

KOMMT NUN DIE SCHILLERZEIT?

Let Us Revive America's Love for Friedrich Schiller, the Poet of Freedom!

by Cloret Ferguson and Diane Sare

Nov. 4—In 1984, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, wife of American statesman Lyndon LaRouche, founded the international Schiller Institute with the prophetic words, “Nun kommt die Schillerzeit” (Now comes Schiller’s time). The Institute’s founding document was modelled on the American 1776 Declaration of Independence, extended to mankind as a whole. And for nearly 35 years, the Schiller Institute has dedicated itself to upholding the dignity of man through its promotion of great projects of economic development, education, and a dialogue of cultures which must lead to the scientific breakthroughs needed for mankind to populate and develop the universe.

The affinity of Schiller and the United States’ identity and mission is not coincidental. Friedrich Schiller was born November 10, 1759, just two years after the great American genius and founding father, Alexander Hamilton. Like Hamilton, he was immersed from a young age in the Greek classics. He watched from afar the successful American defeat of the British Empire in the American Revolution. Schiller’s poem “Ode to Joy”¹ with its optimistic exuberant expression of love of mankind, was inspired by that victory.

Also like Hamilton, Schiller was deeply disturbed



Painting by Anton Graff, 1791

Friedrich Schiller

by the dismal failure of the French Revolution, which resulted in 17,000 human heads being severed from their bodies, and the establishment of the aggressive military dictatorship of Napoleon Bonaparte. In an epigram, Schiller commented on this disaster, “A great moment has found a little people,” as he agonized over what would be required to make a downtrodden and degraded population capable of rising to the sublime qualities necessary to transform its society to one worthy of the dignity of man.

Schiller’s answer was that human beings could find their way through beauty, and that the artist has a sacred calling to evoke and uphold the dignity of man. In his poem, “The Artists,” Schiller wrote:

The dignity of Man into your hands is given,
Its keeper be!
It sinks with you! With you it is arisen!
The sacred magic of poetry
A world-plan wise is serving
To th’ ocean, steer it e’er unswerving,
Of lofty harmony!
Fair Truth, by her own time rejected,
By Poetry now be protected,
And refuge find in the Muses’ choir.
In highest and abundant splendor,
More fright’ning in her veil of wonder,
Then let her rise aloft in singing
And vengeance win with music ringing

1. “Ode to Joy,” William F. Wertz, translator, in *Friedrich Schiller: Poet of Freedom* (hereafter FSPOF) Vol. 1, pp. 308-311. Schiller Institute, Washington, D.C., 1985.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, Lyndon LaRouche (center) and John Sigerson at the founding conference of the Schiller Institute in Arlington, Virginia, July 3, 1984.

Upon her persecutor's ear.²

Schiller set to work on this problem with his very challenging essays and letters “On the Aesthetical Education of Man,” as well as his powerful dramas, which became well known and loved in the early days of the cultural and political life of the United States. From John Quincy Adams and Frederick Douglass to lesser known translators of Schiller such as Charles Follen, a German-born professor at mid-19th century Harvard University. Heartfelt tributes in elaborate parades, week-long exhibitions, monument raisings and re-enactments of Schiller's literary productions were commonplace occurrences all across America during the poet's lifetime and continued extensively throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

The American Project

EIR author Renée Sigerson—among others, whose accounts are less clear—reports³ on Dunlap's Park Theater in New York holding the “honor of the first performance [of Schiller's *The Robbers*] in English-language” in America, in the late 1790s. The drama “was

2. “The Artists,” Marianna Wertz, translator, in FSPOF Vol. 4, p. 51. Schiller Institute, Washington, D.C., 2003.

3. EIR, December 2, 2016.

played successfully,” and according to William Dunlap, its troupe of actors was said to have been “unequaled,” in his *History of the American Theatre*. Editors of *The German American Annals* of this same period record Dunlap's troupe having performed a season of *Don Carlos* and *Kabale und Liebe* (Intrigue and Love) in English.

Like Schiller, the substance of the LaRouches' work has sought, over generations, to further the maturation and cultivation of each citizen's aesthetical character. Familiarly known as “The Poet of Freedom,” Schiller identifies humanity's universal commonality as the ability of its individual members to transcend

partisan, national, religious, and other parochial interests. Each of his poems, epigrams, philosophical essays and dramas addresses the highest self-interest of humanity, the general welfare of the human species, as a totality. Whether as dramatist, historian, poet, and philosopher or physician, his efforts seek to elicit and entice forth a harmonious, self-governing ennoblement of character.

In today's United States, the biggest threat to the potential posed by President Trump's repeatedly expressed desire to have good relations with Russia and China, and to address the needs of our “forgotten men and women,” is the perverse culture being promoted by the London-, Wall Street-, and Hollywood-controlled “fake news.” Rather than promoting universal principles that will benefit the human race as a whole, they seek to divide us into minute, mutually exclusive, infantile mobs, based on alleged racial, religious, and literally dozens of gender categories. Scientific progress, which elevates millions from poverty, is decried as “burning up the planet,” and human beings are declared to be “more destructive than beasts”!

With that in mind, let us now turn with serious attention directly to Schiller's concepts, which should be helpful to our becoming aesthetically educated people.

We begin by emphasizing that which places us apart

from, and above our animal instincts. In this way we usher in the adulthood of all humankind.

Different from animals, humans possess a capacity to improve our environment and are ever able to redefine how to transform our surroundings and create the widest growth for human and all living kind. Consider the how and why of our true nature and origin, as expressed by Schiller:⁴

... Man was ordained to something completely different [from animals] and the strengths that lie in him, called him to a completely different happiness. What Nature in his infancy had undertaken for him, he was now supposed to undertake for himself, as soon as he was of age. He himself was supposed to become the creator of his own happiness, and only the share which he would have in it, was supposed to determine the degree of his good fortune. He was supposed to learn to rediscover the state of innocence, which he had lost, through *his Reason*, and as a free reasoning mind return there, whence he had emerged as a *vegetative being* and a creature of instinct; out of a Paradise of ignorance and bondage, he was supposed to work himself upward, were it even a thousand years later, to a Paradise of knowledge and freedom; such a one, namely, where he would have harkened to the moral law in his breast equally as unswervingly, as he had first obeyed instinct, as the plants and animals obey it still.⁵

Happy Citizens

The American statesman and physical economist Lyndon LaRouche reminds us that a reflection of a citizenry's good, happy and productive character, or absence thereof, may be mirrored in that citizenry's choice of leadership. Yes, our people did reject the despicable likes of Hillary Clinton, demonstrating a desire to avoid a replay of previously imposed democratic-fascist policies of Obama-Bush.

Yet, around what higher purpose have we summoned ourselves and others to rally? How may we

4. While constraints of this article limit the authors to cite only brief segments from the complete Schiller papers, nothing compares to a reading and study of the papers in their entirety, which the reader is urged to do.

5. "Thoughts on the First Human Society," FSPOF Vol. IV, p. 221.

begin to express our intentions to protect the concept of a general welfare encompassing the entire human species? By what means might we soar over the gaping abyss of our condition and locate a means to throw off the mental shackles of our enslavement?

A direction to resolve our dilemma is offered by Schiller:

... [C]limb down from the region of ideas into the scene of reality, in order to meet man *in a determinate* condition, hence under limitations, which do not flow originally from his conception, but rather from external circumstances and from an accidental use of his freedom. But in however manifold ways the idea of humanity may also be limited in him, so the mere content of the same already teaches us, that in the whole only *two* opposite deviations from the same can occur. Lies, that is to say, his perfection in the harmonious energy of his sensuous and spiritual powers, so can he fail to achieve this perfection only through a deficiency of harmony or through a deficiency of energy. ... Both opposite limits are, as now should be demonstrated, lifted by beauty, which restores in the tense man harmony, in the relaxed [man], energy and in this way, in conformity with her nature, leads the limited condition back to an absolute and makes man whole, complete in himself.

And how beauty accomplishes this task so miraculously, we find—

She will firstly as a calm form soften the savage life and pave the way for a transition from sensations to thoughts; she will secondly as living image equip the abstract form with sensuous force, lead the conception back to intuition and the law to feeling. The first service she renders to the natural man, the second to the artificial man. ...⁶

In a modern-day echo of Schiller's thinking, in a letter to educators of the Central China Academy of

6. "The Aesthetical Education of Man," 17th Letter, FSPOF Vol. I, p. 263 & p. 264.

Fine Arts, Chinese President Xi Jinping wrote that the aesthetic education of the citizen is “very necessary,” as it plays a significant role in the shaping of a beautiful mind. He urged all to abide by the law of aesthetics and carry forward the Chinese spirit of aesthetical education, keenly expressed by Confucius.

Yes, beautiful mind! Could such a mind be found on stage or among the overflowing hordes attending concerts of the Stones, McCartney, Beyoncé-JayZ, or any modern “booty-shaking” exhibition; or imparted in self-deprecating, menacing lyrics and dance rhythms of so-called country tunes, or the widely embraced, popular, though mis-named Christian Gospel songs? (Volumes could be penned about the assault on both Beauty and human cognitive processes pedaled in jazz, blues, and soul, or the compositions of atonalist, serialist, and expressionist composers.)

Beauty Is Truth

Can inner beauty be communicated, transmitted? Why do we so readily dismiss the idea of aesthetical principles? For Schiller, beauty is that form which is not determined from the outside. Rather, the beautiful is analogous to creative reason, i.e., the inner freedom of the human mind. In this way, our free will to choose, for example, truth over popular opinion, leads us toward political freedom: “The most beautiful and most noble force in the human soul is Love,” which is “nothing but the exchange of myself with the being of a fellow human being . . .” as to promote the perfection of one’s fellow man.

Our philosophical guide, Schiller, harmonizing with Confucian principles and the Leibnizian currents of his time, notes that,

Moral defectiveness ought not to infuse us with suffering and pain, which always bespeaks more an unsatisfied need than an unfulfilled demand. . . .

There are two genii, which nature gave us as companions throughout life. The one, sociable and lovely, shortens the laborious journey for us through its lively play, makes the fetters of necessity light for us and leads us amidst joy and



jest up to the dangerous places. . . . [T]he world of sense is its province, beyond this its earthly wings cannot carry it. But now the other one steps up, earnest and silent, and with stout arm it carries us over the dizzying depth.

In the first of these genii, one recognizes the feeling of the beautiful, which leads us to freedom and, in the second, the feeling of the sublime. Indeed the beautiful is already an expression of freedom, but not that which elevates us above the power of nature and releases us from every bodily influence, but rather that, which we enjoy within nature as men. We feel ourselves free with beauty, because the sensuous instincts harmonize with the law of reason; we feel ourselves free with the sublime, because the sensuous instincts have no influence upon the legislation of reason, because the mind acts here, as if it stood under no other than its own laws.⁷

Yet how does one determine the nature of the Sublime?

The feeling of the sublime is a mixed feeling. It

7. “On the Sublime,” SPOF Vol. III, pp. 258-9.

is a combination of *woefulness*, which expresses itself in its highest degree as a shudder, and of *joyfulness*, which can rise up to enrapture, and, although it is not properly pleasure, is yet widely preferred to every pleasure by fine souls. This union of two contradictory sentiments in a single feeling proves our moral independence in an irrefutable manner. . . . We therefore experience through the feeling of the sublime, that the state of our mind does not necessarily conform with the state of the senses, that the laws of nature are not necessarily also those of ours, and that we have in us a principle independent of all sensuous emotions.⁸

The Classical Artist

The classical artist should, according to The Poet of Freedom, portray to the fullest, folly's agonizing weightiness upon the human soul. As our sympathies draw us so very close to the predicament illustrated in classical, dramatic art, objective conditions permit us to recognize, acknowledge and examine, what may be a folly similar to our own—but at safe distance from ourselves. One begins to develop that which makes us truly above and apart from all other creatures, through such regular engagements in this realm.

Now how does art succeed thereto, to present something, which is above nature, without helping oneself to supernatural means? What sort of phenomenon must that be, which accomplished through natural forces (for otherwise were it no phenomenon) and yet cannot be derived from physical causes without contradiction? This is the problem; and now how does the artist solve it?

We must remind ourselves, that the phenomena, which can be perceived in a man in a state of emotion, are of two kinds. Either they are such as belong to him merely as animal, and as such merely follow natural law, without his being able to master them, or the independent force in him being able to have an immediate influence thereon. . . .

There is, however, also a second type of phenomenon in him, which stands under the in-

fluence and under the rule of the will, or which one can at least consider as such, which the will may have been able to prevent; for which, therefore, the person and not the instinct had to be responsible. It belongs to the instinct, to attend to the interest of sensuousness with blind zeal, but it belongs to the person, to limit the instinct through regard for the law. . . . Therefore, if the person shall be represented, so must some phenomena in man be found, which have either been determined in opposition to the instinct, or indeed not through the instinct. Already that they were not determined through the instinct, is sufficient to lead us to a higher source . . .

In this disharmony now between those features, which are imprinted on the animal nature according to the law of necessity, and between those, which the self-acting mind determines, one discerns the presence of a super-sensuous principle in man, which can place a limit upon the effects of nature, and is therefore marked as distinct from the same. The merely animal part of man follows the law of nature and may therefore appear oppressed by the power of the emotion. In this part, therefore, the whole strength of suffering manifests itself, and serves, so to speak, as a measure by which the resistance can be estimated; for one can judge the strength of the resistance, or the moral power in man only by the strength of the attack. The more decisive and violent the emotion now expresses itself in the field of animality, without, however, being able to assert the same power in the field of humanity, the more this latter becomes known, the more the moral independence of man manifests itself gloriously, the more pathetic the representation and the more sublime the pathos.⁹

The Sublime

Schiller refers us to a particular example composed in the Greek classical school of sculpture of antiquity:

In the statues of the ancients one finds this aesthetic principle made clear, but it is difficult to reduce to concepts and express in words the im-

8. "On the Sublime," SPOF Vol. III, p. 259.

9. "On the Pathetic," SPOF Vol. III, pp. 233-236.

pression which the sensuous living view makes. The group of Laocoön and his children is an approximate measure for that, which the plastic art of the ancients was able to achieve in the pathetic.

Schiller then quotes from Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *History of Art*. This is Winckelmann:

Laocoön is a nature in the highest pain, made in the image of a man, who seeks to assemble against the same, the deliberate, strength of the mind; and whilst his suffering swells up the muscles and tightens the nerves, the mind, armed with strength, steps forth on his buoyant brow and the breast rises through oppressed breath and through restraint of the expression of feeling, in order to hold and lock up the pain in itself. The anxious sigh, which he in himself and the breath to himself draws, empties the abdomen and makes the sides hollow, which lets us judge, so to speak, the movement of his bowels. His own suffering, however, seems to him to be less cause for alarm than the pain of his children, who turn their faces to the father and cry for help; for the paternal heart manifests itself in the melancholy eyes and compassion seems to swim in a turbid fragrance in the same. His face is lamenting, but not creaming, his eyes are turned toward higher help. The mouth is full of melancholy, and the sunken lower lip heavy from the same; in the over-drawn upper lip, however, the same is mixed with pain, which with a movement of displeasure, as over an undeserved unworthy suffering, ascends into the nose, makes the same swell, and manifests itself in the enlarged and upwardly drawn nostrils. Under the brow, the strife between pain and resistance, united as in a point, is formed with great truth; for whilst the pain drives the eyebrows into the heights, so the struggle against the same presses the upper eye flesh downward and against the upper eyelid, so that the same is almost entirely covered by the infringing flesh. Nature, which the artist could



Marble statue of the Trojan priest Laocoön and his sons being attacked by serpents sent by the gods.

not beautify, he has sought to show more unfolded, strenuous, and powerful; here, wherein the greatest pain is placed, appears also the greatest beauty. The left side, in which the snake poured out its poison with furious bites, is that which seems to suffer the most intensely through the nearest sensation to the heart. His legs want to rise, in order to escape its evil; no part is at rest, yes, even, the chisel strokes contribute to the import of a benumbed skin.¹⁰

Schiller continues, commenting on Winckelmann's observations:

How true and fine is the fight of intelligence with the suffering of sensuous nature developed in this description, and how appropriately the phenomena given, in which are manifested animality and humanity, the compulsion of nature and the freedom of reason!¹¹

10. Johann Winckelmann, as cited by Schiller in his essay, "On the Pathetic," *FSPOF* Vol. III, pp. 236-7.

11. "On the Pathetic," *FSPOF* Vol. III, pp. 236-7.



Painting by Gerhard von Kügelgen, 1809
Friedrich Schiller

Schiller Battles ‘Spirits of the Age’

It should be obvious, from these all-too-brief excerpts from Schiller’s writings, that Friedrich Schiller was not, as was his contemporary Immanuel Kant, a moralizing “stuffed shirt,” who enjoyed a sanitized existence in the gentrification of the time. Rather, Schiller wielded ideas in direct combat with the tyranny of Kantian know-nothingness. The slothful “back-to-nature, God is dead” tendencies of the age tasted the full strength of an unwavering conviction of Beauty and Truth elaborated in each Schiller drama, poem, and essay. Undaunted by adversity—including his own imprisonment—drama after drama, Schiller skillfully themed and composed all of them to thoroughly address the shortcomings and pitfalls of potential leaders within the populace and among contenders in the corridors of power.

Then as now, his capacity to touch and re-awaken man’s “knowable spirit of creativity” found a willing pathway into each breast, from the loftiest self-designated ranks of society to its lowliest, downtrodden millions, from the shores of an infant American Republic, into the far reaches of Russia and Eastern Europe. The seeds of Schiller’s noble sentiments—regarding the nature of humankind and man’s inalienable right to

self-determination—took hold and matured in fertile minds seeking to overturn the ways of the Old World Order, in each respective land.

America Needs Schiller

Xi Jinping’s commitment to eradicate poverty worldwide by 2050, and President Trump’s stated intention to establish good relations with China, Russia—and all nations of the world—on fair and respectful terms, has evoked the murderous ire of our old adversary, the British Empire. The world is truly at a turning point which will be decided by the people of the United States of America. Friedrich Schiller is calling to us across the centuries, challenging us to become a great people, in a great moment. It is the intent of the Schiller Institute to ensure that we meet that challenge.

Hear now the extended toast in Schiller’s Ode to Joy:

Whom the crown of stars doth honor,
Whom the hymns of Seraphs bless,
To the goodly Soul this glass
O’er the tent of stars up yonder!

Courage firm in grievous trial,
Help, where innocence doth scream,
Oaths which sworn to are eternal,
Truth to friend and foe the same,
Manly pride ’fore kingly power—
Brothers, cost it life and blood—
Honor to whom merits honor,
Ruin to the lying brood!

Closer draw the holy circle,
Swear it by this golden wine,
Faithful to the vow divine,
Swear it by the Judge celestial!
Rescue from the tyrant’s fetters,
Mercy to the villain e’en,
Hope within the dying hours,
Pardon at the guillotine!
E’en the dead shall live in heaven!
Brothers, drink and all agree,
Ev’ry sin shall be forgiven,
Hell forever cease to be.¹²

12. “Ode to Joy,” William F. Wertz, translator, in FSPOF Vol. 1, pp. 308-11.