Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1789)

Abstract

A writer and musician, Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1739-91) was a spirited and vocal supporter of the American Revolution. In 1774, he founded and assumed the editorship of *Deutsche Chronik* [*German Chronicle*] (1774-78), a periodical that became a forum for his critical and anti-absolutist polemics. He saw the events taking place in the American colonies in the context of a shared Enlightenment heritage and, like many of the German intellectuals of his day, sympathized with and admired the American rebels. Joining Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Christoph M. Wieland, and other prominent poets of the time, he protested the Hessian princes' traffic in mercenary soldiers, denouncing it as a crime and calling for retribution. He followed the war in the American colonies closely, writing and publishing vivid accounts of various military engagements. For Schubart and many of his contemporaries, the American Revolution was an example for German patriots in their own struggle against tyranny. Schubart's journalistic career ended abruptly in 1777 when, on the orders of the duke of Württemberg, Karl Eugen, he was arrested and imprisoned in Hohenasperg Fortess outside Ludwigsburg. He was released ten years later, in 1787, at the insistence of Frederick II ("the Great") of Prussia, to whom he expressed his gratitude in *Hymnus auf Friedrich den Grossen* [*Hymn for Frederick the Great*]. After his release, he was given a post as theater director in Stuttgart – a form of compensation for the injustice he had suffered.

Source

Source: August Friedrich Oelenhainz, Portrait of Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, oil on canvas, 1789. Staatsgalerie Stuttgart.
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