

Metaphor as Classical Tragedy, or, On the Sublime

by William F. Wertz, Jr.

I had a little more time to prepare my speech today than some others. You might say I began working on it over three-and-a-half years ago in the Alexandria Detention Center, where I was Lyndon LaRouche's roommate for several months. While he was writing *In Defense of Common Sense*, I was working on translating Friedrich Schiller's play on Joan of Arc, the *Virgin of Orleans*. In that context I also translated a number of writings by Schiller on the subject of tragedy. In Alexandria and later in Petersburg, Virginia at the federal prison there, I also translated a number of the works of the German Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote in his letter from Paul to American Christians from the jail in Birmingham, Alabama, "Sometimes you may be put in jail for righteousness sake. If such is the

This article is based upon a speech given at the annual conference of the Schiller Institute on Labor Day weekend 1992, in the State of Virginia. It was dedicated to Allen and Pat Salisbury, to former Schiller Institute board member Fred Wills, to Lyndon and Helga LaRouche, Rochelle and John Ascher, and to all those who, along with their spouses, are facing imprisonment for righteousness' sake.



Homage to Friedrich Schiller as he leaves the theater in Leipzig after the premier of his "Virgin of Orleans," 1801.

case, you must honorably grace the jail with your presence and never succumb to the temptation to become bitter, because the end of life is not to achieve pleasure and avoid pain, but to do the will of God, come what may.”

While I was in jail, beginning January 27, 1989, a number of momentous developments occurred which I shall always remember. As you well know television is one of the most destructive influences in our society today. I can assure you that in prison its destructive impact is magnified several fold. However, thanks to television I saw two events which had a profound impact on me and I'm sure also on you.

The first scene was that of the Chinese student who stood up to a tank at Tiananmen Square. The second scene was that of the people who demonstrated for freedom in Leipzig, Germany in the face of shoot-to-kill orders from the East German government. Both of these scenes brought to my mind images from an earlier period in this country, of the civil rights movement standing up to Alabama State troopers on Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965.

In each of these cases the kind of moral courage could be seen, which I knew I needed in my own circumstances, and which I also knew humanity needed at this juncture of history, if we were to succeed in bringing about true freedom for all mankind.

The purpose of my presentation today is to make self-conscious the nature of this (what Schiller calls sublime) state of mind, and how it is achieved, through a discussion of metaphor as Classical tragedy.

In his address to a recent conference in Mexico, Lyndon LaRouche said that in his essay “On the Subject of Metaphor,” he hoped to communicate the method of thinking based on “Platonic principles consistent with Augustinian Christianity” necessary “to set into motion social processes, which will lead to the establishment of new kinds of institutions which must arise out of the collapse of the oligarchical order now centered in rapidly decaying Anglo-American power.”

In the section of this essay entitled “Metaphor as Classical Tragedy,” LaRouche states that Classical tragedy “most perfectly situates in art-form the Cantor notions of cardinality and power, as Cantor defines these to include the problems of ordering the *aleph*-manifold.” He also stresses that although only Aeschylus, Cervantes, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Schiller are truly great tragedians, among these Friedrich Schiller alone has written on the principles of composing classical tragedy.

What I intend to do in this presentation is to introduce you to Lyndon LaRouche's concept of metaphor, both through an examination of Friedrich Schiller's writings on tragedy and through an examination of several crucial

scenes from Schiller's play, *Mary Stuart*. In this context, I shall also make reference to the ideas of Nicolaus of Cusa and Thomas à Kempis.

In “On the Subject of Metaphor,” LaRouche suggests that a Classical tragedy is constructed of two “mutually exclusive *Types*.” The first is the negentropic *Type*, and the second is the entropic *Type*, which he equates metaphorically to the names of science and anti-science.

He then proceeds to outline the necessary components of a hypothetical tragedy: “Given a society whose prevailing custom in science is the ‘post-modernist’ version of the entropic *Type*, but a society in which a few potential heroes know that the crucial elements of the society's scientific-economic practice might be ordered according to the negentropic *Type*, as readily as to the presently hegemonic entropic choice. Define a situation in which the failure of the potential hero to act with pungency and force upon that latter option, means a devastating or other kind of great suffering for his or her nation. Let this unhappy consequence occur, ostensibly because the potential hero fails to seize his last available opportunity, at the *punctum saliens*, to bring about the required shift of emphasis in the society's policy practice. . . .”

He continues: “This failure of the potential hero defines the tragedy. This failure is implicitly of an intelligible Cantor *Type*; but, that is not a fully adequate representation of the notion of this tragedy.

“The tragedy is performed before an audience. The performance of that drama, presented to that audience, begins to succeed if the audience is made conscious of the opposition of the two *Types*, and of the potential hero's situation. Thus, the audience, by taking the dramatic character's express consciousness as the object of the spectator's conscious attention, is seeing the drama, and the characters depicted, as if from above. If the audience also recognized something of itself in each of these characters, the drama has reached a second milestone in the direction of success.

“Next,” he says, “the negentropic alternative must ultimately uplift the spirits of the spectators; that is the spark of true life, evoked so within the audience, and imparted thus, by fusion, to the audience's consciousness of the succession of dramatic events on stage.”

LaRouche concludes that these several components of a tragedy must be represented by a thought-object corresponding to the tragedy as a whole. That idea, that *Type*, is the essential experience of the author, as composer, which he communicates metaphorically to the audience by means of the tragedy. As LaRouche explains, and as we shall see through our examination of Friedrich Schiller's writings, that thought-object is man's transfinite capacity to efficiently participate in God's creation.

As LaRouche says, “Nicolaus of Cusa’s elaboration of the principle of *capax Dei* references this impulse in its highest form of expression.”

Schiller on the Sublime

Having outlined LaRouche’s concept of tragedy, we now turn to Friedrich Schiller. There are six works by Schiller to which I shall refer: *The Philosophical Letters*, *On the Pathetic*, *On the Sublime*, *On Tragic Art*, *On the Cause of Pleasure in Tragic Objects*, and *Kallias, or On the Beautiful*.

In the first of these, the *Philosophical Letters*, Schiller identifies two mutually exclusive *Types*: love and egoism. According to Schiller, “egoism and love separate mankind into two highly dissimilar races, whose boundaries never flow into one another. Egoism erects its center in itself; love plants it outside of itself in the axis of the eternal whole. Love aims at unity, egoism is solitude. Love is the co-governing citizen of a blossoming free state, egoism a despot in a ravaged creation. Egoism sows for gratitude, love for ingratitude. Love gives, egoism lends. . . .” Also: “When I hate, so take I something from myself; when I love, so become I so much the richer, by what I love. Forgiveness is the recovery of an alienated property—hatred of man a prolonged suicide; egoism the highest poverty of a created being.”

For Schiller, love is the means by which man becomes perfect. Citing Christ’s Sermon on the Mount, he writes: “Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect, says the founder of our Faith. Weak humanity grew pale at this command, therefore He explained Himself more clearly: Love one another.” It is also the means by which he becomes more like God: “love . . . is the ladder, whereby we climb aloft to divine likeness.”

Thus, for Schiller, love and forgiveness are negentropic, whereas egoism and hatred are entropic *Types*. Love and forgiveness are the states of mind characteristic of man in the living image of God, whereas egoism and hatred destroy the image of God within us.

Now let us see how Schiller constructed his tragedy, *Mary Stuart*, based on the conflict between these two *Types*. I should caution that although Schiller writes historical tragedies, as he himself stresses, the purpose of tragedy is not to teach history. Therefore, one should not interpret the play as a commentary on history as it actually occurred. For Schiller the historic truth is subject to the laws of poetry. Moreover, it should be noted that in order to demonstrate crucial features of tragedy, I shall focus the discussion only on certain aspects of what is otherwise a much more complex dramatic action.

In this play, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, is being held in jail in England on charges of leading a Catholic

plot to assassinate Queen Elizabeth in order to replace her as Queen of England. Although innocent of this charge, Mary has been railroaded by a judiciary controlled by Elizabeth and has been condemned to death. She and Elizabeth, who are cousins, have never met one another. She writes a letter to Elizabeth asking for a meeting in hopes of gaining her freedom.

Elizabeth, moved by the letter, is convinced by the Earl of Leicester to meet Mary “as if by accident” during a hunt scheduled to occur in the vicinity of Mary’s prison.

In Act III, Scene 3, when Mary learns that the requested meeting is about to take place, she is mentally unprepared. The Earl of Shrewsbury admonishes her to summon all her courage, because the meeting with Elizabeth “is the decisive moment of your fate.” However, at this precise moment, which is the *punctum saliens* of the play, Mary responds:

And nothing lives within me at this moment,
But the fierce, burning feeling of my wrongs.
My heart is turn’d to direst hate against her;
All gentle thoughts, all sweet forgiving words,
Are gone. . . .

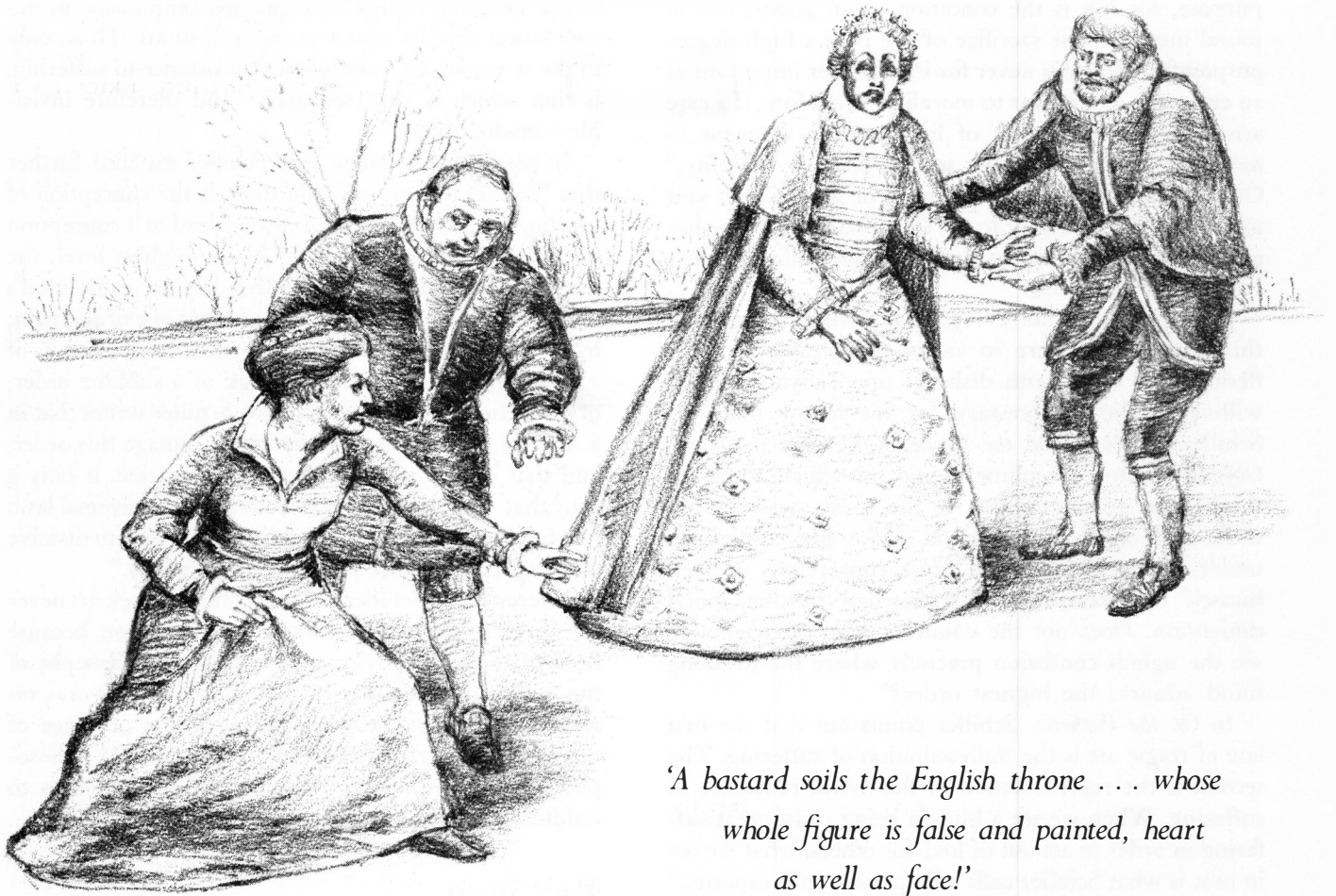
Shrewsbury tells her to constrain the “bitterness” which fills her heart, for “No good ensues, when hatred is oppos’d to hate.” However, Mary replies that no atonement can make Elizabeth and her friends.

At this point in the play neither Mary nor Elizabeth represents the negentropic *Type* of love. As a result, when the meeting occurs in Act III, Scene 4, Mary is eventually provoked by Elizabeth into expressing her inner rage. Because she does not attempt to overcome Elizabeth’s hatred with love, but rather responds with hatred to hate, Mary fails to seize the opportunity to change her fate.

After Elizabeth, “speechless with anger,” hastily quits the stage, in Act III, Scene 5, Mary tells her nurse, Hannah Kennedy:

Now I am happy, Hannah! and, at last,
After whole years of sorrow and abasement,
One moment of victorious revenge!

In the *Philosophical Letters* in the section on “Love,” Schiller identifies love as “the source of devotion and of the most sublime virtue.” In the following section on “Sacrifice,” he points to the aspect of love which makes it sublime, the fact that love brings forth effects which seem to contradict its nature. Specifically, he points to the fact that man can increase his own happiness through a sacrifice, which he offers for the happiness of others, even when this sacrifice is his life. “How is it possible,”



*'A bastard soils the English throne . . . whose
whole figure is false and painted, heart
as well as face!'*

Mary to Elizabeth
Act III, Scene 4

Illustrations by Alan Yue.

Schiller asks, "that we regard death as a means to enlarge the sum of our enjoyments? How can the cessation of my existence agree with the enrichment of my being?"

In his essay *On the Sublime*, Schiller points out that what distinguishes man from all other creatures is that man is free. However, man would not be free, if there were even one exception to his freedom, if he could not overcome death. Because man can indeed overcome death, through "submission to divine counsel," that is through assenting to the Will of God, he maintains his freedom even in the face of death. By imitating Christ, who at Gethsemane said "not my will but yours be done," man can attain immortality.

The feeling of the sublime is therefore a "mixed feeling," a "union of two contradictory sentiments," a combination of pain and joy. As Nicolaus of Cusa says in *On Learned Ignorance*, man is a "finite infinite." If man were only finite, if his nature were only sensuous, then faced with a life-threatening or other painful adversity, he would follow his natural instinct to self-preservation. However, when we see someone act out of love for others in such a way that he is willing to risk his life, then this is proof that we have in us a principle independent of all sensuous emotions. As man, we are not finite only, but rather we are a finite infinite, in the living image of God.

As Schiller writes in *On the Cause of Pleasure in Tragic Objects*, “Every sacrifice of a life is contradictory to life’s purpose, for life is the condition of all goods; but in moral intention the sacrifice of life is in a high degree purposeful, for life is never for itself, never important as an end, only as a means to morality. Therefore, if a case arises, where the giving of life becomes a means to morality, so life must take second place to morality.” One is reminded by this discussion of what Christ said to his Apostles just prior to the Crucifixion: “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:13)

Now of course not everyone is willing to embrace this idea. Our culture so values the pleasures of the flesh that it looks with disbelief upon anyone who is willing to die if necessary for his fellow man. As Schiller writes in *On the Cause of Pleasure in Tragic Objects*, “Thus, a sublime action, in which some see the highest purposefulness, to the great masses seems to be a revolting contradiction. . . . A little soul sinks under the weight of such great conceptions or feels himself embarrassingly overstretched by the moral dimension. Does not the common man often enough see the ugliest confusion precisely where the thinking mind admires the highest order?”

In *On the Pathetic*, Schiller points out that the first law of tragic art is the representation of suffering. The second is the representation of the moral resistance to suffering. When we see a human being resist great suffering in order to act out of love for others, what we see in him is what Schiller calls a “supersensuous capacity,” or what Nicolaus of Cusa calls *capax Dei*.

In *On the Pathetic*, Schiller uses the famous Greek statue of Laocoon and his children to illustrate the presence of a supersensuous capacity in man. Laocoon was a Trojan priest, who warned the Trojans to no avail, that the Greeks were using the celebrated Trojan Horse as a ruse to defeat them. The statue portrays the moment after Troy has been destroyed, when Laocoon, seeing that his two children are about to be attacked by two serpents, instead of seeking his own safety, attempts to save the children, even though it means his own destruction.

Looking at the statue, you can see Laocoon’s great physical suffering and at the same time his moral resistance to the same suffering. As Schiller says, we see “the compulsion of nature and the freedom of reason.” We see “the fight of intelligence with the suffering of sensuous nature.” The serpents can certainly kill the bodies of Laocoon and his children, but not their souls.

As Schiller points out, this supersensuous moral capacity cannot be portrayed positively through a sensuous

medium, but rather only negatively and indirectly. The viewer is led by the fact that Laocoon’s moral resistance to the suffering cannot be explained sensuously, to the conclusion that its source is supersensuous. Thus, only in the sensuous representation of resistance to suffering, is that which is supersensuous—and therefore invisible—made visible.

In his essay *On Tragic Art*, Schiller explains further that “in every tragic emotion there is the conception of incongruity, which . . . must always lead to a conception of a higher purposefulness.” On the highest level, the purpose of tragedy is that of a theodicy, to justify God’s goodness to man in view of the existence of evil and pain, by giving man, as Schiller says, “a clear consciousness of a teleological connection of things, of a sublime order, of a beneficent will.” Accordingly, Schiller writes that in a tragedy, “the thing that seemed to damage this order, and that caused us pain in a particular case, is only a spur that stimulates our reason to seek in universal laws for the justification of this particular case and to dissolve this single dissonance in the great harmony.”

Interestingly, Schiller points out that “Greek art never rose to this supreme serenity of tragic emotion, because neither the national religion, nor even the philosophy of the Greeks, illuminated its path of advance. It was reserved for modern art, which enjoys the privilege of receiving a purer matter from a more purified philosophy, to satisfy also this exalted demand, and thus to unfold all the moral dignity of art.”

Mary Stuart

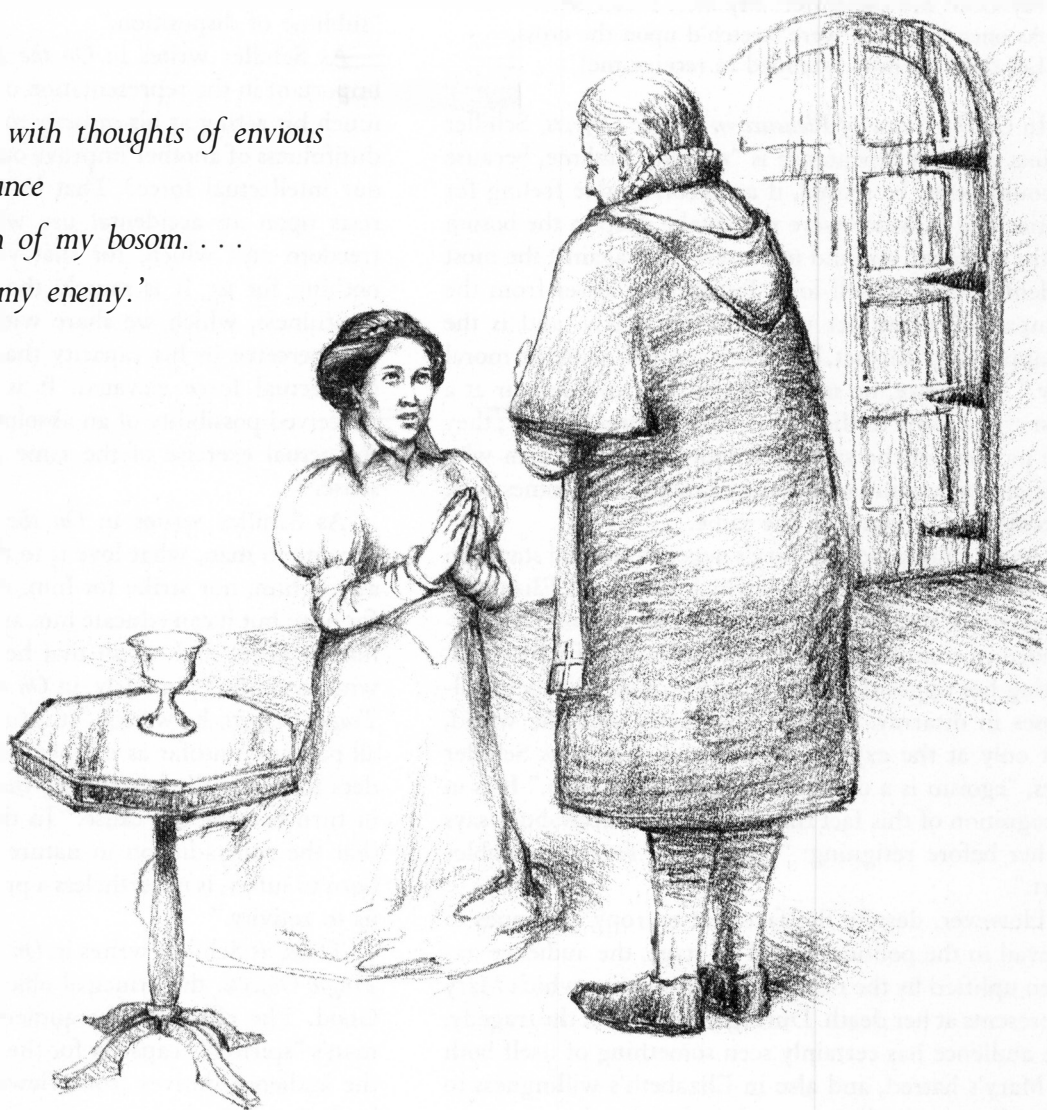
Now let us examine how Schiller develops the concept of the sublime in Act V, Scene 7 of *Mary Stuart*. In this scene, which occurs just prior to her execution, Mary finally overcomes the hatred and desire for revenge which prevented her from acting with love earlier at the *punctum saliens* of the play.

Mary is able to face her own death courageously, as Schiller writes in *On the Sublime*, through “submission to divine counsel.” As the scene opens, she agonizes over the fact that since a Catholic priest is denied her, her soul is not able to fly “delighted, and at liberty to heaven.” However, her agony is resolved when her house steward, Sir Andrew Melvil, who has returned from a long absence, reveals that he has been ordained as a Catholic priest in order to hear her last confession and to give her communion.

In her confession, Mary confesses the two transgressions which weigh heavily upon her soul. First she confesses that she has failed to follow Christ’s command to love one’s enemy:

*'My heart was fill'd with thoughts of envious
hate, and vengeance
took possession of my bosom. . . .
I could not forgive my enemy.'*

Mary's confession
Act V, Scene 7



My heart was fill'd with thoughts of envious hate,
And vengeance took possession of my bosom.
I hope forgiveness of my sins from God,
Yet could I not forgive my enemy.

She also confesses that in her youth she had transgressed by succumbing to her erotic passions:

Ah! not alone through hate; through lawless love
Have I still more abus'd the sov'reign good.

Although the priest admonishes her to confess all of her transgressions, lest she suffer everlasting death by sinning against the Holy Spirit, Mary insists that she did

not commit the crimes against Elizabeth for which she is being executed. As she says:

God suffers me in mercy to atone,
By undeserved death, my youth's transgressions.

After the priest absolves her of the two sins she has confessed, hatred of her enemy and lawless love, he administers communion to her.

Having thus achieved atonement with God through the sacraments of reconciliation and communion, she has now come to represent the negentropic *Type* of love in the play. In Act V, Scene 8, immediately before her death, Mary pardons Elizabeth for ordering her execu-

tion, and asks Elizabeth to forgive the passion with which she spoke to her in the earlier scene. Then in Act V, Scene 9, Mary says in imitation of Christ:

My God! My comforter! My blest Redeemer!
As once thy arms were stretch'd upon the cross,
Let them be now extended to receive me!

In *On the Cause of Pleasure in Tragic Objects*, Schiller points out that repentance is “morally sublime, because it could never be sensed, if an incorruptible feeling for justice and injustice were not awake deep in the bosom of the criminal, and did not assert itself against the most ardent interest of self-love. Repentance arises from the comparison of an act with the moral law, and is the disapproval of this act, because it conflicts with the moral law.” Therefore, he says: “Repentance and despair at a past crime show us the power of the moral law . . . ; they are pictures of the sublimest morality. . . . A man who despairs on account of an injured moral duty comes back thereby to obedience to the same. . . .”

As the drama closes, Mary’s negentropic end stands in stark contrast to the entropy which surrounds Elizabeth. Precisely at the moment when she has apparently succeeded in consolidating her political authority by eliminating her opposition, everything around Elizabeth collapses in disarray. She has apparently won the world, but only at the expense of her soul. Again as Schiller says, “egoism is a despot in a ravaged creation.” It is in recognition of this fact that the Earl of Shrewsbury says to her before resigning: “I could not save your nobler part.”

However, despite the fact that entropy continues to prevail in the political world on stage, the audience has been uplifted by the negentropic alternative which Mary represents at her death. During the course of the tragedy, the audience has certainly seen something of itself both in Mary’s hatred, and also in Elizabeth’s willingness to subordinate morality to a political end.

However, the reason we are uplifted in viewing a tragedy, the reason we derive pleasure from tragic objects, is, as Schiller writes in *On the Tragic Art*, because man in a state of suffering excites our pity. Moreover, the possibility of such pity “rests on the perception or presupposition of a resemblance between ourselves and the suffering subject.” We recognize that we are often dominated by the same hatred and desire for revenge which prevents Mary from acting decisively at the *punctum saliens*, and by the same barren pragmatism which gives Elizabeth an empty victory at the end of the play. But we also recognize in ourselves the supersensuous moral capacity which Mary exhibits before her death.

The change in Mary does not result in her actually acting in the external world so as to bring about a

political solution to the crisis facing humanity in her day, as for example, Joan of Arc does in Schiller’s play, the *Virgin of Orleans*. What Schiller has portrayed in this drama is not the “sublime of action,” but rather the “sublime of disposition.”

As Schiller writes in *On the Pathetic*, what is most important in the representation of a tragic hero is not so much his acting as his *capacity* to act: “But how can the dutifulness of another improve our subject and augment our intellectual force? That he *really* fulfills his duty, rests upon an accidental use which he makes of his freedom and which, for that very reason, can prove nothing for *us*. It is merely the *capacity* for a similar dutifulness, which we share with him, and whilst we also perceive in his capacity that of ours, we feel our intellectual force elevated. It is therefore merely the conceived possibility of an absolutely free will, whereby the actual exercise of the same pleases our aesthetical sense.”

As Schiller writes in *On the Pathetic*: “Poetry can become to man, what love is to the hero. It can neither advise him, nor strike for him, nor otherwise do work for him; but it can educate him as a hero, it can summon him to deeds and, to all that he should be, equip him with strength.” Similarly, in *On the Cause of Pleasure in Tragic Objects*, he writes: “It is furthermore certain, that all pleasure, insofar as it flows from moral sources, renders man morally better, and that here the effect must in turn become the cause.” In the same work, he says that the contradiction in nature that man, who is not born to suffer, is nevertheless a prey to suffering, “solicits us to activity.”

Thus, as Schiller writes in *On the Cause of Pleasure in Tragic Objects*, the principal object of the sublime is the Good. The effect on the audience of the portrayal of man’s “spiritual” capacity for the Good and the pleasure the audience derives from viewing that capacity, is to lead us to see that same capacity in ourselves and to desire the Good as something pleasurable. This pleasure is what Schiller calls a “free pleasure” as distinct from “physical or sensuous pleasure.” Having been so affected by the spiritual capacity portrayed, we ourselves then become in turn a spiritual cause capable of acting morally in the world.

In *Mary Stuart*, Mary becomes a “transfigur’d spirit,” but initially she is not a pure spirit without weaknesses. Like most of us, she is Schiller’s ideal of a tragic hero, a “mixed character,” “half-way between the utterly reprehensible and the perfect.” As St. John writes in his first letter in the Bible: “If we say, ‘We are without sin,’ we deceive ourselves.” And yet, because she—like you and I—is in need of God’s mercy, the fact that she acts heroically convinces us that we too have the capacity to

act heroically and, furthermore, that we can learn from her failure to act effectively at the decisive moment of her fate, so as to avoid the destructive consequences of both hatred and lawless love in our own lives.

The purpose of tragedy as an art form, as Schiller writes in *On the Sublime*, is to expose us to an artificial misfortune on the stage so that through our sympathy for the moral resistance of the tragic hero to his misfortune, “the independent principle in our soul gains room, to assert its absolute independence. Now, the more frequently the mind renews this deed of self-action, the more the same becomes a skill to him, he gains an all the greater advantage over the sensuous instinct, so that he is at last able then, if from the imagined and artificial misfortune an earnest one comes, to treat it as an artificial one and—the highest swing of human nature!—to resolve the actual suffering into a sublime emotion.”

The thought-object associated with the metaphorical name “Mary Stuart,” the title of the play, is the mental act of repentance. The change that takes place in Mary in the course of the tragedy is her recognition that if she expects God to forgive her sins, she must forgive the sins of others. This, of course is the central feature of the Lord’s Prayer: “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Or as the prayer of St. Francis says: “It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.” This same concept is expressed in the Old Testament Book of Sirach: “Forgive your neighbor’s injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.” Also recall what Schiller wrote in the *Philosophical Letters*: “Forgiveness is the recovery of an alienated property—hatred of man a prolonged suicide; egoism the highest poverty of a created being.”

This play, perhaps more than any other, also helps to make clear what LaRouche emphasizes at the end of the section on Classical tragedy in his paper “On the Subject of Metaphor,” that is, that tragedy addresses the central feature of all individual creative-mental activity, the principle of *capax Dei*, man’s capacity to participate in God.

In Act V, Scene 7, Mary not only confesses her sins and receives absolution in the sacrament of reconciliation, she also takes part in the sacrament of communion. As Melvil says, “God descends to thee in real presence.” After she participates in communion, Melvil says:

And as thou now in this his earthly body
Hast held with God mysterious communion.
So may’st thou henceforth, in his realm of joy,
Where sin no more exists, nor tears of woe,
A fair transfigur’d spirit, join thyself
For ever with the Godhead, and for ever.

Although Mary only achieves communion with God

at the point of death in the play, the audience is encouraged by her example to hold communion with God in this life by becoming His adopted children.

Nicolaus of Cusa: *Capax Dei*

In his essay *On the Filiation* [“Sonship”] of God, Nicolaus of Cusa stresses that man is distinct from the beast in that his “intellect is an intellectual living similitude of God,” or in other words, that man is in the living image of God. If an individual has faith in the Son of God, he himself can become an adopted son of God, by ascending in his mind, as Cusa says, above all sensible things and all logical contrarities to the level of the intellect or, as he puts it, mental vision. Moreover, although all can become adopted sons of God through participation in the only-begotten Son of God, Who is the Logos, each will participate in unity variously and will therefore preserve his identity as a sovereign individual.

Since God is the Creator and therefore transcends all that which is created, we can only become “deiform,” or God-like, by ascending through a negative mental process, which Cusa calls “absolution.” First, since the Creator is not anything sensible which He has created, to become God-like we must elevate our minds above the sensuous. Secondly, since everything which appears to be contradictory to our rational mind, actually coincides in the mind of the Creator, Who created everything which appears contradictory to our created minds, we must ascend above all logic. From the standpoint of sensuality, only the finite exists and not the infinite. From the standpoint of logic a “finite infinite,” which is the way Cusa describes man, is a contradiction. This is why LaRouche says in “On the Subject of Metaphor,” that a true thought-object by its nature “may be neither explicitly portrayed as a sensuous object, nor be depicted in terms of a medium of formal communication.” However, from the standpoint of the intellect, which has achieved learned ignorance, such apparent contrarities as “finite infinite” and “learned ignorance,” are compatible.

In his letters entitled *Kallias, or On the Beautiful*, Schiller develops the same concept as Cusa. Beauty cannot be located in the sensuous object per se, nor does it derive merely from physical causes. Therefore the pleasure we derive from beauty is not a “corporeal pleasure.” Nor can beauty be located in the formal or logical perfection of the sensuous matter. An object can be formally correct, it can be perfectly proportioned, and still not be beautiful. If the logical form is externally imposed upon the sensuous object, then the object is not beautiful, just as a person who acts morally against his own will out of a sense of duty, is not truly beautiful, because his moral

act is not given freely. Therefore, according to Schiller, true beauty must be located in the "form of the form." Beauty shows itself when it overcomes the logical form of its object. "Perfection is the form of a matter; beauty, on the other hand, is the form of this perfection."

Schiller defines this "form of the form" as freedom. If the perfect is presented with freedom it is immediately transformed into the beautiful. Moreover, we arrive at a conception of freedom through negation. That which is free is *not* compelled or determined from the outside. The beautiful soul does *not* act with sadness or compulsion, but rather is a "cheerful giver," as St. Paul writes. As empirical proof of his entire theory of beauty, Schiller advances the example of the Good Samaritan. In contrast to the person who does his moral duty, but only grudgingly, the Good Samaritan helps another person in need "without being called upon and without debate with himself, although it was at his expense." He does his moral duty with joy, because to do so has become his very nature. The beautiful soul voluntarily assents to act morally. He has so forgotten himself, that he rejoices even in the face of persecution or death, because he desires to do God's Will.

In this sense, Schiller's concept of the beautiful soul is totally coherent with Cusa's concept of the filiation of God. As Cusa writes in *On Learned Ignorance*, the Son of God, who is the Word or the Logos, is the "one infinite Form of all forms." Thus, the beautiful soul, which is the "form of the form," is an imitation of Christ, who is the "infinite Form of all forms." Hence, Schiller's "beautiful soul" is Cusa's "adopted son of God."

Probably the most direct expression of the concept of *capax Dei* occurs in Thomas à Kempis' book, the *Imitation of Christ*. As à Kempis points out: "Jesus has many lovers of His kingdom of heaven, but He has few bearers of His Cross. Many desire His consolation, but few desire His tribulation. All men would joy with Christ, but few will suffer anything for him." And yet, as à Kempis says, Christ explicitly stated that there is no other way to eternal life than to deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Him. The central paradox which underlies all human existence, and which all great tragedy expresses, is that it is only in dying to the world that man gains the joy of eternal life. Or, as Schiller wrote in the last line of his play on Joan of Arc, *The Virgin of Orleans*, which Ludwig van Beethoven later set as a canon: "Brief is the pain, eternal is the joy." Moreover, as à Kempis says, "if you bear this Cross against your will, you make a great burden for yourself." However, "if you will gladly bear this Cross, it will bear you, and it will bring you to the end you desire, where you will never afterwards have anything to suffer." As à Kempis points out: "When

you come to such a degree of patience that tribulation is sweet to you . . . you have found paradise on earth."

In my view there is no better expression of the sublime state of mind which, according to Schiller, it is the purpose of tragedy to effect in each of us, and which Lyndon LaRouche has stated is the method of thinking which we require in the political fight before us today, than Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Mountaintop" speech, which he gave the day before his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee on April 3, 1968. In that speech, King said that he was in Memphis to help the sanitation workers for the same reason that the Good Samaritan stopped to help the man in need. The question, King said, was not what would happen to him if he stopped to help those men. "The question," he said, "is, if I do not stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to them. That's the question."

At this point in his life, faced with imminent death, Martin Luther King, Jr. had elevated himself to the level of intellect which Nicolaus of Cusa describes as capable of seeing the glory of God. Like Thomas à Kempis, he realized that it is more important to live a good life, than to desire a long life. He no longer feared any man, because as the New Testament affirms: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear." He was "happy," because, like Christ at Gethsemane, he just wanted to do God's will. And the vision he imparted to us from the mountaintop, or as Nicolaus of Cusa would say, the Summit of Vision, is that freedom will become a reality for all God's children. We need only have the faith which he had, the faith that works through charity.

These are his words: "Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. And I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the Promised Land. So I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. I have a dream this afternoon, that the brotherhood of man will become a reality. With this faith, I will go out and carve a tunnel of hope from a mountain of despair. . . . With this faith, we will be able to achieve this new day, when all of God's children—black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics—will be able to join hands and sing with the Negroes in the spiritual of old, 'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty we are free at last.'"