The more strength and depth of the personality, the more freedom the reason wins, the more form he creates outside himself. Where both qualities are united, “instead of losing himself in the world, he will rather draw this into himself with the entire infinity of its phenomena, and subject it to the unity of his reason.”

If sensuality predominates, then man will never be *he himself*; if the formal drive annuls the sensuous, he will never be “*something else*,” consequently he will be naught.

Schiller then notes that the bad influence of a preponderant sensuality is clear to most people, but not so the disadvantageous influence of a preponderant rationality. First, he maintains that progress in the natural sciences has been slowed by the tendency to impose Aristotelean teleological judgments. This reminds one of Lyndon

LaRouche's criticism of those who attempt to impose Euclidean "blackboard mathematics" on the physical universe, when in fact, as Bernhard Riemann argues in his 1854 habilitation paper, "On the Hypotheses Which Lie at the Foundations of Geometry," one must abandon such methods, and test one's hypotheses in "the domain of another science"—"the realm of physics."

A good example of this would certainly be those who argue that the circle can be squared. Such an approach imposes the notion of linearity in the small upon a surface characterized not by linearity, but by curvature, as argued by Nicolaus of Cusa in *On the Quadrature of the Circle*. This same approach led to the suffocation of all true discovery in astronomy until Kepler, based on the work of Cusanus, overturned the Aristotelean teleology of Ptolemy.

As Schiller emphasizes, in such a fruitless approach, all nature's "manifoldness is lost for us, because we seek

nothing in her, but what we have put in her, because we do not permit her to move *inward towards us*, but on the contrary strive with impatiently anticipating reason *from within towards her*."

The same problem manifests itself with respect to "practical philanthropy." As Schiller writes: "How can we, with ever so praiseworthy maxims, be just, good, and human towards others, if the capacity fails us, to include foreign nature faithfully and truly in ourselves, to appropriate foreign situations to ourselves, to make foreign feelings our own? . . . Severity with oneself, combined with softness towards others, constitutes the truly excellent character. But mostly he who will be soft towards other men will also be thus towards himself, and he who will be severe towards himself will also be thus toward others; soft towards oneself and severe towards others is the most contemptible character."

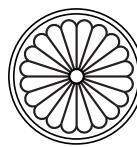
Letter Fourteen

IT IS in this letter that Schiller develops his concept of the *play drive*, not as a separate, third fundamental drive, but rather, as the way in which the sensuous and formal drives act together in reciprocal combination. Such a reciprocal relation of the two drives is "the task of reason." It is "the *idea of his humanity*, hence an infinite, to which he can approach ever more closely in the course of time, but without ever reaching it." Man can not be fully man as long as he satisfies only one of the two drives exclusively or only one after the other successively. He is truly man only when both drives act *at the same time*. Only then does he have a complete intuition of his humanity. The object which provides him this intuition is a symbol of his "*realized destiny*."

Such an experience would awaken a new drive in man, which Schiller calls the *play drive*, the direction of which is to "annul the time in time, to reconcile Becoming with Absolute Being, alteration with identity." Here again we see the ideas of Nicolaus of Cusa. When man, as a contracted or finite infinite, is reconciled with God or the *Logos*, he is "timeless time."

In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant does indeed refer in passing to "free play," as a state of mind in which one's cognitive powers are free of any definite concept which limits them to a particular rule of cognition.²⁸ But Schiller makes the play drive the central concept of his entire aesthetics.

For Schiller, the play drive will annul all compulsion and set man free, not only physically, but also morally. As Schiller writes: "If we embrace someone with passion, who is worthy of our contempt, so we feel painfully the



compulsion of nature. If we are disposed hostilely towards another, who compels our respect, so we feel painfully the *compulsion of reason*. But as soon as he at once interests our inclination and hath gained our respect, so disappears not only the constraint of feeling, but also the constraint of reason, and we begin to love him, i.e., at once to play with our inclination and with our respect."

This passage is particularly important, because, in it, Schiller identifies play with love (*agapē*). Man is truly free from the one-sided compulsion of nature and reason when he plays, which is to say, when he loves.

In his "Philosophical Letters," Schiller writes that egoism and love separate mankind: "Egoism erects its center in itself; love plants it outside of itself in the axis of the eternal whole. Love aims at unity, egoism is solitude. Love is the co-governing citizen of a blossoming free state, egoism a despot in a ravaged creation. Egoism sows for gratitude, love for ingratitude. Love gives, egoism lends . . ."²⁹

Moreover, in the "Kallias Letters," Schiller advances his own version of the Good Samaritan story, as the empirical proof of his theory of beauty. The truly beautiful soul is the individual who acts out of love to help the man in need, "without being called upon, and without debate with himself." His moral action is a beautiful action, when he does his moral duty freely, because his "duty has become nature to him." Schiller concludes: "I call upon thee, to name to me, from among all the explanations of beauty, the Kantian included, a single one which resolves the selflessly beautiful so satisfactorily as, I hope, has taken place here."³⁰

Given that, as he wrote in the eleventh letter, Schiller

derives his conception of beauty from his conception of divinity, and given that God is love, as manifested through the play of his creative power, it should not be surprising that Schiller's solution to the "letter" of the Kantian system, should also be love (*agapē*).

For Schiller, as for the Apostle Paul, the letter kills, whereas the spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6). Thus, mere obedience to the law strengthens sin, whereas love overcomes the wages of sin, death. Schiller writes to the same effect in "On Grace and Dignity":

"[T]he person not only *may*, in fact he *must* bring desire and duty into connection: he should obey his reason with joy. . . . Only when it flows forth from *his entire humanity* as the united effect of both principles, *when it has become nature for him*, is his moral way of thinking secure from danger. For, as long as the moral mind still applies *force*, natural impulse must still have power to set against it. The enemy merely cast down can arise again, the reconciled is truly vanquished."

"In the Kantian moral philosophy, the idea of *duty* is presented with a severity which frightens all the Graces

away, and a weak reason might easily attempt to seek moral perfection on the path of a gloomy and monkish asceticism. . . .

"He became the Draco of his time, because to him it seemed not yet worthy and receptive of a Solon. . . .

"But, whereof were the *children of the house* to blame, that he only cared for the *servants*? . . .

"It awakens in me no good judgment of a person if he can trust the voice of impulse so little, that he is compelled to interrogate it first before the court of morality; instead, one will esteem him more, if he trusts his impulses with a certain confidence, without danger of being misguided by them. For that proves, that both principles in him find themselves already in that concord which is the seal of perfected humanity, and is that which we understand by a *beautiful soul*."³¹

Finally, one should consider Schiller's concept of play from the standpoint of Plato, who in Book VII of *The Republic* wrote that "nothing that is learned under compulsion stays with the mind. . . . Do not, then, my friend, keep children to their studies by compulsion but by play."³²

Letter Fifteen

IT SHOULD be noted that Schiller rejects Kant by the very fact that he derives his idea of beauty from his idea of human nature. For Kant, in his *Critique of Judgment*, nature alone is a free beauty (*pulchritudo vaga*), whereas human beings are characterized by dependent beauty (*pulchritudo adhaerens*).³³ For example, in the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant writes: "Many birds (such as the parrot, the humming bird, the bird of paradise) and many sea shells are beauties in themselves. . . . So also delineations à la grecque, foliage for borders or wall papers, . . . are free beauties."³⁴

As Schiller writes in his "Kallias Letters," Kant assumed "somewhat strangely, that each beauty, which stands under the concept of a purpose, is not a *pure* beauty; that therefore an arabesque and what is like to it, regarded as beauty, are purer than the highest beauty of man." For this reason, Schiller writes, in reality Kant's view "seems to me to miss fully the concept of beauty."³⁵

In the fifteenth letter, Schiller begins by establishing that, whereas the object of the sensuous drive is *life*, and the object of the formal drive is *form*, the object of the play drive is *living form*. Schiller then writes that this concept of *living form* is what one calls *beauty* in the broadest meaning.

From this standpoint, even a block of marble, although lifeless, i.e., non-living, can become a living form through the architect or sculptor. One certainly sees this in Classical Greek sculpture, as in the cases of Scopas and Praxiteles, whose sculptures, sculpted from non-liv-

ing stone, nonetheless are beautiful, because they capture a human being in mid-motion, thus conveying living form.
[SEE Figure 1]

On the other hand, Schiller points out that a man, although he lives and has form, is not necessarily a living form, that is, a beautiful soul: "That requires that his form be life, and his life form. So long as we merely think about his form, it is lifeless, mere abstraction; so long as we merely feel his life, it is formless, mere impression." Only where he is living form do we judge him to be beautiful.

However, the reciprocal action between "the finite and infinite," this "fusion itself," remains inscrutable to us. "Reason sets up the demand out of transcendental grounds: there shall be a communion between the formal drive and the material drive, i.e., a play drive," because only this completes the conception of humanity. Every exclusive activity of one or the other drive leaves human nature incomplete. Once

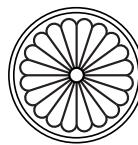


FIGURE 1. Praxiteles, "Hermes and Dionysus," c. 350-330 B.C.

it is decided that humanity shall exist, the law is established that there shall be beauty. Beauty is the consummation of humanity itself.

From this standpoint, Schiller criticizes empiricists like Edmund Burke (*Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Conception of the Sublime and Beautiful*), who reduce beauty to mere life. In the “Kallias Letters,” Schiller refers to Burke among others as having a “sensuous-subjective” theory of beauty.³⁶ Others, such as Baumgarten, Mendelssohn, and Wolff (“the entire flock of perfection men”), he criticizes for making beauty into mere logical form.

In the “Kallias Letters,” Schiller writes in opposition to these two theories and to Kant’s, which he characterizes as “rational-subjective,” that beauty is neither mere life, nor mere form. “Beauty is only the form of a form.” That which one calls its matter, “must by all means be a formed matter. Perfection is the form of a matter; beauty, on the other hand, is the form of this perfection, which stands thus to beauty as matter to form.”³⁷ Thus, for Schiller, beauty is not formal logical perfection, but rather formed matter, or living form expressed freely.

To the objection that the term “play” puts beauty on an equal level with frivolous objects, Schiller responds that in all conditions of man, it is precisely and only play which makes man complete, and unfolds at once his two-fold nature. As a result, play is not a limitation or degradation of man, but rather an enlargement of man’s capacity, of his humanity. As Schiller emphasizes: With the merely “agreeable, with the good, with the perfect, man is *only* earnest, but with beauty he plays.”

Schiller goes on to say, that the beauty of which he is speaking is “the ideal of beauty, which reason establishes,” with which an “ideal of the play drive is also presented, which man should have before his eyes in all his plays.” If we contrast the Greek Olympic games with the Roman gladiatorial combats, this shows us the contrasting ideals of beauty of the two cultures, and for this reason, we “must seek for the ideal form of a Venus, a Juno, an Apollo, not in Rome, but rather in Greece.”

But, from the standpoint of the metric developed by Schiller, such a culture would not be adjudged to be beautiful. As Schiller writes:

“But now reason speaks: the beautiful should not be merely life and not merely form, but rather living form, that is, beauty; in that it dictates to man the twofold law of the absolute formality and the absolute reality. Hence it also makes the decision: Man shall with beauty only *play*, and he shall *only with beauty play*.

“For, in order to finally say it at once, man plays only, where he in the full meaning of the word is man, and *he is only there fully man, where he plays*.”

Schiller concludes this letter by stressing that this ideal of

beauty existed among the Greeks, who transferred this ideal, which should have been realized on earth, to the Olympian gods, whom they represented in their art. In these gods, both earnestness and futile pleasure vanish from their brows. The Greeks “freed the eternally satisfied from the fetters of every aim, every duty, every concern and made *idleness* and *indifference* the envied lot of the godly state; a merely more human name for the freest and most sublime Being.” The material constraint of natural laws, and the spiritual constraint of moral laws, are replaced by a higher conception of necessity, in which the two necessities are unified, and from the unity of these two necessities issues forth to them true freedom for the first time.

Schiller cites the sculpture of the goddess Juno Ludovici, a colossal cast of which appears in the Juno Room in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s town house in Weimar, Germany. [SEE

Figure 2] “It is neither grace, nor is it dignity, which speaks to us from the glorious countenance of a Juno Ludovici; it is not one of the two, because it is at once both. Whilst the womanly god demands our worship, the godlike woman enkindles our love. . . . There is no force, which struggled with forces, no weak point, where temporal power could break in. Irresistibly seized and attracted by that one, by this one held at a distance,

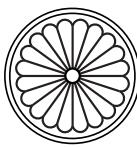


FIGURE 2. *Cast of Juno Ludovici, Goethehaus.*

we find ourselves at once in the condition of highest rest and of highest motion, and there results that wonderful emotion, for which the understanding hath no conception and language no name.”

What Schiller has thus described, is a blissful or happy state of mind, which transcends Aristotle’s logical law of contradiction. Here we have neither grace nor dignity, but rather both simultaneously. We have the highest rest and the highest motion, a coincidence of opposites, as Cusanus would express it. This is a condition of what Lyndon LaRouche has described as “temporal eternity.” In such a state, man is truly free, he is not subordinated to any utilitarian aim. Not accidentally, this state of mind “enkindles our love,” because the state of mind is love. As St. Augustine wrote: Love and do as you wish. This is possible, because one’s emotions have been brought into harmony with reason, one’s inclination and one’s will have been knitted into “the most intimate alliance.”

Letter Sixteen



WE HAVE now seen that the beautiful arises from the reciprocal action of two opposites drives (sensuous and formal), and from the combination of two opposite principles (nature and reason), whose highest ideal is to be found in the most perfect union and *equilibrium* of reality and form. Schiller emphasizes that such an equilibrium remains only an idea, which can never be fully achieved in reality. In reality, there is an *oscillation* between both principles. Beauty in the idea is eternally one and indivisible, whereas beauty in experience will be eternally double.

This double character is expressed in a “dissolving” and a “tensing” effect, the dissolving to keep both drives within their bounds, and the tensing to preserve both in their strength. In the idea, both should be absolutely one, but experience offers no example of such perfect reciprocal action. Thus, in experience, there is a melting and an energetic beauty. Schiller is thus once again making the distinction between the realm of Absolute Being and that of Becoming. Nonetheless, the task of the aesthetical is to lead these two beauties, the melting and the energetic, towards the equilibrium which constitutes Beauty.

Energetic beauty can not preserve man before a residue of savagery, nor can the melting protect him before softness and enervation. Since the effect of the first

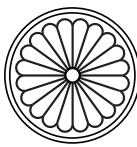
is to make the disposition tense, the gentler humanity often experiences an oppression which should have befallen only his raw nature, and his raw nature gains strength, which should have applied only to his free person. Similarly, the effect of the melting is often to stifle the energy of feeling along with the violence of desire, and thus the character experiences a loss of strength, which should affect only his passion.

“Therefore, one will see in the so-called refined ages, softness degenerate not seldom into effeminacy, plainness into insipidity, correctness into emptiness, liberality into arbitrariness, lightness into frivolity, calm into apathy, and the most contemptible caricature border upon the most glorious humanity.”

Thus every contradiction in the judgments of men about the influence of the beautiful derives from this twofold nature of beauty. However, the contradiction is removed, if one distinguishes “the double need of humanity, to which that double beauty corresponds.”

Schiller concludes this letter by stating his intention to “elevate myself from the kinds of beauty, to the species conception of the same.” His purpose will be to “dissolve at last both of the opposite kinds of beauty in the unity of the ideally beautiful, just as those two opposite forms of humanity perish in the unity of the ideally human.”

Letter Seventeen



AS IN Plato’s analogy of the cave in Book VII of *The Republic*, in deriving the ideal of beauty from the ideal conception of human nature in general, Schiller has taken off his shackles and abandoned the shadows of the cave wall, in order to see the source of light above. Now he must return to the cave, that is, as Schiller writes, to “climb down from the region of ideas into the scene of reality, in order to meet man in a determinate condition.”

Here we find that there are only two possible, opposite deviations man can experience from the idea of humanity—a deficiency either of harmony, or of energy. Therefore, we shall find man either in a condition of tension or in a condition of relaxation. Both opposite limits experienced by actual (as opposed to ideal) man, are lifted by beauty, which restores harmony in the tense man, and energy in the relaxed, thus making man whole, complete in himself.

It is not beauty that is responsible for the deficiencies critics attribute to her, but rather it is “man, who transfers to her the imperfections of his individuality, who through his subjective limitation stands incessantly in the way of her perfection, and reduces her absolute ideal to two lim-

ited forms of phenomena.”

Some say that “melting” beauty is for the tense disposition, and “energetic” for the relaxed, but Schiller argues that man is tense if he is under the exclusive domination of either one of his two fundamental drives: “Freedom lies only in the cooperation of both of his natures. The man ruled one-sidedly by feelings, or sensuously tense, is thus dissolved and set free by form; the man ruled one-sidedly by laws, or spiritually tense, is dissolved and set free by matter.” The melting beauty required to satisfy this double task will reveal herself under two different forms.

First, she will appear as a “calm form,” to soften the savage life and pave the way for a transition from sensations to thoughts; and second, as “living image,” to equip abstract form with sensuous force, and to lead conception to intuition, and law to feeling. The first service she renders to the natural man, the second to the artificial man.

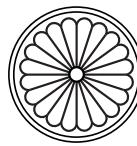
But to conceive of how beauty can become a means of removing that double tension, we must seek to explore the origin of the same in the human disposition.

Letter Eighteen

SINCE beauty leads the sensuous man to form and the spiritual man to matter, it appears that there must be a *middle condition* between matter and form. This is absurd, however, because the distance between matter and form is *infinite*, and can be mediated absolutely through nothing. Beauty combines two opposite conditions, of feeling and of thinking, and there is absolutely no middle between them. Schiller writes that this discontinuity, which Kant treats as an unresolvable paradox, “is the essential point, to which the whole question of beauty finally leads.”

On the one hand, beauty knits together two conditions, which are opposed to one another, and never can become one. And yet, on the other hand, beauty combines two opposite conditions, and therefore cancels the opposition. Only through such cancellation do both conditions disappear entirely in a third.

Schiller then points out that all philosophical disputes about the concept of beauty derive from the failure to rigorously distinguish between these two conditions and to achieve their pure union. Some philosophers trust blindly in the guidance of their *feelings*. They can achieve no *conception* of beauty, “because they distinguish nothing individual in the totality of sensuous impressions.” Others,



who take understanding exclusively as their guide, never achieve a conception of *beauty*, “because they never see in the totality of sense impressions anything other than parts, and spirit and matter remain divided eternally.”

“The first fear to cancel beauty *dynamically*, i.e., as acting power, if they should separate what is combined in feeling; the others fear to cancel beauty *logically*, i.e., as conception, if they should unite what is yet separated in the understanding.”

Both miss the truth, the former because they attempt to imitate infinite nature with their own limited capacity of thought; the latter, because they want to limit infinite nature according to their laws of thought. The first fear to rob beauty of its freedom through a too-strict dissection; the others fear to destroy the definiteness of its conception through a too-bold union. The former do not consider that the freedom in which they place the essence of beauty is not lawlessness, but rather harmony of laws, not arbitrariness, but the highest inner necessity; the latter do not reflect that the definiteness of beauty consists not in the *exclusion of certain realities*, but in the *absolute inclusion of them all*. Beauty is not restriction, but infinity.

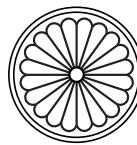
Letter Nineteen

IN THE nineteenth letter, Schiller shows how this definition of beauty derives from the twofold nature of the human mind. By moving the discussion to the “laws according to which the mind operates,” he must focus on areas of philosophical abstraction encountered in Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*.

He begins by noting that in man there is both a passive and an active condition of determinability, and also a passive and an active condition of determination. In this letter he develops man’s initial passive determinability, and his passive determination by the senses. He will then develop man’s active determination by reason, and finally his active determinability as the free or aesthetical state of mind, in which the passive and active determination of the senses and reason act to annul one another.

The condition of the human spirit before all determination is a determinability without bounds. Since nothing is yet excluded, we can call this condition of indeterminability an *empty infinity*, which Schiller says should not be mistaken for an infinite emptiness (see Glossary).

In the eleventh letter, Schiller said that the personality,



considered independent of sensuous matter, is nothing other than form and “empty capacity.” Here he repeats that concept.

When his senses are moved from the infinite number of possible determinations, a single reality is obtained. A conception arises in him. He is no longer empty capacity in the sense of mere determinability, but is now an acting power, which receives content. As mere capacity, he was unlimited. Now he has received a limit. Reality is there, but the infinity is lost. In order to describe a form in space, we must *limit* the endless space. We arrive at reality only through limits, at actual affirmation only through *negation*, at determination only through annulment of our free determinability.

In this letter, Schiller totally rejects the Lockean-Aristotelean conception of man’s mind as a blank tablet, and the related notion that human mentation consists only of induction from sense perceptions. Thus he writes: “But from a mere exclusion, no reality would arise in eternity, and from a mere sense perception, no conception would arise in eternity.” Something must be present upon which a

limit is imposed. There must be something positive, an absolute activity of the mind. This activity of the mind is judging or thinking, and the result of the same is thought.

As Schiller argues, before we determine a place in space, there is really no space for us; but without absolute space, we would never again determine a place. Likewise with time. We arrive at the whole only through the part, at the unlimited only through the limit; but we also arrive only through the whole at the part, only through the unlimited at the limit.

Schiller reiterates that beauty can not fill the gap which divides feeling from thought, passivity from activity; this gap is infinite, and requires the intervention of a new and independent capacity. Thought is the immediate action of this absolute capacity. Thought must be called forth by the senses, but it does not depend on sensuousness; rather, it manifests itself through opposition to the senses.

Only insofar as beauty secures freedom for the mental powers to express themselves according to their laws, can it lead man from matter to form, from sensations to laws, from the limited to an absolute existence.

Schiller argues that any weakness in man's mental powers does not derive externally from sensuousness. Sensuousness is not able to suppress the freedom of the mind. The senses only predominate because of the weakness of the mind, which has freely neglected to demonstrate its own independence.

Does this mean that the mind itself is divided? Schiller answers no. The finite mind becomes active through passivity, achieves the absolute through limits, acts and forms insofar as it receives matter. Such a mind combines the drive toward form or the absolute, with the drive toward matter or limits. However, this indwelling of two fundamental drives does not contradict the absolute unity of the mind, if one distinguishes the mind itself from both

drives. Both drives act in the mind, but the mind is neither matter nor form, neither sensuousness nor reason.

Because both drives strive towards opposite objectives, their double necessity mutually cancels itself, and the will preserves complete freedom between both. The will acts towards both drives as a power, but neither one can act for itself as a power towards the other. "There is no other power in man than his will, and only that which annuls the man, death and the theft of consciousness, can annul his inner freedom."

In "On the Sublime," Schiller writes that the species characteristic of man is his free will: "The will is the species character of man, and reason itself is only the eternal rule of the same. All nature acts according to reason; his prerogative is merely, that he act according to reason with consciousness and will. All other things must; man is the being, who wills."³⁸

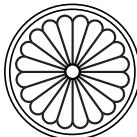
Schiller continues, that a necessity *outside us* determines our condition, our existence in time by means of sense perception. This is entirely involuntary: so as it acts on us, we must suffer. A necessity *in us* reveals our personality, at the instigation of sense perception and through opposition to the same. The will presupposes self-consciousness. But the supersensuous origin of both sensation and self-consciousness lies beyond our will, and beyond the sphere of our knowledge.

Both, however, are real. The sensuous drive awakens with the experience of life, with the commencement of the individual; the rational with the experience of law, with the commencement of the personality. Only after both have come into existence is man's humanity erected. Until this happens, everything in him ensues according to the law of necessity. As soon as two opposite fundamental drives are active in him, both lose their compulsion, and the antithesis of the two necessities produces the origin of freedom.

Letter Twenty

FREEDOM can not be acted upon, but *freedom itself* is an effect of nature, and therefore can be promoted or hampered by natural means. As stated above, it takes its start when man is *complete*, and *both* drives have developed. It is lacking as long as man is incomplete.

Both in regard to the human species as a whole, and to the individual man, a moment exists when man is not yet complete, and one of the two drives is exclusively active in him. He commences with mere life, in order to end in form. He is an individual earlier than he is a person. He proceeds from limitations to infinity. Thus the sensuous drive comes into effect before the rational. In this *priority* of the sensuous drive we find the key to the



entire history of human freedom.

There is a moment when the sensuous, or life drive, because the formal drive does not yet counter it, acts as nature and as necessity, when sensuousness is a power, because man has not yet begun; for in man himself there can be no other power than the will. But in the state of thinking, to which man passes over, reason is a power, and a logical and moral necessity replaces the physical. The power of sensation must therefore be annihilated. In order to exchange passivity for self-activity, man must be *free of all determination*, and pass through a condition of mere determinability. Hence, he must return to the negative condition of mere indeter-

minability in which he found himself before receiving sense impressions. However, that condition was empty of content. So now it is a matter of uniting an equal indeterminability and an equal unlimited determinability with the greatest possible contents. The task is therefore to annihilate, and at the same time to preserve, the determination of the condition, which is only possible if one opposes another to it. As Schiller writes: "The scales of the balance stand level, if they are empty; however they also stand level, if they contain equal weights."

The mind passes over from sensation to thought by means of a middle state of mind, in which sensuousness and reason are simultaneously active, but because of this mutually annul their determining power and effect a negation through opposition. This middle state of mind is a free state of mind. If one names the condition of sensuous determination the "physical," but the condition of rational determination the "logical" and "moral," then this free state of mind must be called the *aesthetical*.

The mind in the aesthetical condition acts freely and in the highest degree free from all constraint, but in no

way free from the law. This aesthetical freedom is only distinguished from the logical necessity in thought, and from the moral necessity in willing, in that the laws according to which the mind operates *are not conceived* and, because they find no resistance, do not appear as compulsion, i.e., they have the appearance of freedom.

The concept Schiller develops here of the aesthetical state of mind is totally coherent with the concept of love in Christianity. In a letter to Goethe on August 17, 1795, Schiller wrote: "I find *virtually* in the Christian religion the disposition for the highest and most noble; and the various manifestations of the same in life seem to be so adverse and tasteless merely for the reason, that they are unsuccessful representations of the highest. If one observes the characteristic trait of Christianity, . . . it lies in nothing other than in the *supersession of the law* or of the Kantian imperative, in place of which Christianity wants to have established a free inclination. It is therefore in its pure form the representation of beautiful morality or of the incarnation of the Holy, and in this sense the only *aesthetical* religion"

Letter Twenty-One

IN THIS letter, Schiller develops the idea of beauty as man's "second creator," because it restores man's humanity, and answers what Schiller had described in the Eighth Letter as the pressing need of the time, to develop man's "capacity of feeling," the capacity to love truth and justice.

As Schiller observed in Letter Nineteen, there are double conditions of both determinability and determination. The mind is determinable in two ways: First, it is determinable insofar as it is not determined at all; and second, it is determinable insofar as it is not exclusively determined, i.e., it is not limited by determination. The former is mere indeterminacy, in that it is without reality; the latter is aesthetical determinability, because it unites all reality.

Similarly, the mind is determined in two ways: First, insofar as it is limited at all; and second, insofar as it limits itself out of its own absolute capacity. The former is the case when it perceives; the latter when it thinks. What thinking is, in regard to determination, the aesthetical composition is, in regard to determinability. The former is limitation from inner infinite power, the latter is negation from inner infinite fullness.

In sensation and thinking, the mind determines man exclusively something, individual or person, otherwise they are infinitely apart. Aesthetical determinability agrees with mere indeterminacy, in that both exclude every determined existence, while otherwise they are



infinitely different. Indeterminacy is an *empty infinity* out of deficiency; aesthetical freedom of determination is a *fulfilled infinity*.

Thus, in the aesthetical condition, man is *naught*, in that he lacks any particular determination. The beautiful is fully indifferent and unfruitful in regard to *knowledge* and *inner conviction*. Beauty gives no individual result for the understanding or the will. She realizes no individual intellectual or moral purpose. She finds no single truth, helps fulfill no single duty. She is inept at establishing character or enlightening the mind.

For Schiller, nothing further is achieved by beauty than that it is now made possible for man, *on account of nature*, to make of himself what he will. His freedom to be what he should be is restored. He now has an infinite capacity. The freedom taken from him by the one-sided compulsion of nature, in sensing, and by the excluding legislation of reason, in thinking, this capacity is given back to him in the aesthetical state of mind. Such a restored capacity is truly the gift of humanity.

Certainly he already possesses this capacity, this humanity, as disposition. But, in reality, he loses it with any determinate condition, and it is given back to him by the aesthetical life. In this sense, *beauty is our second creator. She makes humanity possible for us, and leaves it to our free will to make it real*. She has it in common with our original Creator, to give us nothing further than the

capacity for humanity, leaving its use to our own willful determination.

This is why, as Lyndon LaRouche has emphasized, in the fight to achieve political freedom, one must not agitate a population by appealing to its irrational passions and obsessions, but rather, one must create within individuals a philosophical, or as Schiller puts it, an aesthetical state of mind. And the task of political organizing is to replicate such a state of mind in others.

As Lyndon LaRouche has argued, for human society to survive, requires, on the one hand, discoveries of universal principle in respect to the physical universe (which he has referred to as the *n*-fold domain), so that man is capable of achieving economic progress. On the other hand, since this requires social cooperation to implement,

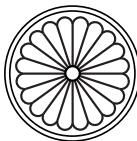
such progress requires artistic discoveries of a moral nature in what LaRouche refers to as the *m*-fold domain, to free man from those false-axiomatic habits of practice which otherwise lead to his tragic self-destruction.

From this standpoint, a beautiful soul is a true revolutionary, capable of playing a world-historic role precisely because, as Schiller himself would express it, he is greater than his destiny. Such a soul is not appreciated by the oligarchy and its agents. Perhaps that is why G.W.F. Hegel criticized Schiller's concept of the beautiful soul in his *The Phenomenology of Mind*. Hegel wrote that Schiller's "beautiful soul" was empty nothingness with no concrete reality, and thus "is unhinged, disordered, and runs to madness, wastes itself in yearning, and pines away in consumption."³⁹

Letter Twenty-Two

IN FACT, Schiller seems to have anticipated this Hegelian criticism, because he answers it immediately. While the aesthetical disposition of mind must be considered *naught* in respect to individual and determinate effects, in respect to the absence of all limits and the sum of all powers, which are jointly active, it must be regarded as a condition of the *highest* reality.

Thus, paradoxically, on the one hand, as stated above, the aesthetical disposition is fully indifferent and unfruitful in regard to knowledge and inner conviction; on the other hand, it is the most fruitful in regard to knowledge and morality, because the disposition of mind which contains in itself the whole of humanity must include in itself every individual expression. Since it takes no individual function of humanity exclusively under protection, it is favorable to all without distinction. It favors no single one preeminently, only because it is the ground of the possibility of all. All other exercises give a particular fate



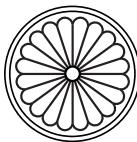
to the mind. The aesthetical alone leads to the unlimited. Only the aesthetical is a whole in itself, since it unites in itself all conditions of its origin and of its continuance.

Again for Schiller, the aesthetical places man in the simultaneity of eternity. Here alone do we feel ourselves as if "swept out of time." Immediate sensation opens our disposition, but makes us less fit for exertion; abstract thinking strengthens our mind, but hardens and robs us of receptiveness. Both lead to exhaustion, or, one might say, entropy. In the thirteenth letter, Schiller referred to this as the egoism of the senses and the egoism of reason.

In genuine beauty, we are masters to the same degree of our passive and active powers. We are capable of both earnestness and play, rest and movement. Thus, a genuine work of art sets us free.

From this standpoint, Schiller then proceeds to apply this standard to art and the judgment of artworks.

Letter Twenty-Three



SCHILLER now emphasizes again that the transition from the passive condition of feeling, to the active one of thinking and willing, occurs through a middle condition of aesthetical freedom. The only way to make the sensuous man rational is to make him aesthetical first.

To have the capacity in each individual case to make his judgment and will that of the species, to find from every limited existence the passage to an infinite one, from every dependent condition to be able to take the upward swing to self-dependence and freedom, man

must take care that he be in no moment mere individual, merely serving the law of nature. To be able to elevate oneself from the narrow circle of natural ends, to rational ends, man must have practiced within the former for the latter, and have realized his physical determination with a certain freedom of mind, i.e., according to the laws of beauty.

In a footnote, Schiller writes that a disposition is noble, which possesses the gift to transform the most limited or trivial, through the mode of treatment, into an infinite. A noble spirit is not satisfied to be free himself, he must set

free all else around him, even the lifeless.

Alluding to Kant, Schiller reports that the moral philosopher says man can never do more than his duty. Schiller says he is right in respect to the relation which actions have to moral law. But in respect to actions which relate to a purpose, to pass beyond this purpose into the supersensuous, to perform the physical aesthetically, is to pass beyond duty. Therefore, there is no such thing as moral surpassing of duty, but there

is an aesthetical surpassing of duty, which is called noble.

Schiller argues that we esteem sublime conduct far more than noble, and that the aesthetical man needs only the challenge of a sublime situation, acting on the capacity of his will, to become a hero or a sage. Schiller's point is that if one's sensuous desires have been made noble by the aesthetical, then under conditions of adversity, he will be capable of responding sublimely.

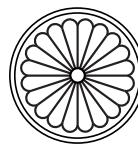
Letter Twenty-Four

ACCORDING to Schiller, the three different moments or stages of development of the individual man are also reflected in the entire human species. These stages can be lengthened or shortened, but not leapt over, nor can their order be changed. These stages are: (1) man in a physical condition suffers the power of nature; (2) he frees himself from this power in the aesthetical condition; and (3) he rules over it in the moral.

In the first stage, before beauty and peaceful form calm the savage, man is a self-serving slave and not himself. If man does not proceed through the second stage of beauty to reason, he will not achieve true reason, but rather merely a form of Aristotelean understanding, which remains rooted in the material.

Thus, instead of achieving moral independence based on true reason, man can be directed to physical life in his drive for the absolute. While the infinite rises in his imagination, his heart lives in the individual and serves the moment. He extends his individuality into the endless, instead of abstracting from it. He strives for an inexhaustible matter, for everlasting alteration, for an absolute affirmation of his temporal existence, instead of for the immutable.

What Schiller is describing here are the consequences of the false-axiomatic assumptions of both empiricism



and Aristoteleanism—the location of reality in the finite particular, and the definition of space and time as a “bad infinite” of linear extension.

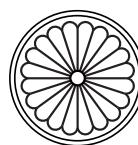
Schiller next presents the distinction between cognitive reason (*Vernunft*) and mere understanding (*Verstand*). Reason would leave the world of sense entirely, and swing up into the pure realm of ideas, but the understanding “remains eternally within the conditioned, and questions eternally, without coming to a final cause.”

As long as moral law speaks only *against* the interest of sensuous self-love, it appears as foreign. Man has not yet come to see self-love as foreign, and the voice of reason as his true self. He therefore feels only the fetters, not the infinite liberation. This, of course, is yet another criticism of Kant's categorical imperative.

In this condition, either reason has not yet spoken, and the physical still rules over him with blind necessity, or reason has not yet purified itself enough from the senses, and the moral still serves the physical. In the first case, he is a reasonless (*vernunftlos*), and in the second case, a rational animal (*vernunftiges Tier*).

But, as Schiller concludes, in emphasizing the absolute distinction between man and animal, man should be neither: He should be man. Nature should not rule him exclusively, and reason should not rule him conditionally.

Letter Twenty-Five



SCHILLER warns that, in seeking an exit from the material world and a passage into the world of mind, to leap over beauty, passing directly from mere life to pure form and pure object, violates human nature by negating the world of sense.

Beauty is form, because we contemplate her, and life, because we feel her. She is at the same time our state and our deed.

Because she is both at the same time, she is our tri-

umphant proof that passivity in no way excludes activity, nor matter form, nor limitation infinity. Consequently, man's moral freedom is not annulled by his necessary physical dependence. Thus, beauty stands forth as the solution to Kant's categorical imperative, and as the basis for solving all the Kantian antinomies.

Logic, on the other hand, can not prove that both subsist together, that they act upon one another reciprocally,

that they are to be absolutely and necessarily united. And here Schiller once again attacks Kant's Aristotelean logic. He writes:

"Rather, on the contrary, from this exclusion of feeling, so long as there is thought, and of thought, so long as there is feeling, an *incompatibility* of both natures must be concluded, in consequence of which analysts [i.e., Kant-WFW] do not really know to adduce any better proof of the practicability of pure reason in mankind than, that it is imperative."

"But since, in the enjoyment of beauty or *aesthetical unity*, a real union and interchange of matter with form, and of passivity with activity, takes place, so is proven thereby the *compatibility* of both natures, the practicability of the infinite in finiteness, hence the possibility of the most sublime humanity."

In these two sentences, we have the most devastatingly succinct critique of Kant imaginable. Because he denies the very nature of man as a "finite infinite," Kant can only issue Draconian imperatives. Is it any wonder, that in *Concerning the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, Heinrich Heine compared him to Robespierre: "If, however, Immanuel Kant, the arch-destroyer in the realm of ideas, far surpassed Maximilien Robespierre in terrorism, yet he possessed many similarities with the latter which invite comparison of the two men."⁴⁰

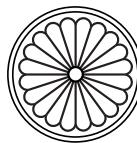
In contrast to the utilitarians and pragmatists, who justify all manner of brutality and ugliness on the grounds that beauty is not "practical," Schiller has established a higher practicability, the "possibility of the most sublime humanity."

Letter Twenty-Six

HAVING thus decisively resolved the Kantian antinomy of practical reason, Schiller has now freed himself to devote the final two letters to a discussion of man as an artist who creates works of appearance (artworks) in the "joyous realm of play."

The entrance of the savage to humanity is announced in the joy of *appearance*, and in the inclination for *adornment* and for *play*. Thus, the transition to humanity occurs when man no longer seeks only that which is real. The reality of things is *their* work; the appearance of things is the work of man.

For Schiller, the aesthetical disposition is a gift of nature. Nature itself leads man aloft from reality to appearance. Since she endowed him with two senses, seeing and hearing, which lead him through appearance to cognition of the real. These two senses are distinct from touch. The object of touch is a force, which we endure; the object of the eyes and the ears is a form, which we create. As soon as man begins to enjoy with the eye, and seeing acquires a self-dependent value for him, he is

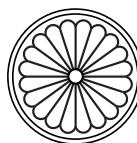


already aesthetically free, and the play drive has unfolded. As the play drive is aroused, which finds pleasure in appearance, the imitative formative drive will follow, which treats appearance as something self-dependent.

The capacity for imitative art is therefore given with the capacity for form; but the urge to the same rests upon another predisposition, of which, Schiller writes, he need not treat here. But this predisposition is the "predisposition for divinity in his personality," which Schiller discusses in the eleventh letter. Moreover, when the aesthetical drive for art will develop, depends, according to Schiller, "merely upon the degree of love" with which man can dwell on mere appearance.

Schiller concludes that we can not be reproached for placing value on aesthetical appearance, but for the fact that we have not yet brought it to pure appearance. We will deserve this reproach so long as we can not enjoy the beautiful living nature without coveting it, can not admire the beautiful of imitative art, without asking for an end or a purpose.

Letter Twenty-Seven



SCHILLER ends his letters by asking, Does this state of beautiful appearance exist? He answers: "As a need, it exists in every finely tuned soul, as a reality, one might indeed only find it, like a pure church and a pure republic, in a few select circles, where not the mindless imitation of foreign manners, but rather one's own beautiful nature guides conduct, where man

passes through the most complicated circumstances with bold simplicity and calm innocence, and needs neither to impair others' freedom in order to maintain his own, nor to cast away his dignity in order to display grace."

Schiller is no utopian *Schwärmer*. He does not propose that this ideal can be fully realized in reality. Nonetheless,

this is the ideal which must guide us along the path to political freedom, a path which requires a “total revolution” in the inner man.

Schiller concludes the *Aesthetical Letters* with a concept that was also central to the “Kallias Letters,” a concept which echoes the fundamental principle of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia: One should act to the advantage of the other. In the “Kallias Letters,” he wrote: “[I]t is striking, how good fashion (beauty of behavior) is developed from my concept of beauty. The first law of good fashion is: *Spare others' freedom*, the second: *Show freedom yourself.*” He then writes that he knows “no more suitable image for the ideal of beautiful behavior, than a well-performed English dance, composed from many complicated figures. . . . It is the most suitable emblem of the asserted self-freedom and the spared freedom of the other.”⁴¹

In this concluding letter, Schiller describes this as the “joyous realm of play and appearance,” in which the fundamental anti-entropic law is “to give freedom through freedom.” This joyous realm of the play of man’s creative power, is nothing other than Vernadsky’s notion of the

Nöosphere, as LaRouche has further developed Vernadsky’s concept.

For Schiller, as for Plato, Leibniz, Nicolaus of Cusa, and Lyndon LaRouche, the universe is not entropic, and man is not a beast. Therefore, human society is not, as Hobbes characterized it, a “war of each against all,” requiring a tyrant to impose order. Nations are not inherently pitted against one another, requiring a supranational empire to impose so-called peace. As Lyndon LaRouche has emphasized, there is no inherent “Clash of Civilizations” of the sort desired by Samuel Huntington, nor is the sovereign nation-state the cause of war; but rather, oppositely, the only possibility for global peace is to construct a family of sovereign nation-states based upon a community of principle. Nicolaus of Cusa had argued similarly in his *On Catholic Concordance*, that the only way to ensure peace, is to bring all rational creatures into harmony with the Word or *Logos*.

But the precondition for achieving this, as Lyndon LaRouche would say, is to have fun! Or as Friedrich Schiller would say: Man is only fully man, where he plays!

Unless otherwise indicated, all citations to Schiller’s writings are from the Schiller Institute’s *Friedrich Schiller, Poet of Freedom, Vols. I-IV* (1985; 1988; 1990; 2003), edited by the author.

1. *Letters on the Aesthetical Education of Man* (Vol. I, p. 242).
2. “On Grace and Dignity” (Vol. II, p. 366).
3. “The Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon” (Vol. II, p. 289).
4. One recent example of this occurs in Patrick T. Murray’s *The Development of German Aesthetic Theory from Kant to Schiller: A Philosophical Commentary on Schiller’s Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795) (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1994). Murray writes: “Schiller’s own aesthetic position is closely identified with that of Kant” (p. 4).
5. Wilhelm von Humboldt, “On Schiller and the Course of His Spiritual Development” (Vol. II, p. 537).
6. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “Russia Is Eurasia’s Keystone Economy,” *Executive Intelligence Review*, March 27, 1998 (Vol. 25, No. 13).
7. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “The Substance of Morality,” *Fidelio*, Winter 1998 (Vol. VII, No. 4).
8. LaRouche, “Keystone Economy,” p. 49.
9. LaRouche, “Substance of Morality,” p. 5.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
12. Humboldt (Vol. II, p. 547).
13. “Kallias, or, On the Beautiful” (Vol. II, p. 488).
14. *Ibid.*, p. 503.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 506-507.
16. “Aesthetical Lectures” (Vol. II, p. 480).
17. “On Naive and Sentimental Poetry” (Vol. III, pp. 358-359).
18. “Grace and Dignity” (Vol. II, p. 363).
19. “Lycurgus and Solon” (Vol. II, p. 287).
20. *Ibid.*, p. 301.
21. Vol. I, p. 325.
22. Vol. I, p. 345.
23. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. by J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner Press, 1951), pp. 151-152.
24. “Of the Sublime,” *Fidelio*, Spring/Summer 2004 (Vol. XIII, No. X), p. 95.
25. “On the Pathetic” (Vol. III, p. 250).
26. “Letters on Don Carlos” (Vol. I, p. 207).
27. “Naive and Sentimental Poetry” (Vol. III, p. 366).
28. Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
29. “Philosophical Letters” (Vol. III, p. 214).
30. “Kallias” (Vol. II, pp. 498-499).
31. “Grace and Dignity” (Vol. II, pp. 364-368).
32. Plato, *Republic*, Book VII, 536e, trans. by Paul Shorey, in *Plato: Collected Dialogues*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Bollingen Series LXXI (New York: Pantheon Books, 1961), p. 768.
33. Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
35. “Kallias” (Vol. II, p. 483).
36. *Ibid.*, p. 483.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 484.
38. “On the Sublime” (Vol. III, p. 255).
39. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. by J.B. Baillie (New York and Evanston: Harper Torchbooks, 1967), pp. 675-676.
40. *Concerning the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, trans. by Max Knight, in *Heinrich Heine: Selected Works* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 369.
41. “Kallias” (Vol. II, p. 518).