

## 16th letter

In this letter, Schiller continuing from the previous explanation of the reciprocity of two contrary impulses (formal – material), he now *plays* and has fun with the limits of the beautiful. He will alternate between explaining beauty which is in the absolute form, and this counterposed to the beauty that most people experience in this finite world. The main difference between the infinite and the finite is that all encompassing unity will be infinite in the infinite realm of the *ideal* however in the *reality*, as we alternate between *matter* and *form*, we will have limited unity which is contracted in the part unlike in the infinite in which unity was absolute. Each part will have their own unity, which we now understand to be unity, yes, but of only one part.

In the ideal, beauty follows the concept of a perfect, simultaneous and necessary reciprocity while effecting either a releasing or a tensioning. In experience we do not have this example of a *perfect* reciprocity. We have a *fluctuation* between a *deficiency* of one to a preponderance of the other. (p.59 “what then is for the ideal of beauty a distinction made in *imagination* is for the beauty found in experience an existential difference)” In Experience, there is liquifying and energetic beauty. Ideas of reason are to be realized in mankind. So the business of linking the experiences to the abstract forms is the job of the physical and moral culture while making beauty out of beautiful things is the job of the aesthetic culture.

As energetic beauty and liquifying beauty each has their own power to effect men, there is a limit to what each can do. Even though energetic beauty can be useful to invigorate a softened aspect in man, it can also do the opposite on a character which is already tempered and full of convictions and resistant to impressions. We become aware of this limit and another kind of beauty plays counterpart to *energetic* beauty to enable the releasing effect on an entrenched character trait with, this time, *liquifying* beauty. It is not uncommon to “...find in times of strength and abundance the true greatness of imagination paired with the gigantic and the extravagant and the sublimity of conviction paired with the most appalling outbreaks of passion... [p.59]” Without harmony, the proper remedy does not correct the properly intended (patient) ill or unbalance...

So we can start to make sense of the influence of the beautiful but we must first make a few distinctions. We should properly define what we are talking about so that it be possible for our words, that we use as expressions of our meaning, may allow potential agreement in the other who will have been properly situated, whether in the ideal ‘sandbox’ or reality ‘sandbox’.

Schiller announces that he intends to pursue this line of reasoning exploring further how and what effect liquifying beauty has on the tensioned man, and energetic beauty on the relaxed man, in the next letter. He further sets out to resolve both contrary kinds of beauty into the unity of the ideal man.

## 17th letter (Liquifying Beauty)

We now must go and deduce the general idea of beauty from reason whereas before we (*or most people normally*) would only be deducing this idea of beauty from the concept of human nature. Normally (or maybe he's talking the situation he witnesses during the ongoing French Revolution) we had a problem of beauty being stuck within a limited finite mindset. In **REASON** we can now *form* the ideal of mankind along with the ideal of beauty.

But as in the allegory of the cave of Plato, we will descend to the arena of *actuality* to meet a man in a real life condition who's burdened by limitations which are not only due to his erroneous concept but flow from external circumstances and his freedom which is dependent on these external circumstances. There is a myriad of ways that the idea of mankind may be in him, in his mind, but generally there are basically two deviations from the ideal of mankind which is in reason.

- A) Lack of *Harmony*
- B) Lack of *Energy*.

Hey! (Schiller says...) "You see we haven't even 'Questioned the witnesses of experience' yet but we've already established by pure reason that actual (limited) man will be in state of *tension* or *relaxation*"

Depending on how individual forces disturbs the *harmony* of his being or the *unity* of his *nature*... his *sensuous* and *intellectual* powers will have been *uniformly* (*uni + form*) slackened...

Beauty to the rescue! Both contrary limits will be elevated by beauty restoring harmony to the tense man and vitality to the relaxed man... rendering man complete... in HIMSELF.

The function of liquifying beauty is to relax the dominating impulse while energetic beauty aims to strengthen the weaker impulse.

We have to look for beauty in reason because if we only look for it in ourselves, we'll only access a spoiled and corrupted version of beauty because we have yet to develop in ourselves what Schiller previously called the third character. It is man who transfers to beauty the imperfection of his individuality ... Man's limited concept of beauty will limit his understanding.

Man is tense when he is driven by sensations (although this is somewhat counterintuitive since we usually think of the man as being softened when he is easily affected by sensation but in this case he is too much 'stuck', thus tense, in sensations, not free)... But he is also tense when

driven by concepts (categorical imperative comes to mind... and Schiller's refutation to Kant, No man must must!)

All exclusive DOMINATION of either one of his basic impulses is for him the contrary of FREEDOM. To be free, man requires HARMONY ... man requires to be in harmony of both necessities. *Form* can free someone who's being unilaterally RULED by his feelings or led by his senses.. He can be released by *form* which offers an abstract beautiful vision of a higher power to show or inspire, in mind, the way to re-orient oneself.

Liquifying beauty;

- A) will calm the wildness of life... Sensations will have a bridge to thoughts...
- B) As a living image, will arm a shrunken form with SENSUOUS power (See Schiller is always playing? ... He's playing, not stuck at all, He's alternating between opposites, freely!!)

Schiller anticipates that beauty can become a medium through which this problematic dual tension can be removed but we will need to investigate further for that, we'll actually need to investigate the HUMAN SOUL (Dramatic: tan tan taaaan!). He says we're almost done with the abstract concepts ie speculation, but we'll soon move on to experience...after we check out the Human soul...

\*Notice how there is no chapter on ENERGETIC BEAUTY (the way that letter 17 has a subtitle: Liquifying Beauty. I was expecting Schiller to present one then the other, but again, schiller, is free and he's a true poet genius!! Expect the unexpected!) but how energetic beauty is presented all-the-while accompanying his partner in crime, namely 'Liquifying beauty'?