

Schiller's Idea Of The Sublime: Lessons For Today's Rulers

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The following is edited from Helga Zepp-LaRouche's speech, "The Bankruptcy of Today's Ruling Elite, and the Alternative in Schiller's Idea of the Sublime," presented on Aug. 19 to the Schiller Institute Summer Academy in Oberwesel, Germany. Mrs. LaRouche is the founder and president of the Schiller Institute in Germany, and its chairwoman in the United States. Lyndon LaRouche's keynote, to which she refers in the opening of her speech, appeared in EIR on Aug. 31, 2001.

I think after Lyn's presentation yesterday, and what you have been following in the last period, there is no question, that the crisis we face is of a scope, which I have difficulties in finding another place in history, where the crisis was of the same dimension. Because we are looking not only at a financial crisis, the meltdown of the system, in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Turkey, Poland, but we are looking at a potential dollar collapse; we are looking at a disintegration of the entire fabric of the international financial system; we are looking at a depression, the destruction of industrial capacities. In one sense, even more importantly, we are looking at a cultural collapse of the society.

The fact that the international community accepts the genocide in Africa, the absolutely unbelievable, unnecessary destruction of human life—50,000 children die every day, babies, of hunger and starvation, which is not necessary. The health-care destruction, the destruction of health-care policy; in some countries, which had decent health-care systems—Sweden, Germany, the United States—euthanasia is being re-introduced.

The point Lyn made in this beautiful article that he wrote recently about primitive accumulation [EIR, Aug. 17, 2001], which was part of his dialogue with Russian Academician Prof. Dmitri Lvov, was, that the worst kind of primitive accu-

mulation, meaning looting, taking profit out of the economy without replenishing what you have taken out in order to guarantee a continued existence, that this is actually worst in the area of cognition. And that, if you look at this destruction of education over the last 35 years, especially after the introduction of the Organization for Cooperation and Development in Europe (OECD) educational reforms, which were introduced in Germany by Willy Brandt, where you have entire generations, who do not know the works of Schiller, who do not know the difference between Lessing, Heine, Mörike, Eichendorff, who have never heard such things, or for whom it's just words.

I think that, in terms of the reproductive capability of a society, the destruction of the ability to think creatively is probably the worst crisis we face, and actually worries me the most.

Then, if you take the unbelievable situation in the Middle East: Just this morning I saw on the news, that the Israeli Army has attacked the military headquarters of the Fatah, the military organization of the Palestinians, which is another terrible escalation, and possibly a further step to war. The danger, that out of the war in the Middle East there would be a generalized religious war of 30 or 50 years, a religious war which could go into the entire Islamic world, into India, which has a very large Islamic population, Indonesia, Central Asia. There are, I think, 60 million Muslims in the former Soviet Union, a tremendously explosive potential.

Now, imagine the combination of the financial meltdown of the system, a depression, where people lose their jobs, and how the world could be shaken up almost any moment through the outbreak of a Middle East war, which could turn into a generalized war. If you take these things all together, and the fact, that there are people, who plan that—not that

they know the outcome, but they have this evil utopia, these evil scenarios, which they play out; like Samuel Huntington, who is a crazy man, who is a criminal, who eventually should end up in jail, but he plans these things by proposing the Clash of Civilizations—the Christians against the Muslims against the Hindus against the Confucian people: that they should all eventually clash and that there is no common denominator.

And what is being worked out in some of these think-tanks, unfortunately, is not theory, but there are people on the ground, who play these things, who play the conflict, who play the hatred of one group against the other group—agent infiltrations. I mean, the whole Middle East is a playground, traditionally, of British intelligence, which has an incredibly long history and knowledge about how to further these conflicts.

So I have no question, that the fate of mankind hangs by a thread. And let me tell you—because I have the incredible fortune to be married to the most beautiful individual I know, in all of history—I know why I am saying it, that history hangs by a thread, because I personally witness every day how Lyn comes up with ideas, concepts, in an incredibly courageous way; I mean, he singlehandedly postponed the Middle East war in the last weeks by courageously saying: Look Israel will not survive, if they do this.

Now, this takes courage, because these people are not nice people. They are quite dangerous. But this circulation of Lyn’s analysis that, look at this, Israel will not survive this itself. I know for a fact, because we talked to these people, we were able to get some forces inside Israel to say: “Uh, wait a second, we can’t go on this way.” We got the Egyptians, the Jordanians, many forces in the region; we got the Europeans, we got the Russians, we got forces in the U.S. to intervene. And I am not saying that this danger is now defused, but, what I can tell you is, that we have created a counter-motion. And, if this war can be stopped, it is because of Lyn’s intervention, the last of which

was, that he basically put the blame on Bush and said: Look, you have the ultimate responsibility. Counting on the fact, not so much, that Bush would be, all of a sudden, the intelligent genius who would intervene, but by causing his advisers, people who do have the experience, to hopefully get him to put his foot down. Because it is the President of the United States who presently is practically the only power, who could, hopefully in concert with Russia, in concert with the Europeans, prevent this catastrophe.



Friedrich Schiller’s portrayal of Joan of Arc is the foremost literary example of the Sublime. Here, a statue of Joan outside the Church of St. Augustine in Paris.

But we have a real problem. We have seen, what happened in Genoa at the Group of Eight meeting, where, at least the Group of Seven have really done nothing concerning the two fundamental existential crises which threaten mankind at this point: The financial crisis, they talked it over, and said: “No, no we don’t have a fundamental crisis.” Concerning the Middle East, they made some half-hearted efforts. But, really, they don’t care.

Well, that is the impression one gets, and one has to come to the conclusion, that most of these leading politicians rather prefer to reign in Hell, than change the system which is causing this catastrophe. And, also, the reason I think this is very clear (Lyn said it yesterday), is, these people love their posts, the privileges of their position, the pensions they get as parliamentarians, things which the popular mood is against; but one would not

mind their pension, if they would do their job in the meantime. But they are parasites, and only love the privilege they gain out of this.

The Evil Fantasy-Life Of H.G. Wells

Gabriele Liebig¹ spoke yesterday, about what is going on at the cultural, ethical level, in terms of morbid policies, and I can only tell you, that this is the policy of the elite. And, just

1. Gabriele Liebig, speech to the Oberwesel conference, “ ‘Ape Science’: A Multi-Pronged Darwinian Attack Against Man,” *EIR*, Sept. 7, 2001.

recently I reread a really crazy book, which if you want to get nightmares, I will suggest, that you read this; it is the H.G. Wells novel *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. I read this book many, many years ago, but when I reread it, I said, “Holy cow!” The story is this: A guy lands on an island and finds two scientists, who have manipulated—today one would say stem cells—and they have produced animal-men, mixing man’s nature with animals, so they have these part-human, part-pig, part-bear, part-dog creatures, and eventually it turns into a complete nightmare. So when Dr. Moreau is finally killed by his own creatures, these creatures revert to being animals. To think out such things, you must be sick. And then the thing which really was funny: In the end, guess what happens on this island? The sheep all get scrapie, and they start to dance, as mad sheep.

This novel was written in 1894. So, this is how far this crazy stuff goes back to, and if you know how certain of these people think, it is really scary.

The question is: Do these politicians know, what Gabriele was referring to, and others, do they know what is going on? Madeleine Albright, in a speech in New York recently, when she still was in office, praised H.G. Wells as the man to follow, who has the kind of ideas, including world government, including all of these scenarios. And what should one think about [German Foreign Minister] Joschka Fischer, who loved to crawl under the skirts of Mrs. Albright? Does he know, does he understand, what the significance is of such a statement? I don’t know. It is a question I leave open. Maybe they do know, maybe not. Because, the problem is, if you don’t have a positive reference point, if you don’t have a Classical education, if you don’t have a well-grounded positive idea, of what humanity should look like, then you have no criteria; then this is an interesting idea; this is a fashionable idea, this is a modern idea. And once you become degenerated yourself, then your view becomes blurred. You no longer recognize what is going on.

And since especially the ’68ers and the generation afterwards, most people do not have a Classical education. I don’t know, how much they understand this. Look at our Defense Minister [Rudolf] Scharping, who is a Baby-Boomer, a typical ’68er. He got married for the—I don’t know how many times. And for his latest wedding, he is inviting singers of various rock and pop bands, all of whom are known as his good friends. One could say: “This is the personal taste of these people. Why should I get upset?” The only problem is, that, when I was recently in Sudan, in January, it breaks your heart, when you see how great is the poverty of the people in Africa: I had a beautiful discussion with a man from Ethiopia, who told me: “Look, at the high point of the famine catastrophe in Ethiopia, [German Developing Sector Relations Minister] Heidi Wiczeorek-Zeul came, and said, ‘We have sanctions against Ethiopia, because if we give them money, all they will do with the money is buy weapons in their war against Eritrea.’” And this man, an Ethiopian, represents a



Helga Zepp-LaRouche: “Fear is what prevents the Sublime. If you have nothing to fear than fear, get rid of it, and in this spirit, I count on you.”

culture of maybe 10,000 years old, or longer. So, who is this woman, to tell them that they don’t have the right to fight for the unity of their country, talking to a person from a 10,000-year-old culture?

And it really occurred to me, we have to redouble our efforts to win over the European population to our point of view, because, it is not their private business, what people in government right now have in their head, because they go out to Africa and other places and do a tremendous amount of damage, such as imposing sanctions against Ethiopia, when people are starving. Now, Christian Democratic Party Chairwoman [Angela] Merkel and this woman Roth from the Greenies, they go to the Bayreuth [Wagner opera festival], which is a cult. People go there. And the problem is: All our politicians lack a passion for humanity, because, otherwise, they would not go along with this system, which is killing people. When even Daniel Cohn-Bendit has to say, the Greens have lost all perspective, because otherwise they would not go along with globalization, it shows you how far the spectrum has moved. I am just noting this.

A Bankrupt Culture

The problem is, that all of these people are relatively small-minded persons, who locate their self-interest in their immediate gain for themselves, and at best, they think about the next legislative session, or how many of their ideological pet-projects they got through the legislature, or how many windmills they have built to make pollution in Germany aesthetical, and in other places. Or they think: How many farmers



In Germany today, as in the rest of the Western world, the population "lives in a fantasy-land," said Mrs. LaRouche, "and most people have morally not really grown up." Here, young demonstrators against nuclear power.

did we stop from producing food? They get enormous amounts of money, for what? To plow under the harvest. A farmer in Germany today gets more money, if he plows under the harvest, than if he produces food, at a point when the world is starving. This is perverse! So, they only care how they look in the polls, in the media, or at best they have some narrow national interest, that they say this is in the German interest, or this is in the French interest, which, if you look at it closely, it usually never is.

The population unfortunately is not much better; they live in a fantasy-land, and most people, if you look at your neighbors and colleagues, most people have morally not really grown up. They still are on the level of children or adolescents, and they have the same desires as teenagers. I can prove this to you, by going to any Weinfest in the Rheingau [Germany's premier wine-producing region], and you look at these Oldies parties, which is really something. You have these aging '68ers, where the men have no hair any more, but they have a long ponytail from the three hairs they have left at the back. And they go to these Oldies bands, and first they look around to see if "somebody sees me," but then, they really get into the beat. This is obviously a sign of a not-grown-up person, who has gone from puberty to senility, with maybe a minute in between. This is our problem, because only a very small portion of the population is really on a better level, and when you try to get these people to rise to a higher moral standard, which we do in the organizing all the time, then they say: "I have more urgent personal interests to take care of; I must take care of my family; I have to take care of my business; I

have no time for this."

But in times of crisis, this combined leadership-population problem, is usually, if not solved, fatal for the future condition of society. And in all great crises of society, it is clear, that this society will go under, unless you can find the right combination, that the population can develop a sense of reality, and I can assure you, from the German population — with what I know about how the world looks in places such as Latin America, Africa, Russia, and other places — the German population does not have a sense of reality, they live in a complete illusion, in a complete fantasy-land. They may go to a five-star hotel in Kenya at the beach, but they come back knowing nothing. The perception of reality is lacking, but if the society is supposed to live, it has to be developed. And you need the right kind of leadership. And this is, where the best education still, is the question of the great Classical, historical drama, looking at society and real history, with the principles we learn from Classical drama. A society which fails to produce leaders, who can address these problems in times of crisis, will end up like society in Denmark with Hamlet, or Spain with Don Carlos; whereas, if you have leaders like Jeanne d'Arc or Wilhelm Tell, these are examples where the tragedy can be averted, because the leaders acted on the level of the Sublime.

And we will look now at some of these examples concretely. If the outcome of the future of society depends on the level of quality of leadership, is it not the most urgent, longtime interest of every society to develop the greatest possible number of truly adult persons, who are capable of think-

ing and acting on the level of the Sublime? Only an education, which transmits the Classical culture, gives the individual access and understanding to what the Sublime even is. The lack of such a Classical education is presently the biggest problem in Europe. In Germany we have only remnants, and probably in other European countries as well. In Germany, in particular, the people who went to school between 1945 and 1970, if they were lucky and had the right teachers, at least got an inkling, a glimpse of the Classical culture of the Humboldt education system. But, as I said today, in the younger generation, you must have a really fortunate family, parents who gave you this; if children are only left to the schools, they have almost no chance.

Schiller's Conception Of The Sublime

The most urgent question, therefore, is to develop such exceptional persons, who look at their self-interest not in the immediate pleasure (*Spassgesellschaft*), but in the future consequences of their action. The key question we have to think about, therefore, is what can we do, to turn the selfish, greedy representatives of the '68er-Baby-Boomer generation, Generation X, or Generation Y, Y-Not, into responsible leaders for the dimension of the crisis, we face today? The solution is, what Schiller says in "The Theater as a Moral Institution," that we have to, both in Classical art, science, and the discussion of history, according to these principles of great Classical tragedy, present the concepts of the great issues of mankind on the stage, so that the best people will respond, as Schiller said, directly, and then "Reason and purified notions will emanate in milder beams and radiate throughout the society."

Schiller gave the best elaboration, of what the quality of the Sublime is. And I will present to you first this concept of the Sublime in theory, and then look at some examples, where Schiller uses this concept in its place.

Now Schiller — and I want to encourage you to reread this, when you get back home — has a very rigorous definition:

Sublime, he says, we call an object, where our sensuous nature goes under — we may fail as physical human beings — but our Reason proves to be superior. Only as sensuous beings are we dependent. As beings of Reason, we are free. As sensuous beings, we have two drives, one drive is the instinct for survival (*Existenztrieb*), and the second one — also which we have as sensuous beings — is the drive for cognition, for imagination, to comprehend the world. This, Schiller says, represents a dual dependency: The first we feel, when our existence is threatened, when there is a danger to our life, and the second we feel, when something prevents us from an adequate understanding, to comprehend reality as it is.

Reason allows a dual independence of nature. Because in theory we can go beyond the existing conditions, we can think beyond what we presently know. We can come up with new, deeper levels of understanding. And in practice our will can triumph over our desire and over the existing condition. We

can say: I am not dependent. And our will is making us free. An object, when we experience the first, Schiller calls the theoretical Sublime, the Sublime of cognition. An object, which lets us experience the second, the independence of our will, he calls the Sublime of the *Gesinnung* (of the intention, of the mind).

In the theoretical Sublime, we experience an increase in cognition. The practical Sublime increases our power, to determine our condition.

Pain is an alarm signal for our instinct for survival. A danger of a kind, where our mind knows that any resistance is in vain, leads to fear. The object is experienced as terrible, awful, but it is awful only for us as sensuous beings. The practical Sublime is an object, which involves a danger, and our physical power does not feel capable of dealing with it. The theoretical Sublime is an object, which involves the imagination of something infinite, where our power of cognition or our power of imagination does not feel adequate.

For example the ocean, when it is calm but infinite, is an example of the theoretical Sublime. The ocean in a storm is an example of the practical Sublime. A gigantically high tower can have as a consequence the Sublime of Cognition. And I thought, that it was very interesting, that Schiller uses this image of the high tower for this idea of Reason, because Nicolaus of Cusa uses the same idea, to say that the person who looks from the vantage point of a very high tower, sees, from an Aristotelian method of contradiction, not only what would be a search for a problem, but from Cusa's high tower of Reason, you see the searcher and the searching. You understand the process.

Schiller says: The theoretical Sublime is a challenge to the power of imagination, to go beyond previously existing levels of cognition. The practical Sublime is a challenge to prevail, despite the challenge to our existence. And every failure in the effort for cognition brings, naturally, discomfort, but never pain (as long as we know our existence is not threatened by that failure and our self-respect is not suffering). But something which threatens our existence, means pain in sensuous perception and terror in the imagination. Schiller says that the terrible object is more important to our sensuous perception, than an infinite one, because the instinct for survival has a louder voice, than the drive for cognition.

Now, unfortunately, Schiller is dead, and I cannot discuss this point with him, because he didn't meet Lyn. Because I can tell you, that for Lyn, the threat to his theoretical is worse than the threat to his physical existence. He takes more pain and he feels more pain, when he looks at what happens to future generations, if we don't correct the present course, than he is afraid of something which threatens him directly. I think Schiller would not disagree, because he has proven, that he has understood this in his dramas, but I would like to qualify this a little bit.

Schiller says, all the joy in the interest in the Sublime is



The great German poet and playwright Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) provides a brilliant theoretical elaboration of the quality of the Sublime, which he proceeds to develop in his dramatic works.

based on the ability of Reason to be free. Therefore, the awful in the aesthetical imagination has a more lively impact, than the infinite. The theoretically great enlarges our sphere, our horizon, but the practical Sublime increases our strength. It's a quite different matter, to be independent in the realm of imagination, than to be independent from any fate, all accidents and necessities.

The question of existence is most immediate for sensuous beings. The practical Sublime liberates us from this dependency. The Sublime of this superiority of Reason is not identical with the superiority of physical power. For example: A human being, who is threatened by a herd of wild bulls, and is capable of redirecting them, who overcomes—this is not Sublime. All natural means are excluded from the Sublime. Where physical force is sufficient, the inner independence of the power of Reason is not necessary.

For the Sublime, it is necessary, that all means of physical resistance be exhausted. And the inner freedom of the mind is that from which the Sublime comes. Real and serious fear eliminates the freedom of the mind (*Gemüt*). The Sublime object must be awful, but not cause real fear, because fear

is a condition of suffering and violence, and eliminates the possibilities of the Sublime. The Sublime pleases from a free point of view, because it is not suffering, and it is not through the feeling of an inner activity. It has nothing to do with violence.

The mind must remain free, if the sensuous becomes conquered. But, Schiller says, this just-mentioned condition is very rare, and requires an elevation of human nature. It is not self-evident. We must be secure, if the awful is to please us. For example, when you are sitting at the beach and you watch a terrible storm on the ocean, you can enjoy the beauty of this view, but if you are sitting in a tiny rubber dinghy in the middle of this storm, I think, you will not be able to have a sublime feeling, because you have quite other sensations.

But on what should we base our security in the face of destiny? The all-present power of the Deity, *die Gottheit*, painful diseases, serious loss of beloved people, death itself? There can be no physical reason for calmness. The calmness can only come from an inner or moral security.

Physical security, everybody can enjoy in the same way, but moral security assumes a state of mind, which is not to be found in all individuals. Physical security is only relevant for the sensuous aspect of life. There is nothing intriguing about it for Reason. It is a completely different matter concerning moral security; it calms our sensuous part, too, but only through the ideas of our Reason, gives us consciousness about the indestructibility of our being.

Death, for example, is a matter, where we can only have moral security, not physical security. The belief of Reason in immortality has a certain calming effect, even for our sensuous side. But the imagination of death does not get the idea of the Sublime. It is not the idea of immortality, which gives us the Sublime. Schiller is very emphatic. He said: Absolutely not! Just the idea, that you live forever—an idea which is associated with all positive religions—has nothing to do with the Sublime. The idea of an omniscient God, Who knows all secrets of the human heart, and has its physical existence under His control, is an awful thought, and it can become a Sublime assumption.

Against this power, no physical security exists, only moral security, which you only have, if you know that your actions are based on justness of character, and it makes it possible not to lose the freedom of our mind in the face of this apparently limitless power. But this moral security is not the source of the Sublime, since it can never lead to a calming of our sensuous worries, which is the source of the Sublime.

If such an imagination of the Deity is supposed to be practically Sublime, the security cannot relate to our existence, but must be in respect to our principles. We must be indifferent to our fate as physical beings, only if we remain independent, as beings of Reason, from their power.

Deity can never influence us as a direct power. But since the pure will must always coincide with the will of the Deity,

the situation can never happen, that we decide out of pure Reason, against the will of the Deity. Coincidence cannot occur because some authority tells us, that we fear punishment or a reward, but it is the cohesion with the pure law of Reason. All of these conditions apply both for the Beautiful Soul and for the Sublime. But the Sublime goes even one step beyond the Beautiful Soul. Schiller, in the *Kallias Letters*, describes the Beautiful Soul as a good Samaritan, a person who helps the wounded man on the side of the road, without any consideration for himself. But to achieve the condition of the Sublime, one has to be completely indifferent to what would happen to us as sensuous beings. We must treat the physical aspect of our nature as something external, something foreign.

Schiller says: Great is, who conquers the Awful, but Sublime is, who does not fear it, even if he is conquered by it! Not all human beings, he says, have enough powers of imagination, to have even an idea of the dangers involved. And many don't have the moral strength, once they have an idea what the Awful is, to not rather avoid such a perspective. But that exactly is the moral test, whether a society has the moral fiber to survive!

Generation X, the people I described earlier, often do not have the power of imagination, to know what reality really is, or the moral strength to draw the right conclusion from it. When you tell such a young person, or an old person for that matter: Africa is dying as the result of conscious genocide. They say, "I don't go there!" In German you say: "*Das lass ich gar nicht an mich ran kommen!*"

But if the majority of leaders don't act on the level of the Sublime, in times of crisis — and crisis is not something which erupts in one day, one fine morning; but, as Lyn has developed this many, many times, crisis is building up, you have a long-wave preparation for the crisis, and then, when the final crisis breaks out, you are dealing with the facts, which have long since developed before. We experienced in the U.S. election campaign in 2000, how such crises develop. We knew from the inside, how the Gore goons terrified the Democratic politicians, making physical threats, saying, "You will not live, if you don't support Gore," threatening them with frame-ups, saying, "Your career will be finished if you go with LaRouche." So the fear, in many cases, caused them to capitulate, and now you have Bush, financial meltdown, danger of generalized war.

This, what I am discussing, is not a theoretical problem, it is a very practical question!

The Importance Of Classical Tragedy

Why are Classical drama and tragedy absolutely essential for a population that should have the moral strength to survive such a crisis? Precisely to train the audience for the two areas that Schiller talked about! Because I have come to the conclusion, that many of the young people, whom you talk with about Africa, they just cannot imagine it. They just block,

they don't have the capacity to think it through; a barrier drops down, and something happens to prevent them from understanding.

And secondly, to train courage, to draw the consequences from this insight. Lessing said: The importance of great Classical tragedy is, that the audience can watch the tragedy unfolding on the stage, and watch the courage of the heroine or the hero, and what you have trained for many, many times before the crisis erupts, then gives you the strength in the moment of crisis to act in a potent way. Because, when you are unprepared, when the crisis hits, you don't have time to train for it, and you may have a strange reaction.

All of a sudden, the average citizen is confronted with the question of the fate of his or her nation, the fortune or misery of generations to come, and he or she has to think like a king, a heroine, or a leader, on whom the outcome of the present historical period depends — this is something you have to anticipate.

In great historical drama, the audience clearly sees that the failure of a leader to act on the level of the Sublime in a moment of crisis, means disaster for the society.

The Example Of 'Don Carlos'

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is such a case. Also, Schiller's *Don Carlos* is an example, where the failure of the heroes to reach the level of the Sublime means the political failure of society.

Don Carlos is a play which takes place in Spain during the reign of the Hapsburg King Philip II, and the Inquisition and Philip's rule over Spain and over the conquered territories is based on suppression, tyranny, and the evil methods of the Inquisition. The Netherlands are in a state of rebellion and want to separate. Marquis of Posa, who calls himself, "Representative of Mankind," comes from the Netherlands, back to the court in Madrid, where he hopes to convince his boyhood friend [Prince Don Carlos], to help to liberate the Netherlands. A hope, which is not unfounded, since the two shared the same ideals in their early youth.

But Posa does not find a hero, who still believes in the lofty ideals of their common youth, but an unhappy, depressed person, who still loves his former fiancée, Elisabeth, who unfortunately was in the meantime married to his father, and who is now technically his mother. He has only one thing in mind: to meet her secretly and confess his love to her, however hopeless this may be in the Spain of the Hapsburg Dynasty and the Inquisition.

Posa agrees to arrange such a meeting without witnesses, because he has a completely different motive. He counts on Elisabeth's Reason and her influence on Carlos, as the only hope to engage him again in the cause of freedom. The encounter takes place; Carlos is at first in a completely unreasonable state, given the circumstances. Elisabeth briefly, but without compromise, describes to him the complete hopelessness of his wishes. She says quite brutally: How do you want our relationship to fulfill itself? Do you want to kill the King

CARLOS: How great you are, O Heavenly! — Yes, all
You charge me with, that shall I do! — So be't!

With Queen Elisabeth, Schiller has created for the first time, a female character, who represents the ideal of the Beautiful Soul. Of all the figures in the play, she is never drawn down by any weakness, she has no selfish motives, which Carlos and Posa both do at times. The first—and Carlos is uplifted by this—he says: “*Ja, alles was Sie verlangen, will ich tun—Es sei!*,” “Yes, everything you ask of me, I will do.”

And indeed at the first occasion he has, to speak with his father, he demands to have command over the army in the Netherlands, and he explains to Philip, that this is the only way to avoid terrible bloodshed with the rebels.

Carlos says the famous words, “Already 23 years old, and I have done nothing yet for eternity!” (Now, one could easily say, “Already 50 years old or already 90 years old and. . .” There is still time, I mean, there is still time!) Carlos says: World history calls on me, the honor of my forebears, and the world court! He is no more the wimpy Carlos of before, but the hero, who is willing to follow his world historical responsibility. But Philip gives his son a brutal rejection, and he says: And at the same time I should give my best army to your power-greediness? The knife to my murderer? The King calls his son his murderer, which is not an easy thing!

Later, when Posa has the opportunity to speak with Philip alone, he uses the occasion to try to move the King with his daring vision of a new state. He says: “Be the King of a million Kings!” This is very interesting, because in his letters about *Don Carlos*, Schiller says very clearly, that this vision of a functioning state, of a beautiful state, was the favorite subject of the decade, the 1780s, when this play was written. This was the time, when the whole world discussed the ideas of the American Revolution. Even if the play takes place in Spain, what Posa says are the lofty ideas of the inalienable rights of men.

Posa wants to win Philip over to his just cause, but he misjudges the situation completely, because Philip is only impressed by Posa as a person, an individual, who is not licking the boots of the King, which is obviously a rarity in Spain at that time. And Philip seeks his help as a person, not as a politician. The discussion therefore remains without political consequences.

Now I think, this is also something to think about, when our organizers sometimes say, “Oh I had this wonderful discussion, because this person really liked my ideas.” People misjudge sometimes, that what people respond to, is that they find it refreshing, to speak to a person, who is not a blockhead, but this does not mean necessarily, that they are already willing to go our way. There are many things one can study these dramas for. I maintain the point, that Schiller was the best psychologist, much better than all the psychoanalysts and people following Freud.

But unfortunately, Posa misjudges this and he becomes arrogant; he does not tell Carlos about these new developments. He does not want to “show the weather clouds (which hang over his head) to the sleeping.” This naturally brings Carlos into an impossible situation, because he estimates his own situation in a completely wrong way. This is not so great, because Posa uses his friend, and no matter how noble his intentions are, this represents a serious flaw. Posa later is aware of this, but only after it is too late—he says “*Denn wer, Wer heisst auf einen zweifelhaften Wurf mich alles setzen?*” “But who, who told me to bet everything on a dubious calculation?”—namely, that Philip would turn all of a sudden into a revolutionary, which is a most unlikely thing. Posa thinks that by sacrificing himself for Carlos, he can save the situation, but he brings doom upon both of them and their political perspective. Elisabeth, the Beautiful Soul, recognizes, that this is a false form of the Sublime, and she says so explicitly (Act IV Scene XXI).

QUEEN: No! No!
You plung'd yourself into this deed, which you
Deem lofty. But deny it not! I know
You, you have long been thirsting for it— May
A thousand hearts be broken, what is it
To you, so long your pride is satisfied.
O, now — now do I learn to understand you!
You only vied for admiration.

That this is also Schiller's view, is proven by his “Letters on Don Carlos,” where he criticizes Posa's flight-forward from the same point of view. This ends tragically for everybody. The plan for the liberation of the Netherlands has failed; Carlos and Posa are dead; the King has lost his only son; and Elisabeth, one can assume, will remain with a broken heart, or worse.

The Sublime In History: ‘Wilhelm Tell’

The Sublime as the basis for action in historical situations remained Schiller's focus. A beautiful example he gives us in *Wilhelm Tell*, which is a drama, not a tragedy, with a positive outcome, exactly because the main heroes acted in a Sublime way. According to his letters, it was Schiller's intention to write a drama for “the whole audience,” which was supposed to get under the skin of everybody, and he succeeded!

The drama deals with the just uprising of the Swiss people, a simple, but proud people of shepherds and hunters, against the tyranny of the foreign-imposed bailiffs. They have to fight for their inalienable rights themselves, if they are not going to lose their dignity, and they are willing to risk their lives for their freedom.

In the famous “Rütli Oath,” they make it clear, “No, there is a limit to the tyrant's power!” Wilhelm Tell is not part of the group that swears the Rütli Oath. He is a father, who gets into an existential crisis of having to shoot at his own son—



A performance of Wilhelm Tell by the Schiller Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. It is Gertrud who infuses Stauffacher with courage, since she knows that their fight is a just one. This is one of Schiller's finest dramatic illustrations of the quality of the Sublime.

he is forced to act totally and absolutely against his fatherly love, but he has to do it, to save his son.

Because Tell, who is a proud and an independent man, refuses to bow to the hat of the bailiff Gessler, Gessler demands, that Tell shoot an apple from the head of his son. He tells him: "You shoot, or die together with your son!" Now, imagine you are a father and you have to shoot at the apple—even though Tell is a very good marksman, he could fail, the terror of the situation could make him tremble and fail. So it is quite a thing. But Gessler says, if you don't do it, we shoot you both. So what is he supposed to do? Tell is in an unavoidable, tragic situation, the cruel game of the tyrant, forces the father to aim at the head of his child. But the perversity of this demand gives Tell the moral right for a political murder, and his resistance is born out of the same spirit as the Rütli Oath.

Tell acts as an individual, only in the end, his action goes together with the public concern. There is one scene which makes totally clear, what Schiller believes it is that gives these Swiss people the courage to act so bravely. In the beginning of the play, is the famous scene with the wealthy farmer Werner Stauffacher and his wife Gertrud, who want to preempt the catastrophe. Here is one of the most beautiful examples of how Schiller illustrates the Sublime, and it is typical for him, that it is the female character, who acts on that level.

The sublime attitude of Gertrud gives Stauffacher the moral backing he needs to fight. She has an underlying confidence in victory, because she knows that they are fighting for just principles, which Schiller says is one precondition for the Sublime. Also, the trust in God, but not in such a way as to

transfer the responsibility to him, but only after man has dared to go to the outer limits. Tell does hit the apple, because he has this confidence.

Gertrud says, "God helps the courageous" — "*Dem Mutigen hilft Gott!*"

Walter Fürst says, "*So muss Gott helfen durch unsern Arm!*" ("So God helps us, through our arm!")

In the Stauffacher-Gertrud scene, the couple discuss the situation in Switzerland, and the terrible suppression.

STAUFFACHER: What's to be done?

GERTRUD: (*steps nearer*)

So hear what I advise! Thou know'st, how here
 In Schwyz all honest men do now complain
 About this Gov'rnor's greed and tyranny.
 So have no doubt, that they there yonder too
 In Unterwalden and in Uri land
 Are weary of oppression and the yoke—
 For just as Gessler here, there yonder o'er
 The lake the Landenberger is as brazen—
 There comes no fishing boat across to us,
 Which doth not tell of some new mischief and
 Beginning-violence from the governors.
 Therefore it would be wise, if some of you,
 Of sound intent, did quietly confer,
 How we might free ourselves of this oppression,
 So know I well, that God would not desert you
 And would be gracious to a righteous cause—

Dost thou not have a friend in Uri, speak,
To whom thou may'st thine heart sincerely open?

STAUFFACHER: I know of many men of courage there
And men of high repute and eminence,
Who are my trusted friends and confidants.
(*He stands up.*)

Wife, what a storm of dangerous ideas
Awak'st thou in my quiet breast! My innermost
Thou bring'st from me into the light of day,
And what I secretly forbade myself
To think, thou boldly speak'st with easy tongue.
—Hast thou considered well, what thou advisest?
The savage discord and the clang of arms
Thou callest forth into this peaceful vale—
Dared we, a feeble folk of herdsmen, go
To battle with the master of the world?
'Tis only for some pretext, that they wait,
In order to unleash on this poor land
Their savage hordes of military might,
Therein to govern with the victor's rights
And 'neath the show of righteous punishment
To extirpate our ancient freedom's charter.

GERTRUD: You *too* are men, know how to wield your axe,
And God gives help unto courageous men!

STAUFFACHER: Oh Wife! A fearful raging scourage is war,
It strikes at once the shepherd and his herd.

GERTRUD: One must endure, whatever heaven sends,
Inequity endures no noble heart.

STAUFFACHER: This house delights thee, that we newly
built.
But war, the monster, burns it to the ground.

GERTRUD: Thought I my heart to temp'ral goods enslaved,
I'd throw the torch with mine own hand thereto.

STAUFFACHER: Thou dost believe in human kind! But war
Spares not the tender infant in its cradle.

GERTRUD: The innocent in heaven have a friend!
—Look forward, Werner, not behind thee now!

STAUFFACHER: We men can perish bravely sword in hand
And yet what destiny will fall to you?

GERTRUD: The final choice is left e'en to the weakest,
A spring from yonder bridge doth make me free.

STAUFFACHER (*falls into her arms*):
Who presses such a heart unto his bosom,
He joyfully can fight for hearth and home,

And fears he not the hosts of any king—
To Uri shall I post without delay,
There lives a friend of mine, Lord Walter Fürst,
Who thinks the same as I about these times.

Schiller ends the play with the famous “Parricida” scene, where Tell does not approve of the murder of the Emperor, to make clear, that the action is not a general license for Jacobin terror, but it was a self-help in his own “rigorously defined singular situation.”

Joan of Arc

A very special place in Schiller's life's work belongs to his Johanna von Orleans [*Die Jungfrau von Orleans*]. To write this “Romantic Tragedy,” which is what he calls it, which portrays in Johanna, the most beautiful image of man, (“*Das edle Antlitz der Menschheit*”), was a direct attack on Voltaire, who has pulled exactly this beautiful image into the mud with his “*La Pucelle d'Orléans*” [“The Maid of Orleans”]. The Duke of Weimar didn't dare to perform Schiller's play at first, because the entire nobility use to recite “*La Pucelle*” by heart, because it was this dirty, half-pornographic thing, and the Duke feared to be ridiculed, if he would all of a sudden have the noble play by Schiller performed.

Schiller identified more with this play than any other. To Körner, he wrote that he was “in it with his whole heart, and much more flows from the heart, than with previous plays, where the mind had to fight with the material.” And, to his publisher he wrote, “This piece flowed out of the heart, and to the heart it is supposed to speak. But for this it is necessary, that one have a heart, and this is unfortunately not always the case.”

In his beautiful poem, “The Maiden of Orleans,” he says: “*Dich schuf das Herz! Du wirst unendlich leben!*” (“You were created by the heart! You will live forever!”) Jeanne d'Arc, who was actually an historical figure, took the mission from God to save France from English occupation. The weak Dauphin, whom Schiller gives all the characteristics of Romanticism, is unable to defend the country, but Johanna, a simple shepherdess, takes the responsibility. Nobody in her environment understands her, because people are not up to this level. She accepts the condition, that she never will be allowed to feel an earthly love for a man, if she wants to fulfill her Divine task (Prologue, Scene IV).

JOHANNA (*alone*):
Farewell, ye mountains, ye beloved swards,
Ye quiet and familiar vales, farewell!
Johanna will now no more o'er you wander,
Johanna says forever fare you well.
Ye meadows, which I watered, and ye trees,
Which I have planted, green forth merrily!
Farewell, ye grottoes and ye cooling springs!
Thou echo, lovely voice upon this vale,

Which oft an answer gave to my refrain —
Johanna goes, and she ne'er comes again!

Ye places of mine ever silent pleasure,
You do I leave behind for evermore!
Disperse yourselves, ye lambs, amid the heather,
Ye are a flock without herdsman more,
For there's another herd which I must pasture,
On danger's yond field of bloody gore:
So hath the spirit's call to me been given,
I'm not by idle earthly longing driven.

For who on Horeb's summits once descended
To Moses in a fiery bush of flame
And 'fore the Pharaoh him to stand commended,
Who one time Jesse's boy of pious fame,
The shepherd, as His champion intended,
Who e'er His grace to shepherds did proclaim,
He spake to me from the branches of this tree:
"Go forth! Thou shalt bear witness on the earth for me.

In rugged ore shalt thou thy limbs enlase,
With steel thou shalt bedeck thy tender breast,
Nor love of men thine heart may e'er embrace
With sinful flames of idle earthly zest.
The bridal wreath thy locks will never grace,
No darling child will blossom at thy breast,
Yet thee with military honors I
Shall o'er all earthly women glorify.

For when i' th' fight the bravest do despair,
When France's final destiny draws nigh,
Then thou mine oriflamme wilt onward bear
And, as the rapid reaper cuts the rye,
Shalt thou the haughty conqueror impair;
Thou wilt his wheel of fortune now defy,
To France's hero sons salvation bring
And Rheims set truly free and crown thy King!"

A signal hath the Heaven promised me —
He sendeth me the helm, it comes from Him,
With godly strength His iron touches me,
And through me flames the pluck o' th' Cherubim!
Into the martial throng it urges me,
It drives me forth with stormy vim,
The field-call hear I to me strongly pound,
The war horse rears, and all the trumpets sound.

Johanna leads the battle against the English. She is a true Warrior Angel, who also ruthlessly kills the enemy. Schiller emphasizes, that she is not victorious because of her physical strength, but she wins because of her supernatural powers. He writes to Iffland, that in Johanna the female, the heroic and the divine are united. She also develops the highest talents of

a military commander, and under her leadership, large parts of France are liberated.

But then she feels suddenly love for Lionel, the only remaining English commander, who is still alive, and whom she is supposed to kill. The shock, that she was capable of breaking her oath, totally destabilizes her, she doubts herself and she loses her supernatural powers (Act IV, Scene I).

JOHANNA: The weapons rest, the storm of war abates,
On bloody battle follow song and dance;
Through all the streets gay singing resonates,
The church and altar shine with festal glance,
And out of verdant boughs are built the gates,
And winding wreaths the columns do enhance;
Wide Rheims contains not each and every guest,
Who seething streams unto the people's fest.

An exultation of one joy bursts into flame,
And but one thought now strikes in every breast;
What bloody hatred recently did maim,
That shares o'erjoyed the universal zest;
He's only proudly conscious of his name,
Who's to his Frankish heritage confessed;
The glow o' th' ancient crown is now made new,
And to its royal son France pays his due.

But me, who for this glory hath contended,
The universal bliss doth me not sway;
In me the heart is altered and is wended,
From this festivity it flees away —
Into the British camp it now hath wended,
O'er there unto the foe my glances stray,
And from the ring of joy must I now steal,
The heavy guilt o' th' bosom to conceal.

Who? I? Within mine own pure breast
The image of man do bear?
This heart, which Heaven's glow hath blest,
To risk an earthly love shall dare?

I, mine own country's savior,ess,
The highest God's own warrior,ess,
For mine own country's foe enflame!
Dare I to the chaste sun its name,
And I not be destroyed by shame!
*(The music behind the scene passes over
into gentle, melting melody)*
Woe is me! Woe's me! what tones!
How they do seduce mine ear!
Each one doth recall his voice,
Conjures up his image here!

Would the storm o' th' battle seize me,
Whizzing spears around me sound

In the burning struggle's roar!
I'd my courage find once more!

O these voices, O these tones,
How they do ensnare mine heart,
Every power in my bosom
They dissolve in soft desire,
Melt to tears in sorrow's fire!
(after a pause, more lively)
Should I have killed him? Could I, since I looked
Into his eyes? Kill him! I'd sooner have
The murd'rous steel upon mine own breast drawn!
And I am culpable, since I was human?
Is pity sinful? — Pity! Didst thou hear
The voice of pity and humanity
From others too, whom thy sword sacrificed?
Why was it silent, when the Welshman thee,
The tender stripling, for his life implored?
Deceitful heart! Thou liest to th' light eterne,
The pious voice of pity thee did spurn!

Why had I to behold him in the eyes,
To see the features of his noble face!
'Twas with thy glance that thine offense began,
Unhappy one! A sightless tool demandeth God,
With sightless eyes thou hadst it to attain!
So soon thou saw'st, God's shield did thee forsake,
The snares of Hell did thee at once enchain!
(The flutes repeat, she sinks into a silent melancholy.)
Pious staff! O had I never
battle-sword exchanged for thee!
Had it never in thy branches,
Holy oak tree, rustled me!
Wert thou present to me never,
Lofty Queen of Heaven's sphere!
Take, I can't deserve it ever,
thine own crown, it take o'er there!

Ah, I saw the Heaven ope
And the Blessed's countenance!
Yet on earth is all mine hope,
And i' th' Heaven is it hence!
Must thou me then with this burden,
This so terrifying trade?
Could I this mine heart then harden,
Which the Heaven feeling made?

Wilt thou thine own might proclaim,
Choose but those, who free of blame
Stand in thine eternal home:
Thine own spirits send to roam,
Who is pure, who will not die,
Who feels not, who doth not cry!
Not the tender virgin hail,
Not the herdmaids' spirit frail!

Care I for the lot of battles,
Or the discord of the kings?
Guiltless did I drive my lambs
On the silent mountain heights.
Yet thou rip'st me into living,
In the haughty Prince's hall,
Unto guilt my life thus giving,
Ah! 'twas not my choice at all!

At the formal high point of her earthly powers, after she carried the flag which has the symbol of her Divine mission, at the front of the coronation procession for the King, her father accuses her of being a witch.

She could defend herself, by speaking about her mission, but she remains silent, not because she is a witch, but because her previous confidence was shaken, because she felt this moment of love for the enemy. And all of her previous followers and friends start to doubt her, and abandon her but one.

Afterward, she becomes a prisoner of the English. When she hears that her King is in danger, she calls to God to free her. With supernatural powers, she again breaks her chains, quickly hurries to the battlefield and brings victory, but receives a deadly wound in the battle.

Now she is again the prophet, the Warrior Angel, but on a higher level than before. She accepted the task, the mission, and carried it out victoriously. But then she had a weakness, and she sank temporarily to a lower level of consciousness:

"Ach, es war nicht meine Wahl." ("It was not my choice at all!")

But then, when confronted with reality, namely, when the original purpose of her mission to save France and France was in danger, she evokes her old strength and completes the task.

Johanna is now transfigured, free. She confronts death with the strength of a person, who has changed history for the better. She acted on the level of the Sublime (Act V, Scene XIV, the scene of Johanna's death).

JOHANNA: *(looks around smiling brightly)*
Am I really now among my folk
And am no more rejected and despised?
They curse me not, they kindly look upon me?
— Yes, now I recognize all clearly once again!
That is my Monarch! That is France's banner!
Yet mine own banner see I not — Where is it?
Without my banner dare I not to come:
It was entrusted to me by my Master,
Before His throne I must needs lay it down —
I may display it, for I bore it true.

KING: *(with face turned away)* Give her the banner! . . .

JOHANNA: Do you behold the rainbow in the air?
The Heaven opens up its golden gates:

I' th' choir of angels stands she gleaming there,
 She holds th' eternal Son upon her breast,
 Her arms she smiling stretches out to me.
 What comes o'er me—Light clouds are lifting me—
 The heavy armor doth to winged garments turn.
 Upward—upward—The earth doth backward flee—
 Brief is the pain, the joy shall be eterne!

Eternity is joyful. Johanna acts on the level of the “simultaneity of eternity.”

Rise To The Level Of The Sublime!

Now, we have today two problems. As I said before, we have a population in an hysterical denial, and we have mediocre politicians, to say the least. This is a very difficult problem, because we have to get the population and the political class, which is morally very bankrupt, to act in a way, so that society can survive. They are still denying the problem, but this can change very, very rapidly and they will become explosive, they will express rage. Their popped illusions will turn them into raving people. And this is exactly where the question of leadership comes in. Because then you have to ask yourself the question, “Will you let this people sit there and become fodder for a fascist movement,” as Hitler used it during the time of the last Depression or—remember what FDR did at

the same time, who went the other way. He addressed the denial. He spoke to the forgotten men. And both Franklin D. Roosevelt and our beloved Amelia [Boynton Robinson],² whom I spoke with yesterday, both of them said: There is nothing to fear, than fear itself. In the crisis, the population transferred their values to FDR, because he gave real leadership.

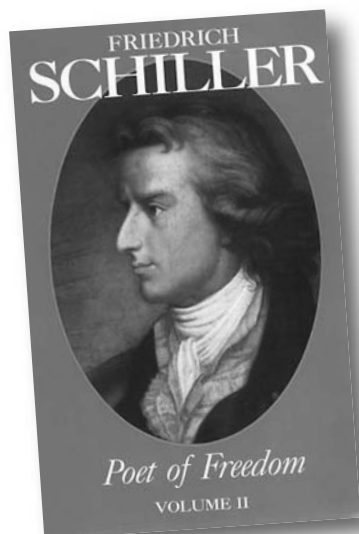
Leadership must have one quality. It must be a person, who embodies the Classical principles and the knowledge of thinkers of thousands of year before, who finds his identity in what he or she can contribute to the next several generations and radiate that. A leader has to do, what a commander does in warfare. And the question you have to ask: Are you willing to risk your life for people who you don't know, who are not even born? Obviously this is against the values of the *Zeitgeist* of the *Spassgesellschaft*. But if you look back in history, that is what counted to bring mankind forward.

Fear is what prevents the Sublime. If you have nothing to fear than fear, get rid of it, and in this spirit I count on you.

2. Mrs. Amelia Boynton Robinson, vice-chairman of the Schiller Institute, is a 60-year veteran of the Civil Rights movement and heroine of the voting rights campaign in Selma, Alabama. *EIR* paid her tribute for her 90th birthday in its Sept. 14, 2001 issue.

“There is a limit to the tyrant's power.”

—Friedrich Schiller,
 Wilhelm Tell.



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