

The explicit intention to "change the nature" of "the sensual human being" (AE 163) is thereby turned into an urgent call to "return to nature" (AE 50). Formation or education becomes "restoration" effectively hiding the violence of *Bildung*.⁹⁴ Nowhere does this become more obvious and paradoxical than in the key area of application of Schiller's program: the aesthetic formation of "the other sex."

THE GOAL OF AESTHETIC EDUCATION

One must grant to *Schiller* the great accomplishment to have broken through the Kantian subjectivity and abstraction of thought and to have dared to conceptually grasp beyond them unity and reconciliation as the truth. [...] Beauty is thus articulated as the forming-into-one of the reasonable and the sensual and this forming-into-one as the truly real.

Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics*.

As an answer to the political challenges of his time, Schiller's project of an aesthetic education of humanity certainly constitutes another example of the moral radicalism of the bourgeois opposition to an absolutist state.⁹⁵ Schiller's diagnosis is clear as to where the blame for the failure of the Enlightenment and its political hopes are to be placed:

There must, therefore, since the cause does not lie in things themselves, be something in the disposition of men [*in den Gemüthern der Menschen*] which stands in the way of the acceptance of truth, however brightly it may shine, and of the adoption of truth, however forcibly it may convince. [...] It is not enough, therefore, to say that all enlightenment of the understanding is worthy of respect only inasmuch as it flows back into character; to a certain extent it also proceeds from character. (AE 51)

Schiller's answer to the contemporary political dilemma is thus simply a new, more perfect strategy for the moral formation and perfection of

⁹⁴ See Kittler: "To attribute to the object of education the goal of education as its own nature has a motive: every trace of violence is supposed to disappear in the education" (1991, 31).

⁹⁵ See Koselleck 1973.

individuals: "the way to the head must be opened through the heart" (AE 53). As a supplement to the "dynamic state of rights" and the "ethical state of duties" (AE 215), the future free citizens are to be aesthetically "ennobled" by means of a (nominally) apolitical realm of "aesthetic culture." Here, they are to be made "aesthetic in every domain over which beauty is capable of extending her sway" (AE 165):

In the midst of the fearful kingdom of forces, and in the midst of the sacred kingdom of laws, the aesthetic impulse to form is at work, unnoticed, on the building of a third joyous kingdom of play and of semblance, in which man is relieved of the shackles of all circumstance, and released from all constraint, as much in the physical, as in the moral sphere. (AE 215)

In the guise of "mere play" (AE 105) and "mere semblance" (AE 195), "aesthetic culture" is to "subject" the "inclinations" and the "desires" to the strict, but non-coercive "laws of beauty" (AE 165). As Schiller explains in an important footnote:

I add here the superfluous comment (despite the fact that these Letters on Aesthetic Education are concerned with virtually nothing else but the refutation of that very error) that our psyche in the aesthetic state does indeed act freely, is in the highest degree free from all compulsion, but is in no wise free from laws; and that this aesthetic freedom is distinguishable from logical necessity in thinking, or moral necessity in willing, only by the fact that the laws according to which the psyche then behaves do *not become apparent as such*, and since they encounter no resistance, never appear as a constraint. (AE 143)

Far from representing a "liberation of nature" and a "rehabilitation of the senses,"⁹⁶ the program of aesthetic education, as Schiller conceives of it, seeks to institute a most thorough disciplinary hold over the individual, a total moral subjection that will "encounter no resistance," because it "never appear[s] as a constraint." While emphatically denouncing repression, alienation, and the tyranny of abstract rationality, Schiller's idea of aesthetic "reconciliation" is entirely committed to the complete colonization of "nature" by "reason." The seemingly liberating regard for the "complete anthropological view" (AE 19), in fact, aims at a thorough

submission of the senses and the body to reason and the "moral law." In accord with Norbert Elias' interpretation of the "process of civilization," Schiller's project of *Bildung* can be said to aim at "an ever more differentiated regulation of the entire psychic apparatus" (1976 II: 317). Sensuality, desire, or the body, are no longer to confront reason and moral duty as their other, but are to be refashioned into their eager and submissive ally. As Schiller puts it in characteristic metaphors:

Only when it has become nature for him, is his ethical mentality secured [*seine sittliche Denkart geborgen*], because as long as the ethical spirit still uses power [*Gewalt*], the natural drive must still be able to counter it with force [*Macht*]. The enemy that is merely *toppled* can rise again, but the one that is *reconciled* is truly vanquished. (GD 284)

Rather than constituting a *liberal* reinterpretation of Kant's moral imperative, Schiller's project thus openly subjects "human nature" to an ideal norm that is far more severe and stringent, since it directly aims at a transformation of the senses and the body. "Man is not called upon [*lazzu bestimmt*]," Schiller proclaims, "to perform individual moral acts, but to be a moral being [*ein sittliches Wesen zu sein*]. Not virtues, but virtue is his command [*Vorschrift*], and virtue is nothing else 'but an inclination to duty'" (GD 283):

The moral philosopher does, it is true, teach us that man can never do more than his duty; and he is perfectly right if he merely has in mind the relation between actions and the moral law. But [...] to carry out the physical in an aesthetic manner [...], is in fact to exceed duty, since duty can only prescribe that the will be sacred, but not that nature itself has taken on a sacred character [*die Natur sich geheiligt habe*]. There is thus no possibility of a moral transcendence of duty; but there is such a thing as an aesthetic transcendence; and such conduct we call noble. (AE 167; corr.)

The declared goal of aesthetic education is an internalization and incorporation of "the law" to the point of complete harmony between "duty" and "inclination," where, in fact, "duty" has "become nature" (GD 284) and "nature itself has taken on a sacred character."

⁹⁶ See Marcuse above: 10ff.

Following a comparison which the poet-philosopher Hölderlin makes of Kant "as the Moses of our nation" (1970 4: 337),⁹⁷ one could say that Schiller, in analogy to the Jesus of *The Gospel of Matthew*, has not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it. Schiller himself hints at such an analogy when in a letter to Goethe from the summer of 1795, he characterizes Christianity as aiming at a "sublation [Aufhebung] of the law, or of the Kantian imperative" by an ideal of "free inclination":

In the Christian religion I potentially find the foundation for the highest and most noble. [...] If one sticks to the unique characteristic of Christianity, [...] then one finds it in nothing else, but in the *sublation of the law*, or of the Kantian imperative, in the place of which Christianity wants to have placed a free inclination. It is, therefore, in its pure form the presentation of *beautiful morality*, or of the incarnation of the holy [*Menschwerdung des Heiligen*], and in that sense the only *aesthetic religion*. (G/S B II: 53)

In contrast to Schiller, the Jesus of *The Gospel of Matthew* is quite outspoken with regard to the violence towards nature, the body, and the senses that is implied by such a radical internalization and incorporation of "the law":

You have heard it said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart: If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you loose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown to hell. (Math. 5, 27)

Schiller's project of aesthetic education of course abhors any such hints of violence, dismemberment, or castration. Precisely by realizing its true educational potential, "aesthetic culture" is to perform a transformation and "ennoblement" of the "inclinations" that does not harbor or reveal any traces of violence or coercion.⁹⁸ The program of aesthetic formation thus not only involves the internalization of a pre-conscious agency of moral censorship,⁹⁹ but ultimately aims at an actual refashioning of the "drives"

[Triebe] taking place at the unconscious level of "desire." Schiller speaks of an actual transformation of "human nature":

Already his inclinations must be overlaid by the law of his will; he must, if you will permit me the expression, maneuver the war against matter into the very territory of matter itself, so that he may be spared having to fight this dread foe on the sacred soil of freedom. He must learn how to desire *more nobly*, so that he may not need to *will sublimely*. This is accomplished through aesthetic culture. (AE 167ff.; corr.)

⁹⁷ Schiller suggests as much in *Grace and Dignity* of 1793 (GD 285).

⁹⁸ The model for this ennobling effect of aesthetic culture is the "interest-free delight" [*interesselose Wohlgefallen*] of Kant's aesthetics, which Schiller repeatedly characterizes in sexual terms. See AL 63; AE 199.

⁹⁹ See AL 77.

A Technology of Self

The hydroelectric plant is set into the current of the Rhine. [...] The Rhine itself appears as something at our command. [...] The river is dammed up into the power plant. [...] The river is now a water power supplier. [...] The revealing that rules throughout modern technology has the character of a setting-upon, in the sense of a challenging-forth. That challenging happens in that the energy concealed in nature is unlocked, what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is stored up is, in turn, distributed, and what is distributed is switched about ever anew. Unlocking, transforming, storing, distributing, and switching about are ways of revealing. [...] The revealing reveals to itself its own manifoldly interlocking paths, through regulating their course.

Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*

In light of these openly declared intentions, Schiller's aesthetic theory may well be understood in terms of a genealogy of morals. That is, it should be placed into the context of "a history of *ethics* and *ascetics*, understood as a history of the forms of moral subjectivation and of the practices of self that are meant to ensure it" (Foucault 1985, 29).¹⁰⁰ Following Foucault's

¹⁰⁰ In a recent essay Ian Hunter has also drawn on Foucault in order to analyze "aesthetics as a practice of the self" and, in so doing, has also focused on certain "themes in Schiller's aesthetic" (1992, 366). Hunter is interested in critically presenting contemporary "Cultural Studies" as profoundly indebted and bound to an aesthetic critique "inaugurated by late eighteenth-century German criticism and philosophy" (1992,

systematic categorization of "morality" as a "practice of the self," one can describe Schiller's paradigmatic move beyond Kant as an important reconceptualization of "the manner in which one ought to form oneself as an ethical subject" (1985, 26). "Given a code of actions," Foucault points out, "there are different ways to 'conduct oneself morally, different ways for the acting individual to operate, not just as an agent, but as an ethical subject of this action':"

A history of the way in which individuals are urged to constitute themselves as subjects of moral conduct would be concerned with the models proposed for setting up and developing relationships with the self, for self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-examination, for the decipherment of the self by oneself, for the transformation that one seeks to accomplish with oneself as object. (Foucault 1985, 29)

Schiller's aesthetic humanism and his program of aesthetic education develop an important such model. By vastly increasing the emphatically *human* significance of aesthetic self-reference,¹⁰¹ Schiller's "classical" post-Kantian theory helped establish and institute an important form of discipline and (self-)formation, one that could prove to be all the more effective, as its formative power and potential violence is idealistically veiled and obscured. Aesthetic self-reference—mirroring one's supposed identity through aesthetic media and shaping one's desires by means of aesthetic representations—has been an ever increasingly important form of subject-formation within modernity.¹⁰² Schiller's theory certainly

349). He advocates turning away from this tradition in order "to free ourselves for a quite different reflection on the limits of the aesthetic domain, by beginning to treat it as one of the *'contingencies that make us what we are'*" (Foucault) (349). Since Hunter is more interested in "the problem with aesthetic critique—and with cultural studies to the degree that it is still caught in its slipstream" (372), he construes Schiller's aesthetics above all as a radically critical practice and less clearly as a (self-)discipline in Foucault's sense of the term. My reading of Schiller's idea of "aesthetic self-cultivation" places far more stress on the specific post-Kantian disciplinary results that are to be achieved by the program of aesthetic education, as best illustrated by the formation of "the other sex."

¹⁰¹ See Henrich: "Schiller's aesthetics has thus intensified the human significance of the beautiful to an extraordinary degree. [...] Since Schiller's aesthetics the claim on beauty and art to be the objectification of the human essence has never been relinquished" (1957, 546).

¹⁰² The critical literature on this subject is rightfully vast and growing. See especially: Horkheimer/Adorno 1972; Williamson 1978; Baudrillard 1981; Zizek 1989; Featherstone 1990.

*Of perfection, until semblance conquers reality and Art triumphs over Nature" (AE 61; corr.). At the same time, aesthetic humanism's schema of nostalgic teleology, the three-stage model of a re-discovery of "nature" and human integrity, allowed Schiller to hide the disciplinary character of his project. The intention to "change the nature" of the "sensual human being" (AE 163) is turned into the urgent call to "return to nature" (AE 51); formation, or *Bildung* appears as "restoration."*

It is precisely this philosophical achievement, to have transcended the Kantian dualism of "nature" and "reason" and to have ventured "on an attempt to get beyond this by intellectually grasping unity and reconciliation as the truth," that is later praised by Hegel as constituting Schiller's groundbreaking role in the development of idealist philosophy: "The beautiful is thus pronounced to be the forming-into-one [*Insensbildung*] of the rational and the sensuous, and this formation to be the truly real [*wahrhaft Wirkliche*]" (1975, 61f.; corr.). The mystification of such a "mediation," "reconciliation," and "forming-into-one of the rational and the sensuous," whether anthropological, dialectical, or metaphysical, would in effect forget and ignore what was still obvious to Kant, namely, the necessarily violent and un-natural character of *all* moral formation. "Man," Kant writes in his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* of 1798, "must be *educated* to the good. [...] The education of the human race [...] is beneficial [*heilsam*], but rough and strict, a working over of nature [*Barbeitung der Natur*] that leads through much hardship and comes close to the destruction of the entire race" (W VIII: 223ff.). It was Nietzsche, well familiar with the principles of "classical education" and "our institutions of *Bildung*" (KSA I: 641), who again lifted the idealistic veil that had been cast over the "reconciliation" of "nature" and "reason" and who again confronted the truth of Christian Europe's moral genealogy: "We moderns, we are the heirs of the vivisection of conscience and the animal self-abuse of millennia" (KSA 5: 335).

In arguing for the implementation of his program of aesthetic education, Schiller insists that his own moral philosophy is entirely in conformity with "Kantian principles" (AE 3). The true moral code, he

Concerning those ideas which prevail in the practical part of the Kantian system only the philosophers are at variance; the rest of mankind, I believe I can prove, have always been agreed. Once divested of their technical form, they stand revealed as the immemorial pronouncements of common reason. (AE 5; corr.)

Schiller's most explicit reformulation of Kant's categorical imperative in the *Aesthetic Education* is already, however, a clear indication of the direction in which he develops this center-piece of Kant's philosophy:

Every individual human being, one may say, carries within him, as a potential and as a decree [*later Anlage und der Bestimmung nach*], a pure ideal human being, and it is the great task of his life to be, through all his changing manifestations, in harmony with its unchanging unity. (AE 17)

Certainly Kant's practical philosophy also institutes a tension between the actual and the ideal, between that which is and that which is to be, but it does so in the realm of moral deliberation and action, not, as Schiller reinterprets Kant, in reference to the moral subject's being or nature.

One can describe this difference as a change in the "*determination of the ethical substance*," i.e., in "the way in which the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct" (Foucault 1985, 26). For Kant, the prime material of moral self-constitution is "practical reason," which is called upon to become "pure" and "autonomous." This means, on the one hand, that reason, entirely on its own, should discover and grasp the principles of action that are to inform the will, and, on the other hand, that reason should, again entirely on its own, also practically activate and direct the will according to these principles. Kant's emphasis on "duty" thus conceives of desire in negative terms, which means that it is to be entirely excluded from "supreme inner legislation." This does not mean that love, or a fondness for harmony cannot contribute to the "legality" of actions, but that as sources of legislation and of motivation, i.e., as determinants of the will, such inclinations can only take away from the all-important "spirit" and "mental attitude" [*Gesinnung*] of morality. As Kant never tires of insisting:

The moral law is for the will of any finite rational creature a law of duty [*Pflicht*], of moral restraint [*Nötigung*], and of the determination of his actions through respect [*Achtung*] for the law and reverence for its duty. No other subjective principle must be assumed as incentive [*Triebfeder*], for though it might happen that the action occurs as the law prescribes, and thus in accord with duty but not from duty, the intention to do the action [*die Gesinnung dazu*] would not be moral, and it is the intention which is precisely in question in this legislation. (CPR 85ff.)

Schiller's aesthetic humanism can be said to relocate the prime material of moral conduct, which instead becomes the entire nature or being of the moral subject. While nominally agreeing with Kant's notion that the moral subject should regard the "voice of reason" as the "true self," Schiller, in fact, radically and influentially re-determines the identity of the ethical substance: "Man is not called upon to perform individual moral acts, but to be a moral being":

Man not only may, but he *should* unite pleasure and duty [*Lust und Pflicht*]; he should obey his reason with joy. [...] Only then, when it wells forth out of his entire humanity as the united effect of both principles, when it has become nature for him, is his ethical mentality secured. (GD 283f.)

This implies a far more radical critical scrutiny and problematization of the self as a moral subject of *desire*. Any indication of inner disharmony and of contradictory movements or "drives" within the self here becomes a sign that the aimed-for "reconciliation" and aesthetic identity-formation has not been achieved and that "nature" has not yet "taken on a sacred character" (AE 167; corr.):

It is here, then, in the indifferent sphere of physical life that man must make a start upon his moral life; here, while he is still passive, already start to manifest his autonomy, and while still within the limitations of sense begin his rational freedom. (AE 167; corr.)

As the next chapter argues in detail, Schiller's elevation of the inclinations and of desire to the status of prime material of moral conduct harbors all-important consequences for the "classical" philosophy of gender. The program of aesthetic education was instituted most consciously and

proved to be strategically most effective in the aesthetic formation of "the other sex."

Schiller's departure from Kant further involves a reconception of what Foucault calls the "*mode of subjection*," i.e., "the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule" (1985, 27). Partly also in response to Schiller's criticism, Kant always insists on the necessarily violent, un-natural, and repressive character of moral formation. In answer to Schiller's criticism in *Grace and Dignity* of his supposed "rigidity," Kant maintained in the second edition of his *Religion within the Limits of Pure Reason* (1794) that his "concept of duty" could not join up with "grace" precisely because of the "dignity" [*Würde*] of the moral law:

Because it contains unconditional compulsion [*Nötigung*], which stands in direct contradiction with grace. The majesty of the law (as the one on Sinai) infuses awe [*Ehrfurcht*], [...] which is the respect [*Achtung*] of the subordinate towards his master [*Gebietet*], in this case, however, because he is in ourselves, a feeling of the sublime nature of our own destiny [*Bestimmung*], which is more compelling [*hinreißt*] than all beauty. (W VI: 161f.)

This direct response to Schiller is entirely in agreement with the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) as well as the later *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), which place their emphasis throughout on the subjective experience of constraint and humiliation in response to the "sublime" and "*solemn majesty*" of the moral law. While Schiller tried to rationalize such so-called "rigidity" on Kant's part as an historically motivated therapeutic strategy—"he had to [...] correct falsity. The cure required shock, not ingratiation and persuasion" (GD 285)—the philosopher from Königsberg clearly refused to go along with any such suggestions. Indeed, what Schiller calls Kant's "rigidity" goes to the very core of Kant's conception of moral subjectivity. It concerns one of the central dimensions of his moral theorizing, namely the question of the motivational power of reason, the "incentives [*Triebfedern*] of Pure Practical Reason" (CPR 74ff.).

For Kant, "practical reason" can only be "pure" and "autonomous" if it contains "a practical ground sufficient to determine the will" (CPR 17). The moral law is not just "a formal determining ground of action through

practical pure reason" and an "objective determining ground of the objects of action (under the name of good and evil)," but also "a subjective ground of determination".

That is, it is the incentive to this action, since it has an influence on the sensibility of the subject and effects a feeling which promotes the influence of the law on the will. [...] This feeling, under the name of moral feeling, is [...] effected solely by reason. (CPR 78f)

Kant calls this "singular feeling," which is "not of empirical origin," i.e., "cannot be compared with any pathological feeling" (CPR 79), "respect [*Achtung*] for the moral law".

The consciousness of free submission of the will to the law, combined with an inevitable constraint imposed only by our own reason on all inclinations, is respect for the law. (CPR 83)

"Respect," according to Kant, consists of two principle moments, one of which is described as "negative," the other as "positive." Since "our nature as sensuous beings" is so constituted that the "material of the faculty of desire (objects of inclinations, whether of hope or fear) first presses upon us" (CPR 77), the sole and exclusive determination of the will through the judgment of practical reason has "a negative effect on feeling," insofar as "it blocks the inclinations [...] from all participation in supreme legislation".

The moral law [...] completely excludes the influence of self-love from the highest practical principle and forever checks self-conceit, which decrees the subjective conditions of self-love as laws. If anything checks our self-conceit in our judgment, it humiliates. (CPR 77)

But the effect of the moral law on feeling does not end with this negative moment:

As striking down, i.e., humiliating self-conceit, it is an object of the greatest respect and thus the ground of a positive feeling which is not of empirical origin. [...] Respect for the moral law, therefore, is a feeling produced by an intellectual cause, and this feeling is the only one we can know completely *a priori* and the necessity of which we can discern. (CPR 76)

"Respect for the moral law," in other words, describes a dynamic structure of self-reference that founds and necessitates a tension between a "pathologically determined self" and the pure determination of the will by reason. A "negative" moment, in which the inclinations are checked or constrained, is an *a priori* necessity for the moral law to be both the cause and the object of "respect," and *thereby* for it to be understood as the determining ground of action:

In the subject there is no *antecedent* feeling tending to morality; that is impossible, because all feeling is sensuous, and the incentives of the moral disposition must be free from every sensuous condition. Rather, sensuous feeling, which is the basis of all our inclinations, is the condition of the particular feeling we call respect, but the cause that determines this feeling lies in pure practical reason. (CPR 78)

The moral subject, as legislator of action, needs to detach itself from all other, prior determinations of the will. It needs to silence the voice of nature, inclination, habit, fear, or convention, in order to pay attention and respect to the pure self-determination by reason. The legal-political metaphor that Kant employs to capture this structure of the moral subject's relation to the rule is intent on stressing precisely this double aspect of our relation to the law:

We stand under the *discipline* of reason, and in all our maxims we must not forget our subjection to it. [...] We are indeed legislative members of a moral realm which is possible through freedom and which is presented to us as an object of respect by practical reason; yet we are at the same time subjects to it, no sovereigns, and to mistake our inferior position as creatures and to deny, from self-conceit, respect to the holy law is, in spirit, a deflection from it, even if its letter be fulfilled. (CPR 85)

Schiller, however, wishes to reconceptualize the moral subject's relation to the rule, which, in his eyes, assumes in Kant still too much of an external, legalistic guise, the "appearance of a foreign and positive law" (GD 286). By denying a natural and original division and antagonism within the self, Schiller, in effect, tries to reconceive of freedom as self-determination. In radical departure from Kant, Schiller understands the

moral self and its relation to the rule in analogy to an aesthetic whole.¹⁰³ He first captures this in the so-called "Kallias-Letters" (1793) by his famous definition of "beauty as freedom in appearance" (KB 14). The beautiful object appears as self-organized and self-formed because it shows no traces or effects of "externality," "heteronomy," "violence," or "contingency" (KB 31). It alone, therefore, is said to make sensually present the idea of freedom as true self-determination:

Certainly no greater word has been spoken by a mortal human being than this Kantian, which is at the same time the content of his entire philosophy: Determine yourself out of yourself [*Bestimme Dich aus Dir selbst*]. [...] This great idea of self-determination shines back to us out of certain appearances of nature, and these we call *beauty*. (KB 18)

Schiller here first articulates his own concept of "freedom," modeled after an aesthetic union, by expanding on the Kantian dictum that "fine art" has to have "the appearance of being nature" and that "the finality of its form must appear just as free from the constraint of arbitrary rules as if it were a product of mere nature" (CJ § 45).¹⁰⁴ As Schiller there gropingly puts it:

Beauty is nature in artfulness [...], what gives itself the rule by itself—what comes to be by means of its own rule. (Freedom in regulation, regulation in freedom). [...] Technique [*die Technik*] itself must again appear as if determined by the nature of the thing, what one could call the voluntary consensus of the thing to its technique. [...] Technique therefore is everywhere something foreign, where it does not develop [*entstehen*] out of the thing itself, is not one with the entire existence of it, does not come out of the inside, but from the outside, is not necessary with the thing and inherent to it [*angeboren*], but given to it and therefore contingent [*zufällig*]. [...] What is nature in artfulness? Autonomy within the technique? It is the pure coincidence of

¹⁰³ Compare: GD 49; AE 136ff. That Schiller's concept of freedom departs from Kant's by moving the aesthetic and the moral order closer together is well established in scholarship. See Henrich 1957, 540ff. For a critical interpretation from a Kantian point of view, see Strack 1976, 30ff. For a positive interpretation, see Ewers 1978, 13f. See also Taylor's commentary on this Schillerian departure from Kant: "We can recognize here the ideal of the expression theory, an expressive harmony in which natural desires and the highest human forms are effortlessly united in a single élan. This is freedom, in the sense of integral, undivided, unconflicting self-expression" (1975, 38). See also Taylor's more recent rereading of Schiller with Foucault: 1985, 159ff.

¹⁰⁴ On Kant's aesthetics, see below: 166ff.

the inner essence with the form, a rule, which is at the same time followed and given by the thing. (KB 28ff.)

In Schiller's aesthetic humanism, "beauty" thus constitutes the paradigm of the desired "mode of subjection" (Foucault), the model of an effectively internalized technique that appears to be fully at one with the being or nature of the subject that is formed by it. *Grace and Dignity* illustrates Schiller's critique of and departure from Kant by means of a characteristic image that speaks well to the aesthetic basis of Schiller's thought. There he contrasts an individual whose "drives" and "feelings" are in complete harmony with practical reason with a "well-schooled pupil [*Zögling*] of the moral rule," who, "as the word of the master demands, will be ready at every moment to give the strictest account of the relation of his actions to the law":

The life of the latter will resemble a drawing in which one can discern the rule in hard lines and with which, at the most, an apprentice could learn the principles of art. But in a beautiful life, as in a painting by Titian, all these cutting borderlines have disappeared, and nevertheless the whole figure [*Gestalt*] steps forth only the more truthfully, the more lively, and the more harmoniously. (GD 287)

The internalization and incorporation of "the rule" and "law" that is to be achieved through aesthetic education is to harbor no signs of violence or coercion, but should rather appear as the spontaneous and natural expression of the subject's essence or nature.

Not only are "fine art" [*schöne Kunst*] and "aesthetic culture" therefore posited by Schiller as the privileged *means* for the urgently needed "ennoblement" and "recovery" of "humanity," but "beauty" also supplies the paradigm for the intended *goal* of humanity's moral formation, what Foucault calls "the telos of the ethical subject" (1985, 27). "Be free like I am" (KB 39) is, according to all of Schiller's post-Kantian theorizing,¹⁰⁵ the

¹⁰⁵ See Henrich: "In all of his writings, as much as they may divert from each other in significant ways, the definition of beauty is: beauty is freedom in appearance. In the beautiful form and in the work of art the ground of our moral being, which otherwise is only disclosed through reflective understanding, is encountered intuitively. Freedom means to-be-wholly-determined-out-of-yourself, to unfold oneself to the outside according to inner necessity without influence from the outside. Just as the moral essence is what is completely out of itself, so we encounter the beautiful appearance as a free,

invitation that issues from the beautiful object.¹⁰⁶ "Beauty," the master concept of Schiller's aesthetic humanism, above all denotes an order or form of organization, the "rules" and "technology" of which are so fully internalized and incorporated that it can "appear" as "nature." In the aesthetic contemplation of "beauty," "humanity" is allowed to intuit the goal of its own moral self-transformation, namely the accomplished and perfected internalization and incorporation of its self-given "form" and "rule," the realization of "freedom" as "supreme inner necessity" (AE 124):

He would in such cases, and in such cases only, have a complete intuition of his humanity, and the object which afforded him this intuition would serve him as a Symbol of his *accomplished destiny*, and, consequently (since that is only to be attained in the totality of time) as a representation [*Darstellung*] of the infinite. (AE 94)

unconstrained form, in which all the parts form a fitting whole out of a unified ground" (1957, 534).

¹⁰⁶ One can speak here of an appellation in Althusser's exact sense. See below, Note 202.

THE FORMATION OF THE OTHER SEX

These programmings of behavior, these regimes of jurisdiction and veridiction aren't abortive schemas for the creation of a reality. They are fragments of reality that induce such particular effects in the real as the distinction between true and false implicit in the ways men "direct," "govern," and "conduct" themselves and others. To grasp these effects as historical events—with what this implies for the question of truth (which is the question of philosophy itself)—this is more or less my theme.

Foucault, "Questions of Method"

Schiller's aesthetic humanism is a pivotal constituent of the classical philosophy of gender consolidated in Germany during the 1790's to a large extent by the circle of authors gathered together in his journal *The Horae*.¹⁰⁷ Schiller's contributions to the gender-ideology that dominated in Germany during the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century can be regarded as one of the most significant historical legacies of his work, a classical heritage that the institutions of aesthetic education have only recently begun to confront and examine critically.¹⁰⁸ While Schiller's poetic and dramatic *oeuvre* functioned as a most prominent medium for the indoctrination of this ideology, his theoretical work could serve both as an authoritative justification and as a strategic model for the

¹⁰⁷ Figures such as Goethe, Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Fichte, and August Wilhelm Schlegel.

¹⁰⁸ See, in particular: Duden 1977; Bovenschen 1979; Kitzler 1990; Müller-Sievers 1993.

implementation of this distinctly modern form of gender discipline—a program that proved to be so astonishingly successful, in part, because its disciplinary coercion and violence could remain more or less hidden behind a veil of idealization. It is, indeed, most instructive to pay closer attention to this crucial dimension of Schiller's theory, traditionally neglected or downplayed in scholarship, but quite obviously central to his entire project, in order also to illustrate the potential historical efficacy of Schiller's aesthetic humanism and its productive model of normalization.

Making Truth Productive

'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extent it.

Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*

That Schiller's aesthetic humanism indeed presents a blueprint for certain technologies of self is most clearly recognizable in its normative construction of an ideal female subjectivity. What the discourse of humanism celebrates as "nature" is to be implemented and produced in the real. Indeed, it is with respect to the education or formation [*Bildung*] of "the other sex," as Schiller likes to write, that the project of aesthetic education really comes into its own. Here, and only here, does aesthetic education constitute an end in itself. Education *through* art becomes education *to* art (Gadamer) because in the case of women, the very goal of aesthetic self-reference is to turn the self into an aesthetic object.¹⁰⁹ As Schiller puts it in his poem of 1795, *The Virtue of Women*:

The man needs virtues, he should throw himself into life daringly,
Take on inconclusive battle with the stronger luck.
One virtue suffices for the woman, she is there, she appears,
Lovely to the heart, to the eye, she should always appear.

[Tugenden brauchet der Mann, er stürze sich wagemut ins Leben,
Tritt mit dem stärkeren Glück in den bedenklischen Kampf.
Eine Tugend genüget dem Weibe, sie ist da, sie erscheinet,
Lieblich dem Herzen, dem Aug' lieblich erscheine sie stets.] (NA 1: 286)

¹⁰⁹ Critics who claim that this is the case for Schiller's project as a whole downplay or ignore his reflections "On the Necessary Limits in the Use of Beautiful Forms" (NA 22: 3ff.) a topic announced clearly already in letter 26 of the *Aesthetic Education* (AE 194) and soon developed in the essay published in the ninth piece of *The Horae* of 1795.

In contrast to male adherence to the demands of reason and duty [*Pflicht*], *freedom* for women implies complete subjection to an inner identity and "necessity" called *The Feminine Ideal*:

If the man thinks he is free! *You are free*, because eternally necessary

You no longer know of any choice, of any necessity.

Whatever you give, always you give yourself whole, you are eternally

Only One, even your slightest sound is your harmonious self.

[Dünke der Mann sich frei! *Du bist es*, denn ewig notwendig

Weißt du von keiner Wahl, keiner Notwendigkeit mehr.

Was du auch giebst, stets giebst du dich ganz, du bist ewig nur Eines,

Auch dein zärttester Laut ist dein harmonisches Selbst.] (NA 1: 287)

While for men, aesthetic education is meant to function merely as a supplement to rational self-regulation, for women it is conceived of as the principle mode of self-reference and as the main instrument of moral formation. Since women are to function as the guardians of "nature," the "beautiful sex" must be guided to a realization of its "beautiful vocation" by means of a formation that does not threaten or disturb its "character." "this glorious gift of nature" (NSP 425). The "other sex," as Schiller explains, is (to be) "governed by beauty" alone:

This sex, even if it does not rule through beauty, should be called the beautiful sex solely on account of the fact that it is governed by beauty. It draws everything that it encounters before the judgment of sensation and what does not speak to it, or even offends it, is lost to her. (NA 21:16f.)

This is also the reason why so many of Schiller's own pronouncements about gender are expressed in verse. As he explains:

Why do you tell us that in verse? The verses are effective,

If one speaks to you in prose, you plug up your ears.

[Warum sagst du uns das in Versen? Die Verse sind wirksam,

Spricht man in Prosa zu euch, stopft ihr die Ohren euch zu.] (NA 1: 331)

It is certainly hard to imagine a more perfect example of a productive project of normalization and discipline than Schiller's programmatic "praise of women" (Hegel)—a strategic idealization that was to resonate

forcefully and in a lasting manner throughout Germany's cultural institutions. As Hegel, who wholeheartedly affirmed the classical-idealist doctrine, later testifies to the centrality of this dimension of Schiller's discourse:

The beautiful is thus pronounced to be the forming-into-one of the rational and the sensuous and this formation to be the genuinely actual. In general this view of Schiller's can be recognized already in his *Grace and Dignity*, as well as in his poems, because he makes the praise of women his special subject matter, for in their character he recognized and emphasized just that spontaneously present unification of spirit and nature. (1975, 62; corr.)

Here, indeed, is potentially little need for violent external forms of repression, since the norm articulates itself in an authoritative discourse of "praise" and of liberation, while, at the same time, individuals are strategically colonized on the level of their desires by means of seductive aesthetic idealizations.

It has been remarked that German classicism, with its "Gretchens, Käthchens, and Klärchens," soared to the "ethereal realms of humanist ethics and aesthetics [...] on the images of women" (Theweiler 1987 II: 352f.). One needs to add that these literary images of a male fantasy were underwritten and confirmed by no less effective truth discourses about the "true nature" and "beautiful vocation" of "the other sex." Schiller's poetic and theoretical *oeuvre* is itself a perfect example of such a system of communication and formation. What the fictions of poetry and drama make present imaginistically is codified and theoretically legitimated by a scientific and philosophical discourse of truth, and *vice versa*—a two-pronged discursive technology for the production of "nature." The philosophy of gender, as it is articulated in Germany in systematic and "classical" form in the 1790's, thus constitutes a paradigmatic example for what Foucault describes as a "regime" of "truth": "[T]ruth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it" (Foucault 1980, 133). Schiller first outlined such a system of communication and cultural formation in his famous review of Bürger's poetry of 1791. Himself

destined to become the poet of the German people *par excellence*,¹¹⁰ he reflects there on the peculiar educational role of the "popular poet" [Volksdichter]:

Such a poet would resolve even the sublime philosophy of life into the simple feelings of nature, would hand over to the imagination the results of strenuous research, and would allow the secrets of the thinker to be guessed by the child's sense by means of an easily decipherable language of images. A precursor of clear insight, he would propagate amongst the people the most daring truths of reason in charming and trustworthy wrappings, long before the philosopher and legislator may dare to exhibit them in their full glory. Before these truths had become a property of conviction, they would through him have proven their quiet power at the heart and an impatient and unanimous desire would finally by itself demand them from reason. (NA 21: 249)

Very much in line with this conception, Schiller himself does not develop any extensive scientific demonstrations or philosophical deductions of "female nature"—that is supplied by the philosophical doctors of the later eighteenth century,¹¹¹ as well as by fellow transcendental philosophers and *Horae*-contributors such as Humboldt and Fichte.¹¹² Schiller, rather, sets out to make these truths popular and "effective" by means of his

¹¹⁰ See Grawe 1994. In 1924 Goethe already commented on this growing popularity of his late friend: "Schiller, who, by the way, was much more of an aristocrat than I am, but who thought more carefully about what he said, than I, has the strange luck to be regarded as a special friend of the people" (Eckermann 1925, 434).

¹¹¹ On the importance of the "philosophical doctors" for the discourse of truth about women see: Laqueur 1990; Sharpe 1992.

¹¹² Schiller published Humboldt's important essay "On Gender Difference and its Influence on Organic Nature" in *The Horae* alongside the second installment of the *Aesthetic Education*, and two installments of Humboldt's subsequent "On Male and Female Form" preceded the third part of the *Aesthetic Education*. Schiller's own most direct prose statements on the philosophy of gender are found in his essay "On the Necessary Limits of the Beautiful," which he published in *The Horae* between the *Aesthetic Education* and *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*. Humboldt was regarded by Schiller as the journal's expert on this subject matter, as one can surmise from a letter to him in which he comments on an article by Friedrich Schlegel on Greek women: "The essay comes very close to you and your favorite work on two sides and should have been left for you. [...] I wished that Schlegel turned to material that would make him useful to the *Horae* because the one he is working on now is already occupied so well by you and we cannot give it too much room" (S/H B I: 263f.).

poetry, his plays, as well as his so-called "beautiful prose." As he puts it programmatically in the conclusion of the *Aesthetic Education*:

Taste leads knowledge out of the mysteries of science into the broad daylight of common sense, and turns the possession of the schools into the common possession of human society as a whole. In this realm even the mightiest genius must divest itself of its high authority and step down in familiarity to the child's sense. (AE 217; corr.)

In the important essay "On the Necessary Limits of the Beautiful Especially in the Presentation of Philosophical Truths" (1795), published in *The Horae* between his two main theoretical studies, the *Aesthetic Education* and *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*, Schiller gives an account of the unique character of his philosophical prose and delineates more specifically how he intends to make "truth" effective through the "magic power" of "beauty" and "taste." He also declares there just who is to be the main beneficiary of this mode of communication:

Only in this manner is it possible to have those participate in the treasures of wisdom, whom already their nature forbade [*schon ihre Natur untersagte*] to wander the unnatural path of science [*Wissenschaft*]. Taste [...] nourishes and adorns the female spirit with the products of the manly, and lets the charming sex perceive [*empfinden*] where it has not thought, and enjoy, where it did not work. (NA 21: 17)

Because scientific specialization and philosophical abstraction is detrimental to harmonious humanity and since the "few examples" of women who have ventured into the sciences "cannot make us wish that this may become the rule," Schiller concludes categorically, that "the other sex" is to be "forbidden" to enter "the realm of abstraction, where He reigns" (NA 21: 16)—a repressive measure that was indeed strictly enforced throughout Germany's universities during the nineteenth century¹¹³: "The business, therefore, which nature not only spared the other sex, but forbade her, the man must doubly take upon himself" (NA 22: 16f.). Since scientific abstraction is "lost" on the "other sex," it is the obligation of men to translate "as much as possible" from the "realm of

¹¹³ See Kittler 1990, 53ff.

abstraction, where He reigns," into the "realm of imagination and sensation".

It is true that in this channel only the material of truth, not truth itself, which is inseparable from its proof, can be delivered to the beautiful sex. But happily it only needs the material of truth, in order to reach its highest perfection. (NA 21: 17)

One of the most important "truths" that is to be transmitted in this fashion from the "realm of abstraction" to the imagination, feeling, and will of the "other sex" is, of course, the "truth" about her "true vocation" and how she may reach "her highest perfection," i.e., the very philosophy of gender on which this regime is based. Whether delivered in form of his poetry, plays, or in the "beautiful diction" of his philosophical prose, Schiller's "praise of women" is always conceived of as fully able to stand up to the scrutiny of "science" [*Wissenschaft*]. As an aesthetic "presentation," however, it explicitly sets out to "seize the living with living energy and to take possession of the entire human being, the understanding, the feelings and the will" (NA 21: 15). The enthusiastic comments by his friend Humboldt—the leading authority on the philosophy of gender on the *Horae* team—in response to the character of Thekla in Schiller's play *Wallenstein* seems to testify to his success in both of these demands:

So wholly nature and so purely nature nothing has ever appeared to me, not just with you, but anywhere else. [...] Thekla is precisely as feminine, as a woman has to be [...] and only knows herself and her vocation. (S/H B II: 196)

Schiller's popular contributions to the dominant gender-ideology of German-speaking lands during the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century are as notorious as they were pervasive.¹¹⁴ One simply has to remind oneself of the generations of school-children who literally learned his gender-pronouncements by heart, being obliged by the state institution of aesthetic education called "the German lesson"

[*Deutschstunde*] to memorize and recite his didactic poetry.¹¹⁵ Both of my German grandmothers—in that respect, very much examples of the norm—could readily recite such infamously long poems as Schiller's *Song of the Bell*, which had been inscribed into them sixty years earlier in school. One of its best-known sections reads as follows:

Man must gird for his race
Thro' the stern paths of life,
Midst turmoil and strife,
Must plant and must form.
Gain by cunning or storm;
Must wager and dare,
Would he reach fortune e'er.
Then wealth without ending upon him soon pours,
His granaries all overflow with rich stores;
The room is enlarged, and his house grows apace;
And o'er it is ruling
The housewife so modest,
His children's dear mother;
And wisely she governs
The circle of home.
The maidens she trains,
And the boys she restrains,
Keeps plying for ever
Her hands that flag never,
And wealth helps to raise
With her orderly ways,
The sweet-scented presses with treasures piles high,
Bids the thread round the fast-whirling spindle to fly;
The clean and bright-polish'd chest she heaps full
With the flax white as snow, and the glistening wool;
All glitter and splendor ordains for the best,
And takes no rest. (1916, 219f.)

Der Mann muß hinaus
Ins feindliche Leben,
Muß wirken und streben
Und pflanzen und schaffen,
Erlisten, erraffen,
Muß wetten und wagen,
Das Glück zu erjagen.

¹¹⁴ On the institutionalization of the "German lesson" at state schools, see Frank 1973. On "German" as a subject in "the pedagogically institutionalized difference between the sexes," see Kittler 1990, 150ff.

¹¹⁵ See: Bovenschen 1979. On Schiller's popularity, see Grawe 1994.

Da strömet herbei die unendliche Gabe,
Es füllt sich der Speicher mit köstlicher Habe,
Die Räume wachsen, es dehnt sich das Haus.

Und drinnen waltet
Die züchtige Hausfrau,
Die Mutter der Kinder,
Und herrschet weise
Im häuslichen Kreise,
Und lehret die Mädchen
Und wehret den Knaben,
Und reget ohn Ende
Die fleißigen Hände,
Und mehrt den Gewinn
Mit ordnendem Sinn.
Und füllet mit Schätzen die duftenden Laden,
Und dreht um die schnurrende Spindel den Faden,
Und sammelt im reinlich geglätteten Schrein
Die schimmernde Wolle, den schneeigen Lein,
Und fügert zum Guten den Glanz und den Schimmer,
Und ruhet nimmer. (NA 2, I: 230)]

Put into easily accessible language, the poem aptly summarizes the mundane and all-too-familiar significance of Schiller's idealizing philosophy of gender. Whereas the bourgeois male is compelled by "duty" to go out and accumulate property by the sweat of his brow, so to speak, the "beautiful soul" who is to aesthetically enrich his household is to perform her tasks in a pre-lapsarian manner, i.e., "gracefully," without displaying any traces of violence or constraint, and as if merely obeying her own spontaneously beautiful desires and inclinations.

In light of the (intentionally) simplistic character of many of Schiller's pronouncements about gender, it has often been easy and convenient to ignore and sidestep this aspect of his thought as incidental and not on a par with his larger philosophical concerns.¹¹⁶ However, as Hegel's remarks testify, the philosophy of gender by no means constitutes a secondary issue in Schiller's theorizing, an idiosyncratic concern, to which one might assign a lower status in relation to his primary philosophical or world-historical interests. Rather, the issue of gender and the "praise of women" stand at the very center of his discourse. This can be

¹¹⁶ For an exception to this, see Riecke-Niklewski 1986.

exemplified by one of the most dramatic moments of Schiller's philosophical career, when in 1793 he first publicly criticized Kant's moral philosophy in the climactic ending of the first part of *Grace and Dignity*. Schiller famously begins his criticism in biblical language: "But did the *children of the home* deserve that he only cared for the *drudges*?" (GD 285f). Schiller's from now on standard charge against Kant's moral "rigorism," that "human nature is a more unified whole in reality than the philosopher is able to make it appear" (GD 286), is then quickly backed up by descriptions of the moral ideal embodied in the "beautiful soul" and by the "grace" that characterizes the "female sex" (GD 288). Reason and sensuality, duty and desire, are not "by nature" in conflict, as the great philosopher Kant insisted, and the "grace" and "moral harmony of feeling" of "the female sex" is crucial evidence of this fact:

It is thus in a beautiful soul that sensuality and reason, duty and inclination are in harmony, and grace is its expression in the realm of appearance. [...] On the whole, one will find grace more with the *female* sex (beauty perhaps more with the male) and the reason for this is not hard to find. [...] Grace will therefore be the expression of female virtue, which manly virtue will very often lack. (GD 288f.)

By no means limited to its reliance on "the Greeks," Schiller's aesthetic-humanist rhetoric is steeped in examples, images, and metaphors drawn from and developing the classical philosophy of gender and its authoritative truth-claims concerning the "natural spiritual difference between the sexes" (NA 21: 17). Indeed, one of the central criticisms that Schiller directs against the over-idealization of Greek literature is the charge that it is woefully deficient in its representation of women and love.¹¹⁷ Schiller's humanist discourse is, in fact, thoroughly

¹¹⁷ Compare *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*: "Every reader of finer feeling must sense, for example, in their depiction of feminine nature, of the relations between the two sexes, and of love in particular, a certain emptiness and satiety that all the truth and naïveté of the representation cannot overcome" (NSP 478). This criticism is, of course, a familiar one in the eighteenth century (see Jauß 1970, 76; 100). Schiller makes use of it in *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry* as evidence for his thesis that the poetry of the ancients is "objective," i.e., bound to the objective conditions of reality: "To the extent that nature within and without them is beautiful, the poetry of the ancients is likewise so; but if, on the contrary, nature is vulgar, then the spirit has fled from their poetry" (NSP 478).

gendered, and one can hardly overemphasize the importance "the other sex" assumes in it. The role played by gender-definitions in Schiller's discourse is thus not restricted to a limited number of truth-claims about the sexes or to a certain amount of "praise" for "the other sex." Rather, these pronouncements about gender have a general, figurative quality to them, which intimately links them to all the other main schemata or oppositions of Schiller's aesthetic humanism: nature/culture, organic/mechanical, internal/external, Greeks/Moderns, naive/sentimental. The nostalgic teleology of Schiller's aesthetic humanism is so thoroughly interwoven with sexual and gender metaphors, allusion, and connotations that the entire discourse can be said to take on a gendered quality.¹¹⁸

The Beautiful Style

The greatest part of the effect produced by my writing (whether among the few or the many) is of an *aesthetic* nature, and thus the effect is secured for all following ages in which the language of the author is understood.

Schiller to Fichte, 1795

Competent contemporaries, no less than Schiller himself, certainly took note of the peculiar character of Schiller's philosophical prose, which has also been a central topic in recent Schiller-scholarship.¹¹⁹ Humboldt, the future language philosopher, remarked with respect to the style of Schiller's theoretical texts that "the ideas in these essays were not so much split and taken apart, but [...] as if cut into facets of which each receives and throws back a new light" (S/H B I: 651f).¹²⁰ Fichte, on the other hand, who was a major inspiration for the *Aesthetic Education*, was harshly critical of Schiller's "popularizing philosophical diction," which he described as "completely new":

Among the ancient and modern authors I know no one, who could be compared to you in this. You bind [*fesseln*] the imagination, which can only be free, and want to force it to think. [...] I need to translate everything of yours first, before I understand it. (1971, XXXIX)

Schiller certainly agreed that his "philosophical diction" was not to be compared to a merely "didactic" style and provoked by Fichte's attack, set out to justify himself at length in his essay "On the Necessary Limits of Beauty, Especially in the Delivery of Philosophical Truths" (1795). In

¹¹⁸ In a letter to Humboldt, in which he clarifies his important distinction between "naive" and "sentimental poetry," Schiller himself clearly points to this underlying connection between the philosophy of gender and the various schematizations of his discourse: "Naive poetry stands in relation to sentimental poetry [...] as naive *humanity* does to sentimental humanity. Now you will certainly not deny that the merely naive humanity does not have the content for the spirit which the sentimental owns (being subject to culture). [...] I need to remind you here of your own concepts of the sexes and their relation to a sexless humanity. Compared to the woman, the man is more of a possible human being, but a human being in a higher sense; held against the man, the woman is certainly a more real human, but one less rich in content" (S/H B I: 270f.).

¹¹⁹ See Meyer 1963; Ueding 1971; Borchmeyer 1973; Riecke-Niklowski 1986; Kontje 1987.

¹²⁰ See also the comments in "On Schiller" (S/H B II: 380)

comparison to a "scientific" and a "popularizing" style, Schiller places his own writings in the category of "beautiful diction," so named, because its individualization of general concepts "releases the imagination from the fetters [*Fesseln*] of reason and gives it the right to prove itself creative":

Such a presentation, one could say, is an *organic* product, where not just the whole is alive, but where also the individual parts have their own unique life; the merely scientific presentation is a *mechanical* work, where the parts, lifeless in themselves, only give to the whole an artificial life through their coherence. [...] The common judge, of course, who has no sense for this harmony [...] will first have to *translate* [such an author], if he wants to understand him. (NA 21: 9)

A good example of the peculiar character of Schiller's prose is found in a passage from *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*, published soon after Schiller's justification of his prose style. In the famous first section he discusses the "naive" natural world as the object of "sentimental" longing for modern civilized man. In accordance with his schema of nostalgic teleology, his deliberations want to establish that in spite of all nostalgia for a lost "nature" [*die Natur*], one should not seriously desire to go back or trade with "her" [*ihre*].¹²¹ Schiller first makes it clear that when we experience "nature," or parts of "her" (e.g., animals or a landscape) as "naive," we are actually attributing a "naive character" to nature "by means of an effect of the poeticizing imagination," i.e., "we lend in our thoughts a will to that which has none":

We address the non-rational as a person, making a virtue of its eternal uniformity, and envy its calm bearing, as if it had really fought with some temptation to be otherwise. [...] We then see in non-rational nature only a happier sister who remained in our mother's house, out of which we impetuously fled abroad in the arrogance of our freedom. With painful nostalgia we yearn to return as soon as we have begun to experience the pressure of civilization and hear in the remote lands of art our mother's tender voice. As long as we were children of nature merely, we

¹²¹ My translation here of the grammatical gender of Schiller's German does not claim any larger evidential value, but merely wishes to convey the full richness of the original text. By no means is it intended as the sole evidence for the strongly gendered quality of Schiller's philosophical prose.

enjoyed happiness and perfection; we became free, and lost both. (NSP 427)

After making the moral argument that it is evidently wrong to wish to "trade" with the "happinness" of this former state of innocence ("ask yourself, sentimental friend of nature [...]"), Schiller then goes on to suggest a different option:

When you are consoled with the lost *happiness* of nature then let her *perfection* be your heart's example. If you step out to her from your artificial environment she stands before you in her great calm, in her naive beauty, in her childlike innocence and simplicity—then linger with this image, cultivate this emotion; it is worthy of your most sublime humanity. Let it no longer occur to you to want to trade with her, but take her up within yourself and strive to wed [*vermählen*] her infinite advantage to your own infinite prerogative and from both to produce [*erzeugen*] the divine. Let her surround you like an enchanting *idyll* in which you yourself may always find yourself again out of the aberrations of artifice, where you gather courage and new confidence for the race, and rekindle in your heart the flame of the *ideal* which is so easily extinguished in the storms of life. (NSP 428f.)

Schiller is here ostensibly addressing the fate of modern, post-Enlightenment culture as a whole, which needs to be (dialectically) reunited with the order of "nature."¹²² Above all, however, Schiller is addressing the "sentimental" individual of his time, whom Schiller is leading to a recognition of the true status of his desires and giving practical guidance for his moral self-regulation. In so doing, Schiller is also articulating and drawing on basic ideas and images of the classical philosophy of gender. The passage and its central metaphor—a male subject's relationship to a feminine other¹²³—can also be read literally: the text presents Schiller's ideal of woman and of marriage: "Let her surround you like an enchanting *idyll* in which you yourself may always

¹²² Which is here also (aside from being feminized) characterized in terms of Winckelmann's Greece, namely by "calm" [*Ruhe*], "beauty" [*Schönheit*], and "simplicity" [*Einfalt*]. See Hatfield 1959, 27.

¹²³ It is Schiller who is arguing that "we" personally "non-rational nature" as a "happier sister who remained in our mother's house." My translation of the grammatical gender of Schiller's German merely intends to convey the suggestive character of Schiller's prose.

find yourself again [...]". Just so, the passage is *literally* also about "production" in marriage, i.e., about "procreation" or "begetting" [*Zeugung*], which is a master concept and a crucial topic in the classical philosophy of gender. In Humboldt's foundational essay "On Gender-Difference and Its Influence On Organic Nature" (1795), a text which Schiller had published a year earlier in *The Horae* alongside of his *Aesthetic Education*, the discussion centers on the process of "generation" [*Zeugung*] as the productive fusion of an active "male" with a reactive "female" principle. In Humboldt's essay this creative act also describes the process of creation by the (male) aesthetic "genius," where the productive synthesis takes place through the dynamic interaction of "male" and "female" principles within the mind. Certainly, therefore, Schiller's passage also plays on this poetological, or aesthetic register, which, after all, is the main topic of *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*.¹²⁴

Such a reading of Schiller's philosophical diction as harboring multiple, interrelated, and mutually supporting levels of signification is explicitly endorsed by the author. In describing (and justifying) his own prose style as "beautiful," Schiller explains that even though his prose is strictly controlled by "the understanding," its unique stylistic features allow the reader's "imagination" a great deal of productive freedom in its play of association with different "images" and "figurative expressions," which is why the grammatical gender of Schiller's German is significant and often clearly intended to be suggestive:

Always striving after completion of determination, she [the imagination; *die Imagination*; *die Phantasie*; *die Einbildungskraft*] now is given the right to complete, enliven, and remold, according to her liking, the image that is given to her, as well as to pursue it in all its connections and transformations. She may momentarily forget her subordinate role and act as an arbitrary and autonomous ruler, because the strict inner network of connections is a sufficient guarantee that she can never completely escape from the reign of the understanding. (NA 21: 9f.)

¹²⁴ See also the *Aesthetic Education*: "He [the artist] should seek to produce [*erzeuge*] the ideal out of the union of what is possible and what is necessary" (AE 56). On the whole, however, Schiller's analyses of the process of aesthetic creation are sparse; he is more concerned with questions of aesthetic "effects."

This passage is both a justification and a good example for the pervasive sexual figuration of Schiller's prose. The "imagination" is seemingly allowed to freely transcend "her" otherwise "subordinate role" and to act out "her" arbitrary reign, while, in fact, the authoritative "understanding" [*der Verstand*] is said to have "her" securely in "his" reins—much like Schiller, in the same essay, envisions women's participation in the "results" of science: "Taste [...] nourishes and adorns the female spirit with the products of the manly, and lets the charming sex perceive [*empfinden*] where it has not thought, and enjoy, where it did not work" (NA 21: 17). But, as Schiller continues, the "beauty" of his philosophical prose goes even further:

The figurative expression increases this freedom even further by wedding together [*zusammengatten*] images that are completely different in their content, but which are united under a higher concept. Because the imagination clings to the content, the understanding, however, to that higher concept, the former makes a leap where the latter observes the most perfect continuity. [...] The thought remains the same, only the medium that presents it changes. (NA 21: 10)

In the above example from *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry* such a so-called "leap" by the "imagination" is indeed carefully controlled. First, a (male) individual's sentimental regard for the "naive" is figured as the longing for the lost "motherly home," while naive nature is personified as the "happier sister." The whole image is then associated with "the mother's stirring voice." Upon establishing that "this nature" must "eternally lie behind you," Schiller then compels the imagination to leap from the image of nature as childlike sister to the personification of nature as an ideal female figure ("naive beauty," "childlike innocence and simplicity"), ready to be "wedded to" a male principle that has matured to a recognition of its own "infinite prerogative": "Let it no longer occur to you to want to trade with her, but take her up within yourself and strive to wed [*vermählen*] her infinite advantage to your own infinite prerogative."

Schiller's union ("wedding together") of these various images and of their different "contents" thus takes the form of a *Bildungsroman in nuce*—which, characteristically ends with or aims for a bourgeois marriage and a wedding. Similarly, in the above passage in which Schiller reflects upon

his own style, the key element of the 'magic power' of his 'beautiful diction'—the productive association of images with different contents—is again figured by Schiller as a wedding ("wedding together"). This, of course, is meant to suggest that there is nothing violent or forced about his "beautiful style," but that its productive fusions are, as he says, "an organic product":

Such a product will completely satisfy the understanding, as soon as it is studied, but since it is truly beautiful, it does not obtrude its lawfulness, it does not solely address the understanding, but it speaks as pure unity to the harmonious whole of the human being, as nature to nature. (NA 21: 13f.)

Schiller goes on to argue in this essay that such an "organic product," which is able to speak "as nature to nature," must for this very reason be uniquely qualified to function as a privileged "channel" for the communication of "truth" to women:

The other sex can and may never, due to her nature and beautiful vocation, share the sciences [*Wissenschaft*] with the masculine. But through the medium of presentation she may partake with them of truth. (NA 21: 16)

The Faithful Mirror of Art

Women [...] remain in inner harmony, unfolding themselves simply like a flower, without struggle and without resistance. The man needs the perception of this harmony, in order to find himself again.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*

In characterizing Schiller's theoretical position, critics have traditionally emphasized his idealization of "the Greeks" as another example of the "myth of Greece" and of the so-called "tyranny of Greece over Germany" (Butler 1935).¹²⁵ Certainly the image of classical antiquity, mediated primarily through sculpture and well in tune with the neoclassical idealizations of his time, is of great importance to Schiller's aesthetic humanism.¹²⁶ And certainly his own particular version of post-Winckelmannian *græcophilía* also contributed its share to the historical and institutional consequences of this neoclassical ideology. As Richard Fester wrote in 1890:

Rousseau's abstract natural man is thus substituted by an abstract Greek. Schiller, far more so than Winckelmann, is therefore the father of that overblown enthusiasm for the Hellenic being, which so long has stood in the way of a deeper understanding of the history of Greece and which still today continues to have its effects in the philological history instruction of our Gymnasiums. (1890, 111f.)

¹²⁵ Which, some would argue, is really a tyranny of Germany over Greece and, thereby, over interpretations of modernity. See Bernal 1987; Lacoue-Labarthe 1990; Lambropoulos 1993. For balanced discussions of the development of Schiller's attitude towards "the Greeks," see Hatfield 1959; Buck 1984.

¹²⁶ For Schiller's relationship to the plastic arts, see Walzel 1905; Pfotenhauer 1991, 137ff. and 157ff.

One who failed to conform to these Germanic idealizations of the "Hellenic being" was, of course, the notorious former professor of classical philology, Friedrich Nietzsche. As he explained his departure from the classical norm in his *Twilight of the Idols* of 1888:

To smell out "beautiful souls," "golden means," and other perfections in the Greeks, or to admire their calm in greatness, their ideal cast of mind, their noble simplicity—the psychologist within me protected me against such "noble simplicity," a *malisserie allemande* after all. (KSA 6: 157)

The image of "the Greeks" in Schiller's discourse generally follows in the tracks of the peculiarly German neo-classicism of the later eighteenth century,¹²⁷ to which he tends to add his own post-Kantian remarks about "the Greeks" as a paradigmatically "whole," "natural," and "aesthetic" people. This is most explicit in the famous sixth letter of the *Aesthetic Education*, which begins with a characteristic eulogy:

The Greeks put us to shame not only by a simplicity to which our age is a stranger; they are at the same time our rivals, indeed often our models, in those very prerogatives with which we are wont to console ourselves for the unnaturalness of our customs. At once full of form and full of content, at once philosophizing and creative [bildend], at once tender and energetic, we see the Greeks combine the youth of the imagination with the manhood of reason in a glorious manifestation of humanity. (AE 29)

Schiller is here addressing a possible "objection" to his critical diagnosis of modernity, which might counter that "all people in the process of civilization [...] must fall away from nature" (AE 31). The objection occasions an elaborate comparison between "the Greek" and "the contemporary form of humanity," culminating in a dramatic re-staging of the century-old *quarrel between the ancients and the moderns*¹²⁸: "Which individual modern [Neuerer] would step forward and enter the contest,

¹²⁷ See Pfofenhauer's analyses of the "seriousness of idealization" peculiar to German classicism, "making the German heritage of antiquity a special case in Europe" (1991, 148ff.).

¹²⁸ On Schiller's reactualization of the *Querelle*, see Jauss 1970, 67ff. and below: 225ff.

man against man, with an individual Athenian for the prize of humanity?" (AE 31).

The point of such a confrontation is to illustrate Schiller's paradigmatic diagnosis of a *dialectic of enlightenment*, which argues that "however much the separate development [Ausbildung] of human powers may have benefited the world as a whole, it cannot be denied that the individuals affected by it suffer under the curse of this cosmic purpose" (AE 43). While the progressive nature of modern cultural development is said to be based on the functional differentiation of both social institutions and human faculties, "the Greek humanity," by contrast, is presented as a "maximum of excellence" that could be achieved prior to specialization and the division of labor:

Why was the individual Greek qualified to be the representative of his age, and why can no single modern venture as much? Because it was from all-unifying nature that the former, and from the all-dividing intellect [Verstand] that the latter, received their respective forms. (AE 33)

This, of course, also implies that they "could not rise any higher": "Had they wished to proceed to a higher stage of development, they would, like us, have had to surrender the wholeness of their being and pursued truth along separate paths" (AE 41).

Schiller's socio-political comparison of "the Greeks" and "the moderns [Neuerer]" thus centers on the contrast between the "fragmentation" of modern society and the supposedly "simple organization of the early republics," where "every individual enjoyed an independent existence but could, when need arose, grow into the whole organism" (AE 35). The so-called "organic" character of "the Greek states," however, remains mostly a undeveloped projection and a simple rhetorical contrast to the civilizational ills of the modern world. Schiller's overall intention is to present "the Greeks" as an *aesthetic* people, whose culture did not deviate from the order of "nature":

There, amid joyous surroundings and in that blessed zone, where activity alone leads to enjoyment, and enjoyment alone to activity, where out of life itself springs the sanctity of order, and out of the law of order nothing but life develops—where imagination ever flees actuality yet never strays from the

simplicity of nature—here alone will sense and spirit, the receptive and the formative power [*bildende Kraft*], develop in the happy equilibrium which is the soul of beauty and the condition of humanity. (AE 190).¹²⁹

"Sensuality" and "reason," the "receptive and the formative power" are not necessarily in conflict, as Kant had maintained, and, to Schiller, the "beauty," "nature," and emphatic "humanity" of "the Greeks" are clear and welcome evidence of this fact. As in his famous poem *The Gods of Greece* (1788), the nostalgic teleology of Schiller's theoretical texts thus likes to contrast "the modern [*modernen*] common world" with an "old poetic" one (NA 10: 11) not, however, in order to advocate a simple return to the former, but to show the need for an aesthetic supplement to the one-sided rationality and artificiality of the latter. As a necessary consequence of "progress" and a "higher stage of development" the "modern common world" has lost its sensual immediacy and "organic" sense of community. The abstractness of its order thus needs to be supplemented by an "art" that communicates and again makes visible "the highest of forms, the human" (NA 10: 12). As Schiller put it programmatically in the *Aesthetic Education*: "It must be up to us to restore again by means of a higher art, the totality of our nature, which the arts themselves have destroyed" (AE 43). The advice he there gives to "the artist" perhaps represents one of the strongest expressions of his neoclassical orientation:

A beneficent deity snatch the suckling betimes from his mother's breast, nourish him with the milk of a better age, and allow him to come to maturity under a distant Greek sky. Then, when he has become a man, let him return, a stranger, to his own century. [...] His material he will, indeed, take from the present, but the form he will borrow from a nobler time, yes, from beyond time altogether, from the absolute, unchanging unity of his being. (AE 57)

In his theoretical texts, Schiller regularly turns to examples from the contemporary classicist canon of antique sculpture¹³⁰—to works which,

¹²⁹ In the original *Horae*-version this passage included a reference to the chapter on "the Greeks" in Herder's *Ideas Concerning the Philosophy of History*.

¹³⁰ Such as in *Grace and Dignity* to "the divine figure of Niobe," the "Belvederean Apollo," the "Borghesian winged genius," or "the muse of the Barberinian palace" (GD 301).

characteristically, he had never seen in the original, but knew only as plaster copies or from the descriptions in Winckelmann's writings.¹³¹ And although Schiller considered himself as "lacking the interest in and sense for the plastic arts" and even referred to himself as "a barbarian in all that concerns plastic art," his theoretical writings regularly employ these "antiques" as evidential illustrations of central claims in his arguments.¹³² This is most prominently the case in the fifteenth letter of the *Aesthetic Education*, where the one appearance of a work of art—the colossal marble head of the so-called *Juno Ludovisi*, which had so impressed Goethe on his *Italian Journey*¹³³—serves Schiller both as a representation of the highest ideal of beauty and as a sensual evidence for the truth of his anthropological arguments.¹³⁴

In Schiller's theoretical discourse "the Greeks" thus function primarily as the guarantors of an original and to-be-regained wholeness and integrity of human nature. Schiller's idealizations, however, rarely go much further, and thus his position can be distinguished from Wilhelm von Humboldt's, as well as from the young Friedrich Schlegel's, whom Schiller in one of his *Xenia* of 1796, in fact, accused of "graecomania" (NA I: 348).¹³⁵ The distinct limits to Schiller's idealization of "the Greeks" are perhaps revealed most clearly in his critical comments made in response to an important essay by his friend Humboldt, "On the Study of Antiquity and of the Greeks in Particular" (1793).¹³⁶ Schiller makes it clear there that he regards "the culture of the Greeks" as "merely aesthetic," i.e., as not yet based on the free and rational self-determination of the "manly age" of humanity.¹³⁷ Schiller captures his view of the actual "progress of human

¹³¹ See Schiller's description of the famous collection at Mannheim, which Schiller wrote about with Winckelmannian enthusiasm in 1785. See NA 20: 433f.; NA 21: 280.

¹³² See Walzel 1905 and the valuable analyses by Pfothenauer 1992.

¹³³ And which was neither Greek nor the head of a goddess, but Roman and the head of the statue of Antonia Minor, wife of Drusus the Elder, created around 45/39 B.C.E.

¹³⁴ See below: 210ff.

¹³⁵ See Lovejoy 1960, 207ff.

¹³⁶ While Humboldt never published the essay, he circulated it in early 1793 among a number of friends from whom he elicited comments (NA 21: 379).

¹³⁷ "One also should not forget that in politics the Greeks also did not make it beyond the youthful age, and it is very doubtful if in a manly age [*männlichen Alter*] they still would have deserved this praise" (NA 21: 64).

culture" in precise accordance with his three-stage schema of humanism: "In the first period stood the Greeks. In the second we stand. The third is therefore still to be hoped for, and then one will also not wish the Greeks back again" (NA 21: 63).

In *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry* (1795/6) the otherwise fairly conventional image of "the Greeks" found in Schiller's published texts becomes more complicated, insofar as he now characterizes the contemporary attitude towards "the Greeks" as "sentimental." In contrasting ancient and modern poets in their different feelings for "nature," he observes that in spite of the closeness to "beautiful nature" that surrounded "the ancient Greeks," their poetry shows no "sentimental" interest in "her" [*die Natur*]:

In his love for an object, he does not seem to make any distinction between those which are of themselves [*durch sich selbst*], and those which arise as a result of art or the human will. [...] He does not cling to her with intimacy, with sentimentality, with sweet melancholy, as we moderns do. (NSP 429)

The reason for this difference is, of course, that the naive, ancient poet "is nature," whereas the modern, sentimental poet "will seek her" (NSP 436):

So long as man is pure—not, of course, crude—nature, he functions as an undivided sensuous unity and as a harmonious whole. [...] Once man has passed into the state of civilization and art has laid its hand upon him, that *sensuous* harmony in him is withdrawn, and he 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 still to be realized, no longer as a fact of life. (NSP 436f.)

Schiller thus concludes that the contemporary admiration and love for "the Greeks" has to be understood as part of the general "sentimental" impulse towards "nature, [...] truth and simplicity" that so manifestly characterizes his own age and that is said to stem from the "unnaturalness of our relations, conditions, and conventions" (NSP 430):

Since the Greek had not lost nature in his humanity, he could not [...] have such a pressing need for objects in which he might

find her again. [...] The feeling of which we here speak is therefore not that which the ancients had; it is rather identical with that which *we have for the ancients*. They felt naturally; we feel the natural. (NSP 431)

On the basis of this insight, Schiller, of course, goes on to legitimate the "sentimental poetry" of "the moderns" against the paradigm of the ancients and against classicist norms. This has earned Schiller the title of "spiritual grandfather of German Romanticism" (Lovejoy 1960, 220) and *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry* the description as "first act of that 'aesthetic revolution' that was to be performed instantly thereafter by the first generation of the Romantics" (Gauss 1970, 105).¹³⁸ Here, Schiller first articulates this important and influential breakthrough in literary theory according to the same schema that also governs over his philosophy of gender:

This path taken by the modern poets is, moreover, that along which man in general, the individual as well as the whole, must pass. Nature sets him at one with himself, art divides and cleaves him in two, through the ideal he returns to unity. Because the ideal is an infinitude to which he never attains, the civilized man can never become perfect in his own wise, while the natural man can in his. [...] But if one compares the species themselves with one another, it becomes evident that the goal to which man strives through culture is infinitely preferable to that which he attains through nature. (NSP 438)

While the image of "the Greeks" found in Schiller's texts is not entirely monolithic, one can yet be fairly precise about the role they play in his discourse. In the first place "the Greeks" serve as evidence in a philosophical argument. As an idealized projection of a cultural other, they are meant to demonstrate the truth of Schiller's philosophical anthropology. Simply put: Kant was wrong when he pinned reason against the senses—just look at the Greeks! Second, "the Greeks" represent the first stage of Schiller's three-stage dialectical construction of "universal history." As a developed, yet still natural humanity ("pure, not, of course, crude, nature") they orient his nostalgic teleology, while serving as a foil to

¹³⁸ See below: 227ff.

expose the negative consequences of the differentiation of modern society and the specialization of human faculties. And third, and perhaps most important, *as sculpture*, "the Greeks" function as *the* paradigm of "beautiful art," namely, as idealizing aesthetic mirrors that help to re-cognize, re-member, and re-center a dis-figured, dis-membered, and de-centered humanity.¹³⁹ Schiller clearly captures this central idea of his aesthetic humanism in the context of a reflection on images of a "golden age" in the past:

For man who has deviated from the simplicity of nature and is delivered over to the dangerous guidance of his reason, it is of infinite importance to perceive once again the legislation of nature in a pure exemplar, and in this faithful mirror to be able once again to purify himself of the corruptions of artifice. (NSP 468f.)

This function is of course to be performed by all true art, allowing human beings "to perceive once again" (in the mirror of art and, thereby, in themselves) the underlying "legislation of nature."

But the plaster copies of marble statues are of course not "living" reminders and "proof" of the wholeness and integrity of humanity. That is the prerogative of the male aesthetic "genius"¹⁴⁰ and of women. According to Schiller, the emphatically pronounced "nature" of women has allowed "the other sex" to have remained whole and untainted by the progress of civilization. Whereas men are inevitably caught up in the second, progressive stage of human development, women have remained, or rather, *should* have remained, in an ideal state of happy innocence and inner harmony. As Schiller explains in no uncertain terms: "Nature has assigned to the other sex the naive character as its greatest perfection"

¹³⁹ The "plastic art of antiquity" is uniquely able to fulfill this aesthetic ideal of sensual presentation, because the characteristic "strength of the ancient artist"—his greater "imitation of actuality," "nature," "sensual truth," and "the living presence of the object"—accords best with the unique character of this medium: "This explains the great advantage which the plastic art of antiquity maintains over that of modern times. [...] A work addressed to the eye can achieve perfection only in finitude. [...] In plastic works the modern is little aided by his superiority in ideas; here he is obliged to *determine in space* in the most precise way the picture of his imagination and hence to compete with the ancient artist in precisely that quality in which they undisputably excel" (NSP 440).
¹⁴⁰ See NSP 424ff.

(NSP 425).¹⁴¹ "Grace" [Anmut], as the evident and visible sign of an integrated and wholesome humanity, is the true "expression of female virtue" (GD 289). The "moral harmony of feeling" that "nature" has granted to women¹⁴² becomes in its perfection what Schiller calls the "beautiful soul." As he expresses his views in the poem *The Honor of Women* (1795) in strict accordance with his three-stage humanism:

In their mother's humble cottage,
They have remained with modest custom,
Faithful daughters of pious nature.
[...]

Out of the enchanting simplicity of the features
Glow's humanity's perfection and cradle,
Rules the child's, the angel's command.

[In der Mutter bescheidener Hütte
Sind sie geblieben mit schamhafter Sitte,
Treue Töchter der frommen Natur.
[...]

Aus der bezaubernden Einfalt der Züge
Leuchtet der Menschheit Vollendung und Wiege,
Herrschet des Kindes, des Engels Gewalt. (NA 1: 240ff.)

The poem captures in all clarity the main functions that Schiller's discourse of nostalgic teleology assigns to "the other sex." As "faithful daughters of pious nature," women are to serve as living embodiments of the original unity and integrity of human nature. Women are to remind men of the artificiality of their ways and to steer them back to the order of "nature." And, finally, as aesthetic objects—one could say, as living sculpture—women function like all truly beautiful art should: they allow men to perceive again through aesthetic self-reference (i.e., through the mirror of art and, thereby, in themselves) the underlying "legislation of

¹⁴¹ Schiller there adds a brief "proof" of this statement that nicely reflects his own (however violent and sophistic) naivete in cultural matters: "The female desire for approval strives after nothing as much as the *appearance of naivete*; proof enough, even if one had not other, that the greatest power of the sex rests on this characteristic" (NSP 425).

¹⁴² As he explains in *Grace and Dignity*: "Both the physical build, as well as the character need to contribute to grace; the former by means of the flexibility in the reception of impressions and in the readiness to become involved, the latter through the moral harmony of feeling. In both nature was more favourable to the woman than to the man" (GD 289).

nature." As living embodiments of aesthetic integration, women's "features" and the "grace" of their movements allow the "perfection" of humanity to shine forth: the accomplished integration of nature and reason.

The Work of Rule Must Become Nature

The sex drive of women [Geschlechtstrieb des Weibes] in its raw state is the most repulsive [widrigste] and disgusting thing there is in nature. [...] On the other hand, feminine purity and chastity, which consists in the fact that her sex drive never shows itself as such, but always in the form of love, is the source of all nobility and greatness in the feminine soul. For the woman, chastity is the principle of all morality.

Fichte, *System of Moral Doctrine* 1796

As openly disciplinary and repressive as the German classical philosophy of gender may appear today, it is delivered in an emphatic tone of liberation and empowerment. Schiller's so-called "praise of women" (Hegel) is above all meant to give legitimation to and preserve the "glorious gift of nature" called "female nature." Often enough his "praise" articulates itself in a Rousseauian protest against the repressive character of the then "governing principles of female education":

Nature has assigned to the other sex the naive character as its greatest perfection. [...] But since the governing principles of feminine education are in perpetual conflict with this character, it is as difficult for a woman morally as it is for a man intellectually to preserve this magnificent gift of nature intact along with the advantages of a good education. (NSP 425)

And certainly, when compared to the more explicitly brutal forms of subjugation and repressions of traditional Christian European misogyny, Schiller's eulogy of female "nature" may actually appear as a liberation;

that certainly is its self-understanding.¹⁴³ As his fellow philosopher of gender, Fichte, puts it in his *Foundations of Natural Right* of 1797:

The woman is not subjected [unterworfen], so that the man has a right of coercion over her. She is subjected through her own continuing, necessary desire to be subjected—on which her morality depends. She could well take back her freedom, if she *willed*; but that is precisely it, she cannot reasonably [vernünftigerweise] will it. (GA 1,4: 130)

It would thus certainly represent a lack of dialectical acumen to present Schiller's "praise of women" merely in terms of the repressive violence of the cultural imposition of a certain set of normative constraints. The paradoxical character of a three-stage humanist rhetoric, which can be simultaneously liberating and disciplinary, empowering and normalizing, is clearly the expression of a dialectic of liberation that needs to be recognized as such.¹⁴⁴ In order to do so successfully, however, projects of cultural formation need to be described with the help of theoretical models that are at least as complex as the ones informing these programs. As Foucault put it, "we must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: [...] power produces. [...] The individual, that is, is not the vis-à-vis of power; it is [...] one of its prime effects" (1980, 98).

Aesthetic education, as Schiller conceives of it, is primarily intended as such a technique for the formation of an inner identity called "nature." While men are to form themselves primarily through conscious and rational self-reference—which, as Schiller points out, will "often" imply a lack of "grace"—the "moral harmony of feeling" which nature has granted women is to express itself spontaneously and un-self-consciously. "Grace," the "expression of female virtue" (GD 289), requires an unconscious and un-intentional self-determination based on "inclination" and "affect." Schiller is quick to point out that this means that "the female character will seldom raise itself to the highest idea of moral purity and will seldom achieve more than actions based on *affect*. It will often

withstand sensuality with heroic strength, but only *by means* of the senses" (GD 289). Nevertheless, the graceful character of "the morality of women" alone can guarantee the purity and integrity of her "nature": it is grace alone which "testifies to a quiet, in itself harmonious spirit [*Gemüt*], and to a feeling heart," just as it "proves already just by itself a receptivity of the power of feeling and a correspondence of sensations" (GD 300). In its perfection this moral and aesthetic norm is said to produce the enrapturing "grace" of the "beautiful soul":

With an ease, as if merely acting on instinct, she performs humanities' most painful duties. [...] Therefore she herself never knows about the beauty of her actions, and it never occurs to her any more, that one could act and feel differently. [...] The tenderness of the heart will give to the mouth a grace that no dissimulation could affect [*erkinsteln*]. No tension will be in the mien, no constraint will be noticeable in the involuntary movements, because the soul knows of none. The voice will be music and move the heart with the pure stream of its modulation. (GD 287f.)

The redefinition of "freedom" performed by Schiller's aesthetic humanism aims precisely at such an incorporation of a moral ideal—one that in the case of feminine (self-)formation and (self-)discipline has to achieve such a degree of perfection as to become invisible *as a discipline*.

The ideal of a complete internalization and incorporation of "reason" and "duty" is said to "bestow also upon a form which lacks architectonic beauty an irresistible grace," one that may "triumph even over debilitations of nature" (GD 288). The "spirit" comes to inform all gestures and movement, yes, "finally the spirit even *forms* [*bildet*] its own body," i.e., "grace finally even transforms itself into architectonic beauty" (GD 265). The prize of such "grace," as Schiller makes clear right in the opening sentence of *Grace and Dignity*, is the "power" to "acquire love" (GD 251). Even the goddess "Juno, the majestic queen of the skies," stands in need of "grace" when she wants to "enchant Jupiter" (GD 251):

The architectonic beauty can arouse pleasure [*Wohlgefallen*], admiration, astonishment, but only grace will enrapture. Beauty has *worshippers*, only grace has *lovers* [*Liebhaber*]; because we pay homage to the creator and love the human. (GD 288)

¹⁴³ See Duden 1977, 138ff.

¹⁴⁴ See Bartky's discussion of "discipline" as also potentially providing "the individual upon whom it is imposed with a sense of mastery as well as a secure sense of identity" (1988, 77).

Grace and Dignity describes such love as the only "free sensation" whose "pure source streams forth from the seat of freedom, out of our divine nature" (GD 303). Schiller there explains how this "free sentiment" of "love" is, indeed, "inseparable" from "grace":

In grace [...] as in beauty in general, reason sees its demands realized in the sensual world, and, surprisingly, one of its ideas steps forth in the realm of appearance. This unexpected concurrence of the contingency of nature with the necessity of reason awakens a feeling of joyful approval (delight [*Wohlfallen*]) [...] and an attraction to the sensual object must occur. This attraction we call benevolence—*love*; a feeling that is inseparable from grace and beauty. (GD 302)

Small wonder that "female vanity" is said to strive "for nothing more than for the *appearance of the naive*," which is said to be "proof enough, even if one had no other, that the greatest power of the sex rests on this characteristic" (NSP 425).

But Schiller's post-Kantian logic of love develops clear rules and instructions for the production of such "unexpected" concurrences of nature and reason. "True grace" can only be the reward of an authentic "beauty of character," where "she herself never knows about the beauty of her actions" (GD 287). Accordingly, Schiller's ideal of female moral formation aims its most vengeful criticism against a conscious manipulation and fraudulent imitation of the signs and expressions of "grace":

The other sex which is principally in possession of true grace, is also most guilty of the false one; but nowhere does this offend more, then where it serves as a bait for desire [*der Begierde zum Angel dient*]. The smile of true grace becomes the most repulsive [*widrigste*] grimace, the beautiful play of the eyes, so enchanting when true sentiment speaks through it, becomes twisted, the melting modulated voice, so irresistible in true speech, becomes a studied tremulating sound, and the whole music of female enticement becomes a deceptive art of the *toilette* [*Toilettenkunst*]. (GD 307)

The "power" to "acquire love" can itself be acquired, but only through an "imitation" of the genuine inner orientations, of which "grace" is the expression: "There is only *One* way, namely the imitation of the

characteristic attitudes [*Gesinnungen*]. [...] Everything else is an *aping* and will soon reveal itself as such through exaggeration" (GD 306). "True grace" can only be found in an authentically "naive character": "it never occurs to her any more, that one could act and feel differently" (GD 287).

Schiller's characteristically harsh contrast between a spontaneous "love" of "true grace" and the "repulsion" and "disgust" that characterizes the discovery of its artful "affectation," of course, only heightens the paradoxical character of his normative ideal of feminine formation. As throughout Schiller's three-stage humanist discourse, its foundational distinction between "art" and "nature" ultimately rests on an unbalizable difference between the "discipline" of "rules" becoming "nature" and a "nature" that is "entirely swallowed up by art" (GD 269). In contrast to many of Schiller's exegeses and commentators, however, his texts by no means silence this paradox, but reveal it most eloquently. As Schiller writes in *Grace and Dignity*: "Grace, however, must always be nature, i.e., unintentional (at least appear this way), and the subject itself may never look as if it *knew of its grace*" (GD 269). Nowhere is the paradoxical "nature" of Schiller's ideal of feminine formation more apparent, than in the explicit analogies he develops between the feminine moral ideal of "true grace" and the "grace" aimed at by the ballet and by the theater. Schiller explains that the "*initiated or studied grace*," which he also calls "the theatrical grace or the grace of the dance master," stands in a similar relation to "true grace," as the "*beauty of the toilette*" stands to true beauty:

On untrained senses both may have the same effect as the original which they are imitating, and if the art is great, it may at times even deceive the connoisseur [*Kenner*]. But any one trace finally does reveal the compulsion and the intention, and then indifference, if not contempt and disgust are the unavoidable consequence. (GD 269f.)

Schiller's point, as he remarks in a lengthy footnote, is not to "dispute the dance master's merits in the service of true grace," or "to deny the actor's claim to it," but merely to stress once again that "the essence of grace disappears with its naturalness":

The dance master certainly comes to the aid of true grace by providing the will with the command [*Herrschaft*] over its tools and by moving aside the impediments which *mass* and *gravity* set against the play of the vital forces. He cannot accomplish this otherwise than through *rules* [*Regeln*] which maintain the body in a beneficial discipline [*Zucht*] and which, as long as inertia [*Trägheit*] resists, may be and may appear *stiff*, i.e., *forced*. [*Zwingend*]. But when he releases the apprentice from his school, the rule must already have accomplished its task with him, so that it need *not accompany* him into the world: in short, the work [*Werk*] of rule must become nature [*in Natur übergehen*]. (GD 269)

Schiller's educational project in this way aims to subject precisely the "inner spirit" to the procrustean bed of its normative discipline:

The domain [*Gebiet*] of the spirit extends so far, as nature is alive. [...] It is known that all moving forces in man are connected with one another and so one can see how the spirit—taken also only as the principle of willful movement—can reproduce its effects throughout the whole of the system of these [forces]. Not only the tools of the will, but also those which the will has no command over directly [*nicht unmittelbar zu gebieten hat*], experience the spirit's influence at least indirectly. The spirit determines them not just intentionally, when it acts, but also unintentionally, when it perceives through the senses [*empfindet*]. (GD 262)¹⁴⁵

As the *Aesthetic Education* will put it programmatically: "already his inclinations must become subject to the law of his will" (AE 166). The actual degree of the success of this effort is said, in turn, to be legible by means of a moral or characterological semiotics that focuses on those "movements that he does not control" (GD 268).¹⁴⁶ The human body in general, and the female one in particular, is said to emit signs—a kind of

¹⁴⁵ On the notion that "all moving forces in man are connected with one another," see: NA 20: 68ff. On the important idea that "the spirit" is also active when seemingly passive, see the *Aesthetic Education*: "The spirit itself is neither matter nor form, neither sense nor reason, which fact does not always seem to have been taken into account by those who will only allow the human spirit to be active when its operations are in accordance with reason, and declare it to be merely passive when they are at odds with reason" (AE 132f.).

¹⁴⁶ On the controversies surrounding physiognomics and the "semiotic models for the theorization of human individuality" and the "construction of bourgeois individuality" see Gray 1992.

natural rhetoric of the body—that are spontaneously expressive of the authentic inner "moral sensations" and "attitudes" [*Gesinnungen*] of the individual: "The tender fiber of the woman bends like a thin reef under the faintest breath of the affect. In light and lovely waves the soul glides across the expressive mien" (GD 288f.). While "willfully controlled movements" stand in an "arbitrary" relation to the inner attitudes and sensations of the "soul" or "spirit," such "accompanying movements" are said to be connected to them "by necessity":

Those [willfully controlled movements] stand in relation to the inner spirit [*Gemüt*] like the conventional linguistic sign to the thought which it expresses; the sympathetic or accompanying signs, however, like the passionate sound to the passion. (GD 268)

In this manner, Schiller's paradigmatic post-Kantian discourse of "spirit" [*Geist*] is designed to subject the entire organism and the innermost sense of self to the control of moral norms—a project that really comes into its own with the formation of "the other sex."