

“Seid einig—einig—einig!”: Friedrich Schiller and Unity
An International Workshop Co-Organized by
Harvard-CSULB-Johns Hopkins on Zoom

When, in his inaugural address, US President Joseph Biden called for “that most elusive of things in a democracy: Unity,” he mirrored the call of Friedrich Schiller’s 1804 drama, *Wilhelm Tell* “Seid einig—einig—einig” (Be united—united—united). Schiller’s call for unity has renewed relevance for democracies today.

Germany’s national poet—likewise dramatist, historian, aestheticist, political theorist, Doctor of Medicine, and philosopher—repeatedly stressed the importance of both unity on questions of human rights and cosmopolitanism in his many responses to partisan conflict, including, famously in a letter to Christian Gottfried Körner (1756–1831) of October 13, 1789, where he bemoaned the lack of imagination associated with hyper-partisanship: “Es ist ein armseliges kleinliches Ideal für *eine* Nation zu schreiben” (It is a pathetic, petty ideal to write for *a single* nation).

This workshop will adopt Schiller’s internationalist perspective and examine Schiller’s concept of consensus regarding the rights of nations and individual human rights, which transcend individual institutions and national borders. We plan to bring together graduate students from a variety of disciplines in order to investigate the relevance of Schiller’s concept of reconciliation in a political context. The Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Germanic Forum, the German Studies Student Association at California State University, Long Beach, and the Johns Hopkins Philological Society invite graduate students to submit abstracts of outstanding papers on the topic of Friedrich Schiller and unity for an international workshop over the course of two half-days on the following dates:

Thursday and Friday, May 13–14, 2021 from
8:00am–12:00pm PST; 11:00am–3:00pm EST; 5:00pm–9:00pm CET

Selected graduate students will present papers alongside established expert panelists and commentators. Presentations will be 20 minutes each. Submissions on Schiller and unity are welcomed from a broad array of disciplines, including those rooted, for example, in literary studies, philosophy, history, musicology, art history, political science, medical humanities, etc.

Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words for presentations in English or German by April 7, 2021.

Submissions may be sent to: schillerandunity@gmail.com.