

Overcoming Your Fears by Increasing Your *Geistesmassen*¹

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

This presentation was given as a keynote to the ICLC/Schiller Institute Labor Day annual conference, on Aug. 31, 2003. Mrs. LaRouche was introduced by Schiller Institute Vice-President and civil rights heroine Mrs. Amelia Boynton Robinson.

Amelia Boynton Robinson: . . . I would like to continue what we were talking about yesterday, when it comes down to fear. But, I would like to speak about my experience, in dealing with people about fear.

I came up in a family, where we didn't know anything about fear. And the first encounter that I got, was after I graduated from Tuskegee, and went to teach in Americus, Georgia. I was young, still in my teens. And I walked up to the window, with my first check, and there was a great, big, burly man, standing up at the window. And on my mind was, "I wonder what is my 'boyfriend' doing?"

And, he looked at me while I was standing at the window; and he said, "Don't you see me standing up here? Get away from that window, nigger!" And, I put my hands on my hips, because I didn't know anything about the difference, and I said, "Who do you think *you* are talking to? I'm not one of them!" And, I guess I was thinking about: I was not a citizen of America. He held up his hand to hit me. I looked him straight in the eye. And he put his hand down, and walked off.

And I said, "Hah! He'd better not hit me!"

I had no fear. And, when I walked out, and I saw the president of the organization of—this was a Baptist school—and he said, "Don't you know that man would lynch you?" And then I began to realize, that people are afraid of fear.

And I thought about what Roosevelt said, afterward; and that was: The greatest fear in the world, is fear itself.

And, as I said, yesterday, it is a handicap. And I could see so it much in Selma, Alabama and in Dallas County [where Selma is]. Because, I didn't know people would be afraid—afraid of something, that they didn't know why. And, the article I said, yesterday, about Kennedy, when we were to have the dream [march] of Dr. King; and he [Kennedy] had

4,400 extra police; telling the people who were doctors on duty, "Don't come to the hospital." He had alerted extra people. And you know, it could have been a riot—if somebody had—just think of more than 250,000 people together: If somebody had gotten sick in that crowd; had fallen down. They would have said, "Oh! They're fighting!" And, the troopers would have come, and it would have been a riot.

Civil Rights vs. Fears in Alabama

Fear! And, there's nothing worse than fear. It is a handicap. And, unless we can deal with that ourselves, within, and when we get to the place, that we place faith in the place of fear—then, of course, we will be able to overcome a whole lot of things.

I think of the time, that the people shot in the house. They were afraid of our going about, teaching people how to fill the applications out [to register to vote]. That we were telling people, who were slaves on the plantation, "Get off of this place. We will help you, if you can find a place. Even if it's just five acres, to get from under this system."

And of course, the plantation owners didn't like it, and they did some of everything that they possibly could. And the last thing they did, was when they came into my husband's office—one man, with a stick, and made an attempt to hit him. And, I happened to be there, when I caught the stick.

And my husband was the most—I think, when it comes down to being the type of person that was non-violent: he was the most non-violent person that I have ever seen.

And, when these two guys came in, and pushed him out of the office. And the man screamed, with froth coming out of his mouth; his eyes looked like two coals of fire, screaming, "Give me my stick!" And my husband said, "Give him his stick." And I threw the stick out of the window. He took it—and this is an old building, with maybe the plate glass being more than a half-inch thick; he broke the door, and the two plate glass windows down, from the top to the bottom.

And, this office was across from the City Hall. They took their binoculars, as they always did; looked straight into our office, to see who came in and out. And they figured that, "Well, you didn't do such a good job." Finally, after having called them [the police] a couple of times, they came over,

1. A conception meaning literally, "thought-masses," but better comprehended as "thought-objects," definitely-formed and lasting ideas.

and gently led him across the street—and in five minutes time, he was walking down the street.

But, I wasn't afraid. However, my husband went to the hospital for the last time. And, when he died—. See, we asked Dr. King to come into Selma, but he did not come in, but he did send a young man there, by the name of Bernard Lafayette. And, when my husband passed, Bernard Lafayette, who was working with the young people, said to a minister, that he would like to have a memorial for Mr. Boynton. And, this minister said, "I'd be glad to have it"; but, he spoke also to those people, who were the outstanding people in the church, and they said, "Oh no you don't! You're not having any memorial here for that man! You know white people don't like him; and we're not going to have it."

They were afraid! They were afraid of what might happen to them.

In the meantime, the sheriff said, "All full-blooded white men, come to my office; be sworn in and be given ammunition." And they came. They left their stills; they left their plows; they left their country homes; they left their town homes. They went on, and they were sworn in. That night, when they went to the church, there were around 300-plus people: They had to come through a line of deputized sheriffs. They came in trucks; they came in cars; they came on foot.

And Selma is a small place—they had then about 25,000 people. They knew a whole lot of people who attended the meeting. And, when they attended the meeting, they found out that some of these people, these deputized sheriffs, were also in the church. Some were on the outside. And this was on Friday night—Friday night, now, and they were not trying to register and vote. Because they were afraid. But, the children, their children, less than 20 years old, were out there marching, trying to get their parents registered.

But, on Monday morning, when they got ready to go to their jobs, in the factories, on the farms, wherever they had to go, they were told, "You're fired. You don't have any job. Go back home." And, they said, "Well—why? Didn't I do my job well, when I left here on Friday evening?"

"Yes. But, you attended that memorial for S.W. Boynton. You don't have any job!"

'People Plant Fear in Their Minds'

Fear! They put fear in the minds of those people. And, that is the reason, why they acted as they were. They had no jobs.

But—it did something. Something clicked within their minds. "Here I am, a human being, over 21 years of age, doing a good job. And yet, at night, I can't go to my church. My children are out there marching and demonstrating, that I can become a citizen! I go to the office, and I see, on the Boyntons' office wall, that 'A Voteless People Is Hopeless People.' I'm going to get into that line, and I'm going to continue to march, and demonstrate, until I become a registered voter!"

And, from *that*, we got the Voting Rights Act—because



Helga Zepp-LaRouche at the World Forum conference in Rhodes in early September. "Schiller's conception of the 'beautiful soul,' is more important, and more actual today, than ever before. . . . In the Fourth Aesthetical Letter, he writes: 'Every individual man, one can say, carries by predisposition and destiny, a purely ideal man within himself, and to agree with whose immutable unity in all of its alterations, is the great task of his existence.' "

the fear: We have to wash that fear, out of us, and have faith in whatever we do, when we know, we did right.

Dr. King came into Selma, on Jan. 2, 1965. That was the first time. When he came into Selma, he came into my office—the office where my husband was (he had passed then). And when he came to the office, *not one person*—now this is an office, and on the street, you had the business and professional African-Americans; across the street is the City Hall—not one person came to the office and said, "We're glad to see you." Because, they too—like I—received telephone calls, saying, "Don't have anything to do with Dr. King. Don't invite him. Don't have anything, because of the fact, he's a Communist; he's a rabble-rouser."

And, of course, as I tell them, and as I tell people now who say anything about Schiller Institute, Lyndon LaRouche, or any of the others: "See for yourself. Don't take what you hear. Because people plant fear into the minds, and if you don't get that fear out of you, you are handicapping yourself."

So, when he came to the office, with *nobody*—now, all of

those people, the doctors, the dentists, the professional people having offices on that street—and not *one of them*. And, he said, “I want to go to the restaurant”; and of course, everything was segregated in those days. I took him to the restaurant, to the section where there were a few people, and, around in the section there, there were some people who were playing cards. And, when he left, those people left with him—like a tumbleweed. He went to another restaurant, and some of these people who were hanging around, caught on, and knew that he had something good to tell them: And, that is the way, that the people began to realize in Selma, that this man had a solution to their problem.

Only when the news media came into Selma, those dignitaries decided that they wanted to be seen and heard, so they got everywhere: They got in the pulpit; they got in the choir stand; they got everywhere. The people in the choir had nowhere to be, because the preachers and the teachers and everybody, wanted to be seen.

So, we have to drive fear out. We are—each of us—is the master of our fate. Each of us, is the captain of our soul. We will have to replace fear with faith. Faith has power.

Often one thinks of an idea, and they can think what they can do with that idea. Because, if they have faith, they can tackle that problem. They can believe. They can listen. And their faith has, within it, enfolded within it, love. And love is a cleanser, that will excel any kind of problem that we might have.

And we have a problem solver here. And, if you listen, to what our speaker is going to say, when you leave this building, you will feel uplifted; you will feel light; you will realize that you have the ammunition to do away with fear, and to have within you, the faith to conquer any solution that you might have.

And I introduce to some of you, and present to others, one of the greatest persons that you have, that dispel whatever fear you have: And that is my daughter, and your friend, Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Thank you Amelia, my sweetheart. She is a sweetheart.

Well, I’m going to speak to you today, about how to develop one’s personality, through becoming a more perfectly harmonized human being. But, before I go into the actual subject of my presentation today, let me quickly reference the strategic situation, in which we find ourselves. And I want to start by reading the beginning of my speech, made in the Bad Schwalbach conference on March 22. This was two days after the war against Iraq had started, and I said the following:

So, if Friedrich Schiller would be alive today, and he would look at this strategic situation, and the historical moment, what would he say? I’m sure he would say

something like, “You foolish people! Don’t you see, that Nemesis is about to strike? That there is a higher lawfulness, which will come back, and haunt you, for what you are doing?” The crime committed is enormous. The presumptuous arrogance of the present War Party is paired with an enormous guilt, which nobody will take away from them. The defiance of truth and justice, is so gigantic, that Nemesis will strike. The higher lawfulness of the laws of the universe will assert themselves, given the fact that there is no case against Iraq; that there is no threat against any country; not its neighbors, and for sure, not the United States. That there is no proven link to al-Qaeda, and that there *was* compliance with the UN inspection process.

There is no UN mandate, to use force. And therefore, given that all of these things are the case, this represents a war of aggression, which, as Lyn was pointing out, may trigger a global nuclear war. The doctrine of pre-emptive war, the incredible idea to use a first-strike nuclear weapon against countries that do not have nuclear weapons—if not stopped—means the end of international law, and the return to barbarism. It could plunge the world into a Dark Age, and international anarchy, which is why we have to work to reverse it, as quickly as possible.

The Principle of Nemesis

Now, we are five months later, and indeed, you can see, that the Iraq War, which was a war without any justification based entirely on laws, is becoming the Nemesis for the War Party. Now, Nemesis, in Greek mythology, is the principle of justice. It’s a principle which comes down in history, to punish the criminal. And Schiller has used this idea of Nemesis—that there is a higher lawfulness, which man can not touch—in many of his historical dramas: in the *Don Carlos* play; in *Wallenstein*; in the *Bride of Messina*; in the *Demetrius* fragment.

And, today, you can see Nemesis in action: Iraq has become a quagmire, which is becoming worse every week. And, it is also becoming Nemesis for the entire imperial project of this administration.

People in America may not be fully aware of it, but there are tectonic changes taking place in the world, right now. And, they could have terrible consequences for world peace.

A journalist who often writes interesting articles, and whom I only quote because he is a reflection of what many people in other countries are thinking—namely, a certain person with the name of [William] Pfaff—wrote, on Aug. 23 in the *International Herald Tribune*: He denounced the philosophers of chaos in the Bush Administration, who will go for new wars in the future. He said, “The disaster in Iraq was foreseen by them, and they dismissed it. The neo-cons believe that destruction will lead to new creation.” This is the old idea of the Conservative Revolution, which is another word for

Synarchism. “These wars are never successful, and they have no exit strategy. And therefore, the only resort they have is escalation, new attacks elsewhere.”

Then, he said: Iraq and Afghanistan are both situations, where the U.S. forces are already over-stretched, and no American soldier is safe. But, if you look at the other aspects—the Israeli-Palestinian situation, together with the war in Iraq, it’s too much for the Arab world. And, if the United States would do anything against Iran, this would lead to an unprecedented explosion. The big concern is, that the U.S. doctrine of preventive nuclear war will go into effect elsewhere.

Now, that is the big worry, the big concern, of a lot of people we have been talking to, in the last weeks and months. We talked to one source, which I quote to you, again, just because he’s reflective of what a lot of people are saying. This person said—and he’s a high-ranking military person in continental Europe—“Too many people in Washington are blinded to what the world reaction has been, since Bush, for the first time, talked about pre-emptive nuclear war, in June 2002; and especially since the declaration of this doctrine, in September 2002.”

The idea, that the United States could start a nuclear war, and that international law, in Iraq, was thrown out of the window, has led already to a complete, seismic shift in world relations, right now. And you have a covert re-arming going on, on a world scale. Russia and other countries are beefing up their own nuclear capability. Russia is building new strategic nuclear subs; they just conducted a huge Russian naval maneuver in the Pacific. And people in Russia and China have told us that they will never allow the United States to control the Korean Peninsula.

Now, if, for some reason, the North Korea situation would escalate, and given the fact that the United States is over-stretched in Afghanistan and Iraq, the danger is that nuclear weapons could come to use; and then you have immediately, the conflict with Russia and China. And, that’s how close we are to an escalation of the situation, and that is what terrifies and motivates every country, every government, around the world.

And, I can tell you, that all sources, all top-ranking politicians, strategists, military people we talked to in the last period, they *all*—and some of them have been Atlanticists for 30-40 years, or more, of their life, who are firm friends of the United States; they’re not anti-American, don’t fall for that for one second—they all say, that they are now thinking about the United States in ways they never thought they would be thinking about. And that, now, even if they didn’t like to talk about LaRouche in the past, before, that they are now saying that what Lyn is doing in the United States, in his effort to get Cheney out of office, is the *only realistic option* to prevent a course to World War III. And, that is the joint opinion of people in Germany, France, Italy, Russia, China, India, Turkey, and many other countries.

So, I think it is very important that you keep that in mind, because, whatever you do, will be looked at, by the world, from that standpoint: That our ability to change the United States from the inside, is regarded by these people as the *only realistic chance* to stop World War III.

Plato’s ‘Cave’ and Imperialism

Now, this is a pretty scary picture. But, as Amelia was saying, already, it is very important, not to react with fear to that, but with the determination to act to stop it.

Now, how do we arrive at that? How do we manage to be resolute, determined, and not react with fear? Well, first of all, we have to understand that there is an inner connection between the systemic collapse of the world financial system, and the danger of war. The problem is, that already before the “chicken-hawks” made a coup in the U.S. administration, the idea of a U.S. world empire already existed as a tendency; and, all global institutions already were taken over by neo-liberal monetarism—free-market economy, globalization. If you look at all the institutions, the IMF—the World Bank, the WTO—they already all were in the control of these forces.

So, even one would take the danger of nuclear war away, we are already at the end of an epoch. And the question, therefore, is if the old paradigm—the old set of values, which have led the world to this crisis—will be replaced by a new paradigm which will throw the world into a New Dark Age and barbarism, as we can see it, in many places in the world; or, if we can make a new paradigm, which is worthy of the dignity of man.

If you want to find a positive answer to this problem, we have to deal with the problem [Lyndon LaRouche] has been discussing in many of his recent papers about “Visualizing the Complex Domain,” and other papers: Namely, that there are two completely opposing, epistemological traditions in European history. One of these traditions is associated with a set of axioms, which is responsible for the present crisis. The second has ideas and principles, which are the basis for overcoming the present crisis.

Now, the first tradition, Plato references in his famous example of the cave, where he says, that people, who are sitting in a dimly lit cave, and they see the shadows from real events coming from the outside, only in the form of shadows on an uneven wall. And, they think that what they see there, namely what they can grasp with their sense-perception, is the real universe. But, the real universe does not exist for them. They can not look outside the cave. And that tradition, which assumes that sense-perception is the only way of human knowledge—that what you can see, feel, smell, hear, perceive with your senses—that that is what you know. Your experience; your hard facts.

Now, this tradition has generated, in European history, positivism, empiricism, materialism, utilitarianism; and it always was associated with the imperial form of the state: Which was the idea, that you have a small, oligarchical elite,

which rules over 95% or more of the masses of people, who are backward, stupid, illiterate, and who are not much better than human cattle. It's what Schiller describes in the "Solon and Lycurgus" piece, as the "helots," the slaves, which can be killed by the oligarchy, whenever they feel that there are too many of them. And, this form of thinking—this idea that some people are just not human—is, today, the problem with the extreme utilitarianism of globalization and the shareholder-value society, which today has thrown a large part of mankind into that status, of being just human cattle.

The imperial forces think that they can maintain their power, only if the masses are backward, and "other-directed"; as it was the case with the Roman Empire, where the circus, the "bread and circuses," were used to keep the people vulgar, evil, nasty, and oriented toward entertainment. In the same way, you have seen, in the last years, last decades, a systematic moronization, through the entertainment industry, and people have been reduced to wanting to build their bodies, but not their brains. A recent example: We have seen what happens, if this process takes place—actually, I saw Schwarzenegger on the TV, and I heard these stories about the flab; and he had a T-shirt, and he has this gigantic arm, but it was flabby!

So, in the meantime, in the last decades, the population was dumbed-down, moronized, and basically, unfortunately, the people who underwent this process of manipulation seemed to even verify the oligarchical model, that man is only a being of sense perception. Because, what people have, more and more, at least in the Western countries, demonstrated is a seemingly endless lust for money; an incredible object-fixation—people want to get the newest gadget, the newest thing, the newest electronic device, the fun in the here and now.

Now, that is the present condition of our civilization.

Schiller: The Perfectibility of Man

Now, the second tradition, in which we can find the principles to overcome this crisis, is the Platonic humanist tradition, which regards man as a cognitive being, capable of creative reason and the formulation of better and better hypotheses, to understand the laws of the physical creation, in a better and better way. And, to understand the laws of the cosmic order. With that tradition, you have the idea of a state, whose only legitimacy comes from the fact that the government is oriented toward the common good.

And, it is associated with the idea of a limitless perfectibility of man. This idea first existed with Plato. It, for sure, existed in Christianity: namely, the idea that every man is created in the image of God. But, as we know, because of the Roman Empire and the Dark Age afterwards, this idea which existed in Christianity, was never politically realized. And this occurred, for the first time, in the 15th Century, with the development of the sovereign nation-state. And from the 15th Century onward, you had, for the first time, the idea that the development of the citizen was the prime interest of the state,

because that is, actually, the only source of wealth for everybody.

Now, I'm absolutely convinced, that we will come out of this present crisis *only* if we shift away from the first paradigm—the world of sense-perception, egoism, free-market economy—and that we replace it with a new policy, based on the general welfare, combined with a cultural renaissance. And that only if we revive the best traditions of the Platonic tradition, can we accomplish that.

Now, all great thinkers of universal history have a role to play. All of them have to be revived and actualized. But, I still believe that there is one person, who is particularly relevant for this problem of overcoming the world of sense-perception; and that is my good, old friend, Friedrich Schiller. Because Schiller's conception of the "beautiful soul," is more important, and more actual today, than ever before. For those of you who have read the *Aesthetical Letters*, you will remember, that in the Fourth Letter, he writes: "Every individual man, one can say, carries by predisposition and destiny, a purely ideal man within himself, and to agree with whose immutable unity in all of its alterations, is the great task of his existence."

Wow! You can hear, already, how people, you know, disagree. And shriek: "A purely ideal man! This is totally against the spirit of the time! The spirit of the time has completely other heroes: Rambo, Terminators, game shows—'How To Become a Millionaire.' These are not purely ideal men!" And, you know, we talk about a no-future generation: I just read in the *Washington Post* this week, that a 13-year-old boy was standing in front of a court, with shackles on his ankles; and he was accused of voluntary manslaughter, because he had stolen a car, and then played with some other youngsters, robbers and police, in the context of which he had run over a person, who got killed. Now, the image—of a 13-year-old, with shackles on his ankles, being accused of manslaughter—what other image do you need, that something is *absolutely, fundamentally wrong* with society?

Now, if Schiller would be alive, today, he would ask the same question he asked during his time: Where should the improvement come from, when the government is corrupt, and the masses are degenerated? Schiller described the fractured spiritual condition of the people of his time, in terms virtually identical, to what we would say today, about the present situation. He said: "Now, however, *want* rules. And sunken humanity bends under its tyrannical yoke. Utility is the great idol of the time, for which all powers slave, and all talents should pay homage," he says in the Second Letter. And, in the Sixth Letter, he describes the person, who is ensnared with the world of materialism: "We do not see merely the individual subject, but rather entire classes of men, unfold only a part of their natural gifts; while the rest, as with a stunted plant, scarcely are suggested with a faint trace. Eternally only a single fragment of the whole, man develops himself as a fragment; eternally it is only monotonous noise of the wheel, that he resolves in his ear. He never develops the

harmony of his being; and instead of impressing humanity upon his nature, he becomes merely an imprint of his business, of his science.”

What can be done, if the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time, is yanking most people downward, into the realm of mere physical existence and sensual experience? Many philosophers were struggling with the idea, and were convinced that reason can be developed, and limitlessly developed. But Schiller is the one person, of all the thinkers, poets, and scientists I know, who focused very much on the method to ennoble the emotions to be on the same level as reason. And he defined, as the world-historical goal of human development, the idea to establish an inner agreement between his two natures—the sensual and the cognitive—to always be a harmonious unity, and with his full-voiced humanity, to act.

Educating the Emotions

For Schiller, the “beautiful soul” was the highest aim of development. The beautiful soul is a person for whom freedom and necessity, duty and passion, merge into a unity, so that the person can always blindly trust their instincts, because the instincts and the emotions would never tell the person anything different than what reason dictates. Schiller described such a person, in the famous *Kallias Letters*, as being the Good Samaritan; where he goes through five examples of people who are acting to help a person on the wayside; and only the person who completely—without thinking for one second about how this affects his own interests, when he stops and helps this person—that only such a person is a beautiful soul.

Well, because people *are*, presently, like stunted plants, the education of the emotional faculties—the *Empfindungsvermögen*—is our era’s most urgent need, said Schiller. And, if this was case for Schiller’s time, how much more is this education of the emotional faculties, important and urgent today? Because today, we have an excessive demand for sensual gratification, which goes hand-in-hand with clinging to one’s own identity in the world of senses: i.e., the desire to satisfy one’s own ego; which is, today, coupled with a brutal indifference towards the needs of suffering humanity. If you look at the pitiable condition in which the majority of mankind lives today, a condition which outrages those who are empathetic, calling upon them to act—the majority of people simply lack of strength of imagination required to lift their own thoughts and feeling above the minuscule confines of their own personal lives. If you confront such a person, with the greater issues of mankind, a psychological block kicks in, and they say, “I don’t go there. I’m not interested in Africa. Don’t bother me. I have my family, and my vacation to think about, and I can not act on what you say.”

The problem is, that a person whose identity is exclusively confined to the realm of their own sense experience, will inevitably react with fear, whenever they come to the realization, that if they think about something which has implications

they don’t want to face—that their own physical existence could be threatened, in any way—then, they block. It’s a psychological block, which kicks in, the moment such an issue is raised.

And for this, Schiller’s conception of the Sublime is the absolute crucial idea: To educate the emotional faculties. “As a sentient creature, we are dependent. But, as cognitive beings, we are free,” he writes in *On the Sublime*. “As sentient creatures, our self-preservation instinct comes immediately into play, the moment something makes us fearful. Or pain, or physical injury terrifies us, and our attempt to wall ourselves off, in order to preserve our physical existence, turns us into slaves.”

In the second essay, *Concerning the Sublime* (because he wrote two different writings on the Sublime), Schiller says, “All other things ‘must.’ But man is the being, who wills. Precisely for this reason, is nothing so unworthy of man, as to suffer violence, for violence annuls him. Who does it to us, disputes nothing less than our humanity. Who suffers it, in a cowardly manner, throws away his humanity.”

Now, that is why terrorism, today, is being used by the oligarchy, to turn people into slaves. Because of Sept. 11, because of other threats, if people are starting to be afraid, of this and other perils, they stop thinking. They turn into vegetables. Schiller wrote, in 1801, “People could be developed into demi-gods, if only we sought through education to rid them of fear. Nothing in the world can make a person unhappier, than fear, pure and simple.”

The Sublime

Now, Schiller’s answer to this problem lies in placing one’s own identity *not* in the level of one’s physical existence, but on the level of the Sublime; something which is only possible, if the human being is, indeed, thinking about universal ideas and principles, which reach beyond the confines of his own personal life. Only when he can view his moral, not his sensual nature, as his life’s primary mission, can he put his sensual nature in check, and give his cognitive nature the upper hand. A person who has learned to think and feel on the level of the Sublime, will also not succumb to the fear of death, but will, even given the limited life-span, live, while he is alive, already, in immortality. “Great, is who defeats what is fearsome. Sublime is he, who even as he perishes it, fears it not,” says Schiller.

Schiller says, also, “The capacity to let the sublime enter into one’s own emotional life, is alone, one of human nature’s most magnificent potentials, because it makes him perfectly free.” No animal can think the Sublime: They may be loving and sweet and playful—all of these beautiful things. But, no animal can say, “I place my identity in principles, which go beyond my cat existence, my dog existence, my donkey existence.” That is one of the things which is entirely, only man’s ability. Only man can be free.

Schiller regards beauty as a necessary condition for hu-

manity. But, beauty only encompasses the world of the senses. It brings the world of the senses to its highest potential. But, the Sublime must be joined with the beautiful, in order to make the aesthetic education into a complete whole. And, to broaden the human heart's capacity to take in emotions to the full extent of our endowment, and thus, beyond the world of senses.

Herbart: Mathematics and Psychology

Now, I will introduce another thinker, who I think is very important, not so much that you would believe, or take every word he says; but, because he is a very crucial counterpart of this idea of the Sublime by Schiller: And the person I'm going to talk about now, is Johann Friedrich Herbart, whom Bernhard Riemann described—together with Carl Gauss—as the two most important influences to allow him to develop his idea of Riemannian manifolds.

And I found a very interesting article, or work by [Herbart], which sounds a little bit funny, but it is actually very, very interesting. It's called: "On the Possibility and Necessity of Applying Mathematics to Psychology."

Now, how can one apply mathematics to psychology?

Herbart says, "So far, mathematics has only been applied to objects; to lengths, to measurement, and so forth. But, how can one measure the mental process: perceptions, feelings, desires, are changing rapidly, and how can one measure them? How can one determine their magnitude? Thought, an idea passing through the mind, is faster than the lightning in the storm. Moods are changing quicker than the wind, and the weather. How is it possible to find a mathematical lawfulness for thought?"

Well, he says, if we can't measure, we can't calculate. Therefore, it is impossible to use mathematics for psychology, is what people normally say. But, this is a syllogism, a mixture of habit and lies. And Herbart says, it's completely wrong, that one could only calculate if one has measured before. Totally the opposite, he says. And now, he launches a big attack against Newton, and his famous sentence, "*Et hypothesis non fingo*": You don't need hypothesis. Herbart says:

The assertion that you can only perform calculations after you have first made measurements, is completely false. Quite the contrary! You can make calculations on the basis of any hypothetically assumed relationship of magnitudes—indeed, even of a demonstrably false one. And when we are considering deeply hidden, but nonetheless important issues, we are *obliged* to experiment in hypotheses as long as is necessary, and to use calculation to investigate the consequences flowing therefrom as accurately as is necessary, for us to determine which of the various hypotheses coincides with our experience. Thus, the ancient astronomers *experimented* with eccentric circles, and Kepler *experimented*



Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), the scientist who, in "On the Possibility and Necessity of Applying Mathematics to Psychology," posed the question of higher mathematics "measuring" the objects of thought in the mind, and their interconnections or resonances, for the first time.

with the ellipse, in order to trace back the origin of the planets' movements; and he compared the squares of the orbital periods with the cubes of the mean distances [from the Sun], before he found that they were in agreement. (pp. 136-137)²

And then, Herbart gives an image, which I found very fascinating; because tonight, in the panel about science and Mars and the Crab Nebula, you will (as far as I can tell) see a satellite film of the movements of Mars: which is mainly going like that. It makes a circle, and seems to be completely off its orbit. And Herbart says:

The word *planet* indicates something wayward or veering off course, or, if you will, with reference to the phantasms of astrology, an errant knight who romantically goes out on fearsome or amorous adventures. . . . The errant knights have all vanished like ghosts now, and since then, ignorance has been supplanted by science. Now the planets all behave according to what the calendar says; and that's very naturally the case, since it's the calendars which have learned to behave according to what the planets say. And precisely so, and in this very same sense, genius would now behave according to what psychology says, if only our psychology

2. From: *Johann Friedrich Herbart's Kleinere Abhandlungen zur Psychologie*, Nachdruck der Ausgaben 1811-1840 (*Johann Friedrich Herbart's Smaller Papers on Psychology*, Reprints from the 1811-1840 Editions), Amsterdam, 1969.

were based on as much true science as our calendars are. Let so much be said about genius, which indeed has no knowledge of the rules of its own behavior, but which nevertheless cannot deny that it has such—since, after all, non-knowledge is no proof of non-existence.” (p. 140)

The human soul, Herbart says, is no doll theater. And our wishes and decisions are not puppets, where the puppet-master pulls the strings in some outer-directed fashion. But our real, own life lies in our will. The rules are not outside. They are our own mental rules, and not derived from the material world; but the soul perceives that the rule is nevertheless certain and solid, and therefore, it reacts to push and pressure. “By virtue of this solid definiteness, it has more similarity to the otherwise completely alien laws of percussion and pressure, than it does with the wonders of ostensibly ineffable Freedom.” (pp. 141-142)

Then, he calms people down, and says, Look, if I try to apply mathematics to understand your thought processes, do not be afraid, because numbers and letters will not get to your inner secrets of the heart, and I will not steal your secrets, this way: “and in this respect, common sense will always be far more clever and formidable than all of mathematics and psychology put together. . . .”

Connection of Thoughts, Not Sense-Perceptions

But, let’s start with two magnitudes: How to measure the thought processes. First, the power of each perception; and secondly, the degree of its block or inhibition. And there, we come again to this question of fear, because the power of the perception is one magnitude, but the fear which blocks it, the degree of inhibition, is that which prevents it from developing. Herbart wrote:

The time is now come to describe with greater precision the magnitudes which present themselves to us as susceptible of calculation. We must proceed from what is most simple, and must start out by excluding all relations between thoughts. What remains for us to consider, then, are only two magnitudes: *the strength of each separate thought*, and *the degree of delimitation between them*.

Here we already have enough material for calculation, for us to uncover the primary reason for two universal psychological phenomena: that at any given point in time, the great majority of our thoughts are latent; and, secondly, the equally remarkable fact that, as long as physiological causes do not bring about the state of sleep, there is never a time when all thoughts are simultaneously latent, and also never *all but one*; but rather that, while the body is awake, what is being

thought is never entirely simple, but rather is, at least to some extent, compound. (p. 144)

The calculation, what is the power of each conception, and what is the degree of its inhibition, or block, is still very simple. It becomes more complicated, if one takes, as a certain magnitude, the degree of the connections among the different conceptions. Then, the earlier result changes.

The calculations we could make of the strength of each separate thought, and of the degree of pairwise delimitation between them, are still extremely simple; but they already become much more involved as soon as we bring into consideration a third magnitude, namely, *the degree of connection* between thoughts. Our previous results are then changed, and new ones enter as well. Moreover, now yet a fourth magnitude presents itself for inclusion in our calculations, namely the *aggregate* of the connected thoughts. Of special note here are the *longer or shorter sequences of thought with imperfect interconnection*, such as are formed when each successive thought is, to a certain degree, connected to its successor, the first with the second, the second with the third, the latter with the fourth, and so on, but where the second thought meshes either not at all, or only weakly, with the fourth. Such sequences of thought are similar to the filaments or fibers out of which larger intellectual organs are composed; and they have their own quite definite laws of stimulation, a precise knowledge of which is, in fact, at the very core of psychology. . . . Even the concepts of space and of time have their origin and dwelling-place here, and not in allegedly basic forms of sense-perception. (p. 145)

Now, this obviously has a lot to do with the theory of memory, the theory of idea association, and imagination. But, it’s also a way to know the rules of emotions, desires, and passions.

And then, Herbart says: I say bluntly, mathematics just reveals the gigantic ignorance in which psychology was, up to now. Even the conceptions we have about space and time, have their origin here, not in the so-called sense-perception. In other words, the ideas, the series of conceptions you have built in your mind, form the hypothesis about the sensuous world, and not what the experience concludes from the sensuous world—which geometry it is.

Lyn called this, the geometry of the Sensorium, as opposite to the geometry of universally verifiable principles. Herbart says, sense-perception does not lead to the conception, but the conception in the mind is the origin.

When we consider fully formed sequences of thought, there arise further, new quantifications of whether they



Bernhard Riemann in 1863. "Riemann says, 'For the explanation of the life of our soul, we must assume that the Geistesmassen created in our nerve processes continue to exist as part of our soul. That their inner connection remains, and that they only change insofar as we add new Geistesmassen. An immediate consequence of this is, that the souls of organic beings—that is, Geistesmassen which come into being during the lifetime—continue to exist after death.' "

are affected by some stimulus at only one point, or at many points simultaneously; and, similarly, whether they are more, or less, in a state of evolution or involution; and, further, whether out of these sequences, which I described earlier as filaments or fibers, a larger or smaller tissue has formed, and how this tissue is constructed—an object which, indeed, across various different people, must have a great degree of uniformity, given the common world of thought which we inhabit; and which must spark further associations among thoughts and create new ones—but doing so in such a way, that significant modifications occur, depending upon the particular individual's intellectual rhythm, as a result of the constitution of his nervous system and of his entire body; along with yet other modifications which determine the individual's sphere of experience and mental habits, and which one can seek to deliberately guide, through the use of education and instruction. (pp. 145-146)

Man's Humanity Is Through Education

And Herbart says, since the actual humanity of man, occurs through education—it's not determined by the genes—mathematics is important to discover the way, how the successive ennoblement of the mind and the human spirit proceeds. In the mind, not all conceptions are proportionally connected. Not all have the same "mobility." And then he uses a very beautiful metaphor, to describe how the different qualities of the different conceptions and the different ideas relate to each other:

that like the atmosphere's upper and lower cloud layers, they waft about in various directions, sometimes lethargically, sometimes more quickly and carelessly; that precisely for this reason, among these diverse thought-masses, during their manifold intercourse with one other, we see for the most part repetitions of the same relationships which are produced between new concepts and older thoughts which had been reproduced in this way; and that, consequently, there must exist not merely an external perception, but rather also an inner recognition, or a faculty of Reason, by which what we call thinking or reasoning repeats, on an expanded scale, the same process which occurs even with the acquisition of sense perceptions through the act of seeing and judging. . . . (p. 149)

Herbart says, it is impossible to understand the highest activities of the mind, and their laws and causalities, if one does not know the lower ones, on which they are built. And one will probably never be able to apply mathematical views to the highest domains of creating thinking and willing. But, as a basis of judgment, they are absolutely required, even for the higher domains, so that at least the holes of our knowledge are not filled with false assumptions.

It is not only possible, but necessary to apply mathematics to psychology; to put it in a nutshell, the reason for this necessity, lies in the fact that otherwise we will simply never attain what all speculation ultimately seeks, and that is: *certainty*. And the necessity that we finally embark on the path to solid certainty, is all the more urgent, the greater the danger becomes each day, that philosophy in Germany will soon descend into the same condition it has been in for quite some time now in France and England. (p. 149)

—which is the world of empiricism and positivism. And he says, it is the stupidity of most philosophers, that they don't see this danger. If they would understand what mathematics is, and that it's more than just some formulas, they would know that undefined talk, where everybody has their own interpretation of notions, can only lead to a daily growing

division of opinions. And, this is the reason why only mathematics can give certainty, because in mathematics you have proofs, in which you arrive at the same result in different ways.

So, Herbart says, let's look at the different categories, how we can measure these processes of the mind:

So that it becomes clear what I am saying, I would like to refresh your memory as to those magnitudes which are available to psychology as a basis for calculation. These were: The strength of the thought; its degree of delimitation; its degree of internal connection [to other thoughts]; the aggregate of those connected, the length of the sequences of thought; their susceptibility to stimulation at various points; their greater or lesser degree of involution or evolution; their degree of meshing or of isolation—and, as is obvious with all mental movement, the speed or slowness of change under varying conditions. (p. 150-151)

Now, this is not a complete enumeration, but the idea of a multiply-connected manifold, is very clear. In all of these reflects, the content, the “what” of the thought process is not in consideration; it's only the form of the lawfulness, the rules of the thinking process; and as such, it functions for both good and evil processes of thinking.

Herbart then says, that the first condition of self-observation is important; that, self-observation is the first condition of the psychological study. The capacity of the mind relates to the power, as the possibility to the reality. This is an important conception, which originally comes from Plato: It's the idea that it's the power, and not the capacity, which counts. For example, concerning a magnet, one does not attribute capacity, but power, to attract iron and to orient it in a northern direction. The same is the case for the power of imagination, the power of thinking, the power of judgment. And, if our mind would only be a capacity, then our self would not be real. Man sleeps, and is awakened. When he is awakened, then his conceptions, memories, and notions, immediately are active. Therefore, it is not the capacity of the soul, but the powers of the soul.

Why don't these powers work at the same time, and equally strong? Empirical psychology does not have an answer to that. But, Herbart says, “There must exist one, or otherwise psychology would not be a science. The more knowledge about a certain subject you have, the more all conceptions, which are relevant for this subject; the more the other capacities relating to the same idea, become active. Whoever has the power of imagination for mathematics, has for that a memory and understanding. Whoever has a power of memory for poetry or military matters, has a power to absorb that. If someone says, he has a lot of understanding—or a lot of fantasy—the question is: For what? For music?

For accounting?

“Now, a worker, who has material in his hand, can imagine the same material in the hand of another worker; or, the hand being empty. But, what is the relation of the mental material to the mind? What happens to color, pain, if nobody is there to feel them?” Herbart says, “The psychological material is not a self-subsisting matter, which exists outside of man. Here, material and power are one. There is no sole capacity previously posed, to receive material. There is no sensuousness before the sense-perception. Sense organs, yes. But, not sensuousness. There is no reason, before the notion. That which works as a power in us, are the conceptions themselves. No human being has more power of the mind, than he or she has conceptions.”

‘Geistesmassen’: You Have To Build Your Mind

Bernhard Riemann picked up on these works of Herbart, and, in a paper called “Concerning Psychology and Metaphysics,” he described himself as a Herbartian, as a follower of Herbart. He said the following: “With each act of thinking, something persisting and substantial enters our soul. I call it ‘*Geistesmasse*,’ ” thought-mass. “All thinking, therefore, is building of new *Geistesmassen*, new thought-masses. These *Geistesmassen* appear as conceptions; because of their different inner conditions, they appear as different qualities. They connect, melt together, complicate each other, interact partially among each other, and partially they mix with older *Geistesmassen*.”

“The kind and power of these conceptions were recognized by Herbart,” Riemann says, “only in part. And I will complete this idea now: The soul is a compact of manifoldly-connected *Geistesmassen*. It grows, continuously, through new thought-masses. The *Geistesmassen* are imperishable, everlasting. Only the relative power of these connections changes, through the addition of new *Geistesmassen*. The *Geistesmassen* do not need a material carrier, and don't have a continuous effect in the world of appearances. They don't have a relation to any part of matter, and are, therefore, not located in space. But, any *new* emergence, and all connecting of *Geistesmassen*, need a material carrier.” So, only the new ones need a carrier.

“All thinking, therefore, occurs in a specific space. Each new *Geistesmasse* resonates with all related *Geistesmassen*, and the stronger, the less the difference of their quality is.”

Now, you all have met your typical, average, nice American guy or nice American girl, who is blocked; they're nice, but blocked. They refuse to discuss intellectual issues, because nothing resonates! And, because nothing resonates, they are afraid to discuss issues which they feel they don't know anything about. So, I think this is a very important idea: that the reason why people seem to be so moronized, and blocked, is because there's nothing there, no *Geistesmassen*

there. So, nothing can resonate.

But this is very important, because you have to have a plan in your life, where you add *Geistesmassen* in all fields. You have to build your mind. You have to build your brain cells, as if you would go to a gym. You work on this machine—you work on history, you work on natural science, you work on philosophy. So, people should take their mind, and the building of their *Geistesmassen*, as seriously, as they take the sports process.

Now, Riemann continues, and says: “The interaction of two simultaneously forming *Geistesmassen*”—now, this all sounds very abstract, but if you do this in practice, you will realize that once you study history, once you study philosophy, once you start music, these things tell you laws which you can apply in each field. It’s not that these things are completely different, but that once you understand certain lawfulnesses in one area of knowledge, you find out that it *does* connect in principled ways with others, and they *do* interact. Now, all forming, new *Geistesmassen* interact, directly with previously built *Geistesmassen*, and indirectly with all others—the weaker, the further they are away and the less they are connected. The most simple expression of the efficiency of the older *Geistesmassen* is their reproduction, which consists in the effect to produce a similar one.

‘Immortal’ Thoughts

Let’s apply these laws of mental development, which we concluded from our own inner perception, to explain the expediency we find on Earth, for the explanation of our existence and historical development. Riemann says, “For the explanation of the life of our soul, we must assume that the *Geistesmassen* created in our nerve processes continue to exist as part of our soul. That their inner connection remains, and that they only change insofar as we add new *Geistesmassen*. An immediate consequence of this is, that the souls of organic beings—that is, *Geistesmassen* which come into being *during* the lifetime—continue to exist after death.” Now, because of what we produce, in terms of ideas, of series of conceptions, of knowledge, this constitutes the immortality of the soul. Now, this is the same idea which Nikolaus von Kues [Cardinal Nikolaus of Cusa] had in the 15th Century, where he said, “The soul is the place where the sciences are created. So much so, that these would not exist without the former. And since the sciences, once they are created, are immortal, so is the soul which created them.”

So, the laws of the macrocosm and microcosm follow the same principle, which is why the immaterial idea can have an effect in the physical universe. This is the same idea as Leibniz’s *monads*. And, this idea of the growth of the *Geistesmassen*, of ideas which have been generated, which do not die with the person ending their mortal life—that these *Geistesmassen* continue to increase, even if the people die—that’s the same idea as Vernadsky’s, who says, that eventually the Noösphere is completely dominating the Biosphere; that the

cognitive principle in evolution will become stronger and stronger, and eventually be completely dominant. And that’s when the infantilism of mankind will stop.

Now, if what Schiller says is true: namely, that you can educate your emotions, on the same level as your mind, as your cognitive side—and I absolutely insist that it is true—then, one can educate the emotional faculties in the same way, as reason; what Herbart and Riemann say about *Geistesmassen* then also should apply to the emotional faculties.

If one remembers what Riemann said (I’m just replacing his “mental act” with “emotional act”): With each emotional act, something remaining and substantial enters our soul. I call it “emotional differentiations.” They appear as different qualities, they connect, melt together, complicate each other, partially among each other, partially with older emotions. The soul, therefore, is a compact manifold, of connected *Geistesmassen* and emotional differentiations. Each new emotional experience, or act, resonates with all related emotional experiences; and the stronger, the less the difference of their quality is.

Now, in psychology, one calls this, normally, “cathexis”: an emotional memory, that if people have had a certain emotional experience, and they come into a similar situation, they have a cathexis, which brings forward emotions, which they thought were long forgotten, but they react, apparently, in a similar way.

But, Schiller says, they don’t have to do that in a mechanistic way, on the same level. We are not in a situation where the mind accumulates more complex *Geistesmassen*, and the emotional faculties remain fixed: that man becomes more smart, scientifically educated, but he still remains the same brute, who goes home and beats his wife. That doesn’t have to be the case. They become more differentiated, more beautiful, and more powerful, too. In a harmonious person, they are of one quality with the increasing of knowledge and *Geistesmassen*, as such.

So, what do we have to do, is to work to give the stunted plant of people today, who are emotionally crippled—because the biggest problem is not with their thinking; the biggest problem is with their feeling: That they can not feel in a human way. What do we have to do, to give these stunted plants—these poor, crippled human beings—what every gardener would do: some water, some fertilizer, to make them grow.

Ideas of the Mind in Dialogue

Well, if one looks how scholars from other cultures look at us: For example, Indians, in the Vedantic tradition, observe that the entire Western civilization is in trouble, because it is only based on *pravritti* (I hope I pronounced this correctly); *pravritti* is the idea of only outward action. And they complain that there is absolutely no *nivritti*, inward reflection; i.e., that you have a crippled personality, a stunted plant. Now, some Indian scholars say that there was such a tradition of *nivritti*

in Christianity, in European philosophy, in the form of the saints. These are people, who have completely gotten rid of their inner want, their association with the material world, but who live a devoted life to the higher principle of immortality. But now, naturally, the concept of the saints, in the West, is obsolete.

In the famous *Bhagavad-Gita*, one of the great teaching writings in Hindu tradition, the goal of human development is defined as the transformation from the *tamas*, which is the level of the evil-minded spirit, the materially oriented person; to *rajas*, who is the person who is “kingly,” but it’s also not a good quality, yet; to the idea of *satva*, where every person has the potential to become a *sattvik*, who is a person who manifests the divine within. And, that is, in Indian philosophy, defined as the goal of evolution.

Now, how can we produce more and more people, who are, in that sense, *sattvik* persons, in society? The Vedanta, the Indian teaching, says, every member of society is given that goal, and he or she should try to reach it, or at least one direct one’s own life in that direction. Now, in the Confucian philosophy, you have the same conception, which is the idea of *li*: which is the idea that every man and every woman has a place in society, in the universe, and that society only functions, if everybody fulfills their potential in the fullest way. To be a *sattvik* person, is to be a person without any hatred or violence, and to be always loving and kind.

In India, there is the view that the society which has the largest number of such people, who are *sattvik* and spiritually evolved, and who have manifested the divine in themselves within, is the most advanced society. And that, on the other side, that country where such men absolutely do not exist, is simply doomed, and nothing can save it.

And, they say, the West is dominated by *pravritti* which, as such, if you have it in the right measure, is something positive: Because outward action, as such, is not negative—because that is the force which allows you to achieve social welfare, good housing, plenty to eat and drink, good dress, education, lighted streets, good roads. But, if you have too much of it, it turns into what is called today, “consumerism”: And, as it escalates, it leads to violent thinking, violent action, excessive desires, lust, greed, self-centeredness, anger. And with it, goes that the understanding regarding right and wrong, gets dimmer and dimmer. The recognition when one should stop, restrain oneself from the pursuit of sensual pleasures, is lost. Ethical restraints get absolutely lost. And, more and more, evil deeds become more; and less and less, good deeds are being done.

Isn’t that the condition of our society, today?

If we study, in history, the collapse of civilizations, it always was accompanied by that phenomenon: More and more evil deeds, more excesses, more lust, more degeneration, and less and less good. As a matter of fact, Edward Gibbon, the historian, describes exactly that in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

So, we in the West—in the United States, in Japan, in Europe—we are, today, very much at the level of *tamas*, as the Indians would say: at the level of the evil spirit. Excessive consumerism. *Pravritti*. Without the soul, without the spiritual development, and without intellectual activity.

Now, the oligarchs, one could actually say, are a caste-bound superiority-minded people, full of *rajas* and *tamas*—arrogance and evil—who look down at all other levels of the other castes.

The ‘Beautiful Soul’

From the *Upanishads*, which is after the *Rig-Veda* writings—the second wave of very deep philosophical conceptions, which are really a fountain of fantastic ideas—they define the *Brahman* as a person who has become a person full of love and compassion. And *brahmanatma* is associated with the idea, not particular to an individual, or a group, or a caste; but it means a high level of human evolution. As a matter of fact, the idea of the *brahmanatma* is very much the same idea as the “beautiful soul.” And such *brahmana* people, or “beautiful souls,” can appear in the United States, in China, in India, in Russia, Germany, Africa, or elsewhere—because it’s a universal concept. Every human being has the potential to evolve into a *brahmana*, a “beautiful soul.”

As a matter of fact, in history, such people were Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King—I would think that Lyn and Amelia, today, in our midst, qualify for this condition. It’s a concept of human excellence. And, it is the soul of social evolution. It’s the idea to go beyond the world of sensuous perception.

Brahmana is the idea of the “beautiful soul,” and if we can cause such people to emerge in every society, in many countries around the world today, I’m absolutely certain, that we are at the beginning of a new epoch. And, I’m convinced that the idea of the Dialogue of Cultures, where each culture emphasizes that, which is the highest in their tradition, will lead to a cross-fertilization of cultures, which will be the biggest and most beautiful renaissance mankind has ever seen.

And, what is necessary to evoke that, is exactly what our young people have demonstrated last night, and what you will see tonight, again: namely, an incredible amount of enthusiasm, to make that real. Because, without enthusiasm, there is no creativity.

So, in that sense, stick to the ideals of your childhood: Remain enthusiastic, and we will win.

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