

James Vigus

“You surely don’t wish to cure Anglomania with Anglophobia”: Henry Crabb Robinson’s Debate on National Character and the English Reception of German Literature in the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift* in 1803

This article recovers a neglected episode in Henry Crabb Robinson’s increasingly well-mapped first phase as a literary and cultural mediator between England and Germany.¹ At the beginning of June 1803, writing to his brother from Jena where he was a student, Robinson recounted with satisfaction that a meeting with Friedrich Nicolai had resulted in his submitting a letter for publication in a famous German periodical:

I went by invitation to Nicolai again – he gave me a couple of Magazines in which was an Article abo[ut] England & desired me to write to him – This piece was execrable And I accordingly for once gave myself the trouble to compose an Answer to it in German which I sent to him & hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing myself in German Print – My Compos[ition] is I think better than what I have generally written in English.²

The “execrable” article was “Von der Beschaffenheit der Urtheile der Engländer über die deutsche Nazion und die Deutsche Literatur” [“On the Quality of Englishmen’s Judgments of the German Nation and German Literature”]. Robinson’s reply appeared in the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift* in September 1803.³ By inviting the German author to reply in a series of footnotes, the editor of the journal, Johann Erich Biester, staged a confrontation between Robinson (whose article was signed ‘R’) and his anonymous antagonist. Biester used two different typefaces in order to highlight the contrast visually: Robinson’s text was printed in Latin script, while the replies of the self-styled ‘German correspondent’ appeared in traditional Fraktur.

1 Quotations from Robinson’s manuscripts are by permission of the Director and Trustees of Dr. Williams’s Library, London, and the Henry Crabb Robinson Project (ed. Timothy Whelan and James Vigus), School of English and Drama, Queen Mary University of London (www.crabbrobinson.co.uk). I am grateful for information provided by Christian Deuling and Graham Jefcoate.

2 Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, letter 31, 1 and 2 June 1803, in *Crabb Robinson in Germany 1800–1805: Extracts from his Correspondence*, ed. Edith J. Morley (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 125f. For Robinson’s first introduction to Nicolai in April 1802, when “I was civilly treated and my opinion of him is raised by the personal acquaintance”, see Hertha Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde. Brücke zwischen England und Deutschland im Zeitalter der Romantik*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 135.

3 Anon., “Von der Beschaffenheit der Urtheile der Engländer über die Deutsche Nazion und die Deutsche Literatur,” *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, February 1803 (1), 98–146. Robinson’s article appeared under the same title, subtitled “An den Herausgeber der Berlinischen Monatschrift,” in the September issue (2) of the same year, 185–228. Biester included a preface to Robinson’s text, together with his translation of a short letter by another Englishman, who praises the German correspondent for his patriotism. The *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, together with its predecessor, the *Berlinische Monatschrift*, has been digitised at www.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/diglib/Berlinische_Monatschrift/. Extracts from Robinson’s article were reprinted in *Ein Engländer über deutsches Geistesleben im ersten Drittel dieses Jahrhunderts. Aufzeichnungen Henry Crabb Robinsons*, ed. Karl Eitner (Weimar, 1871), Anhang I, 381–87.

This exchange deserves attention not merely for the sake of developing Robinson's intellectual biography. I wish to use the episode as an example of how Robinson constructed his role as a cultural mediator – a two-way process that does not entirely answer the expectations of literary historians. Further, I will suggest that this material raises an important question for the *histoire de mentalités*: how distinct was literary reception around 1800 from the troubling, cliché-ridden, yet tenacious discourse of national character?⁴ The analysis shall proceed in three stages. I will, first, explain how Robinson came to the unusual position of submitting such a letter to the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*. Second, I shall place the German correspondent's work in the context both of the twin contemporary discourses of patriotism and national character and of the conflicted reception of German literature in England. Third, through an account of the debate itself, I shall consider Robinson's own attempt to distinguish between the 'loose accusations' of national stereotyping and the legitimate critique of dubious Anglo-German cultural transfer.⁵

1 The Mediator as Dilettante

Scholars routinely refer to Robinson, both during his first, five-year stay in Germany (1800–1805) and subsequently, as a cultural mediator.⁶ In the words of his principal twentieth-century editor, Edith Morley:

Crabb Robinson systematically underrated his own powers and achievements both at this period and always, but even he never doubted the importance of his work in acting as the channel of ideas between the country of his birth and the land of his temporary adoption. To him, more than to any one else, is due the influence of German thought and German literature on England in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.⁷

As Morley intimates, the "channel" created by Robinson was two-way. His work did not entirely match the paradigm of 'importation', even though that remains a dominant metaphor in critical

4 For a stimulating discussion of the theme of Anglo-German national stereotypes in literary works, see Rüdiger Görner, "Zur Psychopathologie der Anglophilie und Germanophobie. Von Vorurteilen und anderen Identitätsproblemen," *Angermion* 3 (2010), 185–202.

5 Robinson uses the phrase "loose accusations" in a letter to Nicolai of 30 May 1803, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 140. I borrow the term "dubious" from Barry Murnane, "Radical Translations: Dubious Anglo-German Cultural Transfer in the 1790s," in *Rewriting the Radical: Enlightenment, Revolution and Cultural Transfer in 1790s Germany, Britain and France*, ed. Maïke Oergel (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 44–60.

6 Examples include: Eudo C. Mason, *Deutsche und englische Romantik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959); Diana Behler, "Henry Crabb Robinson as a Mediator of Early German Romanticism to England," *Arcadia* 12 (1977), 117–155; Stefanie Stockhorst, "Henry Crabb Robinsons doppeltes Deutschlandbild – Zur Funktionsweise deutsch-englischer Literaturbeziehungen um 1800," *Weimarer Beiträge* 51 (2005), 254–69; Philipp Hunnekuhl, "Reconstructing the Voice of the Mediator: Henry Crabb Robinson's Literary Criticism," in *Informal Romanticism. Studien zur englischen Romantik*, ed. James Vigus (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2012), 61–76.

7 Edith Morley, "Introduction," in *Crabb Robinson in Germany*, ed. Morley, 1–12, here: 3.

discussions.⁸ Karen Junod has highlighted a key example from Robinson's literary work. When he contributed an article on William Blake to the *Vaterländisches Museum* in 1811, Robinson diffused knowledge of a little-known English poet and engraver in Germany. At the same time, his article participated in the patriotic discourse promoted by the journal's editor, Friedrich Chrisoph Perthes, who believed that a strong, united Germany, confident in its artistic production, would advance the European struggle against military despotism.⁹ Robinson's article in the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift* is an earlier instance of a comparable process. It is of less literary significance than the article on Blake, but especially given that Robinson composed it directly in German, it represents a more direct effort on the part of the cultural mediator to steer patriotic sentiment into a cosmopolitan channel.

In fashioning himself as a mediator, Robinson adopted the *Goethezeit's* aesthetic of literary genius, while modestly excluding himself from the category of creative artists and philosophers.¹⁰ When his brother asked whether he would compose his own work, he replied: "The Truth is I have very little respect for a second rate Author & would much rather translate Masterpieces than make moderate Originals."¹¹ As Stelzig shows, Robinson's "sense of inferiority", though "disabling", nevertheless had a liberating effect: it permitted him to experiment with forms of writing that were generally considered sub-literary.¹² If Robinson was no creative genius, neither was he a passive consumer: he cultivated taste and principled judgment. As Robinson rendered "The Difficult Combination", an epigram of Goethe: "Why do we find that Genius & Taste are so seldom united?/Boldness terrifies Taste Genius despises the rein."¹³ He translated specimens of Goethe and Schiller, and subsequently book-length German texts; published outstanding articles on the Kantian philosophy; and most importantly of all, presented a series of private lectures to Madame de Staël, who annotated them and drew on the material in her later bestseller, *De l'Allemagne*.¹⁴ Robinson found a vocation as a cultural go-between.

During Robinson's period at Jena, a specific term was current to describe the figure notionally located between the creative 'Genie' and the mere 'Liebhaber': a person of this kind was a

8 Leslie Stephen, "The Importation of German," in L.S., *Studies of a Biographer* (London: Duckworth, 1898), 38–75; John Boening, "Pioneers and Precedents: The 'Importation of German' and the Emergence of Periodical Criticism in England," *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der Literatur* 7:1 (1982), 65–87.

9 Karen Junod, "Crabb Robinson, Blake, and Perthes's *Vaterländisches Museum* (1810–1811)," *European Romantic Review*, 23:4 (August 2012), 435–51.

10 Eugene Stelzig, *Henry Crabb Robinson in Germany: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Life Writing* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2010), 114f.

11 Robinson to Thomas Robinson, 15 September 1802, Dr Williams's Library, Bundle 3A, letter 26 (not included in *Crabb Robinson in Germany*, ed. Morley, 113). Robinson wrote to his brother again in very similar terms around November 1806 (Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 325).

12 Stelzig, *Henry Crabb Robinson in Germany*, 65, 123.

13 MS, Bundle 5.IV, Dr Williams's Library, f. 5.

14 See Henry Crabb Robinson, *Essays on Kant, Schelling, and German Aesthetics*, ed. James Vigus (London: MHRA, 2010), and the bibliography of Robinson's German-related writings in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 354–58.

dilettante. In Goethe's classification, the dilettante was just receptive enough to imitate those with a truly creative vocation, but unable to proceed beyond the level of imitation. Goethe wrote: "Was dem Dilettanten eigentlich fehlt, ist Architektonik im höchsten Sinne, diejenige ausübende Kraft, welche erschafft, bildet, constituirt."¹⁵ Karl Philipp Moritz went further, removing all ambiguity from Goethe's presentation of the dilettante, when he asserted in his Neoplatonic work "Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen" [On the Plastic Imitation of the Beautiful] that dilettantism is a deeply painful condition. Robinson was familiar with this argument, for he drafted a manuscript translation of Moritz's work – stopping, however, at the very point when Moritz begins to describe the dilettante's sorrows.¹⁶

Since he refrained from creative composition, Robinson avoided the most direct form of dilettantism. Yet he could still refer to himself as a dilettante,¹⁷ not least because a translator, too, was a mediator-figure subject to a related discursive construction. 'Genial' translators, such as Goethe, enjoyed exceptional status in this respect. But an ordinary translator hovered, dilettante-like, between the original genius who composed a work and the passive spectator who enjoyed it.¹⁸ This hierarchical aesthetic informs Robinson's comment in 1811 on his most substantial translation – of Anton Wall's novel *Amatonda*:

The book, so far as I know, was never reviewed, and I obtained no credit for my work. Perhaps happily, for it was the failure of my attempt to gain distinction by writing that made me willingly devote myself honestly to the law, and so saved me from the mortification that follows a little literary success, by which men of inferior literary faculties, like myself, have been betrayed into an unwise adoption of literature as a profession, which after this year I never once thought of.¹⁹

Further, as an accomplished speaker of German, Robinson inhabited the allegedly unsatisfactory cultural middle-ground. This positioning was to be articulated in stark fashion by Friedrich Schleiermacher – paradoxically so, in view of Schleiermacher's own achievements as a translator.

15 "What the dilettante in fact lacks is an architectonic in the highest sense, that active power that creates, forms, constructs." *Goethes Werke* (Stuttgart and Tübingen: Cotta, 1833), vol. 44, 262. For a detailed account, see Richard Hibbitt, *Dilettantism and its Values: From Weimar Classicism to the fin de siècle* (Oxford: Legenda, 2006).

16 James Vigus, "'All are but parts of one stupendous whole'? Henry Crabb Robinson's Dilemma," in *Symbol and Intuition*, eds. Helmut Hühn and James Vigus (Oxford: Legenda, 2013), 123–138.

17 Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 339. The term is also used in J. M. Carré, "Nicolai et Henry Crabb Robinson d'après des documents inédits," *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 128 (1912), 184–89, here: 184, and cf. Stelzig, *Henry Crabb Robinson in Germany*, 122.

18 Daniel Ulbrich, "Mittelmäßiges Übersetzen. Übersetzerpositionen zwischen (professionalisierter) Liebhaberei und (genialischer) Professionalität im 18. Jahrhundert," in *Dilettantismus um 1800*, eds. Stefan Blechschmidt and Andrea Heinz (Heidelberg: Winter, 2007), 141–160.

19 In *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, Barrister-At-Law*, ed. Thomas Sadler, 2 vols. (Boston: Osgood, 1871), vol. I, 231, also quoted in Stelzig, *Henry Crabb Robinson in Germany*, 122. Cf. Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 339.

Schleiermacher's suggestion is that perfect fluency in a foreign language induces a culpable loss of patriotic identity:

Denn so wahr das auch bleibt in mancher Hinsicht, daß erst durch das Verständniß mehrerer Sprachen der Mensch in gewissem Sinne gebildet wird, und ein Weltbürger: so müssen wir doch gestehen, so wie wir die Weltbürgerschaft nicht für die ächte halten, die in wichtigen Momenten die Vaterlandsliebe unterdrückt, so ist auch in Bezug auf die Sprachen eine solche allgemeine Liebe nicht die rechte und wahrhaft bildende, welche für den lebendigen und höheren Gebrauch irgend eine Sprache, gleichviel ob alte oder neue, der vaterländischen gleich stellen will. Wie Einem Lande, so auch Einer Sprache oder der andern, muß der Mensch sich entschließen anzugehören, oder er schwebt haltungslos in unerfreulicher Mitte.²⁰

Robinson became more immersed in his adopted culture than Schleiermacher, with his doctrine of one country, one language, would consider healthy. As early as September 1801 Robinson told his brother, "Half a score Friends excepted, Germany to me is as dear as England";²¹ a sentiment that only intensified after he matriculated at the university of Jena. It was precisely Robinson's self-fashioning as a dilettante that enabled this immersion. He thus felt equipped to answer an argument about English attitudes to Germany and German literature. He had his own experiences as a foreign traveller to draw on, too. Early in his stay in Germany, he had invoked a uniformitarian attitude to human nature: "I find less Novelty than I expected Nature is the same in almost every part of the Globe – Man is the same too, in all essential points, in civilized countries and it is only in the frivolous minutiae of manners that variety can be expected".²² Robinson, then, rarely draws sweeping conclusions about national character, although he does refer conventionally in a letter to "[t]he cold and reserved character of the [German] people".²³ He praises Lessing and the ideal of religious tolerance, albeit without explicitly deploring the anti-Semitism he encounters.²⁴ As an Englishman he generally felt welcome throughout Germany, was "the pet of the party" in

20 "For true as it remains in many ways that one cannot be considered educated and cosmopolitan without a knowledge of several languages, we must also admit that cosmopolitanism does not seem authentic to us if at critical moments it suppresses patriotism; and the same thing is true of languages. That highly generalized love of language that cares little for what language (the native one or some other, old or new) is used for a variety is not the best kind of love for improving the mind or the culture. One Country, One Language – or else another: a person has to make up his mind to belong somewhere, or else hang disoriented in the unpleasant middle." Friedrich Schleiermacher, "On the Different Methods of Translating," quoted and translated in Douglas Robinson, *Schleiermacher's Icoses: Social Ecologies of the Different Methods of Translating* (Bucharest: Zeta Books, 2013), 146.

21 Robinson to Thomas Robinson, letter 16, September 1801, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 47.

22 Robinson to Thomas Robinson, letter 2, 11 May 1800, in *Crabb Robinson in Germany*, ed. Morley, 16.

23 *Crabb Robinson in Germany*, ed. Morley, 49.

24 Stelzig, *Henry Crabb Robinson in Germany*, 51.

Frankfurt,²⁵ discovering that “a foreigner is always an amusing companion”,²⁶ and that “everywhere in Germany English travellers are treated as if they were noble”,²⁷ and he was “der Engländer” to his student friends in Jena.²⁸ Robinson signed himself proudly in a friend's autograph album: “H. C. Robinson, Engländer und als solcher ein Verabscheuer der Tyrannei”.²⁹ On the other hand, he at times found a “disadvantage in being an Englishman” in Germany because of the uncertainty (befitting a dilettante) as to whether to present himself as a gentleman or a scholar.³⁰

Robinson's exceptional command of German, combined with his sociability and inquisitiveness, gained him entry into various literary circles. When he submitted his article to Nicolai, he concluded his covering letter by alluding to the privilege by which, as a foreigner, he could move between the opposing camps of the Berlin Enlightenment and Jena-Weimar idealism: “My habitual frankness led me at once to confess that I *incline* to the Adversary: At least on one or two main points of speculation. But [...] [this will never] prevent my subscribing myself with the greatest sincerity and Esteem [...] H.C. Robinson”.³¹ In his *Reminiscences*, Robinson recalled Nicolai with affection: “I found a most lively active friendly man[.] Most hospitably did he receive me – He took me to the great literary society club of Berlin a where I saw Gedicke Biester And other forgotten names”.³² The triumvirate of the Berlin Enlightenment – Nicolai, Biester, Gedicke – was not forgotten by Robinson.

2 Against Anglomania

The “German correspondent”, as the author of “Von der Beschaffenheit der Urtheile der Engländer” calls himself, opposes the “anglomania” he considers prevalent in Germany:³³ “wir haben in Deutschland eine Menge Leute, welche an der Anglomanie sehr leiden”.³⁴ His leading theme is the

25 Robinson to Thomas Robinson, letter 13, June 1801, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 39.

26 Robinson to Thomas Robinson, letter 7, 17 December 1800, in *Crabb Robinson in Germany*, ed. Morley, 41.

27 In *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson*, ed. Sadler (1871), I, 64f., also quoted in Stelzig, *Henry Crabb Robinson in Germany*, 41.

28 Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 130.

29 Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 167. “Englishman and as such a detester of tyranny.”

30 Robinson to Thomas Robinson, letter 9, 11 February 1801, in *Crabb Robinson in Germany*, ed. Morley, 54.

31 Robinson to Nicolai, 30 May 1803, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 140.

32 Henry Crabb Robinson, *Reminiscences*, MS, Dr Williams's Library, vol 1, year 1803 (written 1848). This passage is incorrectly transcribed in J. M. Carré, “Nicolai et Henry Crabb Robinson,” 185.

33 For a concise account of anglophile cultural reception, see Bernhard Fabian, “Englisch-deutsche Kulturbeziehungen im achtzehnten Jahrhundert,” in *Europäischer Kulturtransfer im 18. Jahrhundert*, eds. Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp, Uwe Steiner and Brunhilde Wehinger (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2003), 13–30.

34 Anon., “Von der Beschaffenheit,” 144. “We have many people in Germany who suffer greatly from anglomania.” The author remains unidentified; Nicolai did not tell Robinson his name. The article is tentatively attributed to Nicolai himself in Friedrich Nicolai, *Gesammelte Werke*, eds. Bernhard Fabian and Marie-Luise Spieckermann, 14 vols. (Hildesheim, Zürich and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1997), vol. 1.1, 215; but incorrectly so, unless Nicolai were practising an extraordinary deception in his correspondence with Robinson. The attribution derives from Emil

arrogant ignorance of Englishman, which he illustrates with a series of stereotyping anecdotes. He relates that he had previously travelled in France, where the local indifference to anything beyond French borders aroused his anger. This comment about the French, as I will suggest below, provides an important clue to the context of his approach, as well as a point of potential Anglo-German reconciliation on which Robinson will fasten. Having reached London, the German correspondent has discovered that blinkered ignorance is equally prevalent among the “Insulaner” [islanders]. The German correspondent implies that the English use of the word *Continent* to denote the whole of the rest of Europe symptomizes this attitude. Rather than become enraged, however, he professes to laugh and sympathetically shrug his shoulders in response to the insulting behaviour of Englishmen. Despite their various cultural and physical accomplishments, in particular their “Denkkraft” and “Thatkraft”, the English exhibit in this writer’s view “plumpe Nationalstolz” [coarse national pride], a thoughtless tendency to despise others that conflicts with the nation’s scientific achievements. He considers the practice of violent and nationalistic cursing (“French dog!”, or “Damn your blood!”) to be an expression of “angeborene Plumpheit”.³⁵ In order to illustrate this indictment of English character, the German correspondent relates a conversation with a patriotic English “lord” to whom he revealed his own Prussian patriotism. In this confrontation of stereotypes, the Englishman exclaimed: “Patriotism on the continent? Damn the Prussians, they are slaves and eat brown bread [Schwarzbrot]”. Laughing in the Englishman’s face, the German correspondent replied: “Doch essen sie dazu Gemüse und Fleisch, nicht aber bloß Heringe!”, a reference to the debilitating escalation in food costs in England during the wars.³⁶

Although the German correspondent fills pages with such invective, he does proceed to some potentially stronger claims. First, he notes in passing that the term for a foreigner is not “stranger” (unlike in French: “étranger”), “sondern emphatisch *an Alien*, ein Mensch andrer Art, ein

Schaefer’s editorial note to an abridged reprint of the article in *Vossische Zeitung* Nr. 260, Sonntagsbeilage Nr. 21, Berlin 23. Mai 1915, 162–164, here: 164. Schaefer in turn relied on Leopold Friedrich Günther von Göckingk, *Friedrich Nicolais Leben und literarischer Nachlaß* (Berlin 1820), 46. Göckingk, a major source for Nicolai’s bibliography (and probably his literary executor: see Rainer Falk and Jutta Weber, “Friedrich Nicolais Nachlass,” in *Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811)*, eds. Stefanie Stockhorst, Knut Kiesant and Hans-Gert Roloff (Berlin: Wiedler, 2011), 301–21, here: 308), stated that Nicolai was the author of both the original article and the footnotes to Robinson’s essay; but neither is likely. It was perhaps in Schaefer’s political interest to reaffirm the association of the article with a great name from German literary history.

35 Anon., “Von der Beschaffenheit,” 101. “[I]nnate coarseness”. Heinrich von Watzdorf, who in 1784 took a much milder view of London manners, blaming the provinciality of German visitors for their failure to appreciate Englishmen’s idiosyncratic form of politeness, nevertheless also notes the English hostility to the French: he reports that the favoured phrase to dismiss anything despicable or ridiculous is “recht französisch”. Watzdorf initially encountered suspicion because his hat looked “French”. *Briefe zur Charakteristik von England gehörig; geschrieben auf einer Reise im Jahre 1784* (Leipzig, 1786), letter 14, 158. In contrast to the German correspondent, however, Watzdorf could report that “die berühmte Wildheit oder vielmehr Ungezogenheit des englischen Pöbels habe ich noch nirgends gefunden” (159).

36 Anon., “Von der Beschaffenheit,” 101f. “But at least the Prussians eat vegetables and meat as well, not just herrings!” On the hardships of the 1790s, see Jenny Uglow, *In These Times: Living in Britain through Napoleon’s Wars, 1793–1815* (London: Faber, 2015), chapter 14, “Bread” (144–57).

heteronomischer Mensch".³⁷ The specific reference is probably to the Regulation of Aliens Act of 1793, passed primarily in response to the influx of French immigrants, and strengthened by a more rigorous law in 1798.³⁸ At the same time, the German correspondent is suggesting that an insular mentality is embedded in English vocabulary. Second, he claims that majority opinion in London favours perpetuating war rather than encouraging peace, for provided the conflicts remain beyond the island, they will damage other nations' economies whilst enabling British traders to inflate the prices of coffee and sugar. The German correspondent's anger surfaces, despite his disclaimer, when he describes a group of commercially-minded Englishmen ridiculing Prussian manufactures and declaring the hope that Prussia might become entangled in war.

Following these general remarks, the German correspondent turns to literature. English translations of German books are appearing *en masse*, he notes, "nur leider! bei weitem nicht immer die besten, sondern viele höchstmittelmäßige und schlechte, die bei uns selbst Niemand achtet".³⁹ With the exceptions of Wieland, Goethe, Schiller, and works of natural history and chemistry, English readers know nothing of the best German writing; reviews, too, perpetuate this ignorance by merely copying brief notices from a couple of German periodicals, the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung* or the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*. Linked to this, he complains that German "Sitten" – morals, referring in this context almost exclusively to sexual behaviour – are widely condemned on the basis of a poor selection of plays that had appeared on the London stage. The reference is evidently to the explosion of popularity enjoyed by Kotzebue's dramas since 1798, which had in turn provided an ample target for anti-German polemic.⁴⁰ The German correspondent complains of the anti-German sentiment diffused by the government-sponsored *Anti-Jacobin Review* (which he compares to the likewise popular *British Critic*), "eine so gallsüchtige als ungereimte Schmähchrift, welche die auch in Großbritannien ausgebreiteten höchst absurden Verläumdungen eines Robison und Barruel wider alle aufgeklärt denkende Deutsche Schriftsteller wiederholt und noch vergrößert."⁴¹ As proof

37 Anon., "Von der Beschaffenheit," 103. "[R]ather emphatically as an *alien*, a person of a different kind, a heteronomous person."

38 Frederick Burwick, *Playing to the Crowd: London Popular Theatre, 1780–1830* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 213.

39 Anon., "Von der Beschaffenheit," 116. "[O]nly unfortunately! By no means always the best, but rather many that are very mediocre and bad, of which we in Germany take no notice."

40 "In a period when theater audiences favoured melodrama and spectacle over the serious forms of tragedy, there is little wonder that Kotzebue should win popular ascendancy over Schiller." Burwick, *Playing to the Crowd*, 122. See further Stefanie Stockhorst, "Politische Vermittlungsstrategien und transnationale Kanonbildung. Zur britischen Kotzebue-Rezeption am Beispiel von William Taylor und Henry Crabb Robinson," *Angermion* 8 (2015), 35–59. Peter Mortensen also draws attention to William Preston's xenophobic essay "Reflections on the Peculiarities of Style and Manner in the late German Writers, whose Works have appeared in English; and on the Tendency of their Productions", which appeared in instalments in the *Edinburgh Magazine* in 1802 (Peter Mortensen, *British Romanticism and Continental Influences: Writing in an Age of Europhobia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 33–42); Preston "appears to be mainly concerned about a quasi-sexual process of seduction particularly aimed at Englishwomen" (37).

41 Anon., "Von der Beschaffenheit," 121. "[A] libellous publication as vindictive as it is senseless, which repeats and even magnifies the highly absurd calumnies – widespread also in Great Britain – of people like Robison and Barruel." The German correspondent's description of this periodical is not unreasonable. On the cultural influence of Barruel and

of the uncomfortable position in which English apologists for German culture find themselves in relation to official culture, he cites an article published by Thomas Young in the *British Magazine*.⁴² Young considers the *Anti-Jacobin's* condemnation of German "morality" to be "exaggerated", but he nevertheless – as the German correspondent underlines – still admits *some* truth in the charges, readily conceding that morality is healthier in England than Germany. The German correspondent reacts to Young's compromise sarcastically:

Wie aufgeklärt und billig gegen Nebenmenschen muß eine Nation sein, welche erst das Zeugnis eine Landsmanns bedarf, um einzusehen, daß die Deutschen Frauenzimmer nicht die liederlichsten und verworfensten Kreaturen sind, nicht ohne Scheu ihre Kinder abtreiben! Und dieser trefliche Vertheidiger der Deutschen Sittlichkeit und der Deutschen Literatur, wie sorgfältig schont er die kindischen Vorurtheile seines Vaterlandes!⁴³

From this point, the German correspondent's polemic gathers pace. In his view, English denunciations of German immorality are hypocritical. He reports stories of English women gambling, and of English men selling their wives. Denouncing the state of morality in London as worse than in other major cities, he attacks the excesses of the London stage and the unhealthy prolixity of supposedly great English writers, such as Samuel Johnson in his "boring" novel *Rasselas*. In conclusion, the German correspondent claims that "Die Freiheit, wovon in England so viel gerühmt wird, soll ausschließend nur für Engländer gelten."⁴⁴ A closing anecdote sums up English manners as the German correspondent claims to have experienced them. His complaint during a dinner that a beefsteak was overcooked – since he was more used to French taste in meat – was dismissed with the words: "Damn you for a Jacobin!"⁴⁵

As Peter Mandler emphasises, the discourse of national character is "slippery and flexible", performing the logically dubious task of yoking disparate qualities and activities into "a single personality type".⁴⁶ The fact that the German correspondent conflates the opinions of individual Londoners with 'English' views as a whole reflects this endemic imprecision; similar connotations

Robison's conspiracy theory of the French Revolution, see Mortensen, *British Romanticism and Continental Influences*, 22–26.

42 Aletes [Thomas Young], "On the Manners and Literature of Germany," *British Magazine* I (1800), 451f. Young spent one year at the University of Göttingen (1795–96: see *ODNB*); not, as the German correspondent claims, several years. Göttingen was a favourite target of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*.

43 Anon., "Von der Beschaffenheit," 123f. "How enlightened and fair to their neighbours must a nation be, which first requires the testimony of a fellow countryman in order to realise that German women are not the most licentious and abandoned creatures and do not abort their children without abhorrence! And this fine defender of German morality and German literature – how carefully he spares the childish prejudices of his fatherland!"

44 Anon., "Von der Beschaffenheit," 143. "The freedom, which is so much vaunted in England, is to apply only to Englishmen."

45 Anon., "Von der Beschaffenheit," 146.

46 Peter Mandler, *The English National Character: The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 2.

occur in the article between English and British, and between Prussian and German. This is not unusual: in Anglophone writing of the period, too, there was much “discursive slippage between Englishness and Britishness”.⁴⁷ “Von der Beschaffenheit der Urtheile der Engländer” foreshadows the rhetoric which, a couple of years later, would mobilise Prussian resistance to Napoleonic occupation.⁴⁸ Again, the German correspondent's arguments are exceptional neither in substance nor tone. Other opponents of anglomania, too, argued vehemently that German respect for English patriotism undermined their national self-worth. A writer in a Salzburg newspaper had recently complained:

Die Anglomanie, so wie jede Aefferey, raubt uns unsern ächten, deutschen National Charakter, und unsere Sittlichkeit, unsere Mäßigkeit, unsern Wohlstand und unsere Kraft. Wir schämen uns Deutsche zu seyn, wollen Engländer scheinen, und werden Weichlinge und Bettler.⁴⁹

German anglophilia, caricatured here as “anglomania” (or “Engländerei”, a word proposed by a patriotic dictionary in 1813),⁵⁰ had been in retreat for some time, largely for the reasons cited by the German correspondent. To be sure, it was still possible to take an indulgent view of proverbial English national pride at the turn of the nineteenth century: in 1802, Friedrich von der Decke continued to argue that Englishmen's high self-valuation was justified to the extent that it reflected patriotic attachment to a liberal constitution.⁵¹ Enlightenment anglophiles, including Johann Wilhelm von Archenholtz and G.F.A. Wendeborn (whose works were translated into English) had cited patriotism as an English virtue from which Germans could learn.⁵² The first characteristic Wendeborn identified in his summing-up of English national character was “Nationalstolz”.⁵³ This

47 David Higgins, *Romantic Englishness: Local, National and Global Selves, 1780–1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 107.

48 “The idea of the Germanic occurred within a European context, which it retained well into the nineteenth century. Between 1805 and 1815, however, in Germany the need emerged to define a more precisely German notion within this more general northern or European framework. The need was occasioned by the Napoleonic occupation of large areas of the recently abolished German Empire and by the extremely precarious positions of the major central European powers, Prussia and Austria. National feeling was aroused for specific purposes: to end French occupation, to abolish absolute rule in the many independent principalities that had made up the Empire, and to replace it with constitutional rule – in short, to unite and reform.” Maïke Oergel, “The redeeming Teuton: nineteenth-century notions of the ‘Germanic’ in England and Germany,” in *Imagining Nations*, ed. Geoffrey Cubitt (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 75–91, here: 78.

49 “Ueber die Anglisirsucht der Deutschen,” *Salzburger Intelligenzblatt*, XXXV. Sr. Sonnabend, den 2. September 1797, 544–47, here: 544. “Anglomania, like every silliness, deprives us of our true, German national character, and our morality, our moderation, our wellbeing and our strength. We are ashamed of being German, want to appear to be Englishmen, and become weaklings and beggars.”

50 *Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, ed. Joachim Heinrich Campe (Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1813), 111.

51 F. von der Decken, *Versuch über den englischen National-Character* (Hanover: Helwingsche Hofbuchhandlung, 1802), 58.

52 Michael Maurer, *Aufklärung und Anglophilie in Deutschland* (Göttingen and Zurich: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 188, 227, cf. 427; and J. G. Zimmermann, *Essay on National Pride*, trans. Samuel Hull Wilcocke (London: C. Dilly, 1797), 5f.

53 On “Eigenliebe” as the anthropological basis of patriotic discourse, see Hans Peter Hermann, “Individuum und Staatsmacht: Preußisch-deutscher Nationalismus in Texten zum Siebenjährigen Krieg,” in *Machtphantasie Deutschland:*

was an orthodox view, emphasised in J.G. Zimmermann's book on national pride. In his earlier work, Wendeborn presented English national pride as a lesson to his countrymen: "Die Liebe des Vaterlandes, ist fast allen Völkern gemein; die Engländer aber besitzen sie unter den Europäern wol im höchsten, und die Deutschen vielleicht im geringsten Grade."⁵⁴ But a dark side emerged: the inevitable complement of this characteristic, Wendeborn asserted, was "Fremdenfeindlichkeit", or xenophobia.⁵⁵ Wendeborn claimed that he observed more of this trait the longer he lived in England. By 1801, Wendeborn had become disillusioned with England, where, he felt, national pride had become a vice and Pitt's repressive government had stifled the freedom for which the country was once celebrated. Wendeborn reminisced in 1801: "Wie ich zuerst nach England kam, waren die Zeiten gegen die, welche hernach erfolgten, unendlich besser."⁵⁶

The attitude of which the German correspondent complains was proverbial. In Zimmermann's words:

Englishmen themselves acknowledge, that they inherit from their ancestors a stupid prepossession against all other inhabitants of the globe. [...] As to the word French, the national antipathy against their opposite neighbours is so great, that to call a foreigner, dog, is not insulting enough, but he must be called French dog, to convey the highest degree of detestation. [...] [In] general, an Englishman well-stuffed with beef, pudding, and porter, heartily despises every other nation of Europe.⁵⁷

Wendeborn was not the only prominent German anglophile who eventually expressed disappointment at English manners. Georg Forster had hoped to see a favourable change between his departure from England in 1778 and his return in 1791. Instead, he found that "England is noch *das alte*, wie seine Einwohner es emphatisch zu nennen pflegen."⁵⁸ Tolerance and politeness of speech had somewhat improved, but only in qualified terms, for "Die Toleranz gegen die Ausländer, und zumal die Franzosen, scheint auch mit einem größerem Umfange in Befolgung und Nichtbefolgung der Moden, als ehemals in Verbindung zu stehen."⁵⁹ Forster's reservations, though,

Nationalismus, Männlichkeit und Fremdenhaß im Vaterlandsdiskurs deutscher Schriftsteller des 18. Jahrhunderts, eds. Hans Peter Hermann, Hans-Martin Blitz and Susanna Moßmann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996), 67f.

54 Quoted in Maurer, *Aufklärung und Anglophilie*, 226. "Love of the fatherland is common to almost all peoples; but among Europeans the English probably possess it in the highest, and the Germans perhaps in the lowest degree."

55 In Maurer, *Aufklärung und Anglophilie*, 227.

56 *D. Gebh. Fr. Aug. Wendeborn's Erinnerungen aus seinem Leben*, ed. C. D. Ebeling (Hamburg: in der Bohn'schen Buchhandlung, 1813), vol. 1, 188. "When I first came to England the times were, compared with those which followed, infinitely better."

57 Zimmermann, *Essay on National Pride*, 35f.

58 Georg Forster, *Sämtliche Werke* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1843), vol. 3, 380. Also in *Britannien, von deiner Freiheit einen Hut voll. Deutsche Reiseberichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Maurer (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1992), 454. "England is still the same *old* England, as its inhabitants are accustomed emphatically to call it."

59 Forster, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 3, 381. Paul Langford states incorrectly that Forster "had no doubt that such a 'revolution of manners' had occurred in the interim", citing this as evidence for improved treatment of foreign visitors

are milder than Wendeborn's, probably because the former was writing before Burkean conservatism had become culturally dominant in England.

Anglophilia, famously promoted by Voltaire's *Letters Concerning the English Nation*, also suffered during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars due to its association with French culture. The transformation in political opinion characteristic of both British and German Romantic writers from pro-revolutionary (and cosmopolitan) to conservative (and more narrowly patriotic) in many cases occurred in the first few years of the nineteenth century. When Robinson, during his walking tour of Saxony in 1801, encountered the Göttingen Romantics – the brothers Christian and Clemens Brentano, Stefan Winkelmann and Achim von Arnim – he noted that “they are not patriots”,⁶⁰ owing to their universal admiration for Shakespeare. In 1798, Arnim was still professing cosmopolitanism in unambiguous terms, calling it that “süßen Bande, [...] die alle Menschen gleich umschließen, ohne Vaterland zu erkennen oder Stamm”.⁶¹ Yet, during his *Bildungsreise* in Europe in the years 1801 to 1804, Arnim radically changed his view, professing his determination to maintain his German identity unsullied in Paris. As Susanna Moßmann has explained, travel abroad was for the German Romantics frequently an occasion for self-distancing from foreigners and for formulating national sentiment.⁶² The German correspondent, whose patriotism was reinforced by a visit to Paris before he travelled to London, seems to fit this paradigm.

Regarding the English reception of German literature and drama, the German correspondent has substantial grounds for regret. He correctly notes that a new periodical dedicated to the informed diffusion of German literature, *The German Museum*, had proved very short-lived: the proprietor, Constantin Geisweiler, had gone out of business.⁶³ This was just one example of a widespread trend. The *British Magazine*, in which Thomas Young published his qualified defence of German morality, also soon ceased publication; as did the *Monthly Register*, in which Robinson published his articles on Kant to little recognition. A German “Lese-Bibliothek” in London had closed in 1800, and the business of James Remnant, a seller of German books, suffered ‘shipwreck’ in 1801.⁶⁴ Graham Jefcoate points out that the saturation of the market for German books in the 1790s was a major

by the 1790s (Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 224). In fact, Forster only observes that “[e]ine bekannte allgemeine Revolution in der Kleidung der Mannspersonen” had taken place, namely that rapiers were no longer worn (Forster, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 3, 381).

60 See James Vigus, “Henry Crabb Robinson's Initiation into the ‘Mysteries of the new school’: A Romantic Journey,” in *Romantic Localities: Europe Writes Place*, eds. Christoph Bode and Jacqueline Labbe (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2010), 145–56.

61 Achim von Arnim, *Werke in sechs Bänden*, eds. Roswitha Burwick *et al.* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989–1994), vol. 6, 35. “[T]hat sweet band that clasps all people equally without recognising fatherland or lineage”.

62 Susanna Moßmann, “Das Fremde ausscheiden: Antisemitismus und Nationalbewußtsein bei Ludwig Achim von Arnim und in der ‘Christlich-deutschen Tischgesellschaft,’” in *Machtphantasie Deutschland*, eds. Hermann, Blitz and Moßmann, 123–160, here: 130.

63 Graham Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler in London 1680–1811. Strukturen und Bedeutung des deutschen Anteils am englischen Buchhandel* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 360–64, 368f.

64 Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 313.

reason for this collapse in mediation at the outset of the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ But the “Lauheit der Engländer für die deutsche Literatur”,⁶⁶ ably abetted by the campaign against German culture led by the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, also played a major role. Robinson had written in 1800, just before leaving for Germany: “Whether the present taste for German literature has its origin in a just perception of real excellence, or in mere thirst of novelty, is at present a subject of dispute”.⁶⁷ The novelty, in general, faded all too soon: although some individual voices continued to anticipate the spread of German writing in England,⁶⁸ the German correspondent's assessment on this point seems to have been well substantiated. A less polemical contemporaneous writer likewise wrote:

Während in Zeitungen und Zeitschriften viel über die Fortschritte geschrieben wird, welche die deutsche Litteratur jetzt in England macht – erregt der wirkliche Zustand, in welchem sie sich dort befindet, Mitleid, und steht mit jenen hochtönenden Nachrichten in einem sonderbaren Kontraste.⁶⁹

And as Christian August Gottlieb Göde summarised the situation in around 1802:

Viele Engländer halten die Bekanntschaft mit der deutschen Literatur für gefährlich; und hört man sie oft über die unmoralische Tendenz deutscher Schriften klagen, an denen sie vorzüglich die Spuren einer kränklichen, überspannten Empfindsamkeit mißbilligen. Sieht man in den englischen Leihbibliotheken die abscheulichen Mißgeburten, die unter dem Namen “german novels” ihren Weg zu den Toiletten finden: so wird man die Klagen patriotischer Engländer über diese Geist und Geschmack ertönende Lectüre sehr gerecht finden.⁷⁰

65 Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 371 (and cf. 120).

66 “Indifference of the English towards German literature.” Christian August Göde reported hearing this phrase from a lady (perhaps Maria Geisweiler) when he visited Constantin Geisweiler in 1802 (Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 369).

67 Robinson, “On Gutteral Sounds,” *Monthly Magazine* 9 (April 1800), 236 (quoted in Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 93).

68 Jefcoate gathers useful evidence. A certain Dr Hoffmann wrote in June 1800: “Die deutsche Litteratur ist in England außerordentlich geschätzt und das nicht bloß bey Gelehrten – ich habe eine große Menge davon kommen lassen, welche alle Deutsch verstanden und in unserer schönen Litteratur weiter besser zu Hause waren, als ich, im Deutschen” (quoted in Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 90). Archenholz still spoke of “the rage for german literature” in 1800 (86), and Cotta in the same year of “Liebhaberei zur deutschen Sprache” and an increase of German booksellers (18); in 1803, Johann Christian Hüttner claimed that German literature was making progress in England, albeit slowly (322).

69 Anon., “Ueber deutsche Litteratur in England”, *Eunomia* I, I (June 1801), 483–86, here: 483. “While much is written in newspapers and journals about the progress that German literature is now making in England, its actual condition arouses pity, and stands in strange contrast to those high-flown messages.” Like the German correspondent, this writer singles out the dubious selections of the Geisweilers for criticism (486).

70 Göde, *England*, 390, quoted in Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 94. “Many Englishmen consider familiarity with German literature to be dangerous; and one often hears them complain of the immoral tendency of German writings, in which they above all deplore the traces of a sick, over-excited sensibility. If one sees the abhorrent monstrosities in the English lending libraries that find their way to the toilet under the name of ‘German novels’, one will find the complaints of patriotic Englishmen about this spirit- and taste-sapping reading very just.” On the strongly gothic component of the reception of German literature in the 1790s, see Barry Murnane, “Importing Home-grown

Further circumstantial evidence points to a sudden turn against German writing at the end of the 1790s. Wordsworth's "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800 distanced his work from "sickly and stupid German Tragedies". In the first edition of 1798, just two years previously, Wordsworth had not troubled to disguise the affinity of his work with Gottfried August Bürger's ballads.⁷¹ Wordsworth's alarm, like the popular fear of German 'immorality', was probably related to the sudden success in London of the plays of Kotzebue from 1798. Friedrich Nicolai himself would not have been surprised that it was sensational drama rather than more substantial literature that briefly conquered the English market; in 1791 he had written of his expectation that a new book entitled *Das gelehrte England*, would not sell in England despite its topic: "Denn ich kenne gar zu gut die englischen Buchhändler. Geld mögen sie gern bekommen, aber nicht einem Ausländer geben."⁷² As Nicolai anticipated, it received no reviews in England. Though he was an anglophile committed to Anglo-German exchange, Nicolai concluded that "die Engländer sich um fremde Bücher gar nicht bekümmern, selbst, wenn sie England angehen."⁷³ Although this situation did change later in the 1790s, the period 1801–1815 proved to be another of 'relative indifference' for the reception of German literature in British magazines.⁷⁴

The German correspondent thus expressed in a blunt form a fair concern about the one-sided knowledge of German writing in England. Biester, the editor, who preferred to emphasise cosmopolitanism rather than patriotism, distances himself somewhat from the article.⁷⁵ Yet its appearance in this cosmopolitan, philosophically significant journal – Immanuel Kant had published several articles in its predecessor, the *Berlinische Monatschrift* – was a sign of the times.

3 A Cosmopolitan Resolution?

In the letter to Nicolai enclosing his submission to the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, Robinson invited Nicolai and Biester to amend his text as they saw fit:

Horrors? The English Reception of the Schauerroman and Schiller's *Der Geisterseher*," *Angermion* 1 (2008), 51–82, esp. 54f.

71 For a detailed analysis, see Peter Mortensen, *British Romanticism and Continental Influences: Writing in an Age of Europhobia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), chapter two: "'Dethroning German Sublimity': Outrageous Stimulation in Romantic Ballad-Writing" (43–94).

72 Nicolai, *Verlegerbriefe*, eds. Bernhard Fabian and Marie-Luise Spieckermann (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1988), 151, quoted in Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 112f.

73 Quoted in Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler*, 113. "The English don't concern themselves with foreign books at all, even when they are about England." On Nicolai's transmission of English writing to Germany, see Stefanie Stockhorst, "Englischer Geschmack auf dem Kontinent: Friedrich Nicolai als Vermittler ästhetisch-kritischer Diskurse in der Berliner Aufklärung," in *Göttinger Händel-Beiträge*, vol. 15, eds. Laurenz Lütteken and Wolfgang Sandberger (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2014), 179–195.

74 This is the phrase used in Walter Roloff, Morton E. Mix and Martha Nicolai, *German Literature in British Magazines 1750–1860* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949), 53–75.

75 "Wie sehr er auch auf sein Vaterland Preußen stolz ist [...] so überwiegt in ihm doch der deutscher Weltbürger". Joseph Hay, *Staat, Volk und Weltbürgertum in der Berlinischen Monatschrift von Friedrich Gedike und Johann Erich Biester (1783–96)* (Berlin: Haude & Spensersche Buchhandlung, 1913), 25.

If the writer be a friend or Protégé of yours or the Editors, I shall not scruple your correcting the more hard expressions I may have used. But in truth the writer deserves a thrashing for a Letter so full of falsehoods – I do not say they are willful: on the Contrary, there seems to be a “zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge”.⁷⁶

A couple of months later, Nicolai replied courteously, having passed Robinson's work on to Biester. Of the identity of the German correspondent, he says merely: “Ob dieser Correspondent gerade Herrn Biesters Protégé sein möchte, weiß ich eben nicht. So viel kann ich bezeugen, daß er nicht ein Jüngling ist, wie Sie zu glauben scheinen, noch in einer Lage bloß mit Pöbeln umgehen zu müssen.”⁷⁷ In September, Nicolai sent Robinson six copies of the journal, containing Robinson's article accompanied by the footnoted replies of the German correspondent; Robinson replied (this time in German) with gratitude, and commented as follows on the publication:

Ich danke H[errn] Biester für die Einrückung meines englisch-deutschen Aufsatzes, der als solcher mich selbst amusirt hat. Mein Gegner hat so geantwortet, daß ich wünschen konnte ein paar unartige Redensarten nicht gebraucht zu haben; Seine Enthaltbarkeit ist freylich zu bewundern, denn sein ganzliches Stillschweigen gegen ziemlich derbe Insinuationen zeigt (da er sie wohl verstanden haben mußte) daß er sie verachtete. Übrigens wie Sie richtig bemerken, ist der Streit zu Ende.⁷⁸

The principal insinuation that Robinson introduces in his article is that the German correspondent must be a man of low class who would naturally attract supercilious treatment. It is possible, as Robinson apparently guesses, that the German correspondent did recognise this implication and allowed it to stand unchallenged as, in itself, an example of ‘English’ arrogance.

Robinson introduces his article with the proviso that he has no objection to the work of the German correspondent to the extent that it is a “patriotic” defence of Germany. This anticipates the note of idealistic cosmopolitanism on which he will conclude. (Biester echoes this remark when he introduces the debate as taking place between “zwei patriotische Männer”: all these writers thus

⁷⁶ Robinson to Nicolai, 30 May 1803, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 140.

⁷⁷ Nicolai to Robinson, 10 August 1803, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 141; also in Carré, “Nicolai et Henry Crabb Robinson,” 187. “Whether this correspondent may actually be Mr Biester's protégé, I don't know. This much I can attest to: he is not a youth, as you appear to believe, nor in the situation of having to associate only with the rabble.”

⁷⁸ Robinson to Nicolai, 15 September 1803, in Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 143f. “I thank Mr Biester for the inclusion of my Anglo-German article, which as such gave me myself amusement. My antagonist replied in such a way that I could wish that I had not used a few rough modes of expression; his restraint is indeed remarkable, for his complete silence with regard to fairly harsh insinuations shows (since he surely must have understood them) that he despised them. By the way, as you rightly remark, the dispute is now over.”

agree that the term “patriotic” designates a virtue.⁷⁹) Robinson asserts that the anglophobia recommended by the German correspondent cannot be the proper cure for over-enthusiastic anglomania: “Sie meinen gewiss nicht, dass man vermittelst entgegengesetzter Falschheiten sich der Wahrheit nähern solle; auch wünschen Sie nicht, eine ‘Anglomanie’ durch eine Anglophobie zu ‘heilen’.”⁸⁰ In his discussion, Robinson seeks to distinguish the topics that the German correspondent conflated. On the one hand, attacks on national character are, in Robinson's view, “puerile and loose” (as he told Nicolai).⁸¹ On the other, he agrees with the assessment of the German correspondent with regard to the inadequate reception of German literature in England. For the first part, Robinson employs *ad hominem* argument, based on the assumption that the German correspondent is a young man, easily impressed by new experiences, prone to take trivial novelties seriously, and apt to seek confirmations of what he has already read in newspapers. Robinson makes this speculative diagnosis under the motto “set a thief to catch a thief” – for he had recognised similar tendencies in himself when he first entered Germany at the age of twenty-five. This rhetorical opening is immediately undercut by a brief footnote from the German correspondent: “So gar jung ist der Deutsche Korrespondent nicht; sondern von ganz gesetzten Jahren, ist auch schon mehr gereiset.”⁸² But it serves to introduce Robinson's rebuttal of the claim made by the German correspondent that the English habitually hurl the insult “French dog”. On the contrary, writes Robinson, this is not a common expression in England. He explains: “Lessings herrliche, ganz in Sterne's Geist erdichtete Anekdote von Korporal Trim hat diese Redensart weit besser in Deutschland als in England bekannt gemacht.”⁸³ Lessing's story, in which the character Trim uses the insult “French dog”, had been recounted by Nicolai in the *Berlinische Monatschrift*.⁸⁴ Robinson does not mention Zimmermann's reference to the same insult, but that, too, would reinforce the impression that the German correspondent was relying on literary convention rather than experience. Again, however, Robinson's claim is undercut by a footnote from the German correspondent, who repeats his assertion that “French dog” *is* a commonly heard insult. He purports to translate from a London newspaper the story that when a Frenchman, arguing with an Englishman about which of their two nations was the more polite, objected that the English use the very impolite expression “French dog”, the Englishman responded outrageously: “Wir setzen Hund hinzu, um das Wort

79 Editor's preface, *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, September 1803, 189. In his *Reminiscences*, Robinson misremembers the authorship of this preface, attributing it to Nicolai rather than Biester.

80 Robinson, “An den Herausgeber,” 190. “You surely do not mean that one should approach truth through opposing falsehoods; nor do you wish to ‘cure’ an ‘anglomania’ by anglophobia.”

81 Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 140.

82 Anon., footnote to Robinson, “An den Herausgeber,” 193. “The German correspondent is not so very young, but of quite advanced age, and well-travelled.”

83 Robinson, “An den Herausgeber,” 196f. “Lessing's excellent anecdote about Corporal Trim, invented thoroughly in the spirit of Sterne, has made this expression much better known in Germany than in England.”

84 Friedrich Nicolai, “Lessings Predigt über zwei Texte,” *Berlinische Monatschrift*, January 1791 (1), 30–44, here: 43.

Franzose zu mildern".⁸⁵ Most of Robinson's statements meet with straight-faced counter-claims from the German correspondent, some of which occupy more space on the page than Robinson's text.

Robinson quips that the German correspondent's detection of "angeborenen Plumpeit" in the use of the insult "French dog" would find no support in philosophy, since philosophers have rejected the notion of "innate ideas".⁸⁶ Yet what this shows is that Robinson had not yet read Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (published in 1798). Kant writes about the English national character in a manner entirely consonant with the view of the German correspondent, so that the latter could (had he so wished) have claimed philosophical credentials. According to Kant:

Hume thinks that if each individual in a nation is intent on assuming his own particular character (as with the English), the nation itself has no character. It seems to me he is mistaken; for affectation of a character is precisely the general character of the people to which he himself belongs, and it is contempt for all foreigners, particular because the English believe that they alone can boast of a respectable constitution that combines civil freedom internally with power against outsiders. – A character like this is *arrogant rudeness* [stolze Grobheit], in contrast to the politeness that easily becomes familiar; it is obstinate behaviour toward every other person from supposed self-sufficiency, where one believes that one has no need of anybody else and so can be excused from kindness toward other people.

Thus the two most civilized peoples on earth, England and France, have contrasting characters, and perhaps chiefly because of this are in a constant feud with each other. Also because of their innate character [auch ihrem angeborenen Charakter nach], of which the acquired and artificial character is only the result, England and France are perhaps the only peoples to which one can assign a definite and – as long as they do not become mixed by the violence of war – unchangeable character.⁸⁷

It is striking that Kant, who endorsed Locke's rejection of "innate ideas", should recur to a notion of innate national character – in the case of Englishmen, "stolze Grobheit", or arrogant rudeness. Kant's choice of the adjective "stolz", a standard one among speculative anthropological writers, as we have seen, supports the German correspondent's approach.

85 Anon., footnote to Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 197. "We add 'dog' in order to palliate the word 'French'."

86 Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 198.

87 Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. and ed. Robert B. Louden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 213f. (311f. in the standard German pagination). See also Langford, *Englishness Identified*, 291f.

Either the German correspondent misunderstood Robinson's remark, or he chose to combat irony with irony, for he simply substitutes the word "Stolz" [pride] for his original choice of "Plumpheit" [coarseness]:

Es thut dem Deutschen Korrespondenten leid, in der angeführten Stelle dies Wort gebraucht zu haben; denn er will wahrlich eine so schätzbare Nation wie die Engl. ist, nicht beschimpfen. Er hat sagen wollen: angeborenem Stolz. Daß dieser Stolz, durch eine mißverstandne Idee von Englischer Freiheit, sehr leicht in Plumpheit gegen andre Nationen ausartet, fühlen vermuthlich manche Engländer selbst nicht, wenn sie mit Personen jener Nationen in Verhältniß kommen.⁸⁸

Another of Robinson's attempts at ironic de-escalation meets with a similar riposte. Robinson suggests that the German insult, "Du Hundespote", is more humiliating than "French dog", since it invokes the lowest *part* of an undignified creature: it is ruder to liken someone to a dog's paw than to a dog. But the German correspondent's long footnote at this point reminds the reader that his objection is not to the phrase in general, but to its specifically xenophobic imputation. He considers that Robinson has strayed from the point.

Robinson nevertheless lands a further blow by observing that another of the German correspondent's examples appears to derive from literature rather than a real conversation. It is one of Goldsmith's characters who employs a similar insult to the one that the German correspondent claimed to have suffered from a "vornehmen" Englishman: "they are slaves and eat brown bread". The narrator of Oliver Goldsmith's "The Distresses of a Common Soldier" says: "I hate the French because they are all slaves, and wear wooden shoes".⁸⁹ The German correspondent has a reply ready to this, too: the Englishman had probably read Goldsmith and used borrowed wit to supply his own deficiency in invention.

Robinson proceeds to dismiss the story of wife-selling as clearly an exceptional, drunken incident and, as such, completely unrepresentative of English cultural or legal practice. Robinson claims that this story, too, came from a newspaper rather than from the German correspondent's own observation. He reports the newspaper's conclusion, which the German correspondent omitted: the drunkards involved were subsequently arrested by the police. But the German correspondent now responds with his longest footnote of all, spanning four pages, in order to refute Robinson's implication that he ignorantly misused his sources. He argues that a man who sells his wife does not

88 Anon., footnote to Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 197f. "The German correspondent is sorry that he used this word in the place cited. For he really does not want to abuse a nation as estimable as England is. He meant to say: inborn pride. Many Englishmen presumably do not themselves perceive that this pride, through a misunderstood idea of English freedom, very easily degenerates into discourtesy toward other nations, when they come into contact with people from those nations."

89 Cf. Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 204. Robinson in fact cites "*Goldsmith's Essays*."

break any law in England, unlike in other countries.⁹⁰ One of the authorities he cites to support the view that wife-selling is frequent practice among the English is Justus Möser, whose *Patriotische Phantasien* (published in the second edition by Nicolai) probably contributed to the German correspondent's world-view.⁹¹

To this point, the debate has chiefly confirmed the slipperiness (to recur to Mandler's apt term) of the discourse of national character. Owing to the inevitably anecdotal level of the exchange of accusations and denials, little progress is made towards establishing a balanced picture. "Ich würde nie zu Ende kommen, wollte ich diese Art Kommentar fortsetzen",⁹² writes Robinson, to which the German correspondent replies with an unusually concise footnote: "Ja wohl!" With regard to the second main topic, the English reception of German literature, this fundamental disagreement vanishes. Robinson confirms the German correspondent's view that English judgments of German writing are in general poorly informed and polemical, stating: "Gegen die zweite Hälfte seines Briefes habe ich wenig einzuwenden."⁹³ Klopstock, he notes, is the only older German poet whose work had been translated into English – and this is only a prose translation of his *Messias*. Goethe's *Werther* had been translated – but from the French, rather than directly from the German. German, says Robinson, is unfortunately considered a second-class language: "Man zitirt noch immer den berühmten Kaiserlichen Spruch wodurch die Deutsche Sprache zu einer Pferdesprache herabgewürdigt ward; und man weiss nichts von ihrer spätern Ausbildung."⁹⁴ Robinson also confirms the German correspondent's view that the booksellers, however momentarily numerous, are worsening the situation:

Seit ein paar Jahren ist eine Revolution entstanden, die nur beklagenswerth ist. Die Deutsche Literatur ist leider in die Hände der schlechtesten Bücherfabrikanten und Handwerker gefallen. Man übersetzt zugleich Wilhelm Meister und Rinaldo Rinaldini, Don Carlos und Abellino. Um die sogenannten Notizen für die *Magazines* und *Reviews* zu liefern, nimmt man auf gut Glück zerstreute Artikel aus den Deutschen Journalen; und so finden sich also Urtheile halb aus der Allg[emeinen] D[eutschen] Bibl[iothek] halb aus der A[llgemeinen] Lit[eratur] Zei[ung] genommen.⁹⁵

90 Thomas Rowlandson's contemporaneous drawing "Selling a Wife" caricatures this practice.

91 For an account of Möser's version of patriotism, see Maurer, *Aufklärung und Anglophilie*, 119f.

92 Anon., footnote to Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 217. "I would never reach an end if I wanted to continue this kind of commentary."

93 "I have little to object to the second half of his letter." Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 217.

94 Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 219. "People are still always quoting the famous saying of the Kaiser [Charles V] by which the German language is depreciated to a language for horses; and they know nothing about its later development."

95 Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 221. "In the last few years a revolution has taken place, which is only to be deplored. German literature has unfortunately fallen into the hands of the worst book manufacturers and tradesmen.

Robinson even declares that it would be better for English readers to go without the masterpieces of living German poets than to read them in the wretched versions being produced at that time. In support of this contention, Robinson also mischievously submitted an article by a German friend to the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, containing a re-translation into German of passages from Thomas Holcroft's bad English translation of *Hermann und Dorothea*.

Robinson draws attention to one important cause of the English readers' appreciation of the best German work: the lack of an established German literary history. Even if Herder rates the poetry of Haller on a par with Pope, and places Hagedorn in the company of Gay and Prior, these German poets do not (so Robinson explains) enjoy an influence or reputation comparable with their English counterparts. In his role as cultural mediator, Robinson presents a forceful message to the readers of his article: the Germans must develop an appropriate evaluation of their own literature before they can expect other nations to do justice to it. In urging this self-recognition, Robinson implicitly concurs with the 'patriotic' assumption that Germany, though still politically fragmented, might achieve a unified focus through literary endeavour. Robinson reaches a rhetorical climax: "Man darf also die Beschuldigung, wie begründet sie auch sein mögte, doch immer provisorisch abweisen. – Seid gegen euch selbst gerecht, ehe Ihr Gerechtigkeit von Fremden fordert!"⁹⁶ The German correspondent, although continuing to complain that this injunction does not excuse ill-founded English attacks on German morality, hastens to agree: "Auch hier stimmt der D. Korr. mit dem wohlunterrichteten Engl. Korr. völlig überein".⁹⁷ Robinson in part wins him over, it seems, by joining in the anti-French sentiment of German 'patriotic' discourse:

Thut euer Möglichstes, damit man vergesse: dass euer grösster König eure Sprache so verachtete, dass er sie nicht einmal richtig sprechen konnte; dass, bis beinahe in den heutigen Tagen, in euren Hauptstädten Französische Theater errichtet worden sind; und dass noch eben itzt eure Gelehrte Gesellschaften ihre Schriften in einer fremden Sprache herausgeben. Machtet

Wilhelm Meister and *Rinaldo Rinaldini*, *Don Carlos* and *Abellino* are translated at the same time. In order to deliver the so-called news for the magazines and reviews, people randomly take scattered articles from the German journals; and so judgments are taken half from the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* and half from the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*."

⁹⁶ Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 225. Cf. Marquardt, *Henry Crabb Robinson und seine deutschen Freunde*, vol. 1, 139. "One may therefore always provisionally dismiss the allegation, however well-founded it might be. Treat yourselves justly, before you demand justice from foreigners!" This passage of Robinson's article was later quoted approvingly in *Der Sprachgerichtshof oder die französische und deutsche Sprache in Deutschland vor dem Richterstuhl der Denker und Gelehrten* (Berlin: Maurersche Buchhandlung, 1814), 56 (the author given as "ein ungenannter Engländer").

⁹⁷ Anon., footnote to Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 225. "Here too the German correspondent completely agrees with the well-informed English correspondent."

dass dies bald aufhöre, und promulgiret dadurch dass eure Sprache sich nicht mehr in einem Zustand von Unmündigkeit befinde!⁹⁸

Robinson's technique is to appeal to united Anglo-German opposition to France in the Napoleonic wars. He does not challenge the discourse of national stereotypes itself, but rather suggests that Germany has suffered from attachment to French rather than to English culture. Robinson invokes multiple contexts. In referring to Friedrich the Great of Prussia's famous preference for the French language over German, he glances back to his earlier reference to Emperor Charles V's description of German as a language for horses, famously echoed by Friedrich. To denote the 'immaturity' of the German language, Robinson uses the word "Unmündigkeit": this would have been immediately familiar to readers of Kant's essay "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung", which was first published in the *Berlinische Monatschrift* in 1784. Robinson suggests in this way that a turn away from France – but not away from England – would advance enlightenment in Germany. That his strategy at this point was rhetorically effective is suggested by the German correspondent's silence, which eloquently signals his agreement.

Robinson asserts that the English literary and philosophical scene is currently in a fallow phase, unable either to match or appreciate the best German work; yet he continues to hope that the past achievements of English literature will provide a basis for future improvement. He demands in the meantime an improved mediation of German writing: it is time to sow the products of foreign genius on English soil. Briefly but optimistically, Robinson alludes to the Weimar classicist ideal of cosmopolitanism as a means of overcoming national prejudices. Summoning a German testimony to English hospitality, he quotes from the *Venetian Epigrams* of his favourite poet, Goethe: "England, freundlich empfindest du den zerrütteten Gast."⁹⁹ His final paragraph appeals to the Enlightenment ideal of the Republic of Letters, which he could expect to find favour in Nicolai and Biester's journal:

Ohne schwärmerisch zu sein, dürfen wir also auch hoffen, dass durch diesen freundlichen brüderlichen Tausch, der Produkte der schönen Künste sowohl als der strengen Wissenschaften, einen nähere Verbindung und genauere Bekanntschaft entstehen werde, die, von aller kleinlichen

98 Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 225f. "Do everything you can to ensure that the following is forgotten: that your great king despised your language so much that he could not even speak it properly; that French theatres have until almost the present day been erected in your main cities; and that even now your learned societies publish their writings in a foreign language. Let this stop soon, and ensure in this way that your language no longer finds itself in a state of immaturity!"

99 Robinson, "An den Herausgeber," 221. "England, you kindly receive the shattered guest."

nationellen Eifersucht frei, eine wahre innige Republik in der Welt der Gelehrsamkeit stiften werde.¹⁰⁰

Robinson here recalls the spirit of more internationally hopeful times, when, for instance, Schiller had in the year of the French Revolution announced his conviction that the philosophical spirit will overcome petty national boundaries: “Das vaterländische Interesse ist überhaupt nur für unreife Nationen wichtig, für die Jugend der Welt. [...] Es ist ein armseliges, kleinliches Ideal, für *eine* Nation zu schreiben; einem philosophischen Geiste ist diese Grenze durchaus unerträglich.”¹⁰¹

The ideal to which Robinson gestures, of amicable exchange across national borders, propelling aesthetic education, finds support in the increasing agreement of the German correspondent. In Robinson's section on the inadequacy of the Anglophone reception of German literature, the footnotes become appreciably shorter and more approving, and the German correspondent even congratulates Robinson for his sincerity and evident integration in German cultural life. To the above-quoted final sentence, the German correspondent appends a single word: “Amen”.¹⁰² The reader might ask: whilst anglophobia is evidently no cure for anglomania, nor vice-versa, does calm exchange about the foundations of literary taste promise to heal the wounds opened up by stereotyped assumptions about national character?

4 Conclusion

Robinson makes an energetic attempt to reach such an optimistic conclusion. First, he deals humorously with the question of national stereotyping, arguing by implication that the German correspondent has little evidence for his complaints about English attitudes to Germany. Second, he strives to treat literary reception as a distinct question, agreeing with his opponent as to the inadequacy of English translations and reviews of German works. This separation enables him to conclude by asserting the ideal of a cosmopolitan patriotism.¹⁰³ That he does so as an Englishman

100 Robinson, “An den Herausgeber,” 228. “Without being unreasonably enthusiastic, we may thus also hope that through this amicable, fraternal exchange of the products of the fine arts as well as those of the exact sciences, a closer connection and more precise familiarity will arise, which, free from all petty national jealousy will promote a true, earnest republic in the learned world.”

101 Friedrich Schiller to Christian Gottfried Körner, 13 October 1789, quoted in Gonthier-Louis Fink, “Kosmopolitismus-Patriotismus-Xenophobie: Eine französisch-deutsche Debatte im Revolutionsjahrzehnt 1789–1799,” in *Gesellige Vernunft: Zur Kultur der literarischen Aufklärung. Festschrift für Wolfram Mauser zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Ortrud Gutjahr, Wilhelm Kühlmann and Wolf Wucherpennig (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1993), 23–41, here: 38. “The interest of the fatherland is basically only important for immature nations, for the youth of the world [...]. It is a paltry, mean idea to write for *one* nation; to a philosophical spirit this boundary is completely intolerable.”

102 Anon., footnote to Robinson, “An den Herausgeber,” 228.

103 For an even-handed treatment of the complexities of patriotic discourse in this period, see Irmtraut Sahmland, *Christoph Martin Wieland und die deutschen Nation. Zwischen Patriotismus, Kosmopolitismus und Griechentum* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), 78–105. A stimulating rebuttal of the narrative that peaceable, eighteenth-century patriotism was supplanted by aggressive, nineteenth-century nationalism is provided in *Machtphantasie Deutschland*,

writing in German gives him some measure of rhetorical authority. Yet three problematic elements remain. First, the visually intrusive replies of the German correspondent, printed in a strikingly different typeface, undercut Robinson's mode of argument. Although the German correspondent eventually applauds Robinson's encouragement of non-exclusive German patriotism, in the earlier part of the article he provides lengthy reminders that literary reception intertwines untidily with nationalism. And second, Robinson's own version of Anglo-German literary cosmopolitanism depends on making common cause against France, thus only displacing rather than cancelling the process of negative stereotyping. Third, Robinson's own status as a writer comes into question. On the one hand, Robinson's article reflects the fact that he was a cultural mediator in the full, bi-directional sense of the term: not only did he 'import' German literature and ideas through translation and conversation, but he also contributed (in this case) to German discussion of the English 'national character'. Yet on the other, Robinson's self-fashioning as a 'dilettante', while it enabled him to engage in journalistic debate of this kind, also hindered him from overcoming the poor conditions for the English reception of German literature through his own work.¹⁰⁴

The material I have discussed in this article is messy: it resists shaping into a simple story of an English traveller taking home and diffusing great works. That does not mean, however, that Robinson's reply to "Von der Beschaffenheit der Urtheile der Engländer" should be considered a failure and ignored. Indeed, the history of discursive constructions of both national character and literary influence would profit from being investigated together. Peter Mandler's *The English National Character* valuably highlights the paradoxes that surrounded assertions of collective English identity from its inception, but relies to a restrictive extent on Anglophone sources. Paul Langford's *Englishness Identified* does draw on multilingual texts, but (as with the above-cited example of Georg Forster's testimony) sometimes distorts them in order to maintain a generally favourable account of Englishness. I have put a sharper focus on a shorter period. The evidence I have considered suggests that Anglo-German literary exchange reached a particular crisis around the time of these articles in the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift* in 1803. The foremost mediator of German philosophy at that time, Henry Crabb Robinson, recognised this, but could not fully redress the situation, not least because of the great difficulty of the task he set himself in his article "An den Herausgeber": that of separating national stereotyping from literary reception. It was after all Immanuel Kant, Robinson's favourite philosopher and the most distinguished earlier contributor to

eds. Hermann, Blitz and Moßmann; see also Siegfried Weichlein, "Cosmopolitanism, Patriotism, Nationalism," in *Unity and Diversity in European Culture c. 1800*, eds. Tim Blanning and Hagen Schulze (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 77–99. See further Pauline Kleingeld, "Six Varieties of Cosmopolitanism in Late Eighteenth-Century Germany," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 60:3 (July 1999), 505–24.

104 Samuel Taylor Coleridge's difficulties with the same situation are better known: see Rosemary Ashton, *The German Idea: Four English Writers and the Reception of German Thought 1800–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

the *Berlinische Monatschrift*, who pre-empted the German correspondent in positing the inborn, coarse pride of Englishmen.