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## The Immortal Contribution of Jewish Culture

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# Heine, Schiller, and Shakespeare

by Mark Joseph Burdman

*My husband, Mark Burdman, for many years the Special Projects editor of EIR, died one year ago, on July 8, 2004. In his memory, EIR is publishing, for the first time, the speech he gave at a conference titled, "Heinrich Heine, A Birthday Tribute," held in New York City, on Dec. 11-12, 1982, in honor of the 185th birthday of the poet.*

*Mark was a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., who embodied all that is best about American Jewish culture. In 1980, he moved to Germany, where he lived for the rest of his life.*

—Mary Burdman

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Have we, as a people, become so obsessed with our own fixated delusions, that we have reached the point of no return into the dark age of witchcraft and irrationality advocated by the historian Barbara Tuchman, cousin of New York City District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, in her book *A Distant Mirror?* Maybe so: Leading magazines in Germany, Italy, and other parts of Europe have recently begun a craze that we are entering "the era of the witches." Are we the *meshuggenah* who are about to jump into grandmother's soup and drown?

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) and Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), the great lights of high German Classical culture, warned us what would become of us if we violated the lawful principles of continuing creation. Yet we have chosen not to listen. How could we listen, when we have tolerated an inquisition that has decreed that the German Classics be, for all intents and purposes, expunged from our curricula? The German Classical period produced the greatest density and quality of works of poetical, dramatic, and musical beauty known to mankind, and yet because of our own venality and obsessive cheapness, all of this may prove to have been in vain. Try to internalize that possibility the next time you listen to Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."

What has been lost? What must be revived if humanity is to survive?

### Statecraft and Beauty

The immortal message of German Classical culture, in my view, is that the art of statecraft and the pursuit of beauty, poetry, and laughter, are one and the same. The pragmatic view that politics and culture are different things, is a clinical

case of paranoid schizophrenia. Remember Schiller's injunction, that "world history is the world's court," a notion far truer than the absurdities of Marx about the class struggle as the motive force of history.

The essential battle in history is not between social classes, but between beauty and ugliness, between the belief on the one hand, that man is made in the image of the Divine and participates in the lawful process of continuing creation, as against the belief, personified and expressed today by Henry Kissinger, that man is bestial, irrational, and subject to eternal, fixed, insane delusions. Where ugliness triumphs, civilizations and states die. But, despite Toynbee, it is not inevitable that this happen.

Heine expresses a variant of this idea in a remarkable way in his "*Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen*" ("Germany: A Winter's Tale"). In this poem, Heine returns to Germany after years of forced exile, and holds up to the German population a mirror of what the nation was becoming under the influence of the forces of the Inquisition, the forces that in today's terms of reference, could be called the "Pfaffen SS."<sup>1</sup> As he holds up this mirror, his poetry invites a new vision, a change of the rules of the game, to outflank the inquisition. It is still a manual of statescraft for today.

He crosses the border into Germany, with profound emotion:

And when I came to the border,  
Then I felt a strong pounding,  
in my breast, and I even think,  
that my eyes began to weep

And when I heard the German tongue,  
There was a curious gladness,  
I mean only, as if my heart  
were pleasantly hemorrhaging.

He then develops the image of the "little harp-girl" playing the harp, singing with a "false voice" and leading the population into delusion:

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1. The German word *Pfaffe* means "priest," hence the pun on the Inquisition.—ed.

She sang of love and lovers' woes,  
Sacrifice, and being reunited,  
but above, in a better world,  
where all sufferings fade.

She sang of the Earthly vale of tears,  
of joys that soon disappear,  
And of the beyond, where the souls revel,  
transfigured in eternal joy.

She sang the old song of resignation,  
The lullaby of Heaven  
With which they lull, the weeping  
people—the big louts!

I know the way, I know the text,  
I know also the men who wrote it,  
I know, at home they drink wine,  
and preach to the public, water.

He proclaims his own intention, to create a “new song, a better song,” based on the creation of a heavenly kingdom on Earth. Music, poetry, and statecraft have merged, and the foundation of all just constitutions has been laid.

On what will this “new song” be based? The marriage of genius and freedom, or, what could otherwise be understood as the necessary participation of all citizens in the joy of ongoing creation. To achieve this under conditions of the Jesuitical inquisitorial assault, Heine knew, would require the power of irony and laughter. He expressed this through a wonderful metaphor, based on the multiple meanings of the word “*Spitze*.” He is speaking to the Prussian customs guards, who are snuffing through his luggage, looking for “lace [*Spitze*], jewelry, and also for forbidden books.” But Heine’s “contraband” is not in his suitcase, but in his head:

Here, I have the points [*Spitzen*],  
that are finer than Brussels or Mecheln [lace],  
And were I to unpack my sharp jibes [*Spitzen*]  
They would prick and tease you.

All the arts that Heine here describes are those needed by the true statesman, the true philosopher-king, to create the good society and to free citizens from the bondage of inquisition.

### **Caving In to the Inquisition**

It can be said that the German population of Heine’s time did not heed his call: that they caved in to the Inquisition, the Inquisition that introduced the idea of the difference of German and Jewish blood, and in doing so, this German population ushered in the processes leading to the calamity of recent times.

But before we rush into our favorite national pastime of



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*“The immortal message of German Classical culture, in my view, is that the art of statecraft and the pursuit of beauty, poetry, and laughter, are one and the same.” The author, Mark Burdman, speaks from the floor, to a Schiller Institute conference in Germany, in the early 1990s.*

anti-German mudslinging, a practice introduced by the British inquisitionaries into the U.S. long before Adolf Hitler, and today typified by “Hogan’s Heroes” and similar racist trash, let us look at ourselves in the mirror—if we can stand the sight, or pull ourselves away from the television set long enough to do so.

I have been away from the United States for nearly two years, and therefore I am uninformed about some of the latest developments on the scene. But before I left Europe, I read an exclamatory feature in the *Sunday Telegraph* of London about the American “cable TV craze.” The article quoted a certain psychopath from Warner Bros. named Pittman, who runs a 24-hour, non-stop rock n’ roll video station. This Pittman said, “Don’t worry about the 14-year-olds. We own them.” The article said there is a new American word called “vidiot,” and that the latest surveys indicate that Americans every day, watch on average 7.5 hours of television, and spend 12 minutes talking to fellow family members. I don’t know how much of this is British propaganda, but in any case, the thought has occurred to me: When Americans look into the mirror, do they think they are looking into a television screen? Do they imagine that that being looking back at them, is the tragic victim of the latest soap-opera series, or, in the worst-case scenario, the newest existentialist horror movie?

What is known in Europe today, perhaps more so in occupied Germany, as “American culture,” is an ersatz combination of 1950s rock n’ roll, the television show “Dallas,” and the American cowboy. The question of the cowboy is itself a remarkable operation against the American national identity. The etymological origin of the word “cowboy,” according to James Fenimore Cooper, is the following: During the Revolutionary War, both the Americans and British deployed thieves, brigands, behind each others’ lines. The American brigands were called “skinnners,” the British, “cowboys.” The

“cowboy,” in origin, is a British cattle thief!

But there is more. It is literally the case that the same people, who under British direction, carried out a vitriolic witchhunt against the German Classics, invented the existentialist mythos of the “cowboy” as representing the American identity. One Emerson Hough, historian of the American Defense Society and the leading anti-German propagandist in the employ of British intelligence, was the author of the Zane Grey and other “cowboy classics.” He and Teddy Roosevelt sent Buffalo Bill Cody and Annie Oakley on a tour of Europe to represent “American culture.” In the same America that characteristically held festivals for Schiller during the earlier parts of the 19th Century, the Inquisition has since ruled culture.

We can better understand how the Inquisition works by using as a yardstick, a reference-point, the German Classical period’s knowledge of the unity of statecraft and the creation of beauty. Think of the Inquisition: It was launched in its modern form after the 1815 Treaty of Vienna, by Count Metternich. It was Metternich personally who had Heine banned in Germany and hounded out of the country. Today, there is a certain ogre parading around the world pretending to be the “new Metternich,” and claiming to represent the “sage expression” of American foreign policy. I have watched this ogre, Henry Kissinger, quite closely in recent weeks, as he represents the Ugly International.

Ugliness is a function of the soul, but it also expresses itself corporally. Kissinger’s so-called political philosophy, expressed before his real mother (not the one who lives in Washington Heights) at the London Royal Institute of International Affairs on May 10 of this year, is that the British have devised the best system of world order, since it is “Hobbesian,” premised on the belief that man is bestial, irrational, in eternal war of “all against all.” This is the Nietzschean view of universal fascism, and goes to the core of the current project for the creation of a “new Hitler” being devised by the British and their continental European allies.

Of utmost relevance, is that Kissinger, despite media hype to the contrary, is neither Jew nor German. He is a “Golem,” an artificial creation. Many people in Israel would understand this, and if they could so act to make Kissinger *persona non grata* in Israel, they would make a great contribution to universal culture. As the Golem was created, so shall it be uncreated! If Kissinger fades from the scene, we may recall what it is to be a German and a Jew.

## The Mission of Moses

In the German High Classical period, what was great about being German, in terms of the combination of patriot and world-citizen, was known to be the same as what was great in being Jewish. German culture and Jewish culture merged into one higher unity, expressing the higher development of universal culture. What was recognized as immortal

in “Jewish culture” as such, was, on the one hand, the historical role of the Jew as transmitter of universal culture, but even more importantly, the contribution to the world of the idea of statecraft, of natural law, of the constitutional republic.

Schiller expresses this in magnificently poetic form in his “Mission of Moses”:

“What was the real plan which Moses conceived in the Arabian desert?

“He wanted to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt and help them to possession of their independence and a national constitution in a land of their own. . . . [H]e knew the difficulties which stood in his way on this venture quite well; . . . for he foresaw that his eloquence would not take effect upon the soil of the oppressed, slavish minds of the Hebrews: And so he understood, that he must proclaim to them a higher, a supraterrrestrial protector, that he must likewise assemble his people under the flag of a divine general. . . . It is necessary that he hold their united forces together in a national body, and he must thus give them laws and a constitution.

“As a priest and a statesman, however, he knows, that the strongest and most indispensable pillar of all constitutions is religion. . . . For legislation, and for the foundations of the state, he requires the true God. . . . By means of the constitution which he has designed for them, he wants to make his Hebrews a happy, and a lastingly happy people, and this can only come to pass if he founds his legislation upon truth. . . .

“All other states of that time, and of times following, are founded upon fraud and error, polytheism, although there was a small circle which fostered correct conceptions of the Supreme Being. Moses . . . is the first who dares not only to proclaim aloud the results of the most secret mysteries, but even to make it the foundation of a state. He thus becomes, for the best for the world and posterity, a betrayer of the mysteries, and lets an entire nation partake of a truth, which until then had been the possession of only a few wise men.”

As far as I know, this piece does not exist in English,<sup>2</sup> and if it does, is known to only a few. This is proof that the inquisition against German Classical culture here implies that that culture is incipiently, if not actively anti-Semitic. If we want to combat anti-Semitism, we would have to revive Schiller, Lessing, and Heine in the schools, so that, once again, by high-school age, the student has had a thoroughgoing familiarity with these writings. If the Torquemadas over at the ADL Fact-Finding Division disagree with this idea, let them come out of the dark corners and debate it openly.

## Heine: Facing the Fury

Heine continued the tradition of Schiller and Lessing, but under more embattled conditions, since his entire creative life is shadowed by the fury of the Inquisition, the hatred for which

2. It was later published by the Schiller Institute in *Friedrich Schiller, Poet of Freedom*, Vol. II (Washington, D.C., 1988)—ed.



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*Mark Burdman was often asked to give classes to the LaRouche Youth Movement, whose members appreciated his piercing insight and sharp wit; this is a cadre school class on the American System, in Wiesbaden, Germany, in the Spring of 2003.*

is a constant theme in his writings, in his play *Al-Mansur*, in the poem “Donna Clara,” and in his letters.

Heine fought under enormously embattled conditions, different conditions than those that Schiller and Lessing faced, to maintain the notion of the immortal contribution of Jewish culture and Jewish science to the development of natural law and statecraft. In one letter, in which he takes to task certain Jewish-name inquisitionaries, he describes Moses as a jurist. The Inquisition hated both non-Jews and Jews. It showed an antipathy for Heine’s love of the unifying creative principles of universal culture.

In an 1826 letter, Heine writes that he has been reviled for seeing a coherence between the style of the Bible and the style of Shakespeare, as against a fundamentalist Old Testament reading. He writes: “There is only one author who reminds me of the immediate style of the Bible, and that is Shakespeare. Also with him, the word sometimes steps forward in that evident or very obvious nakedness, which frightens us and makes us shiver. It is in the works of Shakespeare that we sometimes see the truth as a body without any veil of art. But that only happens in single moments. The genius of art, perhaps feeling its impotence, has here left its office to nature, for a few moments, and thereafter claims all the more jealously its mastery in giving form and in witty inflections of the drama. Shakespeare is simultaneously Jew and Greek, or actually he is both, spiritualism and the art which have accomplished a rapprochement and unfolded into a higher whole.

“Is perhaps such a harmonious mixing of the two elements the task of the entirety of European civilization? We are still a long distance from such a result. The Greek Goethe, and with him the entire poetical party, has recently given expression to its antipathy, almost passionately, against Jerusalem. The counter-party, which has no big names at its head, but only

few whose throats scream, as for example, the Jew Postkucher, the Jew Wolfgang Mensel, the Jew Hengstenberg. They are raising their Pharisaic cry all the more raspingly against Athens and the great heathen.”

### ‘The Merchant of Venice’

Several years later, Heine was commissioned to write a series of essays to accompany a book of sketches on the subject of “Shakespeare’s Women.” For many of the plays, Heine did not seem to exert great passion, perhaps because of the nature of the overall assignment. One play, however, Heine treated differently. This was *The Merchant of Venice*. Beyond question, this play moved Heine profoundly. In his treatment of it, we find in the most powerful form the cry of alarm of what humanity would become if it didn’t transcend its narrow fixations. We also find the enunciation of the principle of beauty that provides us with a method to avoid tragedy. *The Merchant of Venice*, remember, is a “comedy”—and one that supersedes its own apparently tragic dimensions.

For Heine, only two characters in *The Merchant of Venice* represent high drama: Portia of Belmont and Shylock, the first representing poetic beauty, the second, with certain ambiguities and complexities, representing the obsessive fixed idea.

To quote Heine, in his essay on Portia:

“Portia is the real counterposition to Shylock. If the latter, in the usual interpretations, is representative of the fixed, serious, anti-artistic Jew, to the contrary Portia appears a representative of the Greek spirit, which spread into Italy in the 16th Century and we still love today and cherish as the Renaissance.

“Portia is the representative of that merry happiness, in opposition to the dark misfortune which Shylock represents. How flourishing, rosy, pure-ringing is all of her thought and speaking. Her words are warm with joy, her images are all

beautiful, most of them borrowed from mythology.

“How darkened and shrivelled and ugly are the speeches of Shylock, who also, contrary to Portia, only uses Old Testament images.

“His humor is cramped. He seeks his metaphors among the most disgusting objects, and even his words are dissonances compressed together, shrill and hissing. As the persons are, so are their houses.

“When we see how the servant of Jehovah, who is neither an image of God or of man, the created image of sod, resides in his ‘honorable’ house, where even the ears, the windows,

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are plugged shut, so that the sounds of the heathen dances cannot penetrate into his ‘honorable’ house, then we see the opposite precious and tasteful villa life in the palace at Belmont, where light and music under paintings, marble statues, all shine forth amidst the mastery of Signora Portia, who is like a goddess.

“It is by this contrast that the two figures become individualized, and are so seen to be reborn persons.

“They are even more vital than the normal creations of nature—in their veins, the most immortal poetry pulses.”

### **Shylock and His Enemies**

In his essays on Jessica, Shylock’s daughter, and Portia, Heine spends a predominant amount of time on elaborating the problem raised by Shylock, since it is not a simple one. He locates Shylock in the victimization of the Inquisition, the money-lender forced to become a money-lender by the Inquisition, and then targeted for having accumulated wealth. In this sense, Heine has no patience at all with Shylock’s nominally Christian enemies, whom Heine regards as a bunch of moral louts, especially as they are not in fact Christians but Venetians, citizens of the hotbed of evil.

In creating the hateful, revenge-seeking Shylock, Heine indicates that the Venetians were really carrying out an attack on certain of the foundations of European civilization.

Heine writes:

“There is a remarkable relatedness between the Jews and the Germans in morality. This did not emerge historically, for example, in that the Bible served the German world as educator, nor was it that the Jews and Germans were bitter enemies of the Romans, and therefore natural allies. There are much deeper reasons; both originally are so similar, that one could almost see the former Palestine as Oriental Germany, Germany today as the center of the world, the city of pure spirituality.

“It is not only Germany which has the physiognomy of Palestine, but the rest of Europe elevated to the Jews. The Jews, since the beginning, carried the modern principle in themselves, which is only becoming visible today in the European.

“The Greeks and Romans clung to the Earth, to the fatherland; later the Nordic invaders into the Roman and Greek worlds clung to chiefs, and in place of ancient patriotism, there was the loyalty of vassals.

“Jews from time immemorial have represented law, abstract thought, just like today’s cosmopolitical republican, who respects law as the highest.

“The cosmopolitical actually sprung from the earth of Judea, and Christ was a real Jew, and propagated and gave rise to the idea of world citizenship.”

Then Heine cites Josephus on the “republicans” of Jerusalem, “who opposed the monarchical tendencies of Herod and were courageous warriors who hated Roman absolutism above everything. Freedom and equality was their religion.”

For being cosmopolitical republicans in league with German culture and for fostering European culture, the Jew is targeted by Venice, which, after all, is where the word “ghetto” comes from. Shylock’s reaction, or perhaps reaction-formation, is to want revenge at all costs. In this, Heine says Shylock may be understood and there may be compassion, but it is the understanding of the clinician looking at the insane.

Let us return to the essay “Portia,” after Heine has counterposed Portia to Shylock. Heine describes a trip, which one assumes is true, to the stinking city of Venice.

“If you are at the corner of the Street of Saints, and see a snake carved in stone, and then a winged lion holding the skin of a snake in its jaws, then perhaps you will think of the proud Carmagnole, but only for a moment. More than upon such an historical person, when you are in Venice, you will think of Shakespeare’s Shylock, while the historical person has dissolved.

“When you rise over the Rialto, you will seek him everywhere, you will think that there he is behind his Jewish gabardine, with his mistrustful calculating face and you almost think that you hear his creeping voice, ‘3,000 ducats, well!’



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Heine (center), continued the tradition of Schiller (right), but under more embattled conditions; he proclaimed his intention “to create a ‘new song, a better song,’ based on the creation of a heavenly kingdom on Earth.” Heine believed that Shakespeare (left) accomplished a “harmonious mixing” of Jewish and Greek civilizations.

“I at least, a wandering hunter of dreams as I am, I tried to find him in the Rialto. I had something to tell him. His father, Herr von Shylock, had become a powerful Baron of Christianity, and had received the Isabella Order from her most Catholic Majesty, instituted to celebrate the expulsion of the Jews and Moors from Spain.

“I didn’t find him anywhere in the Rialto, among the Jews at the synagogue, on the day of repentance. They stood there, enveloped in white, with uncanny movements of the head, looking like an assembly of ghosts, poor Jews, fasting and praying.

“I made a discovery. On the same day, I had visited the insane asylum at San Carlo. Now, in the synagogue, it occurred to me that the face of the Jews had the same fatal, half-starving, half-arrogant shine of insanity, flickering, that which I had shortly before remarked among the insane at San Carlo. The mysterious glance did not attest to absentmindedness, but rather much more to the supremacy of a fixed idea.

“Has the belief in that extra-terrestrial God of thunder which Moses spoke of, become the fixed idea of an entire people, which, despite the fact that it had been put into a straitjacket for 2,000 years, and had been given a shower, still does not want to give up the fixed idea, just like that crazy lawyer I saw in San Carlo who also didn’t want to allow himself to be talked out of the idea that the Sun is English cheese and that the beams of the Sun consist of red worms, and that one of these such worm-beams shot down upon him were eating his brain?

“I do not intend in any way to contest the value of that fixed idea, rather, I only want to say that the believers of this idea are too weak to rule it and are suppressed by it and become incurable. What a martyrdom they have suffered for

this fixed idea! What a martyrdom is yet to come! I shudder at this idea and infinite compassion pulses through my heart. Throughout the entire Middle Ages to the present day, the prevailing view of the world did not stand in direct contradiction to that idea which Moses burdened upon the Jews and cut into their flesh. Indeed, they distinguish themselves in no essential way from the Christians and Mohammedans. They did not differentiate themselves by the opposite synthesis, but only in interpretation and shibboleth.

“But once Satan is victorious, that sinful pantheism from which all saints of the Old and New Testaments and the Koran would like to preserve us, so then there draws over the heads of the poor Jews a thunder of persecution which will far outstrip previous sufferings.”

It was Venice which created the Inquisition. In modern times, there are such institutions as the Cini Foundation. I had the dubious fortune of speaking to Giuseppe Volpe, the self-proclaimed Doge of Venice. It was his father, Volpe di Misurata, who masterminded Mussolini’s rise to power. He is also a business partner of [Henry] Morgenthau, Sr. The world of evil is a small world. Today’s Volpe incessantly repeats: “My only concern is Venice.” including producing articles asserting that Venice intends to split from Italy and once more rule the world. He told me: “Yes, we did rule the world, until America was discovered. Since then, we have been in a decline!” Columbus has never been forgiven.

### Comedy: Transcending Tragedy

To transcend tragedy, comedy must intervene. Let us return to *The Merchant of Venice*.

Let us look at Portia, with the proviso added to Heine’s description, that in representing the ideals of the Renaissance,

she represents not only the Greek spirit as such, but that mediated through Judeo-Christian civilization.

Portia's problem to be resolved in the middle of the play, is like ours today: She smells disaster, and she must intervene. Do not underestimate the gruesomeness of what is to happen. Shylock wants his pound of flesh and that existentialist venal merchant Antonio wants to give it to him, to preserve the "laws of Venice." What is about to happen is a man's heart cut out while he is alive!

What does Portia do? She conspires with her confidante Nerissa to dress up as men, and to march into the court of the Duke of Venice, and change the laws, to change the rules of the game. She tells Nerissa: "I have within my mind/A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,/ Which I will practise."

A translation for "bragging jack" could be "macho *schlemihl*."

The true Promethena, she marches into the court, for awhile, plays along with Shylock's insistence on "law," introducing the joke of making the law so literal that Shylock cannot fulfill it. A higher law, of mercy, intervenes. Shylock loses.

But the play cannot end here. What about all the punks from Venice? The scene shifts to Belmont.

The stage is set for the *scherzo* of the composition in a remarkable way. Lorenzo, whom Heine correctly sees as a petty thief for having stolen Shylock's daughter Jessica, has spent time at Belmont, and represents the process of development, of transfiguration, out of rotten Venice and into republican Belmont. He must transfigure Jessica.

It goes like this (*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 5, Scene 1):

**Lorenzo:**

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music  
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:  
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter Musicians*

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn!  
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,  
And draw her home with music.

*Music.*

**Jessica:**

I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

**Lorenzo:**

The reason is, your spirits are attentive:  
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,  
Which is the hot condition of their blood;  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;  
Since naught so stockish, hard and full of rage,  
But music for the time doth change his nature.  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

In the method of transformation employed by Portia, we find the basis for "positive culture," where the genius of statescraft, poetry, and music are merged. With this in mind, I think we should launch what I would call an "International Portia Project," to foster the development of heroes and heroines who can use the Promethean method of intervention to stop the plunge into Hell.

In the Middle East, this would be most appropriate, especially the need for heroines, potent women. Israel would need this, to reverse trends of macho and Mother Earth unleashed since 1967. But no positive Israeli culture can exist without a renaissance in the Arab world; to believe otherwise is a psychotic delusion. Imagine the terror of the heads of the Exotic Erotic International in the British Arab Bureau, were Portias to emerge in the Arab world and put an end to the mustachioed macho circus that rules the Arab world under conditions of fixed relations between man and woman, and the woman relegated to the identity of the witch behind the mask. If it is too late in the Middle East, let's intervene from the outside.

But the principle is universal. Let Belmont triumph over Venice! In terms of reference more familiar to New Yorkers, let Belmont prevail over Bellevue—which I assume has not been closed down by recent budget cuts.

Let us all, like Portia, have within our minds "a thousand raw tricks of these bragging jacks," in London, Venice, and elsewhere who are trying to destroy all that is good and beautiful and to plunge humanity into an irreversible nightmare. If we dedicate ourselves to that purpose, Heinrich Heine will not have lived in vain.