

Friedrich Schiller and Psychosomatics

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Introduction: Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) was not only a famous German poet but also physician and one of the leading historians of his time at the university of Jena (Germany). Objectives and aims: To show that Schiller was very early inclined for psychosomatic interactions. Methods: Analysis of the secondary literature since the death of Schiller for the subjects 'Friedrich Schiller' and 'psychosomatics'. Results: Already during his medical studies at the 'Hohe Karlsschule' in Stuttgart (Germany) Schiller studied very intensively psychosomatic issues on behalf of the disease of another student, Joseph Frédéric Grammont. After the tremendous success of his play 'Die Räuber' he fled from his unhappy life as a military physician and lived as a poet, always threatened by diseases and poverty. Medical and psychological knowledge play an important role in the thought of Friedrich Schiller. His creativity seems to be of greatest importance for him to survive psychically and physically. The actuality of his plays is due to the description of the drama of life in every age group, beginning from early childhood. Critical turning points in his life very often caused psychosomatic reactions, especially pain. Towards the upcoming mesmerism he remained very sceptic and refused to be mesmerized by the physician Eberhard Gmelin. Conclusions: Despite his own severe somatic illness he could cope with pain and emphasized in his writings the importance of the freedom of anxiety in difficult conditions. His descriptions of feelings, emotions and mental states are unique in their phenomenological precision and richness.