

August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, “Das Lied der Deutschen” (1841)

Abstract

The lyrics to the German national anthem, “Das Lied der Deutschen” [“The Song of the Germans”], were written by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798–1874) and adapted to the melody of the Austrian anthem, “Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser” [God Save Franz the Emperor], composed by Joseph Haydn (1732–1809). The lyrics show the clear influence of the French Revolution, especially the idea of “liberté, égalité, fraternité” in the third stanza. The “Deutschlandlied” was an inherently nationalist and liberal anthem that was sung during the Revolution of 1848. Despite or because of its antimonarchical tenor, it became an increasingly popular patriotic song during the German Empire [*Kaiserreich*]. It was officially adopted as the national anthem of the Weimar Republic in 1922. After 1933, the Nazis continued to play the first stanza, in addition to their own party anthem (the Horst Wessel Lied). It still serves as the national anthem for today’s Federal Republic of Germany, but only the third stanza is sung.

Source

Germany, Germany above all,
Above all in the world,
When, for protection and defense,
It always stands brotherly together.
From the Meuse to the Neman,
From the Adige to the Belt,
Germany, Germany above all,
Above all in the world!

German women, German loyalty,
German wine and German song,
Shall retain in the world
Their old beautiful chime
And inspire us to noble deeds
During all of our life.
German women, German loyalty,
German wine and German song!

Unity and justice and freedom
For the German fatherland!
Towards these let us all strive
Brotherly with heart and hand!
Unity and justice and freedom
Are the safeguards of fortune;

Flourish in the radiance of this fortune,
Flourish, German fatherland!

Source of English translation: "Deutschlandlied," Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deutschlandlied>

Source of original German lyrics: August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, *Das Lied der Deutschen*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1841. Available online at:
<http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB00004EDA00000000>

Source: "Deutschlandlied," the German national anthem as played by the United States Army Europe Band & Chorus (USAREUR). August 19, 2009. Available online at:
https://archive.org/details/Deutschlandlied/german_anthem.WAV

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighboring rights.

Recommended Citation: August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, "Das Lied der Deutschen" (1841), published in: German History Intersections, <<https://germanhistory-intersections.org/en/germanness/ghis:audio-6>> [December 09, 2023].