

interpretation

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Volume 9 Numbers 2 & 3

- 141 Larry Arnhart The Rationality of Political Speech:
An Interpretation of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*
- 155 Jan H. Blits Manliness and Friendship
in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*
- 169 Mary Nichols *The Winter's Tale*:
The Triumph of Comedy over Tragedy
- 191 Jerry Weinberger On Bacon's *Advertisement Touching A Holy War*
- 207 John Parsons, Jr. On Sir William Temple's
Political and Philosophical Teaching
- 229 Susan Power John Locke:
Revolution, Resistance, or Opposition?
- 245 Barry Cooper The Politics of Performance: An Interpretation
of Bolingbroke's Political Theory
- 263 Philip J. Kain Labor, the State, and Aesthetic Theory in the
Writings of Schiller
- 279 Michael H. Mitias Law as the Basis of the State: Hegel
- 301 Stanley Corngold Dilthey's Essay *The Poetic Imagination*:
A Poetics of Force
- 339 Kent A. Kirwan Historicism and Statesmanship
in the Reform Argument of Woodrow Wilson
- 353 Richard Velkley Gadamer and Kant: The Critique of Modern
Aesthetic Consciousness in *Truth and Method*
- 365 Robert C. Grady Bertrand de Jouvenel:
Order, Legitimacy, and the Model of Rousseau
- 385 William R. Marty Rawls and the Harried Mother
- 397 Jürgen Gebhardt Ideology and Reality:
The Ideologue's Persuasion in Modern Politics
- 415 Kenneth W. Thompson Science, Morality, and Transnationalism
- Discussion*
- 427 Peter T. Manicas The Crisis of Contemporary Political Theory:
on Jacobson's *Pride and Solace*
- Book Reviews*
- 437 Patrick Coby *The Spirit of Liberalism*,
by Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr.
- 439 Will Morrisey *Political Parties in the Eighties*,
edited by Robert A. Goldwin

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Volume 9 numbers 2 & 3

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LABOR, THE STATE, AND AESTHETIC THEORY IN THE WRITINGS OF SCHILLER

PHILIP J. KAIN

University of California, Santa Cruz

This essay is concerned with Schiller, but it investigates themes that can also be found in other writers, especially in Hegel and Marx. All of these writers attempt (and ultimately fail) to work out a particular ideal model for labor and political institutions. This model was patterned after the ideal cultural conditions of ancient Greece and based upon modern aesthetic concepts, especially the concept of a synthesis between sense and reason. It was a model designed to overcome fragmentation or alienation in the modern world that had been brought about by the development of the division of labor.

This model calls for the complete development of the individual's mental and physical capacities. Even in labor, all of the individual's powers and capacities should be harmoniously brought into play. The individual should not be chained to a stunting sort of activity in which only isolated powers and capacities are developed. Labor should be transformed into an enjoyable activity. Even the difference between labor and leisure should be overcome.

Moreover, rational and sensuous capacities should be in harmony such that principles and feeling, duty and inclination, are in agreement. Contrary to the views of Kant, inclination should spontaneously accord with duty.

The individual should also be in unity with his object—whether this object be nature, the state, or the product of labor. He should not be dominated, but in control. Thus, for example, the split between state and society should be overcome. With the individual in control, with his faculties developed and in harmony, he would have a free, contemplative relationship to his object—an aesthetic relationship.

Schiller sees the problems of the modern world clearly and tries to solve them, but he fails. I will argue elsewhere that Hegel and Marx, following Schiller, try much the same approach but ultimately give up the attempt and change to a different model. Despite the fact that this original model never succeeds, it plays an important part in and thus can illuminate the development of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thought concerning labor and political institutions.

I

Schiller asserts that the condition of modern man is one of fragmentation, a fragmentation that takes the general form of a separation and opposition

between man's intellectual and sensuous capacities.¹ It is the solution to this problem that constitutes the most pressing and fundamental need of the modern world. Schiller begins his search for a solution by turning to the culture of ancient Greece. There fragmentation had not yet occurred. "At that first fair awakening of the powers of the mind, sense and intellect did not as yet rule over strictly separate domains; for no dissension had as yet provoked them into hostile partition and mutual demarcation of their frontiers."² The age had not yet arrived where we find "whole classes of men, developing but one part of their potentialities."³ The ancient world was still a world of unity; the citizen was still at home with, in control of, his state. It had not yet become alien. The time had not arrived where the "governed cannot but receive with indifference the laws which are scarcely, if at all, directed to them as persons."⁴

What was it then that ended this ideal harmony? According to Schiller it was the development of the division of labor. As culture required more specialization, individual concrete life was sacrificed to the abstract life of the whole. The individual was limited to one fragment of reality and whole classes of men developed only a part of their capacities.⁵ The most important results of the division of labor were: enjoyment was separated from labor⁶; in his occupation the individual no longer developed the harmony of his being, but merely became the imprint of his occupation⁷; ranks and occupations were rigorously separated⁸; and the state became alien (*fremd*) to its citizens.⁹ In general, man's intellectual and sensuous capacities were separated and each began to develop on its own.

Schiller does recognize certain improvements that this separation has brought about.

I do not underrate the advantages which the human race today, considered as a whole and weighed in the balance of intellect, can boast in the face of what is best in the ancient world. But it has to take up the challenge in serried ranks, and let whole measure itself against whole. What individual Modern could sally forth and engage, man against man, with an individual Athenian for the prize of humanity?¹⁰

¹A view similar to this can be also found in F. Hölderlin, *Hyperion*, trans. W. R. Trask (New York: Signet, 1965), p. 164; for the German see *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1958), III, 160–61.

²F. Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, trans. E. M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), p. 31; reference in all cases will also be made to *Schillers Werke (SW)* (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1962), XX, 321.

³Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 33, and *SW*, XX, 322.

⁴Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 37, and *SW*, XX, 324–25.

⁵Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 33, and *SW*, XX, 322.

⁶Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 35, and *SW*, XX, 323.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 33, and *SW*, XX, 322–33.

⁹Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 37, and *SW*, XX, 324.

¹⁰Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 33, and *SW*, XX, 322.

An antagonism between faculties was the only manner in which a progress in the development of man's capacities could have been brought about.¹¹ This was the only way for the species to progress, but the individual had to suffer. In the long run, however, this antagonism brings a development to each faculty that will eventually, Schiller hopes, again result in a unity and harmony but now on a higher level.¹² His goal is to maintain the advantages of progress and division of labor, and at the same time to regain the unity, spontaneity, and wholeness of the ancient world.¹³

II

In his consideration of art, Schiller contrasts the naive with the sentimental artist. The naive artist, the artist of the ancient world, is in actual possession of the ideal. In him and in his art we find a harmony between sense and reason.¹⁴ He is still in unity with nature.¹⁵ In the sentimental artist, the artist of the modern world, we no longer find unity except as an ideal to be realized. In the modern world, man

can now express himself only as a moral *unity*, i.e., as striving after unity. The correspondence between his feeling and thought which in his first condition actually took place, exists now only ideally; it is no longer within him, but outside of him, as an idea to be realized, no longer as a fact in his life.¹⁶

Man either possesses nature as in the ancient world or seeks lost nature as in the modern.¹⁷ However, the naive attains only a *finite* goal while the sentimental strives for an *infinite* one. Thus the sentimental makes for progress, which Schiller says is preferable.¹⁸

The goal for Schiller would be actual possession of the unity and harmony of the naive together with the greatness of object and progress of the sentimen-

¹¹Schiller here follows Kant's "Idea for a Universal History." On the influence of Kant's philosophy of history on Schiller see J. Taminiaux, *La Nostalgie de la Grèce à l'aube de l'idéalisme allemand* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1967), pp. 25-32.

¹²Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 41, and *SW*, XX, 326-27.

¹³Wilkinson and Willoughby make this point in the introduction to their edition of the *Aesth. Ed.*, p. xiv.

¹⁴F. Schiller, *Naive and Sentimental Poetry* and *On the Sublime*, trans. J. A. Elias (New York: Ungar, 1966), p. 111, and *SW*, XX, 436-37. Nietzsche's concept of the "Apollinian" is patterned after Schiller's "naive"; see F. Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), pp. 43-45; for the German see *Nietzsches Werke* (Leipzig: Kröner, 1917), I, 32-33. But Nietzsche opposes the view that Greece can be summed up under just one category like the naive; a tension already exists between two principles—the Apollinian and the Dionysian.

¹⁵Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 104, and *SW*, XX, 431.

¹⁶Schiller, *N & S Poet.*; p. 111, and *SW*, XX, 437. The contrast between the ideal and the actual in sentimental and naive art prefigures Hegel's categories of Romantic and Classical art. Further, for Schiller, much as for Hegel, the Greeks excelled in the plastic arts based on the imagination while the moderns excel in the poetic arts that deal with ideals, spirit; see *N & S Poet.*, p. 115, and *SW*, XX, 440.

¹⁷Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 106, and *SW*, XX, 432.

¹⁸Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 113, and *SW*, XX, 438.

tal.¹⁹ This sort of synthesis would be the solution at the cultural level to the problem of the modern world.

In *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Schiller attempts to work out such a synthesis. Aesthetic education will reconcile the developed but opposed faculties of the individual. After the breakdown of the ancient world there arose two opposed drives. This opposition must be overcome. Material and formal impulses,²⁰ sense and reason, must be *aufgehoben* into a third condition—beauty. If both impulses are in full operation at the same time, then the exclusiveness of each will be cancelled. Schiller wants a reciprocal action between the two drives such that the activity of each reinforces yet sets limits to the activity of the other, and in which each achieves its highest manifestation precisely through the action of the other.²¹ Here we have reciprocal subordination and coordination.²² One of the clearest examples of this is given at the end of Letter 14. Schiller says that if we embrace with passion someone who deserves our contempt, we feel pain at the compulsion of our nature. When we are ill disposed toward someone who commands our respect, we feel pain over the compulsion of our reason. But when someone has enlisted our affection and gained our respect, all constraint disappears and we love that person.²³ In the latter case each drive aids the other. Far from interfering, each stimulates the other to its fullest manifestation. Each becomes both an end and a means.

Here actual possession is not opposed to striving after the ideal; instead the two are reconciled. As long as we confine ourselves to faculties or drives within the individual, we can say that if both drives are in full operation simultaneously then a synthesis occurs and the individual is in possession of beauty—aesthetic unity. Since neither drive is excluded, a balance is achieved and made actual within the individual:

Each of these two primary drives, from the time it is developed, strives inevitably, and according to its nature, towards satisfaction; but just because both are necessary, and yet strive toward opposite ends, these two compulsions cancel each other out, and the will maintains perfect freedom between them . . . That is to say, as soon as two opposing fundamental drives are active within him, both lose their compulsion, and the opposition of the two necessities gives rise to freedom.²⁴

In the *Aesthetic Education* this tension and opposition seem to be overcome. However, as soon as we consider Schiller's treatment of the sublime (which he ignores for the most part in the *Aesthetic Education*²⁵), the tension reappears.

¹⁹Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, pp. 113, 175, and *SW*, XX, 439, 491.

²⁰Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, pp. 79–81, and *SW*, XX, 344–46.

²¹Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 95, and *SW*, XX, 352.

²²Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 85n, and *SW*, XX, 347–48n.

²³Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 97, and *SW*, XX, 354.

²⁴Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, pp. 135–37, and *SW*, XX, 371–73.

²⁵R. D. Miller in his *Schiller and the Ideal of Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), p. 115, feels, he is not sure, that “energizing beauty” in the sixteenth and seventeenth Letters may be a disguised form of the sublime. W. Böhm in his *Schillers Briefe über ästhetische Erziehung des*

In his essay, "On the Sublime," Schiller compares the beautiful with the sublime. Beauty implies the unity of sense and reason. The sublime is the opposition, the contradiction, of sense and reason.²⁶ It is the superiority of reason over nature, reason's independence from the sensuous world, the assertion of the individual's freedom in the face of external force. The sublime, Schiller says, must disappear before the ideal of beauty.²⁷ But on the other hand beauty alone would never allow us to discover our higher destiny.²⁸ Beauty is freedom within nature; the sublime is freedom above nature. Beauty is valuable for the human being; the sublime is valuable for the pure *daemon* in man.²⁹ Beauty is associated with childhood, our first and earliest development. But when we are more mature we must apprehend the sublime by means of reason.³⁰ In these passages Schiller prefigures Hegel. The aesthetic is the human ideal, but the rational is higher. But unlike Hegel, Schiller does try, if not to reconcile, at least to make compatible both ideals for the modern world. He does not choose the rational over the aesthetic as Hegel will. Man must be guided by both ideals.³¹ Aesthetic unity leads to and aids the rational, and the rational takes place within a condition of aesthetic unity. But this is not to reconcile the two. It is to leave them as two ideals.³²

Although the sublime is largely ignored in the *Aesthetic Education*, there is one passage in which Schiller mentions it. He says that man must "learn to desire nobly, so that he may not need to will sublimely."³³ "Noble" is another term that denotes the aesthetic condition. Thus Schiller appears to favor aesthetic morality over the morality of the sublime even though in a footnote he says that we rate the sublime "incomparably higher."³⁴ This treatment of the tension between the noble and the sublime, though very brief, is much like that in the essay "On the Sublime," except that in the *Aesthetic Education* Schiller does not try to make the two compatible; rather he seems to choose the aesthetic (or the noble) over the sublime.

Menschen (Halle/Salle: Niemeyer, 1927), pp. 115–17, 189, argues that energizing beauty is not the sublime. Even if energizing beauty were related to the sublime, Schiller does not deal with it in sufficient detail in the *Aesthetic Education*. To explore the tension between the beautiful and the sublime, we must turn to the essay "On the Sublime."

²⁶Schiller, *On Subl.*, p. 199, and *SW*, XXI, 43.

²⁷*Ibid.* There exists a similar tension between grace and dignity. Grace requires a harmony between the moral and physical natures. This is incompatible with dignity, which requires opposition and struggle between the two. Grace has to do with acts in the sphere of human nature, dignity with a higher, nobler sphere; see F. Schiller, "On Grace and Dignity," in *Essays Aesthetical and Philosophical in Schiller's Works* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1879), pp. 220–21, and *SW*, XX, 297–99.

²⁸Schiller, *On Subl.*, p. 199, and *SW*, XXI, 43.

²⁹Schiller, *On Subl.*, p. 210, and *SW*, XXI, 52.

³⁰Schiller, *On Subl.*, pp. 202–03, and *SW*, XXI, 46.

³¹Schiller, *On Subl.*, pp. 210–11, and *SW*, XXI, 52–53.

³²Even Wilkinson and Willoughby, strong proponents of the unity of the *Aesthetic Education*, admit that the beautiful and the sublime are two different ideals; see Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. lix.

³³Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 169, and *SW*, XX, 388.

³⁴Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 167n, and *SW*, XX, 387n.

Only beauty is an aesthetic synthesis of sense and reason, and only by pushing aside the sublime do we securely preserve the aesthetic condition. The sublime is the very opposite—a striving away from the sensuous or natural toward a moral ideal. There is a wavering and a tension in Schiller's thought at this level. As soon as the sublime is considered we find a tension between it and beauty. Schiller seems undecided whether to try to make the two compatible or to choose beauty over the sublime.

III

At the economic level Schiller's concern is with labor and classes. He argues that the division of labor separates enjoyment from labor, separates ranks and occupations, and makes the individual's occupation such that he does not develop the harmony of his being in it.³⁵ Reconciliation will never occur in the modern world if man continues to be confined by this sort of fragmenting activity.

An animal works, Schiller says, when the stimulus to its activity is need, but it plays when the stimulus is sheer plenitude, the superabundance of life.³⁶ Schiller's goal is to transform labor and to make it more like play.³⁷

This ideal is seen most clearly in Schiller's discussion of recreation and ennoblement. Recreation is understood as a transition from an intense state to a state that is natural for man.³⁸ It is a condition in which there would be "an unlimited capacity for every human utterance . . . the ability to experience all our powers with equal freedom . . . any separation and isolation of these powers is an intense condition, and the ideal of recreation is the restoration of our whole nature after one-sided tensions."³⁹ The result is that "Beauty is the product of accord between the mind and the senses; it addresses itself at once to all the faculties of man and can, therefore, be perceived and appreciated only under the condition that he employ all his powers fully and freely."⁴⁰ It is important to notice that the goal of recreation is not rest or cessation of activity.

The goal of ennoblement is the development of the moral individual, but not abstractly. Ennoblement must involve activity.

These are the goals. But the existing conditions are different. "The state of mind of most men is on the one hand intensive and exhausting labor, on the

³⁵Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, pp. 33–35, and *SW*, XX, 321–22.

³⁶Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 207, and *SW*, XX, 406.

³⁷Schiller generally follows Kant's aesthetics, but not when considering labor. For Kant art and play are directly opposed to work; see I. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1966), p. 146, and for the German see *Kant's gesammelte Schriften (KGS)* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1913), V, 305. Kant also thinks the development of the division of labor in general beneficial. He does not seem to appreciate its drawbacks; see I. Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, trans. T. K. Abbott (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949), p. 4, and *KGS*, IV, 388.

³⁸Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 169, and *SW*, XX, 486.

³⁹Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 170, and *SW*, XX, 486.

⁴⁰Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 171, and *SW*, XX, 487.

other enervating indulgence."⁴¹ Thus the man of action, the laborer, is in no position to formulate the goal of recreation for he would make it too physical.⁴² He would formulate it to suit his own needs, i.e., rest, calm, cessation of activity.⁴³ Neither are the contemplative classes in a position to formulate the goal of ennoblement. They would formulate it such that the man of action would never be able to realize it in the course of daily life.⁴⁴ Since men as they exist are unfit to formulate these goals, men and their conditions must be qualitatively changed. We need a

new class of men which, without toiling (*arbeiten*) are active (*thätig*) and capable of formulating ideals without fanaticism; a class that unites within itself all the realities of life with its least possible limitations and is borne by the current of events without becoming its victim. Only such a class can preserve the beautiful unity of human nature that is destroyed for the moment by any particular task (*Arbeit*), and continuously by a life of such toil (*arbeitendes*).⁴⁵

Arbeit is a negative term here. Work, toil, and exhausting labor are to be overcome. The desirable condition is denoted by the term "activity" (*Tätigkeit*). What does this mean? Is activity opposed to labor in the sense that it means the exclusion or avoidance of labor, or is it to be understood as the ideal form of labor, labor remade, qualitatively transformed into something enjoyable and developing? Further, is the "new class of men" to be understood as a synthesis of the other two classes that includes all men, or is it a small elite that merely combines certain characteristics of the other two classes but excludes most men? If all men are to be included in the new class, then in order to include the laboring class, all labor will have to be transformed. On the other hand, if the new class is only a small elite, then it will not be necessary that they labor; labor will be dropped, left to the laboring class, and the new class will be active in some other sense. Schiller's ideal, I shall argue, is to include all men and to remake labor into activity. Nevertheless Schiller is unable to explain how this can be accomplished and thus in fact ends up with a small elite.⁴⁶

The goal for both classes is to be active. The goal of the laboring class is not to be rest or cessation of activity. Neither class can be permitted to formulate the goal because the goal must fit both classes. The contemplative class especially cannot be permitted to formulate the goal because the other class would not be able to realize it in the tempestuous course of daily life.⁴⁷ Labor must be remade into activity.

⁴¹Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 170, and *SW*, XX, 487.

⁴²Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 174, and *SW*, XX, 490.

⁴³Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 170, and *SW*, XX, 486–87.

⁴⁴Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 174, and *SW*, XX, 490.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶I differ here from Lukács who holds that for Schiller it is not a regrettable fact but rather is actually his very ideal that the "new class" is an elite that avoids labor; see G. Lukács, *Goethe and His Age*, trans. R. Anchor (London: Merlin, 1968), pp. 134–35.

⁴⁷Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 174, and *SW*, XX, 490.

Labor in the ancient world was a satisfying and developing form of activity, but after the development of the division of labor,

Enjoyment was divorced from labour, the means from the end, the effort from the reward. Everlastingly chained to a little fragment of the whole, man develops into nothing but a fragment; everlastingly in his ear the monotonous sound of the wheel that he turns, he never develops the harmony of his being, and instead of putting the stamp of humanity upon his nature, he becomes the imprint of his occupation or of his specialized knowledge.⁴⁸

This is the fundamental problem of the modern world, the problem to be overcome. But how is this to be done? Schiller says,

In general we call noble any nature which possesses the gift of transforming purely by its manner of handling it, even the most trifling occupation, or the most petty objects into something infinite. We call that form noble which impresses the stamp of autonomy upon anything which by its nature merely serves some purpose (is a mere means). A noble nature is not content to be itself free; it must set free everything around it, even the lifeless.⁴⁹

The emphasis here is on transformation, qualitative improvement, and not on the exclusion or avoidance of the sorts of activities that are means. But how successful is this explanation? The noble nature makes “everything around him free”; he can transform “anything.” Would this include factory work? That seems rather doubtful. At any rate Schiller would have to go into the problem in much greater detail. Change in the quality of work stems completely from the character of the individual—due to his aesthetic education, his wholeness, spontaneity, and unity. Nothing is said of change in the actual conditions of work. If the only thing the individual has to rely upon is his own character he could hardly expect to make the factory situation satisfying or enjoyable. Thus, those who must work in the factory seem to be excluded. The ideal in which “activity alone leads to enjoyment, and enjoyment alone to activity”⁵⁰ seems possible only for a few, and they will have to avoid labor.

Schiller does not really expect anything more for his “new class of men.” He tells us that he offers this concept “only as an idea,” which he “by no means

⁴⁸Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 35, and *SW*, XX, 323. There is a passage that seems to exclude work from the ideal: “they [the Greeks] transferred to Olympus what was meant to be realized on earth they banished from the brow of the blessed Gods all the earnestness and effort (*Arbeit*) which furrow the cheeks of mortals . . . freed those ever contented beings from the bonds inseparable from any purpose, every duty, every care, and made idleness and indifference the enviable portion of divinity—merely a more sublime name for the freest, most sublime state of being,” *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 109, and *SW*, XX, 359–60. But Schiller is not suggesting the exclusion of any activity or effort. The condition of the gods is not achieved by excluding anything, but by including everything. Their appearance is a synthesis of repose and activity. Thus if labor could be transformed into activity for men, the condition of the gods could be realized on earth.

⁴⁹Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 167n, and *SW*, XX, 386n.

⁵⁰Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 191, and *SW*, XX, 398.

wish[es] to have taken as a fact.”⁵¹ This is to admit that the aesthetic ideal has failed to become actual; it remains merely an ideal. Since it cannot actually be possessed it is reduced to a goal to be striven after; it becomes, as Schiller himself said, a moral ideal.⁵² Striving after ‘the ideal and actual possession of it have not been reconciled here as they seemed to be for a moment at the level of individual faculties in the *Aesthetic Education*.’⁵³ Thus Schiller slips away from an aesthetic to a moral or rational model. Only for a small elite is it to be the case that there will be no contemplation divorced from activity, and no activity separated from contemplation.

Freedom is achieved, Schiller argues, only when man is able to distance himself from the world such that he is free to contemplate it. To distance himself he must see to it that nature no longer dominates him. Man must make nature his object; he must form it. He must be active upon matter. If he works on it, gives it form, it can no longer rule him as a force.⁵⁴ Thus man must be active, but in such a way that at the same time he is free to contemplate his object as well as his own activity. Here sense and reason (activity and contemplation) would be in harmony.

The ideal would be to overcome the split between mental and physical activity. If, besides, Schiller had been able to transform labor into activity, this would have meant that he would be able to overcome the split between labor and leisure. He objects to this split strongly:

True, we know that the outstanding individual will never let the limits of his occupation dictate the limits of his activity. But a mediocre talent will consume in the office assigned to him the whole of his meagre sum of powers, and a man has to have a mind above the ordinary if, without detriment to his calling, he is still to have time for the chosen pursuits of his leisure. Moreover, it is rarely a recommendation in the eyes of the state if a man’s powers exceed the tasks he is set, or if the higher needs of man constitute a rival to the duties of his office.⁵⁵

Notice that Schiller’s objection to the rigid separation of labor and leisure is not just in the interest of a small talented class but especially for the vast numbers who are not so talented. But until labor is transformed into activity this split will not be overcome.

What would be required to transform labor (*Arbeit*) into activity (*Tätigkeit*)? As Schiller himself says it would require overcoming the division of

⁵¹Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 175, and *SW*, XX, 491. See also *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 219, and *SW*, XX, 412.

⁵²Schiller, *N & S Poet.*, p. 111, and *SW*, XX, 437.

⁵³See above, section II.

⁵⁴Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 185, and *SW*, XX, 395.

⁵⁵*Aesth. Ed.*, p. 37, and *SW*, XX, 324. See also *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 191, and *SW*, XX, 398, where Schiller says, “The germ of beauty is as little likely to develop where nature in her niggardliness deprives man of any quickening refreshment, as where in her bounty she relieves him of any exertion.” Both total lack of exertion (total leisure) and total lack of refreshment (total toil) are rejected.

labor and its fragmenting effects. There are two important forms of the division of labor. The first is a hierarchical division, a division according to classes or castes, which usually includes a division between mental and physical activity. Schiller failed to overcome this aspect of the division of labor when he failed to reconcile the contemplative and the laboring classes. The second form of division of labor takes place within the work that any class or caste might perform. There is a division of jobs, tasks, occupations, and functions. Schiller never suggests doing away with these differences. His ideal seems to be much like Marx's—it is to leave the different functions as they stand but to see to it that the individual is not “everlastingly chained to a single fragment of the whole,”⁵⁶ i.e., to merely one function. One overcomes specialization by permitting the individual to perform a variety of different functions. How could this be accomplished? Schiller's only answer is that the individual must be given an aesthetic education, that he learn to develop all of his powers and capacities harmoniously—something the individual is unable to do when his activity is limited to one narrow occupation. The aesthetic condition, for Schiller, is the ground of the possibility of all human functions and activities⁵⁷; it leaves us open, free to develop to the fullest all our powers and capacities, and it leaves us equally disposed to all of them because they are all in harmony. It reconciles thought and activity and frees us for both. Schiller thinks that this subjective change on the part of the individual would be enough to overcome the fragmenting effects of specialization. But again this will only work for a few who are not involved in labor.

IV

In the *Aesthetic Education*, Schiller's political goal is to overcome the alien character of the modern state, to make it more like the ancient Greek state before the development of the division of labor. In the ancient state, according to Schiller, the spontaneous free participation of individuals determined the form of the whole.⁵⁸ In the modern world the state dominates and excludes the individual.⁵⁹ The goal is to overcome this split between the state and the individual, or between state and society.⁶⁰

To accomplish this, says Schiller, the individual must harmonize himself with the ideal man. The ideal man is the species, the universal. This ideal is represented by the state. In the state the diversity of individuals is represented

⁵⁶Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 35, and *SW*, XX, 323.

⁵⁷Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, pp. 151–53, and *SW*, XX, 379–80.

⁵⁸Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 35, and *SW*, XX, 323.

⁵⁹Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 37, and *SW*, XX, 324.

⁶⁰This also is the view of R. Leroux, “Schiller théoricien de l'état,” *Revue Germanique*, 28 (1938), 23. Leroux compares Schiller to Humboldt. Both argue for the greatest possible freedom for the individual. But Humboldt maintains the duality between state and society, whereas for Schiller the state is to be reabsorbed within society.

as a unity.⁶¹ In other words, in the modern state after the development of the division of labor and specialization you cannot find universality, wholeness, the harmonious sum of all powers and capacities, in any individual, but only collectively in the aggregate of individuals, in the state. Schiller says that if we compare the modern state as a whole to the Greek state, the modern rivals the Greek. But if we compare the modern individual to the individual Greek, the modern is a fragment.⁶²

The problem again is with the individual, his lack of inner wholeness and harmony, and the solution offered is again to remake the individual. Aesthetic education, the development of all the powers and capacities of the individual, the spontaneity and harmony of sense and reason, will bring about reconciliation between man and state. The individual will become the state⁶³ because the individual will no longer be a fragment, restricted in his capacities and outlooks, incapable of dealing with the general, universal, and varied concerns of the whole. Given this new individual, wholeness will no longer be found solely at the level of the state; wholeness, the capacity of determining general and universal concerns, will also belong to individuals. Given these developed conditions it is Schiller's view that the state can now simply be the interpreter, the representative, of the citizen. The state will only provide a clearer formulation of the individuals' sense of what is right.⁶⁴ Duty and inclination, the general and the particular interest, will be in harmony. Subjective man will be ennobled to objectivity.⁶⁵ Man will be honored as an end in himself.⁶⁶ There will be agreement between the individual and the state because the state will be determined by the individual. The state will reflect the individual.

It is also important to note that for Schiller the state cannot on its own account bring about this harmony. Instead, inner harmony must be created in men as individuals and this in turn will be reflected in the ideal state. No reform will work in politics until the division in the inner man is healed. Sense and reason, duty and inclination, must be reconciled through aesthetic education first.⁶⁷

In Letter 27 of the *Aesthetic Education*, Schiller speaks of three types of states. In the Natural or Dynamic state each man encounters others as a force. Only in this way is activity restricted and order kept. Nature curbs nature. In the Ethical or Rational state men have duties; men are opposed by rational laws that fetter their will. The individual is subjected to the general will. In the Aesthetic state men confront each other as objects of free play. The will of the

⁶¹Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, pp. 17–19, and *SW*, XX, 316.

⁶²Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 33, and *SW*, XX, 322.

⁶³Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 19, and *SW*, XX, 316.

⁶⁴Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 21, and *SW*, XX, 318.

⁶⁵Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 21, and *SW*, XX, 318.

⁶⁶Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 25, and *SW*, XX, 319.

⁶⁷Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 45, and *SW*, XX, 328.

whole is carried out through the nature of the individual.⁶⁸ In the Natural state need drives man into society. In the Rational state reason implants social principles in him. In the Aesthetic state, the ideal, beauty gives him a social character.⁶⁹

Perhaps the relationship among these three sorts of states can be explained further in the following way. We might say that Kant had explained how society passes historically from the Natural state to the Rational state and then that Schiller explains how society can move beyond the Rational to the Aesthetic state. Let us begin with Kant. In his "Idea for a Universal History" he attempted to reconcile nature and reason. For Kant, we must assume that nature as a whole is purposive, that reason is its goal. Society is developed through natural antagonism (what Kant calls man's unsocial sociability). This natural antagonism raises man from his slumber and causes him to develop all his powers and capacities. Man is propelled by vainglory, lust for power, and avarice, but in time he can come to be determined by reason. Conflict itself leads men to what reason would have commanded from the beginning. A society of men driven together by natural need will eventually be changed into a moral whole, into a society based on practical principles.⁷⁰ Society moves toward this end, toward a society of the greatest freedom, the greatest morality, the fullest development of all powers and capacities. How can society reach this end for Kant? He says that man must produce for himself anything that goes beyond the mechanical ordering of his animal existence. Man creates for himself his own perfection through his own reason.⁷¹ Kant argues that we must assume a purposiveness in the whole of nature, i.e., that its goal is reason. We must view history *as if* it were purposive. And with this assumption our intelligent activity can hasten the end.⁷²

Thus as Schiller would express it, in the course of history social principles (reason) will replace natural impulse (need) as the basis of society. But Schiller's view of the goal of history goes a step beyond Kant's. Rational social principles are not enough. History for Schiller must move on to social character, the Aesthetic state.⁷³ Inclination and duty, feeling and the moral law, nature and reason, must be in harmony. Social character means that the whole man, not just his rational part, has been reconciled with the general concerns of the

⁶⁸Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 215, and *SW*, XX, 410.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰I. Kant, "Idea for a Universal History" in *On History*, ed. L. W. Beck (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), pp. 15, 18, and *KGS*, VIII, 20–21, 24.

⁷¹Kant, "Univ. Hist.," pp. 13–14, and *KGS*, VIII, 19–20.

⁷²Kant, "Univ. Hist.," p. 22, and *KGS*, VIII, 27.

⁷³Schiller's connecting of Kant's notion of the development of human powers through antagonism (and the ultimate rational direction of this development) with an aesthetic condition like that of ancient Greece as the goal of this development is already prefigured by J. G. Herder, *Reflections on the History of Mankind*, trans. F. E. Manuel (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 82–87, 96–99; for the German see *Sämtliche Werke* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1967), XIV, 207–14, 225–28.

whole. Man's relation to man must not be coerced by either nature or law. In the Aesthetic state the individual is coerced neither by other men nor by the state. There is no longer an opposition between duty and inclination, between man and the state.

On the other hand, in an earlier essay, "On Grace and Dignity," Schiller presents a political model that is different from the one we have just considered. In this essay the ideal state is a monarchy where all goes according to the (rational) will of one man, but where each citizen could persuade himself that he governs and obeys his own inclination.⁷⁴ Here there is indeed harmony and agreement between sense (inclination of the citizens) and reason (the state), but not of the same sort as in the *Aesthetic Education*. In the *Aesthetic Education* the state merely reflects, is merely the interpreter of the individual's will; the individual is the source of the determination. In "On Grace and Dignity" the state is the source of the determination; sense and reason are not equals. Sense has been brought to agree with reason, but nevertheless it is still subordinate to reason. There is no true synthesis here. This can still be called a Rational state. Even though sense is not forcefully suppressed by reason, nevertheless reason is primary. Schiller here is still much closer to the Kantian morality than in the *Aesthetic Education*. Here the difference between man and state, state and society has not been overcome. Which then is the goal? We can safely say that Schiller's mature thought is to be found in the *Aesthetic Education* where the goal is the Aesthetic state. However, we might still ask what it is that will move us on from the Rational to the Aesthetic state. Schiller's only answer is the aesthetic education of the individual. It is true that such individuals would bring about the possibility of an agreement between the individual and the state, but what would further cause the state to allow itself to be actually determined by the individual? Aesthetic education would at best bring about the Rational state of "On Grace and Dignity"; some further change would be necessary to bring about the Aesthetic state. Schiller does not deal with this. His only solution is merely to change the subjective character of the individual; he does not speak of how to change the objective character of the state except to say that with these new individuals the change will follow through historical development. But further, Schiller is even pessimistic about changing the character of the individual. Where is the Aesthetic state to be found? Schiller's answer is that it is to be found only in a few chosen circles, in the hearts of a few rare individuals:

But does a State of such Aesthetic Semblance really exist? And if so, where is it to be found? As a need, it exists in every finely tuned soul; as a realized fact, we are likely to find it, like the pure Church and the pure Republic, only in some few chosen circles. . . .⁷⁵

⁷⁴Schiller, "Grace and Dignity," pp. 200–01, and *SW*, XX, 278–79.

⁷⁵Schiller, *Aesth. Ed.*, p. 219, and *SW*, XX, 412.

Thus the Aesthetic state becomes merely an ideal to be striven after, a moral ideal, as Schiller himself put it. We will have to wait till the end of history. It is a wish, an impossibility in the modern world. This is a moral or rational model. If the Aesthetic state cannot be made actual then there is no alternative but to slip back to the Rational state.

Some critics maintain that this sort of tension between two models reappears at all levels of Schiller's thought. Hans Lutz argues that Schiller throughout his writings has two ideals—one aesthetic, the other moral (or rational)—which he continually wavers between and confuses. The moral or rational model (influenced by the Kantian opposition of sense and reason), Lutz characterizes as a three-stage view, a progression through three stages: Nature—Taste—Reason. The aesthetic model, Lutz characterizes as a synthesis model: Nature—Reason—Synthesis (Beauty).⁷⁶

The clearest example of the three-stage view can be found in Schiller's essay "On the Moral Utility of Aesthetic Manners," where Schiller is still quite close to the Kantian morality. Normally, Schiller says, morality appears greater, or at least more in relief, when in the face of powerful instincts to the contrary the individual obeys reason. In such a case it is clear that the individual does the act because it is moral, not because it is agreeable.⁷⁷ This involves conflict between sense and reason, inclination and duty. The rational and the sensuous man are at odds. Thus, says Schiller, whatever could moderate this opposition would help morality.⁷⁸ And it is precisely beauty or taste that can moderate inclination and bring it into accord with reason. The feelings place themselves on the same side as the moral law.⁷⁹ The individual has an inclination to duty. But taste can never suffice to make an action moral. Morality can never have any other foundation than its own.⁸⁰ Taste is only a means of removing obstacles to the commands of reason. Reason is the goal or end here just as it was for Kant. This is Nature—Taste—Reason.

In Schiller's essay "On Grace and Dignity" we can find an example of the aesthetic model. Here the goal is to go even further in overcoming the harshness of the Kantian morality. Here the noble soul can with a certain security abandon itself to inclination.⁸¹ In other words taste can to a certain extent make an action moral. Sense and reason are in harmony here in the sense that they are equals. The entire character is moral. Here beauty is not merely a means to make nature conform to reason. Nature and reason are equals and thus the

⁷⁶H. Lutz, *Schillers Anschauungen von Kultur und Natur (Germanische Studien, Vol. 60 [Berlin: 1928])*, pp. 170–72, 187, 197, 205.

⁷⁷Schiller, "The Moral Utility of Aesthetic Manners," in *Essays Aesthetical and Philosophical*, pp. 126–27, and *SW*, XXI, 28–29.

⁷⁸Schiller, "Mor. Util.," p. 129, and *SW*, XXI, 30.

⁷⁹Schiller, "Mor. Util.," p. 132, and *SW*, XXI, 34.

⁸⁰Schiller, "Mor. Util.," p. 126, and *SW*, XXI, 28.

⁸¹Schiller, "Grace and Dignity," p. 209, and *SW*, XX, 287. On the development of Schiller's ethical views see Leroux, "Schiller théoricien," pp. 5–6.

synthesis of the two, beauty, is the end. Reason is no longer primary and nature secondary.

But the synthesis model is not maintained throughout the essay "On Grace and Dignity." The monarchical political model just discussed is much closer to Nature—Taste—Reason than it is to the synthesis model, whereas the political model in the *Aesthetic Education* is clearly the synthesis model. It demanded equality between inclination (of the citizens) and reason (the state). The first did not play a subordinate role, and the synthesis of the two was higher than either, thus overcoming the opposition between state and society.

The conflict between Lutz's two models will also illuminate the tension noticed earlier between the beautiful and the sublime (although Lutz himself does not discuss the sublime in much detail). In the sublime reason predominates over sense. In the beautiful there is a synthesis of sense and reason. The sublime and the beautiful are opposed. Schiller at one point attempts to make these two ideals compatible and at another point chooses the latter over the former.⁸²

Lutz argues that even in the *Aesthetic Education* traces of the rational or three-stage view persist. In Letter 3 he points out that the model is Natural state—third character (or Beauty)—Rational state. This is very different from the final conclusion in Letter 27 of Natural state—Rational state—Aesthetic state. Indeed while Letter 3 is by far the clearest example of the three-stage model, Lutz claims to see it running throughout the *Aesthetic Education*. His view is that there are two strata in the *Aesthetic Education*: Nature—Taste—Reason is found in Letters 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16; and Nature—Reason—Synthesis is found in Letters 4, 6, 7, 9, 11–15, 17–27.⁸³

But while we can find traces of the three-stage view in the *Aesthetic Education*, the tension that appears there cannot be explained simply as a wavering or confusion between Lutz's two models.⁸⁴ The tension in Schiller's mature thought occurs when he considers the possibility of realizing his ideal political institutions, and as we have seen when he considers the issue of labor and classes, and of the beautiful and the sublime. The last two of these issues are for the most part avoided in the *Aesthetic Education* itself. At the level of the individual (leaving out any consideration of the sublime) the synthesis, as we argued, appears rather successful in the *Aesthetic Education*.⁸⁵ Lutz's thesis of a wavering between two models illuminates Schiller's early development and

⁸²See above, section II.

⁸³Lutz, *Schillers Anschauungen*, pp. 221ff.

⁸⁴Wilkinson and Willoughby argue strongly for the unity of the *Aesthetic Education*. Consequently they see Lutz as one of their main opponents. They accuse Lutz of committing the genetic fallacy, i.e., of using Schiller's earlier writings as a reliable guide to explaining the *Aesthetic Education*; *Aesth. Ed.*, pp. xlili–iv. However, they do not discuss whether Lutz's view of a tension between two models is correct with respect to Schiller's writings other than the *Aesthetic Education* and especially with respect to his earlier writings. It seems to me that here Lutz is correct.

⁸⁵See above, section II.

the tension between the beautiful and the sublime (which develops in the essay "On the Sublime" itself and in the contrast between this essay and the *Aesthetic Education*). But at the economic and political level what we finally have is not a wavering or confusion but an actual failure to achieve the clearly desired aesthetic model. Schiller's failure to achieve a synthesis is due, first, to the fact that he limits his goal to transforming only the individual and not the objective conditions of labor and political institutions, and second, to his pessimism and inability to explain how to transform more than a few individuals.

Schiller, we might say, sees the problem clearly and sets it up nicely. His solution, however, cannot solve the difficult issues and so turns into a hope for the future. Thus we no longer have a solution but only an ideal to strive after. But this is what characterizes the moral, the rational, the sentimental. It is not an aesthetic synthesis, as Schiller said himself.