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German stereotypes in British magazines prior to World War I

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GERMAN STEREOTYPES IN BRITISH MAGAZINES
PRIOR TO WORLD WAR I

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

in

The Department of History

by
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W. F. B.

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ABSTRACT

The British image of Germany as England's "poor relation," a backward cluster of feudal states, gave way during the nineteenth century to the stereotype of England's archenemy and imperial rival. This shift from innocuous Old Germany to menacing New Germany accelerated after German unification in 1871 as German economic growth and imperial ambitions became topics for commentary in British journals. But the stereotypical "German Michael," or rustic simpleton, and other images of self-effacing servile, loyal, honest and passive Old Germany lingered on into the late nineteenth century as a "straw man" for alarmist Germanophobes to dispel with new counter-stereotypes. These included fanatical nationalists, Anglophobic militarists, overbearing officials, know-it-all professors, unscrupulous merchants and indefatigable clerks. Some Germanophobes, however, and many Germanophiles, clung to older stereotypes as a form of escapism or wishful thinking: the former believed that national character deficiencies would foil German ambitions, the latter hoped that German idealism and good sense would eventually triumph over Anglophobic nationalism.

The British entente with France in 1904, and Russia in 1907, marked an end to more than a decade of Anglo-German alliance attempts. These supposed missed opportunities were thwarted by mutual distrust, opposing strategic aims, diplomatic maneuvering and, ultimately, naval rivalry. But the strength of public opinion and popular nationalism also limited official moves toward cooperation. Stereotypes contributed to what has become known as the Anglo-

German antagonism through their power to encapsulate national differences. British journalists could draw upon a rich heritage of demeaning German stereotypes in order to bolster national self-image at the expense of the German nemesis. Stereotypes also gained unwarranted currency in the public media through pseudoscientific racial theories and ethnological hierarchies that constituted the nineteenth-century paradigm of innate national character differences. The record of stereotypes in print therefore reveals the psychological underpinnings of pre-World War I British attitudes toward Germany and provides a new perspective on the interface between public opinion and national rivalry.

I. INTRODUCTION

The destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989, symbolizing both an end to Cold War tensions and the impending reunification of divided Germany, brought cheers throughout the free world, but in the wake of initial celebrations dissenting voices could be heard in the press. In his mildly alarmist “Uneasy About the Germans,” playwright Arthur Miller sensed “something factitious about German society in the minds of Germans” and a less “transcendent” feeling among Germans toward the Federal Republic than that shown by French, British or American citizens toward their respective governments. For Miller, West Germany’s tolerant, democratic government lacked “consecration by blood,” and the knowledge that many Germans had sacrificed their lives actually fighting to prevent it, “keeps sucking the life out of German protestations of a democratic faith and casts suspicion on the country’s reassurances that its economic power is no menace to the world.”¹ Miller’s warning sounds hauntingly reminiscent of German author Thomas Mann’s post-World War II diatribe on undemocratic, anti-Enlightenment, demonic Germans, ever willing to strike a Faustian bargain for world power at

¹Arthur Miller, “Uneasy About the Germans,” *New York Times Magazine* (6 May 1990) : 77, 84. Otto Friedrich, in “Germany: Toward Unity,” *Time* (6 July 1990) : 68, questions what Miller would say if “any German were foolish enough to offer such a gory theory of ‘democratic faith’.”

the expense of liberty. Unlike Mann, however, Miller recognized the importance of discarding old stereotypes and suspicions in hopes of accentuating the positive.²

Such timeworn post-Holocaust worries about German anti-western sentiments and *Machtpolitik* failed to dissuade the appreciable majorities world-wide who favored reunification, but even optimistic articles noted apprehensions among Germany's European neighbors, not to mention Britain, Israel and the superpowers. In *Time* magazine's March twenty-eighth cover story, entitled "The Germans: Should the world be worried?" Bruce W. Nelan reported that "fear of Germany, in abeyance for more than 40 years while the country was divided in a bipolar world, is on the rise," backing up this statement with wary and unenthusiastic quotations from such notables as former French Prime Minister Michael Debré, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, and Israeli Prime Minister Ytzhak Shamir. More to the point, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's "politically motivated equivocation" regarding the status of Germany's post-war border with Poland provoked Polish demands, supported by Britain and France, for a voice in the so-called "two-plus-four" reunification talks taking place between the two Germanies and the four World War II allies: the U.S., Britain, France and Soviet Union.³ Even though Kohl, once reelected, smoothed over fears of territorial ambition by calling for a

²See Thomas Mann, *Germany and the Germans*, text of an address delivered in the Coolidge Auditorium in the Library of Congress May 29, 1945 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945), pp. 5, 11, 15-16.

³"Anything to Fear?" *Time* (26 March 1990) : 32-34. Not surprisingly, Poland was the only country surveyed showing a majority opposed to a single Germany. The fact that the Federal Republic had previously recognized under a 1970 treaty the inviolability of Poland's borders, specifically the Oder-Neisse line separating East Germany from formerly Prussian Silesia, underscores the seriousness of Kohl's foreign policy gaffe. On this earlier treaty as a prelude to Chancellor Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* see Gordon A. Craig, *The Germans* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1982) p. 58.

quick settlement of the border question, the immediacy of West Germany's economic dominance conjured up premonitions of a German commercial hegemony in Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, which would jeopardize the political and economic integration of the European Community.⁴

Similar misgivings resonated in historians' prognostications of a German turn toward isolationism, a new economic nationalism with ominous political overtones, or the possibility of a Soviet-friendly *Ostpolitik* abetted by simmering disenchantment with U.S. policies and the apparently popular appeal of neutrality.⁵ Additionally, intellectual currents in West Germany during the 1980s aroused suspicions that Germany's ties to the West could prove more tenuous than hoped. These "straws in the wind" included an academic reaction against Enlightenment-centered approaches to German history and revival of the nineteenth-century *Mitteleuropa* idea

⁴Surprised not to find a "bastion of chauvinism" amid the more than 600,000 Silesian ethnic Germans, Peter Schneider, in "Is Anyone German Here?" *New York Times Magazine* (15 April 1990) : 63, attributed the source of nationalist agitation, and Kohl's electioneering motive, to West Germany's still influential right-wing hard-liners. Nelan, "Anything to Fear?" pp. 41-42, reported in 1990 that West Germany alone accounted for approximately one-fifth of the EC's population and gross domestic product and 31% of its exports.

⁵Gordon A. Craig, "A New, New Reich?" *New York Review of Books* 33 (18 January 1990) : 30-33, cited a chapter entitled "Uncertain Democracy" in David Marsh's *The Germans: Rich, Bothered and Divided*, published as *The Germans: A People at the Crossroads* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), which begins with pessimistic epigraphs from Thomas Mann, historian Ralf Dahrendorf and ex-Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. Craig also summarized the gloomy isolation argument in Anne-Marie Le Gloannec's, *La Nation Orpheline: Les Allemandes en Europe* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1989), a somewhat more optimistic view of economic nationalism put forward in Harold James's *A German Identity, 1770-1990* (New York: Routledge, 1989), and West German differences with U.S. policies regarding nuclear strategy, economic issues and relations with East Germany discussed in Wolfram F. Hanrieder's *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Hanrieder blamed this divergence on the U.S. "double containment" policy of keeping Germany and Europe divided between the superpowers.

which, even aside from its history of propagandistic exploitation by imperialists and Nazis, hinted at an anti-western protectionist bloc along the lines of a German-dominated Central European customs union or *Zollverein*.⁶ *Mitteleuropa* also suggested the potential for an enlarged neutral zone that could upset the paradigm of an East-West strategic balance in post-Cold War Europe. Moreover, the collapse of Soviet power and influence brought back into vogue talk of a German *Sonderweg*, or special path, applied specifically to Germany's unique geopolitical position and arguments for an increased leadership role in East Europe.⁷ But *Sonderweg*, despite its limited nationalist appeal, also denotes a long-held historical view that modern Germany's nineteenth-century bourgeois revolution from above constituted an exceptional and "abnormal" departure from western liberal models of democratic pluralism, mainly through the survival of authoritarian, pre-industrial traditions which paved the way for the

⁶Craig, "A New, New Reich?" p. 33. German economist Friedrich List and others advocated *Mitteleuropa* in the 1830's as a protectionist scheme to promote national unity and economic expansion. Bismarck adopted the concept during the 1880s because it dove-tailed with German colonial ambitions in its appeal to Pan-German nationalists and helped undermine Anglophilic German liberalism. In concert with Franco-German colonial cooperation, *Mitteleuropa* would provide a foundation for German *Weltpolitik* through both economic and political protectionism, by isolating Britain and containing Russian expansionism. The Nazis perverted *Mitteleuropa* into a German "Monroe Doctrine" justifying territorial annexation and political domination in East Europe. See Bascom Barry Hayes, *Bismarck and Mitteleuropa* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1994) pp. 18, 391-93.

⁷Jorg Brechtefeld, in *Mitteleuropa and German Politics: 1848 to the Present* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996) pp. 77, 88-89, 95-97, points out that the 1980s renaissance of *Mitteleuropa* accompanied a shift from preoccupation with detente and defense issues to questions about Germany's foreign policy role in East Europe. While acknowledging its darker connotations, he uses *Sonderweg* in a positive sense, applauding the notion of Germany as a "bridge" between East and West, although not at the expense of Germany's western connections and not without a consistent and concise policy.

rise of fascism in the twentieth century.⁸ Although revisionists since the mid-1980s have offered correctives to the concept of German exceptionalism, or “peculiarity,” and have questioned the extent of manipulation by conservative elites and the idea of continuity from Bismarck to Hitler, the negative implications of *Sonderweg* have by no means disappeared and the debate continues.⁹

⁸In a concise overview of the historiography of German conservatism, editors Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack outline the stages through which the traditional view of “backward” German aristocrats’ failure to accommodate liberalism became a key component in the *Sonderweg* thesis. Building upon earlier evidence that, unlike their western counterparts, German aristocrats successfully adopted “pseudo-democratic” techniques of mass-mobilization and demagoguery in the reaction against loss of privilege, the “new orthodoxy” of the 1970s, following the work of Ralf Dahrendorf and historians from the University of Bielefeld, held that the “temporal disjunction” after 1871 of rapid economic modernization within an essentially feudal system gave undue leverage to conservative agrarian and industrial elites and thus retarded the social and political development of the German bourgeoisie. See “German Conservatism Reconsidered: Old Problems and New Directions,” in *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Providence, RI and Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993), pp. 3-17.

⁹David Blackbourne and Geoff Eley’s seminal work, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-century Germany*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) stood the *Sonderweg* thesis on its head by arguing instead for Anglo-American exceptionalism. While crediting the revisionists for exposing the fallacy of monolithic German conservatism, Roger Fletcher, in “Social Historians and Wilhelmine Politics – Manipulation From Above Or Self-mobilization From Below?” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 32 (1986) : 86-104, countered that Germany indeed differed from western democracies due to the relative lack or ineffectiveness of forces for political change driven autonomously from below against a “semi-absolutist Prussian military monarchy.” Geoff Eley, in his introduction to *From Unification to Nazism: Reinterpreting the German Past* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986), pp. 5-12, explained his break from the continuity thesis, supported from political and socio-economic perspectives, respectively, by what he called the Anglo-American liberal school of historians, represented by Hajo Holborn, Karl Dietrich Bracher and Gordon Craig, and the later West German critical school inspired by Fritz Fischer and Hans-Ulrich Wehler. The Blackbourne/Eley thesis has since generated studies that debunk the “unpolitical” German stereotype arising from the more deterministic approach. See, for example, Margaret L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Jan Christopher Palmowski, “The Politics of the ‘Unpolitical German’: Liberalism in German Local Government, 1860-1880,” *Historical Journal* 42 (1999) : 675-704.

Amidst these shades of the past and future uncertainties, countervailing arguments played up “forty years of solid achievement” since “Zero Hour” (1945), highlighting the western-oriented vision and firm leadership of Konrad Adenauer, West Germany’s first chancellor, and Germany’s evolution toward tolerance and social conscience, exemplified by special ties with Israel and by the greater political assertiveness of women, labor and especially youth.¹⁰ Indeed, against the backdrop of West Germany’s record of pro-Zionism, active participation in the prosecution of Nazi war criminals, and payment of substantial reparations totaling over 17 billion DM to Israel and families of Jewish victims, the perception of a greater willingness on the part of Germans since the 1970s to discuss the crimes of the Nazi period, and acknowledge some degree of national complicity, probably owes as much to the mere endurance of peaceful democracy as to any other cause.¹¹ Even Miller expressed the near universally held opinion that younger generations of Germans, while not in denial, neither remember nor understand Nazism, but

¹⁰Craig, “A New, New Reich?” pp. 28-29, reviewed the arguments for positive change through prudent government and political dissent, respectively, in Dennis L. Bark and David R. Gress’s two-volume *A History of West Germany*, vol. 1: *From Shadow to Substance, 1945-1963*; vol. 2: *Democracy and Its Discontents, 1963-1988* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989-) and Peter H. Merkl, ed., *The Federal Republic of Germany at Forty* (New York: New York University Press, 1989).

¹¹John Ardagh, *Germany and the Germans: An Anatomy of a Society Today* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 391-400, included the following milestones in this transition to greater openness: Chancellor Willy Brandt’s unabashed homage to Polish Jews killed by Nazis during his 1970 state visit to the Warsaw ghetto memorial; Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker’s 1984 speech, on the fortieth anniversary of the German surrender, commemorating Holocaust victims and urging acceptance of the truth of Nazi horrors; the closer scrutiny of Hitler’s Third Reich in schools and media during the 1970s, including broad exposure to Hollywood’s 1979 *Holocaust* series; and a greater readiness among youth to speak out and confront lingering denial in older generations.

rather, as *Arms of Krupp* author William Manchester blithely put it, tend to be “united by a horror of the Second and Third Reichs.”¹²

Despite such assurances, however, the specter of uncertainty looming over reunification and the future of Germany’s western-oriented strategic alliances prompted U.S. President George H. W. Bush, during a Camp David meeting with Chancellor Kohl, to issue warnings about the dangers of “unpredictability” and “instability” facing a Europe without NATO.¹³ Shared worries about NATO’s future and “a new unstable world of shifting alliances and multi-polar uncertainties” resounded across political and international fronts with news of Italian Socialist foreign minister Gianni de Michelis’s pessimistic outlook after Italy’s exclusion from the “two-plus-four talks.”¹⁴ Perhaps more revealing as to the depth of concern, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher convoked a meeting of eminent historians at Chequers to discuss German character and its ramifications for the future of the European Community. References to German angst, aggressiveness, assertiveness, bullying, egotism, inferiority complex, sentimentality, and

¹²Miller, “Uneasy About the Germans,” p. 85. Manchester quoted in Friedrich, “Germany Toward Unity,” p. 68. The issue of Nazi guilt apparently arises only in connection with senior West Germans because, according to Ardagh, *Germany and the Germans*, p. 392, denial became the official policy of the GDR. The East German government distanced itself from Nazi guilt through propaganda and a more thorough prosecution of former Nazis. Schoolchildren imbibed the lesson that monopoly capitalism produced Nazism and that “noble German communists” in East Germany fought on the side of the Red Army and western allies.

¹³Strobe Talbott, “America Abroad: NATO über Alles,” *Time* (26 March 1990) : 47.

¹⁴Lally Weymouth, “Being Beastly to Germany,” *National Review* 42 (16 April 1990) : 22, wrote that de Michelis, “even more than Margaret Thatcher, . . . has come to symbolize European apprehension about growing German power.” His failed demands for participation in “two-plus-four,” which drew the curt reply from West Germany’s Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher that “You’re not a player in this game,” only amplified de Michelis’s opposition to a rush to reunification that he feared would jeopardize NATO.

other negative stereotypes, when exposed to the media in a confidential memorandum of the meeting written by Thatcher's private secretary, naturally aroused considerable resentment in Germany and unmasked an irrational side to British Conservatives' opposition to reunification.¹⁵

While the extent to which magazine articles of the 1990s nourished or responded to this revived uncertainty and uneasiness about German character lies beyond the scope of this thesis, the sudden reassessment, at least in American periodicals, of West German society as something novel in comparison with post-war years seems remarkable in its capacity to both reassure and bewilder. Reports of West German affluence and the comforting familiarity of western capitalism, consumerism, fashion and enjoyment of leisure coexist with outrageous extravagance, the excesses of shock theater, and quirky laws that appear out of synch with memories of the "overgrown work ethic" that created Germany's economic miracle.¹⁶ Another manifestation of this climate of uncertainty can be seen in the readiness of journalists to exploit outmoded

¹⁵A. J. Nicholls, *Fifty Years of Anglo-German Relations*, The 2000 Bithell Memorial Lecture (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, University of London School of Advanced Study, 2001), p. 15. A generally positive consensus that German reunification would enhance both European integration and East European democratization emerged from the meeting, which included historians Fritz Stern, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Norman Stone and Gordon Craig. The memorandum noted that Germans historically demonstrated "insensitivity to the feelings of others . . . their obsession with themselves, a strong inclination to self-pity, and a longing to be liked . . . a capacity for excess, to overdo things, . . . a tendency to overestimate their own strengths and capabilities," but also stated more optimistically that "there was a strong school of thought among those present that today's Germans were very different from their predecessors." See Craig R. Whitney, "Sizing Up the Germans: A Thatcher Symposium," *New York Times* (16 July 1990) : A6.

¹⁶See William Rademaekers, "The Oh So Good Life," Michael Walsh, "Shopping Hell," and William A. Henry III, "The Power to Shock," who refers to state-subsidized German theater as "a *Walpurgisnacht* of excess," in *Time* (9 July 1990) : 80-82, 84. Walsh reports on the "soul-destroying" *Ladenschlussgesetz* or trade-union-inspired laws restricting shop hours that make life miserable for Germans and tourists alike.

national stereotypes in order to tantalize readers. Semi-jocular reference to the “Latinization of Germany” and “a distinctly non-Teutonic mañana principle,” used to describe the apparent sanctity of *Freizeit* (leisure time), a quote from Tacitus, the first-century Roman historian, about *furor Teutonicus* and “fanatically loyal” Germans, or Friedrich Nietzsche’s infamous statement on the inherited European dread of the “Teutonic blond beast” may make for interesting copy, but the reliance on older stereotypes also betrays a journalistic tendency to categorize groups and individuals, whether through the desire to entertain or through the mere necessity of condensing and simplifying information.¹⁷

The above examples prove the potentially dangerous perpetuation of national stereotypes through mass media to be far from extinct, even though journalists today generally repudiate a genetic component to national character and avoid didactic discourses such as those which framed the unabashed speculations of previous eras.¹⁸ Even amidst contemporary awareness of the pitfalls of stereotyping, a source’s credibility, for example, can enhance the mystique of national character as a force guiding policy. When German novelist Günter Grass observed that reunification would only serve to isolate Germany and that “. . . when Germany feels itself isolated, we know the often panicky reaction that follows,” the weight of his words relies as much on his reputation for insight into German character as on historical evidence.¹⁹ When

¹⁷The quotations can be found respectively in Rademaekers, “The Oh So Good Life,” p. 82; Nelan, “Anything to Fear?” p. 32; and Friedrich, “Germany Toward Unity,” p. 66.

¹⁸Nelan, “Anything to Fear?” p. 34, notes general acknowledgment of the genetic fallacy but points out the risk of stereotyping cultural traits and historical traditions in attempts to define national character.

¹⁹Craig, “A New, New Reich?” p. 33.

Arthur Miller referred to a middle-aged, pro-reunification German journalist's misgivings that "the problem with the German, the one great weakness of his character, is his worship of loyalty. Loyalty! Loyalty! It's the supreme virtue, the chain around his heart," he illustrated the subjectively persuasive potential of national character stereotypes in opinion formation.²⁰ Miller accordingly emphasized the need for Germans to quell the prevailing uneasiness about their character by somehow reconciling images of past militarism with the peaceful present.

The fact that questions about German national character would accompany a sense of uncertainty about the future of Europe and the world during a time of transition is, of course, nothing new. Uncertainty has historically colored the Germans' own struggle for national identity and stability—a situation known as *les incertitudes allemandes*—and it pervades the larger "German Question" of national unity and European integration, two goals that until the twenty-first century have remained mutually exclusive. But on a social and psychological level, uncertainty has also characterized the general tenor of Anglo-German relations since the eighteenth century. In 1974 John Mander wrote that an "ambiguous curse of unpredictability" has historically distinguished Germans from other nationalities in British eyes, not that the British have ever been overly fond of foreigners. To show that this "curse" has engendered an almost endemic sense of mistrust that spans generations, Mander cited a British opinion poll in which even the youngest respondents, those who neither imbibed the hun-baiting Vansittartism of the years surrounding World War II, nor remembered what preceded the positive changes under Adenauer and succeeding chancellors, ranked Germans their least favorite among

²⁰Miller, "Uneasy About the Germans," p. 85.

European peoples.²¹ The irony that the British view of Germans as unpredictable stood diametrically opposed to the “loyalty” upon which Germans prided themselves points to a strange logic behind this persistent animosity. According to Mander, the mid-Victorian “loyal German” stereotype underpinned “too saccharine” and sentimental images of German romanticism and liberal Young Germany that dissolved into the bitter realities of German rivalry and *Weltpolitik* before World War I.²² From this perspective, the twentieth-century association of German identity with Prussian militarism, ruthless efficiency and Nazi brutality appears to have provided a psychological refuge from uncertainty by obliterating the earlier, more benign, yet just as two-dimensional “straw man” of German character. There was good reason to surmise, even in 1965, that persistent war-time stereotypes of Germany in Britain, which had impeded Anglo-German reconciliation for twenty years and had galvanized broad opposition to German rearmament, would only gradually be displaced by new stereotypes during a transitional period fraught with the potential for reversion to old, familiar images in times of stress.²³ The reunification of

²¹John Mander, *Our German Cousins: Anglo-German Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (London: John Murray, 1974), pp. 3-4. The poll revealed a broad perception of the Germans as violent, intolerant and unfriendly—qualities that certainly contradict the pre-Bismarckian stereotype of the German Michael, or rustic simpleton. Lord Vansittart, author of *The Black Record: Germans Past and Present*, 14th ed., (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1941), pp. 14-16, 33, 38-39, laid out the unforgiving premise that Hitler and Nazism were no aberration, but the inevitable outcome of ancient blood-lust, a warped military honor code and the reversion to savagery of a people deeply in need of spiritual regeneration. Mander saw reason for hope in the prescient views of Vansittart’s ideological opposite, John Maynard Keynes, who stressed the key importance of Germany for Europe and civilization, and the need for British participation in a European Free Trade Union, foreshadowing the European Community (*Our German Cousins*, pp. 12, 260-62).

²²Mander, *Our German Cousins*, pp. 4, 10-11.

²³D. C. Watt, *Britain Looks to Germany: British Opinion and Policy Towards Germany Since 1945* (London: Oswald Wolff, 1965), pp. 152-56. Watt referred to the “Bevanbrook axis” of

Germany thus may have reasserted old questions about German character and exposed uncertainties previously quarantined by memories of allied victory and the exigencies of Soviet containment.

The Nazi stigma, which of course underscores post-Cold War uncertainties about Germany, has faded little in English-language media despite generational influences and changes in the international political arena since 1945. It seems only natural, therefore, that present generations of Germans should feel a bit exasperated at what they consider a disconnect between pop culture and reality in American and British psyches accustomed to media portrayals of the Nazi era. As Kent Casper and Susan Linville pointed out in their insightful critique of American reviews of German films, not only have Nazis been cast as the archetypical villains in a plethora of World War II films and movies from *Casablanca* to *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Nazi iconography has also extended into the realms of comedy and science fiction where the “steely-eyed, coldly fanatical Nazi” has become a cartoon image—witness Darth Vader and his jack-booted evil empire storm troopers. American movie and television audiences as well as reviewers, Casper and Linville argued, have bought into the Nazi metamyth wherein “good” Germans are shown only in connection with the struggle, whether external or internal, against fascism. During the 1980s this perspective led to a misinterpretation of contemporary German cinema as insufficiently repentant about Nazi atrocities. The popularity in the United States of German

anti-rearmament sentiment voiced by Conservative Lord Beaverbrook from the Right and led by Aneurin Bevan from a divided Left (pp. 123-24).

films by directors such as Fassbinder, Herzog, Wenders, Schlöndorff and Syberberg, was further misconstrued as signifying an American moral decline or, at best, a temporary spirit of nihilism.²⁴

The tenacity and self-image-reinforcing security of Nazi and World War II imagery in Britain figured prominently during the farcical Anglo-German “holiday” or mock-territorial “beach towel” wars of the 1990s, which evoked derision of German tourists who rose “barbarically early” to secure pool-side *Lebensraum* at hotels and resorts in Morocco or Tenerife.²⁵ A controversial commercial for Carling Black Label beer depicted a late-rising young British tourist throwing his towel to skim across a pool, in a manner reminiscent of the world War II bouncing bomb, only to land on a lounge where it unfurls to reveal the Union Jack to a group of befuddled German tourists.²⁶ While such comical insinuations should be taken lightly, the fact that they coincided with serious German-bashing in the nationalist press of Britain suggests their appeal to a more deep-seated and politically motivated animosity. Unjustified accusations of German cowardice and malingering during the 1991 Desert Storm operation in

²⁴“Nazi Reframes: Negative Stereotyping in American Reviews of German Films,” *Literature Film Quarterly* 13 (1985) : 250-51, 253-55. The authors quote from the reviews of prestigious film critics Andrew Sarris and Pauline Kael to demonstrate this last point.

²⁵Nicholls, *Fifty Years of Anglo-German Relations*, p. 18. Harald Husemann, “We will fight them on the beaches,” chap. 4 in Rainer Emig, (ed.), *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), pp. 59-60, 69-71, defines the Anglo-German beach towel controversy and concomitant stereotyping as a consequence of culture shock and the tendency to rally around national symbols as a way of promoting group identity in opposition to foreign groups during holidays in unfamiliar territories. Husemann relies on the theory put forward by social-psychologist Henri Tajfel that conformism and the substitution of social in-group identity for personal identity can become a vicarious means of establishing a positive self-image through negation of the other.

²⁶David Head, “Jürgen Klinsmann, EURO 96 and their impact on British perceptions of Germany and the Germans,” chap. 6 in Emig, *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations*, p. 106.

Iraq failed to take account of Germany's significant logistical and financial support as well as NATO restrictions imposed on *Bundeswehr* activity. From the same quarter came contradictory warnings about the menacing military potential of an erstwhile "cowardly" reunited Germany. A. J. Nicholls recounted that during the 1990s Germany "had become a whipping boy for the nationalist British media," receiving blame for everything from the devaluation of the pound sterling in 1992 to the European ban on British beef amidst the "mad cow" disease scare. He cited a *Daily Express* cartoon dated 10 May 1996 depicting Helmut Kohl wearing an EU armband in a war room with other helmeted and *Pikelhaubed* Germans, plotting invasion and the extermination of peacefully grazing British cattle. And despite the landslide victory of the Labour party in the 1997 elections, which ostensibly implied public rejection of the highly Germanophobic and Europhobic Conservative campaign, opinion polls of the 1990s have demonstrated some longer-term adverse effects of anti-German propaganda. This persistent British Germanophobia, even if in a popularized tongue-in-cheek form, has spawned, for example, a reference to the new German *Reichstag* as "the hub of a new European superstate-in-waiting," and a frank admission appearing in the 11 July 1999 edition of the Sunday Times Colour Magazine article entitled "Hunforgiven:" "We all hate the Germans—come on, it's all right, admit it, we're all agreed, we hate them."²⁷

While war imagery taken too seriously has backfired in the political arena, it has also fallen flat in the world of sports as shown by the unsuccessful attempts of the *Daily Mirror* and other tabloids to resuscitate German stereotypes and relate war-time scenarios to Anglo-German

²⁷Nicholls, *Fifty Years of Anglo-German Relations*, pp. 17-19.

rivalry during the Euro 96 soccer championship.²⁸ Ironically, soccer rivalry has actually improved the image of Germans in British eyes in at least two ways: first, through respect for players, in particular the good-humored and easy-going star player Jürgen Klinsmann, who played out a one-year stint with a British professional team; and second, through British fans' strenuous objections to Germanophobic hype and statements like "We have to teach the Hun a lesson" in the tabloids.²⁹ It may well be the self-conscious and embarrassing absurdity attending the use of such antiquated stereotypes that offers the most promising hope for their eventual demise, especially in light of future plans for increased European integration.

To suggest that British soccer fans' objections to mixing sports with politics indicates a sea-change in attitudes may be going to far. Taking comfort in the rejection of twentieth-century war-time stereotypes of Hun and Nazi overlooks the fact that these labels to a great extent simply confirmed and elaborated older themes. D. C. Watt wrote that Nazi atrocities fit "preconceived patterns of thought and attitudes towards things German," and that post-war mass opinion in Britain, failing to appreciate, or ignorant of, the realities of life and opposition under totalitarian rule, assumed the collective guilt of all Germans.³⁰ A similar argument can be applied to the neglect of German internal political and socio-economic divisions under a swelling tide of indiscriminate Germanophobia during and immediately following World War I. Even decades before the Great War, British writers exploited traditional themes differentiating German

²⁸Joe Brooker, "Stereotypes and National Identity in Euro 96," chap. 5 in Emig, *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations*, pp. 87-89.

²⁹Head, "Jürgen Kinsmann, EURO 96," pp. 107, 110-12, 115, refers to "The Daily Mirror Invades Berlin," *Daily Mirror*, 24 June 1996, p. 2.

³⁰*Britain Looks to Germany*, pp. 115-18.

“barbarism” from “civilization,” paganism from Christianity, and romanticism from classicism which, intentionally or not, demonized, idealized or simply defined Germans as different.³¹ German militarism merely stood as one very important aspect of a whole litany of broadly stereotyped distinctions extended to politics, morals and culture which could be readily applied to any current topic or event.

The increased attention to German society and character after the events of 1990, and the tendency to deal with newer uncertainties by referring to older, nineteenth-century German stereotypes, such as loyalty and obedience, extravagance and gaudiness, lack of civic-mindedness, lack of patriotism, abhorrence of revolution and sensitivity to criticism, demonstrates a curious continuity with attitudes expressed a century earlier. But whereas recent uneasiness about German character melodramatically juxtaposes past evils against a relatively stable present and the promising future of European integration, the nineteenth-century British image of Germany took shape during an “era of uncertainty” in relation to sweeping political and industrial revolutions, nationalist wars and imperial rivalries.³² The consciousness of living in an age of transition, seen as beginning with the French Revolution and lasting throughout the nineteenth century, generated a spectrum of emotional opinion ranging from wild optimism to

³¹The historical origins of these themes will be discussed in chapter 3.

³²The phrase was used by Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. viii. Walter E. Houghton, in his classic work, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 96-97, also argued that the “secret yearning after certainty” or some dogma to replace, or revive, the ideal of progress emerged as the governing motif in a substantial body of Victorian literary, scientific and religious thought. These concerns followed upon unresolved spiritual crises generated by the scientific assault on religion and spread of agnosticism.

deep, brooding pessimism.³³ Even though the nineteenth century brought dramatic British commercial and imperial expansion, and a corresponding gradual improvement in living standards, rapid technological and social change spawned a persistent sense of dread which pervaded much of the commentary and art of the period, as if the pace of progress itself were leading civilization into the abyss.³⁴ In addition to the internal philosophical concerns that troubled mid- and late-Victorian writers who sought to revive the tarnished ideals of reason, progress and morality in reaction to a new culture of materialism, Germany's transformation under Prussian leadership from a collection of weak, relatively backward, agricultural kingdoms into the dominant military and industrial power on the continent counted as a crucial factor in this growing angst. Bismarck's aggressive diplomacy, which led to successive Prussian military victories over Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866 and France in 1870-1, created a united, autocratically governed German Empire, whose tariff-protected economy and cartel-driven industrial expansion, eventually surpassing Britain in steel production and chemicals, presented a new model of national efficiency that contradicted the cherished Liberal tenets of representative

³³David Newsome, *The Victorian World Picture: Perceptions and Introspections in an Age of Change* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), pp. 1-3, 88-89, 173, places the high-water mark of Victorian optimism at 1865, after which the thought of steady progress seemed unrealistic. At the other extreme, some individuals suffered an overwhelming pessimism or sense of grief, which could result in a prevalent condition characterized by mental paralysis known as *mal du siècle* or "neurosthenia." See also Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1976), p. 49, who regards the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition as the high point of British imperial exuberance.

³⁴Newsome, *Victorian World Picture*, pp. 37-38, 125, refers to John Martin's painting, "The Last Judgement" (1853), as typifying the nostalgic or medievalist reaction against industry and change led by such notables as Matthew Arnold, John Ruskin, William Morris and others. Amidst other images of impending doom, the painting depicts a train plunging into an abyss.

government and free trade. Moreover, Germany supplanted France as the new “Bonapartist” regime in the center of Europe, minus the political affinities felt to exist between the English parliamentary system and the democratic republics of the United States and France.³⁵ New Germany increasingly threatened the Victorian anglocentric world view, a perspective based on the paradigms of providence and the English model which had been popularized in the historical and fictional works of Macaulay, Carlyle, Kingsley, Dickens, Thackeray and others.³⁶

Uncertainties related to technological change and imperial rivalry represented only surface features of yet another underlying moral and philosophical dilemma facing Victorian Britons. Along with fear of war, bloody revolution and recurring economic cycles of boom and bust, all of which kept a rein on optimism well into the century, the mid-Victorian decades marked a disenchantment with Enlightenment humanist ideals, such as the concepts of universal brotherhood and the perfectibility of man, that brought a hardening of social and racial

³⁵Ibid., pp. 166, 169, 172-73. See also Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, pp. 39, 44-45, and G. M. Young, *Portrait of an Age*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 75. British approval of American economic strength and imperial dominance in the Western Hemisphere, which contrasted sharply with the “Teutophobic” reaction to German economic rivalry and imperial pretensions, was partly justified by the notion of Anglo-Saxon kinship and political affinity.

³⁶Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), pp. 70-71, 74, treats cultural imperialism as an integral component of national and social identity especially evident in nineteenth-century British novels, where the often subtle, but ubiquitous, presence of the empire incorporated references to the institutions of bourgeois society with a “departmental” view of the world that placed London and metropolitan culture at the center of a greater, culturally inferior, Britain. Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 11-12, 109, dates the origins of British cultural imperialism back to Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), or even Shakespeare’s *Tempest*, and the legacy of pastoral conversion fantasies of settlers civilizing natives. Later, the myth of providential empire energized adventure tales and other literary forms as a vehicle for manly heroism or missionary fulfillment.

attitudes.³⁷ Several developments at home and abroad have been blamed for this demise of Liberal idealism. Disenchantment on the domestic front stemmed from the perceived failure of the Poor Laws and social unrest associated with Chartist agitation. Overseas, the Crimean War (1853-5) and Indian Mutiny (1857), with their widely publicized horrors and atrocities, shook a public accustomed to thirty-five years of relatively peaceful diplomacy, colonization and commercial expansion. In 1865 Governor Eyre's brutal suppression of the Jamaican Rebellion won broad support, but by that time the failure of missionary expeditions and the deflation of exaggerated commercial expectations had already dispelled earlier Evangelical and Utilitarian optimism bred on the belief that non-Western cultures would readily adopt European ways, or that free trade would miraculously lead savages to civilization without the need for annexation and forceful repression.³⁸ Pessimism regarding the moral foundations and future of the British empire thus grew not only with doubts about Britain's imperial capacity in the face of foreign competition, which paradoxically produced a more stridently militant imperialism, but also with perceived discrepancies between the public's idealized view and the realities of empire. This coming to terms with "reality" in the form of both domestic social inequity and overseas imperialism strengthened an anti-Enlightenment trend that amplified distinctions based on social,

³⁷Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, pp. 77-80, 89, 92, cites the Floggings Act (1863), the Prisons Act (1865), The Criminals Act and The Habitual Criminals Act (both 1869) as evidence of a tougher attitude toward social problems that undermined previous assumptions of innate human rationality and spelled the end of sentimentality and idealism based on Rousseau's *Social Contract*. This change depended in no small part on the polygenism of Christian Literalists and the "inherited prejudice" of ethnologists and anthropologists, many of whom misapplied Darwinian models to human society.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 69, 73, 77. See also Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, p. 28, on the support among English intellectuals and clergy for harsh measures in Jamaica, and pp. 30-31, on the Liberal ideal of commerce as a civilizing "miracle."

racial and national stereotypes at the expense of more universal humanitarian doctrines.³⁹ British imperialists often justified authoritarian rule abroad, ostensibly for strategic purposes, by resorting to demeaning stereotypes, as evident in propaganda opposed to Home Rule in 1886 which caricatured the Irish as lazy, childish, dirty, mischievous, ignorant, emotional, unstable, superstitious, lying and vengeful.⁴⁰

The power of stereotypes to shape and influence public opinion also derived from the fact that beneath the concerns over moral decline and derailment of the engines of “progress”—that is, commercial prosperity, social reform, and imperial preeminence—lay an inward obsession with social and national identity. Whether this identity crisis affected individuals on a personal level, as in the pressure to conform to romanticized social and sexual ideals, or disturbed their status-consciousness as members of a larger group, it also heightened the tendency to draw distinctions based on class, nationality and race.⁴¹ The unique association between Victorian social, political and economic thought and the ideal of “character,” with its evaluative connotations as both cause and desired goal of a model national and imperial system, suggests a

³⁹Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, pp. 44, 173, states that a “transvaluation of values” from slavery abolition to empire building took place between 1833 and 1908.

⁴⁰Hyam, *Britain’s Imperial Century*, p. 92.

⁴¹Patricia Anderson, *When Passion Reigned: Sex and the Victorians* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), pp. 60, 64, 67, 148, outlines the idealized connection between class status and sexuality shaped by romantic fiction, and the contradiction between the Victorian ideal of sexual fulfillment and the reality of unfulfilled lives, whether those of men striving to project the manly image of the Christian Gentleman, or socially and economically disadvantaged governesses, teachers and seamstresses inhibited by social propriety from legitimately expressing their passions. Hyam, *Britain’s Imperial Century*, pp. 135-37, 375, refers to the sexual motivation of avid imperialists, seeking a break from inhibition through either sublimation or the “lure of black flesh,” which, along with proconsular ambition, provided a stimulus to imperial expansion.

moral source of anxiety about rapid social change as well as a psychological motive behind British assertions of superiority over foreigners.⁴² The prevailing evangelical “frame of reference” in pre- and early Victorian England which presumed a connection between morality and socio-economic success, and which survived in Gladstonian tenets linking providential reward and retribution with the necessity for a moral public policy, points to the strong religious component in conceptions of British national character as a pillar of empire.⁴³ Popular imperialism further provided atavistic and socially regressive, authoritarian themes that served as a platform for ordering the world according to an elaborate racial and ethnic hierarchy with, of course, British Anglo-Saxons at the top.⁴⁴ Imperialism also promoted a sense of national unity among members of a growing and increasingly striated middle class by subsuming class interests and status anxieties—what E. J. Hobsbawm has termed the “uncertainty of the bourgeoisie.” This nineteenth-century quest for social identity ranged in expression from plutocratic conspicuous consumption and aristocratization to petty-bourgeois differentiation from the working class through education, residence, lifestyle and sporting events.⁴⁵ The cultural

⁴²Stefan Collini, *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain 1850-1930* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 94-97.

⁴³Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 13-14, 31, 343-46.

⁴⁴Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, pp. 33-35, concurs with Joseph Schumpeter’s view of imperialism as cultural regression or social atavism, particularly in regard to revitalization of the fantasy of aristocratic authority as a sub-theme in Victorian adventure fiction. Examples include glorification of the warrior hero in the King Arthur legend and superimposition of the English gentleman on themes of racial and international rather than class conflict.

⁴⁵*The Age of Empire 1875-1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1887), pp. 170, 176, 181-84. Hobsbawm labels nationalism a petty-bourgeois movement because it afforded a collective identity, as defenders of the nation, preferable to an inferior class status. Patriotism, specifically

“domestication” of imperialism therefore served both to underscore the interdependency of imperial rule and British character, or selfhood, and to reinforce, partially as a sop to humanist idealism, the idea of a providentially ordained imperial mission to establish and maintain cultural hegemony over the realm.⁴⁶

In an imperialist age of conflicting values, cultural pessimism, pseudoscientific racism, moral anxiety and doubt, the Victorian national identity crisis left its imprint in ambiguous stereotypes of Germany and German culture. Carlyle and the mid-century Germanophiles, for example, looked to “pious” Germany as a beacon of traditional Christian-feudal ideals in contradiction to earlier condemnation of Germany as the source of atheistic biblical criticism and Jacobin sympathies.⁴⁷ Later, rapidly developing Germany represented both a model of military, industrial and educational modernization and a menace to British security and imperial pre-eminence. Such contrasting perceptions of the Germans, most blatantly expressed in the divergence between Teutonism and more exclusively Anglo-Saxonist racial theories, also defined

reflected in the successful, non-compulsory military recruitment of middle-class youths during the Boer War, apparently compensated for social inferiority. See pp. 160, 188-89.

⁴⁶Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 83, cites the connection in Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* between domestic tranquillity and West Indies plantation overlordship. The empire offered redemption for criminals as seen in Southey’s *Botany Bay Eclogues* (1794) and in Dickens’s *Great Expectations*, but it also provided for self-justification through the projection of negative racial and ethnic stereotypes as noted in the work of Thackeray and the comic-heroic adventure novels of Captain Marryat. It is interesting to compare here the interconnection between the degeneration of the noble savage stereotype and the fictional hero’s regression from Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe to Kurtz, Joseph Conrad’s backsliding white savage in *Heart of Darkness*. See Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, pp. 39, 50, 104-6, 111.

⁴⁷In contrast to the traditional view of Germany as a bastion of conservatism and anti-Jacobin sentiment, the British reaction to German literature at the turn of the century expressed quite the opposite. The discrepancy will be dealt with in a discussion of British attitudes toward German literature (see below, pp. 117-19).

two British political schools, which Paul M. Kennedy has labeled Germanophile “idealists” and Germanophobe “realists.”⁴⁸ These two opposing camps generally espoused anti-imperialist versus imperialist policies in their approach to international problems: idealists optimistically sought solutions through goodwill, diplomacy and free trade, whereas realists pessimistically advocated fortification of the state, defense of national interests and protectionism. They also disagreed in their expectations as to whether Germany would evolve toward the English political and economic model or, as a corollary, whether an Anglo-German alliance could be based on cultural and racial “affinities.”

While this division generally mirrored the split between Liberal and Conservative, linking attitudes toward Germany with party affiliation remains problematical. To restate George Dangerfield’s famous phrase, the “strange death of Liberal England” that came in the form of Liberal imperialism shattered both Little Englander and Germanophilic sentiments from the Left.⁴⁹ Dangerfield specifically referred to the British public’s self-indulgent release of inner tension through melodramatic scenarios of a German invasion:

. . . what could be more exciting than to gather all the political rages, all the class hatreds, all the fevers for spending and excitement and speed, which then seemed to hang like a haunted fog over England—to gather them and condense them into one huge shape and call it *Germany*?⁵⁰

⁴⁸Paul M. Kennedy, “Idealists and Realists: British Views of Germany 1864-1939,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 25 (September 1974) : 138-39. Kennedy, however, admits the semantic contradiction in applying the term “realist” to policies that offered no real alternatives to war.

⁴⁹Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire*, pp. 189-90, argues that the phrase might be extended to include western Europe because imperialism generally undermined bourgeois liberalism.

⁵⁰*The Strange Death of Liberal England*, (New York: Capricorn Books, 1935), p. 119.

Nothing illustrates the internal conflict between imperialism and Liberal Germanophilia better than the political career of Joseph Chamberlain. Chamberlain began as a Radical reformer in the 1870's, split with Gladstone as a Liberal Unionist in 1886 over the issue of Irish Home Rule, and as a champion of imperial-social and tariff reform, became a lay participant in the “squalid argument” that galvanized Liberal and Free Trader opposition in 1903.⁵¹ As Colonial Secretary under Salisbury’s third Conservative ministry Chamberlain advocated an alliance with Germany in both 1898 and 1899, only to be rebuffed at home and abroad. In 1901-2 he wound up publicly trading insults with the German Chancellor, Bernard von Bülow, in a bitter exchange concerning British soldierly conduct during the Boer War that reverberated in the patriotic presses of both nations.⁵² The repeated failure of Anglo-German alliance attempts had prompted Chamberlain to favor, along with many Liberal Imperialists, an understanding with France and Russia rather than the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy. The Fabian Socialists, as muted imperialists and anti-Gladstonians, also presented an exception to the internationalist, Germanophile left in

⁵¹The Liberal reaction came in response to Chamberlain’s Glasgow speech of October 6, 1903 which implied that imperial preference would benefit England by keeping colonies at the status of non-industrial, primary producers. Cited in Bernard Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform: English Social-Imperial Thought 1895-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 93, in a discussion of Chamberlain’s transformation from Benthamite social reformer to imperialist tariff reformer.

⁵²See Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), pp. 239, 248-49. Chamberlain publicly objected to rumors of British atrocities during the South African war with the assertion that British troops acted no less honorably than Prussian soldiers at Sedan in 1870. Bülow compared Chamberlain’s remarks to “biting on granite” in a Reichstag speech calculated to win political support from the patriotic right, but which effectively scuttled further attempts at an Anglo-German understanding. See also G. P. Gooch, *Studies in Diplomacy and Statecraft* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1942), pp. 64-65.

that they did not join Liberal attempts, such as the futile Haldane Mission in 1912, to improve Anglo-German relations.⁵³

Even taking into account the anomalies of Liberal and Social Imperialism, discrepancies in respect to attitudes toward Germany existed within opposing political parties. Long after 1871 Conservatives, in the Germanophilic tradition of Carlyle and Coleridge, found much to admire in staunch German monarchism, anti-individualism and state corporativism, while Liberal and Conservative imperialists alike espoused German, or Prussian, models of national efficiency, state interventionism and military readiness. Many Liberal Germanophiles, on the other hand, who at first distinguished between a “good,” scholarly, enterprising, moral Germany, and a “bad,” reactionary, Junker-dominated Prussia, became disenchanted with the Prussianization of German statecraft and culture under Bismarck.⁵⁴ These intra-party disparities tended to undermine the “idealist” position for several reasons: first, calls for emulating Germany, for the sake of competing with her, betrayed an intrinsic Germanophobia; second, old distinctions between the “two Germanies,” between stern, disciplined, autocratic Prussia and cosmopolitan, romantic, philosophical southern Germany, began to wane with the rise of imperialist and nationalist sentiments; third, colonial rivalry, events such as the 1896 Kruger Telegram and increased German armaments all strengthened the Germanophobe argument; and fourth, an increasing awareness of the breadth of German Anglophobia at the century’s end weakened

⁵³A. M. McBriar, *Fabian Socialism and English Politics, 1884-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 124-25, 135, discusses Fabian imperialism as defined by George Bernard Shaw citing his tract *Fabianism and the Empire* (London: Grant Richards, 1900) and Fabian efforts to distinguish themselves from Jingoists.

⁵⁴Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 119.

Germanophile attempts to differentiate between the German people and the Hohenzollern regime.⁵⁵ Kaiser Wilhelm II's confused love/hate relationship with his English mother's country and his indiscretions in the press constituted yet another byway complicating this maze of ambiguous opinion regarding Germany.⁵⁶

In his comprehensive work on the subject of Anglo-German relations during the nineteenth century, Kennedy coined the phrase "Anglo-German antagonism" to describe the pervasive cultural and diplomatic antipathy that strained relations between the two countries from the time of Bismarck to the outbreak of World War I. Kennedy concluded that the diplomatic contest and cementing of alliances that preceded the war stemmed essentially from a

⁵⁵Kennedy, "Idealists and Realists," pp. 144-47. The Kaiser's congratulatory telegram to South African President Paul Kruger for his defeat of the Jameson Raid perpetrated by English settlers in the Transvaal aroused British public indignation and brought recriminations against devious and meddlesome German tactics. The rebellion grew out of long-standing disputes between English immigrants, or *Uitlanders*, and the pro-German government in the Transvaal. Later, German pro-Boer sympathies, accelerated German naval construction, the two Moroccan Crises (1905 and 1911), and, in general, the political manipulation of anti-English sentiment in Germany confirmed Germanophobic opinion in Britain.

⁵⁶Wilhelm's volubility, and his unquenchable desire to reconcile his English sympathies with his autocratic Prussian heritage, and with popular Anglophobia in Germany, produced the infamous Daily Telegraph Affair, in which Wilhelm stated that he belonged to a select minority of Anglophiles in an Anglophobic country. The published interview evoked reactions ranging from optimistic belief to scathing ridicule in England, outrage and embarrassment in Germany. See "The German Emperor and England: Personal Interview," *Daily Telegraph*, 28 October 1908, p. 11. For a concise explanation of how Wilhelm II's lack of self integration and self-esteem affected both his relationship with his parents and his attitude as German Kaiser towards England, and in particular how the misguided policy of attempting to win an English alliance through the construction of a rival navy mirrored his youthful attempts to win the empathy of his disapproving mother, Crown Princess Victoria, through a combination of imitation and rivalry, see Thomas A. Kohut, "Kaiser Wilhelm II and his parents: an inquiry into the psychological roots of German policy towards England before the First world War," in *Kaiser Wilhelm II: New Interpretations* (The Corfu Papers), eds. John G. Röhl and Nicholas Sombart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 82-87.

clash of imperial aims: Britain wishing to preserve the status quo and her own imperial ascendancy, Germany wanting to achieve a “place in the sun” at the expense of it. He pointed out, however, that although Bismarckian Germany’s transition from a “cluster of insignificant States under insignificant princelings” to a major power cast her into the role of England’s arch-rival, especially in view of Germany’s geographical proximity and the relative weakening of France and Russia during that period, the description of this developing conflict as an “antagonism” depended as well on cultural and ideological factors.⁵⁷

The interface between public sentiment and government policy looms large in Kennedy’s analysis because of the practical impossibility, confronting decision-makers in either country, of separating diplomatic, colonial and military issues from the impact of popular nationalism and nationalist pressure groups in the domestic political arena. German chancellors consistently tapped popular Anglophobia to gain political advantages: Bismarck, for example, when he launched his program of colonial annexations in 1884, and Bülow when he sought public and *Reichstag* support for naval increases fifteen years later. British officials, on the other hand, encountered scathing media criticism whenever they attempted to cooperate with Germany. The 1902 Venezuelan blockade, for example, which was initiated by Britain in concert with Italy and Germany—in league with “the Goth and shameless Hun,” as Rudyard Kipling put it—in an attempt to exact payment for damages caused during the revolution, had to be quickly abandoned due to public outrage and fears of American reprisal. Likewise, in 1903 an organized press campaign thwarted government attempts to arrange financing of the Baghdad Railway project in

⁵⁷Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 466, 470. The quote comes from a June 1914 address delivered by Lord Welby to the Royal Statistical Society, cited in Kennedy, p. 464.

cooperation with Germany.⁵⁸ The elemental contribution to the Anglo-German antagonism of diplomatic policy decisions that were driven or justified by their nationalistic appeal underscores the importance of a news media where forms of expression could present an overgeneralized, distorted picture, lacking subtleties. In the case of the British periodical press, which is the focus of this study, Germanophobic sentiments could appear as blatant scaremongering, but more often found expression in stereotypes which could subtly convey an anti-German message without disturbing journalistic decorum.

By the mid-1890s the monthly and weekly journals had evoked a portrait of Germany that was the antithesis of Britain in everything from society and the arts to economic, colonial and diplomatic methods. Beneath the facade of material similarity between two industrialized rival nations, and the superficial affinities of racial kinship, Protestantism, and royal family ties, writers exposed glaring cultural and political incongruities that fed the antagonism and deepened stereotyped divisions. From the British point of view, Germany lacked firmly-held convictions based on constitutionalism, freedom of speech and religion, individualism, toleration of dissenters and minorities, pacifism, a sense of “fair play,” free trade, and policies that can be

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 172, 240, 259, 261. The quotation comes from the last line of Kipling’s poem *The Rowers*, published in the *Times* at the height of the protest against the Venezuelan debacle. Chamberlain weighed in against the Baghdad Railway scheme shortly before unveiling his Tariff Reform proposals, which were aimed primarily at Germany. Emphasis on the interface between public opinion and policy sidesteps charges of anti-Germanism in the British Foreign Office, such as those intimated by Zara S. Steiner in her classic *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 76-80 which has been challenged by Keith M. Wilson in *Empire and Continent: Studies in British Foreign Policy from the 1880s to the First World War* (London and New York: Mansell Publishing, 1987), chapter 3, “The Question of Anti-Germanism at the Foreign Office before the First World War.”

summarized as “Gladstonism” as opposed to “Bismarckism.”⁵⁹ Writers exploited these perceived differences in order to discredit German military, governmental or protectionist economic models, but they also perpetuated stereotypes that exaggerated facile distinctions configured according to psychological needs and conjoined less rationally with specific temporal arguments.⁶⁰

The division between idealist and realist, although it applies to attitudes toward Germany from a policy perspective, tends to minimize the darker duality of nostalgic delusion versus national character assassination in the periodical press. For this study, the adjectives “escapist” and “alarmist” more accurately convey the expression of contrasting views which frequently cut across party lines. Both Conservatives and Liberals indulged in either “idealistic” wishful thinking or “realistic” scaremongering in their assessments of a yet little known and semi-mythical country. More importantly, stereotypes that accompanied and embodied these opinions reinforced a xenophobia not evident in statements of policy. In addition, the stereotypic maintenance of a psychological dichotomy elevating the “good” self at the expense of the “bad” or “inferior” other ensured that superficially polarized images of Germany did not cancel each

⁵⁹Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 152-53 also notes that there were no British equivalents of an all-powerful Bismarck or threats of a *coup d'état* in reaction to liberal movements from an unrepresentative autocracy; no anti-socialist laws or *Kulturkampf*, and nothing resembling the class of East Elbian Junkers or the extreme antisemitism and anticapitalism of the German peasantry and lower middle classes.

⁶⁰Psychological theorists have abandoned the controversial “kernel of truth” hypothesis that stereotypes derive from some factual basis, but they note the presence of real cultural differences as a factor enhancing the significance and credibility of stereotypes. See Shelly E. Taylor, “A Categorization Approach to Stereotyping,” chap. 3 in David L. Hamilton, (ed.), *Cognitive Processes in Stereotyping and Intergroup Behavior* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1981), p. 85.

other out.⁶¹ Supposed virtues thus became implied weaknesses: the “philosophical” and “honest” German would be deemed “impractical” and “politically naive,” “thorough” German scholars decried as “plodding” and laborious, and disciplined German troops reviled as cowardly, lacking “pluck” or initiative. The fact that even sympathetic articles nearly always contained condescending or contemptuous stereotypes of Germans and German ways indicates the presence of a powerful psychological dynamic that shaped attitudes regardless of political position.

The links established by contemporary researchers between stereotypy, ethnocentrism, nationalism and authoritarianism have vindicated earlier concerns about the vulnerability of minds unversed in the concept of stereotypes.⁶² Walter Lippmann, who in 1922 first coined the term “stereotype” to refer to a psychological image, condemned the “oceans of loose talk about collective minds, national souls, and race psychology” prior to World War I that fostered, among other things, the pseudo-Darwinian assumption of inevitable war between competing nations.⁶³ Stereotypes enabled such delusions, and most Victorian and Edwardian writers, unaware of or unconcerned about their prejudicial nature, voiced uninhibited opinions without the benefit of

⁶¹Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race and Madness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 20. Gilman clarifies the common motivational basis behind both “negative” and “positive” stereotypes: “The former is that which we fear to become; the latter, that which we fear we cannot achieve.” The myth of the “dark Continent,” which exemplified a nineteenth-century transition away from an idealized “noble savage” stereotype to the characterization of subject races as merely savage, can be seen as a late phase in the centuries-long formation of a “superior” imperial self-image through the denigration of an “inferior” other. See Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 106; Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, pp. 10-11, 174, 179; and Hyam, *Britain’s Imperial Century*, p. 349.

⁶²The classic studies establishing these connections can be found in T.W. Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950). Later studies have refined but not refuted these associations and concerns.

⁶³Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1922), p. 93.

contemporary admonitions to the contrary. Stereotypes flourished in nineteenth-century Britain because they presented simple and seemingly concrete “historical” explanations that eliminated uncertainty. They afforded a temporary respite from anxiety through an escapism which often cohered with allusion to antiquity, racial myth or faith in providence. In the case of Germany, however, stereotypes also sounded warnings to alarmists who preferred to project their insecurities on an arch rival. In either case, the German stereotype became both a target and a touchstone of British self-worth.⁶⁴

This study explores the textual evidence of stereotypes in an effort to better understand the shape of British attitudes toward Germany before World War I. It presents a historical survey of the evolution of the German stereotype, paying particular attention to stereotypes employed within the context of Anglo-German comparisons in periodical literature of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The monthly and weekly reviews, concerned less with reporting news than with social commentary or digressions on national character, provide the richest source of stereotypes and thus constitute the bulk of primary sources used here (see table 1, pp. 32-34).⁶⁵ Citations of non-fiction books, speeches, cartoons, and newspaper articles, mostly written between 1890 and 1914 appear largely in connection with specific issues or events. Because the reviews catered to readers from fairly exclusive social and educational backgrounds, with well-defined political views, they allow some limited quantification and comparison by

⁶⁴Charles Copland Perry in “Germany as an Object Lesson,” *Nineteenth Century* 45 (April 1899) : 526, stated as much when he called Germany the “touchstone of our conduct.”

⁶⁵Only essays, commentary and the occasional satire find inclusion here, not the depiction of Germans in British fiction. This has been masterfully dealt with in Peter E. Firchow's book, *The Death of the German Cousin: Variations on a Literary Stereotype, 1890-1920* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1986; London: Associated University Press, 1986).

TABLE 1

PERIODICAL SOURCES USED—GREAT BRITAIN UP TO 1914

L = Lower
M = Middle
U = Upper

A. NEWSPAPERS (London):

TITLE (DATE OF INCEPTION)	POLITICAL ORIENTATION	PRICE	ANNUAL CIRCULATION (RELEVANT DATES)	READERSHIP	
				CLASS	EDUCATION
Clarion (1891)	Socialist				
Daily Mail (1896)	Independent	.5d	600,000 (1896-1907)	L-M	
Daily News (1846)	Liberal	1d .5d	69,000 (1890-1903) 140,000 (1904-1907)	L-UM	
Daily Telegraph (1855)	Liberal	1d	300,000 (1888)	LM-M	
Morning Post (1772)	Conservative	3d	3,500 (1871)	U	
Pall Mall Gazette (1865)	Liberal	2d	8,000 (1880-1890)	M-U	Fair-High
Standard (1857)	Conservative	1d	255,300 (1893)	LM-UM	
Times (1788)	Independent	3d	40,000 (1890-1907)	M-U	High
WEEKLY AND SUNDAY					
Chamber's Journal (1832)		1.5d	80,000 (peak)	LM-M	Fair
Lloyd's Illustrated Weekly News (1843)	Liberal	1d	910,000 (1893)	L-LM	Low
Observer (1791)	Liberal	3d	3,000 (1868)	UM-U	Fair-High
Reynold's News (1850)	Radical	1d	300,000 (1881)	L-LM	Low
Saturday Review (1856)	Independent	6d	20,000 (1871)	M-U	High
Speaker (1890)					
Spectator (1828)	Liberal	6d	5,000 (1871)	M-UM	High
Weekly Dispatch (1801)	Liberal	1d	140,000 (1870)	M	Fair

Sources for newspapers: Alvar Ellegård, *The Readership of the Periodical Press in Mid-Victorian Britain*, vol. 63, pt. 3 (Goteborg: Göteborgs Universitets Årsskrift, 1957), pp. 1-39; Alfred Powell Wadsworth, "Newspaper Circulations, 1800-1954," *Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society* (9 March 1955), pp. 1-40.

(TABLE 1 continued)

B. POLITICAL MAGAZINES AND REVIEWS:

TITLE (DATE OF INCEPTION - CLOSE)	POLITICAL ORIENTATION	PRICE	ANNUAL CIRCULATION (RELEVANT DATES)	READERSHIP	
				CLASS	EDUCATION
*Blackwood's (1817)	Conservative	2s6d	7,500 (1868)	UM-U	Good
*Contemporary Review (1866)	Liberal Reformist	2s6d	4,000 (1870)	M-U	High
*Edinburgh Review (Q) (1802)	Liberal Unionist	6s	7,000 (1870)	UM-U	Good-High
English Woman's Review (1866)		1s			
*Fortnightly Review (1865)	Liberal-Radical	2s6d	2,500 (1872)	M-U	High
Free Review (1893-1898)					
*MacMillan's (1859)	Liberal	1s	7,500 (1868)	M-U	
Monthly Review (1900-1907)		2s6d			
*National Review (1883)	Conservative Unionist	2s6d			
New Century Review (1897-1900)					
New Review (1889-1897)		6d	39,000 (1889)		
		1s	5,000 (1894)		
*Nineteenth Century (1877)	Liberal	2s6d	10,000 (1880)		High
Progressive Review					
*Quarterly Review (Q) (1809)	Conservative	6s	8,000 (1890)	UM-U	High
*Westminster Review (Q) (1824)	Liberal-Radical	2s6d	4,000 (1870)	M-U	
World's Work (London ed.) (1900)	Labour American politics	\$.25			

* most influential reviews (Q) = Quarterly

Sources for reviews and magazines: Ellegård, *The Readership of the Periodical Press in Mid-Victorian Britain*, pp. 1-39; "Periodicals of Great Britain and Ireland," in *Index to the Periodicals of the 1890s*, 13 vols., (London: *Review of Reviews*, 1890-1902) 1 : 99-111; Walter E. Houghton, gen. ed., *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals 1824-1900*, 4 vols. (Toronto: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969-87).

(TABLE 1 continued)

C. POPULAR AND GENERAL PERIODICALS:

TITLE (DATE OF INCEPTION - CLOSE)	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	ANNUAL CIRCULATION (RELEVANT DATES)	READERSHIP	
				CLASS	EDUCATION
Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday (1884)	Humor (ill.)				
Borderland (1893)	Occult	1s6d			
Cassell's Family Magazine (1874)	Short articles (ill.)	6d	250,000 (1865)	LM-M	Low-Fair
Cornhill (1860)	Fiction and articles	6d	12,000 (1882)	M-U	Good-High
English Illustrated Magazine (1883-1913)	Fiction and articles (ill.)	6d			
Gentleman's Magazine (1731)	Fiction and articles	1s	10,000 (1870)	M-U	Fair
Good Words (1860)	Religious magazine (ill.)	6d	80,000 (1870)	LM-UM	Fair
Harmsworth's (1898)	Articles and stories (ill.)	3.5d			
Idler (Q) (1892-1911)	Light literature (ill.)	6d			
Ladies' Realm (1896)	Articles and fiction (ill.)	6d			
Leisure Hour (1852-1905)	Religious magazine (ill.)	6d	80,000 (1870)	L-M	Low-Fair
Ludgate's (1891-1901)	Fiction and articles (ill.)	6d			
McClure's (1893)	Fiction and articles (ill.)	6d			
Pall Mall Magazine (1893)	General articles (ill.)	1s			
Pearson's Magazine (1896)	Fiction and articles (ill.)	6d			
Punch (1841)	Humor (ill.)	3d	40,000 (1870)	M-U	
Strand (1891)	Light magazine (ill.)	6d	250,000 (1891)		
Sunday at Home (1854)	Religious magazine (ill.)	6d		All	
Temple Bar (1860)	Fiction and biography	1s	8,000 (1896)	M	Fair
Windsor Magazine (1895)	Fiction and articles (ill.)	6d			
Woman at Home (1893)	Magazine for women (ill.)	6d			
Young Woman (1892)	Christian magazine (ill.)	3d			

PERIODICAL PEAK CIRCULATIONS

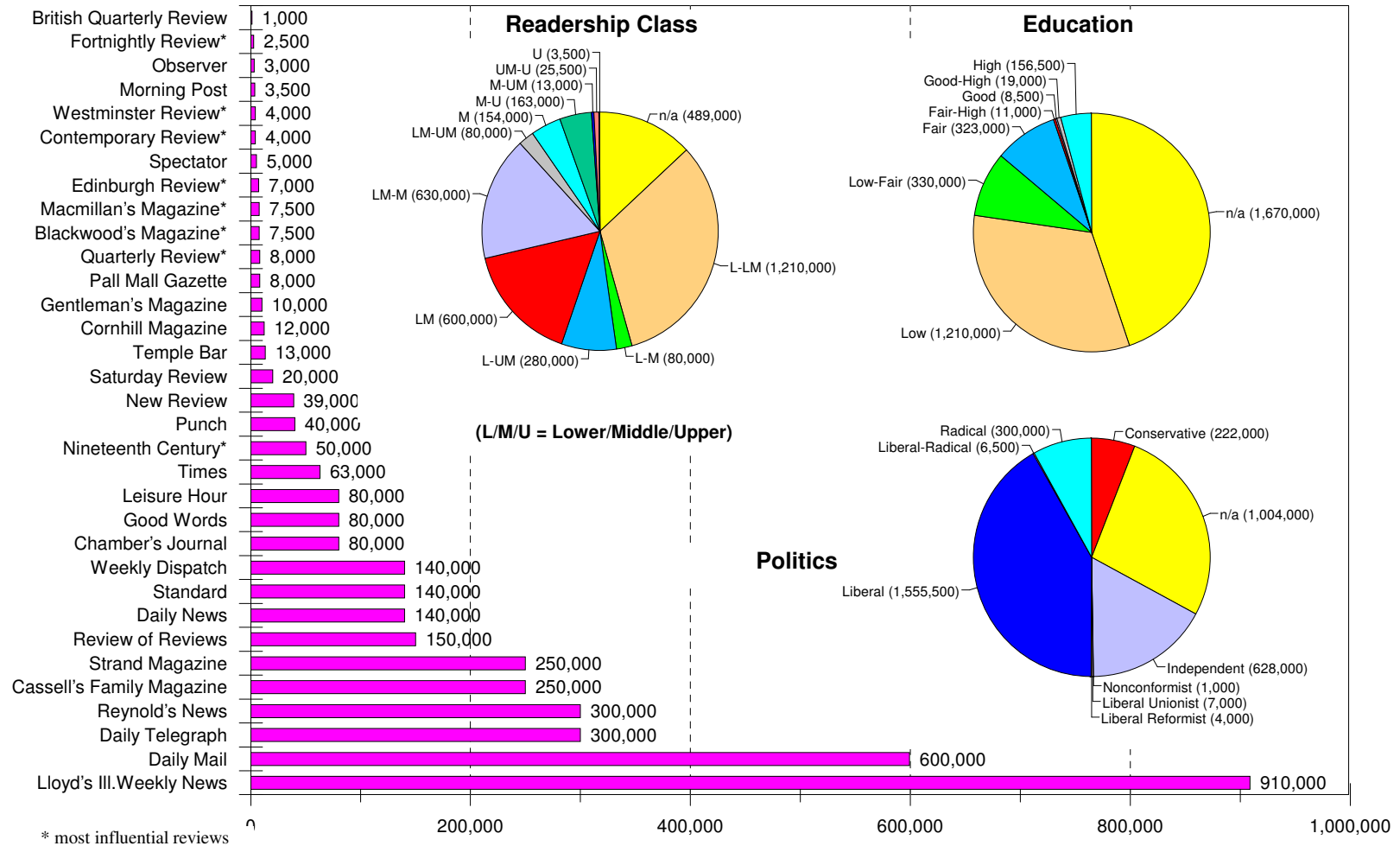


FIGURE 1. These graphs illustrate the circulation figures listed in table 1 (pp. 32-34). The pie charts indicate percentages of a total peak circulation representing 3,728,000 theoretical readers, according to estimated social class, education and politics.

political party and social class. This same exclusivity, however, precludes sweeping generalizations due to the fact that wealthy and well-educated readers of reviews and magazines made up only a fraction of the whole society, albeit a very influential one. Another methodological problem arises in the question as to whether a majority of readers agreed with, or merely tolerated, a writer's views.⁶⁶

The problem of exclusivity can be partially addressed by the correspondence between key themes in the more select journals and those found in mass-circulation newspapers established after 1855. Re-circulation and republication of many of the more expensive "serious" journals also somewhat mitigates this class imbalance in readership.⁶⁷ Unfortunately, neither cheap dailies nor official Labour Party publications can be relied upon for an accurate assessment of working-class attitudes. A case in point, Robert Blatchford's *Clarion*, the most widely read Socialist journal before the war, exhibited a strong anti-German bias in contrast to the international, anti-Jingoist and

⁶⁶The graph on page 32 shows the sheer proliferation of small-circulation periodicals geared to middle- and upper-class readers of good education, a reality which tended to overemphasize the more extreme negative variations of the stereotype. However, there were exceptions, found in the *Daily Mail* and elsewhere, to the usually benign and bland fare served up by the large circulation periodicals.

⁶⁷Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix edition, 1963), p. 359, mentions as serious (i.e. not entertainment) journals the *Fortnightly Review* (1865-1959), *Contemporary Review* (1866-), and *Nineteenth Century* (1877-1950). Based on information in the *Wellesley Index* regarding stature and consistency of subject matter, the list should include the following titles (inclusive of name changes): *Blackwood's* (1817-1980), *Edinburgh Review* (1802-1929), *Macmillan's* (1859-1907), *National Review* (1883-1950), *Quarterly Review* (1809-1967), and *Westminster Review* (1824-1914). Many articles from these journals were republished, critiqued or summarized in W. T. Stead's *Review of Reviews* (1890-1936) which claimed a readership of 150,000 in its first year.

generally Germanophilic tone adopted by Labour.⁶⁸ As to the question of consensus, the sheer frequency and persistence of certain themes and images dispels some uncertainty about what appealed to readers, whether specific stereotypes recurred within a given periodical or obtained broad currency in a variety of magazines. Stereotypes themselves constituted a form of language or code that, regardless of a writer's position on a particular issue, performed the task of simplifying and conveying information replete with value judgements and prejudices.

The ubiquity of stereotypes that defined all facets of German life and culture, from politics and business to society, religion and the arts, allows for their classification under broad contextual categories derived from the source material in reference to specific issues, rivalries and comparisons that represented the general body of British opinion (see table 2, p. 38). This arbitrary division, however, should not obscure the interconnection between integral components making up the German character as portrayed in British periodicals. A series of stereotypes could serve collectively to reinforce the argument, for example, that a country of unpolitical Bürgers, impractical theorists and small-minded shopkeepers had no capacity for administering a great empire (and, therefore, why should it try?). Similarly, accusations of unscrupulousness or Anglophobic intent crept into surveys of German commercial, colonial or diplomatic pretensions. Stereotypical traits also overlapped

⁶⁸The *Clarion*, founded in 1892, reached a circulation of 60,000. See William P. Maddox, *Foreign Relations in British Labour Politics: A Study of the Formation of Party Attitudes on Foreign Affairs, and the Application of Political Pressure Designed to Influence Government Policy 1900-1924* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), pp. 88, 114, 132. Labour Party leaders themselves apparently suffered from a schizophrenic stereotypical delusion, idealizing the German Social Democratic Party as a model of organizational efficiency while condemning, or at least dismissing, Marxist dogmatism and utopian radicalism as a necessary evil under the *Kaiserreich*. See Stefan Berger, "Between efficiency and 'Prussianism': stereotypes and the perception of the German Social Democrats by the British Labour Party, 1900-1920," in Emig, *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations*, pp. 178, 182, who notes the repercussions of these stereotypes on British Labour Party policy before and during the war.

TABLE 2

GERMAN STEREOTYPE CONTEXT CATAGORIES

<u>Culture/Race</u>	<u>Diplomacy</u>	<u>Economy</u>	<u>Empire/Colonies</u>
Arts	German Aims	Agriculture	Boer War
Comparisons	Naval Rivalry	Economic Rivalry	Colonial Policy
Culture in General	Policy	Income	Colonies
Philosophy	Press Wars	Industry	Explorers
Race/Ethnicity	Tactics	Merchandise	German Empire
Religion		Professions	Myths
Science		Taxation	
		Trade Policies	
		Trade Practices	
<u>National Character</u>	<u>National Figures</u>	<u>Politics/Government</u>	<u>Society</u>
General Character	Literary	Army	Domestic Life
Specific Traits	Military	German Politics	Education
	Philosophical	Government	Fashion
	Political	Labor	Food
	Religious	Law	Gatherings
	Royalty	Navy	Habits
		Parties	Manners
		Press	Romance
			Rural Life
			Sexuality
			Social Class
			Sports
			Urban Life

Percentages of Stereotypes by Context

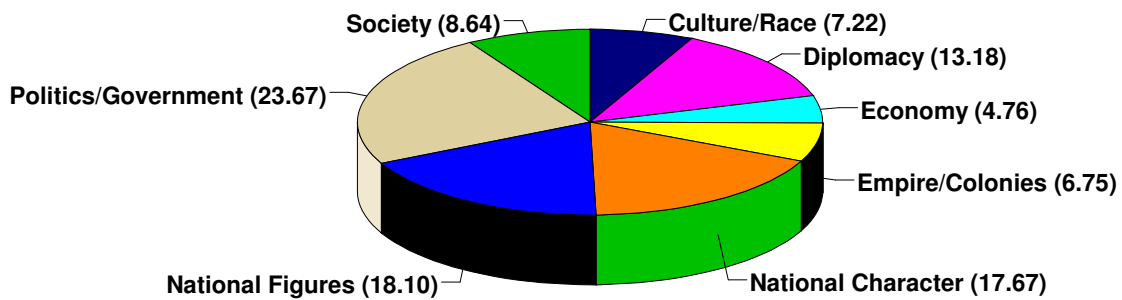


FIGURE 2. A chart based on the incidence of stereotypes counted in the periodical sources used (magazines only) and sorted by context.

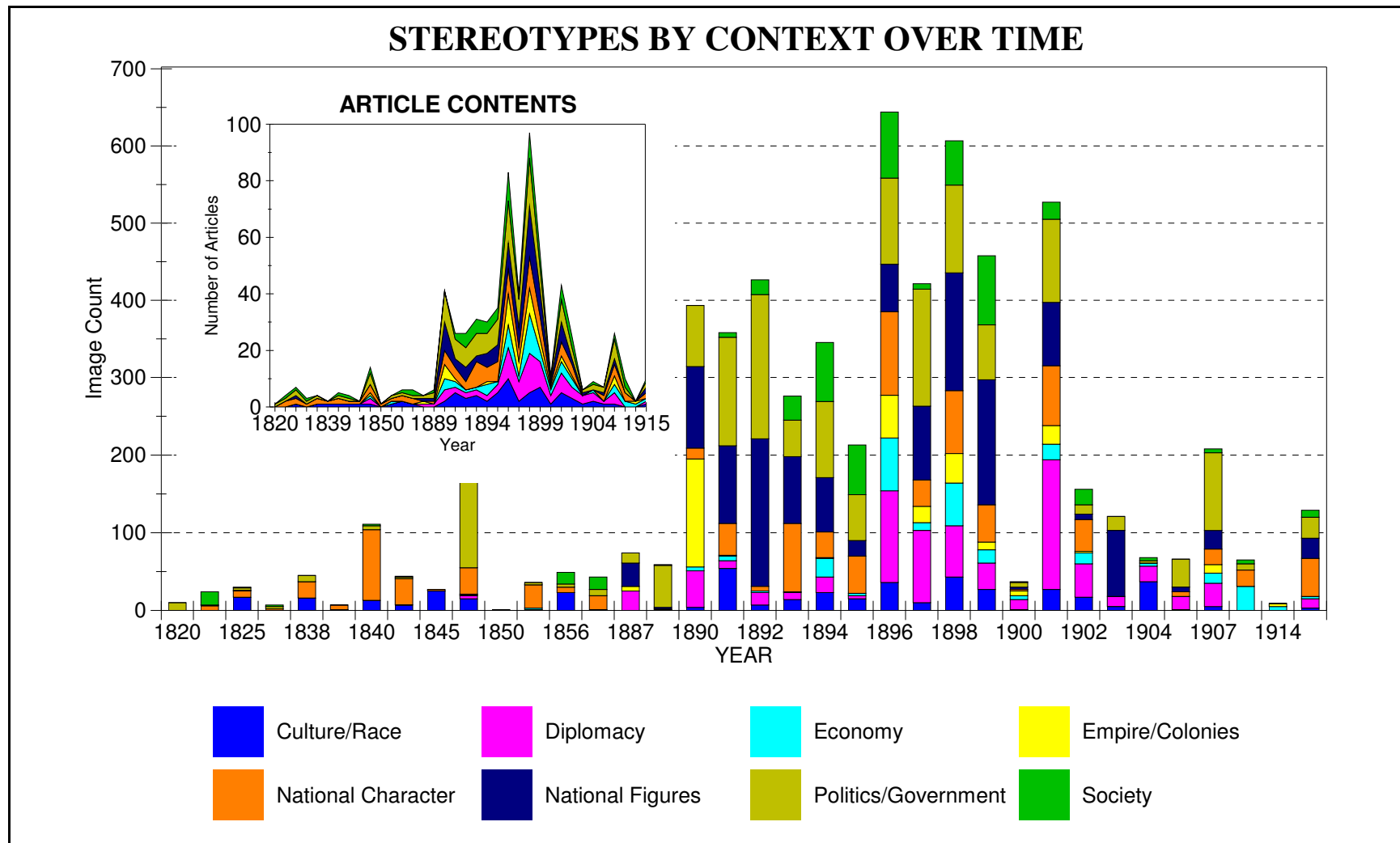


FIGURE 3. Contextual shift in stereotypes over time based on the periodical sources used (magazines only). This chart should not be taken as an exhaustive survey for the entire time period, although it does accurately reflect the 1890s and after.

CONTEXTUAL SHIFT IN THE GERMAN STEREOTYPE

Percentages Based on a Tabulation of Stereotypes Grouped by Context

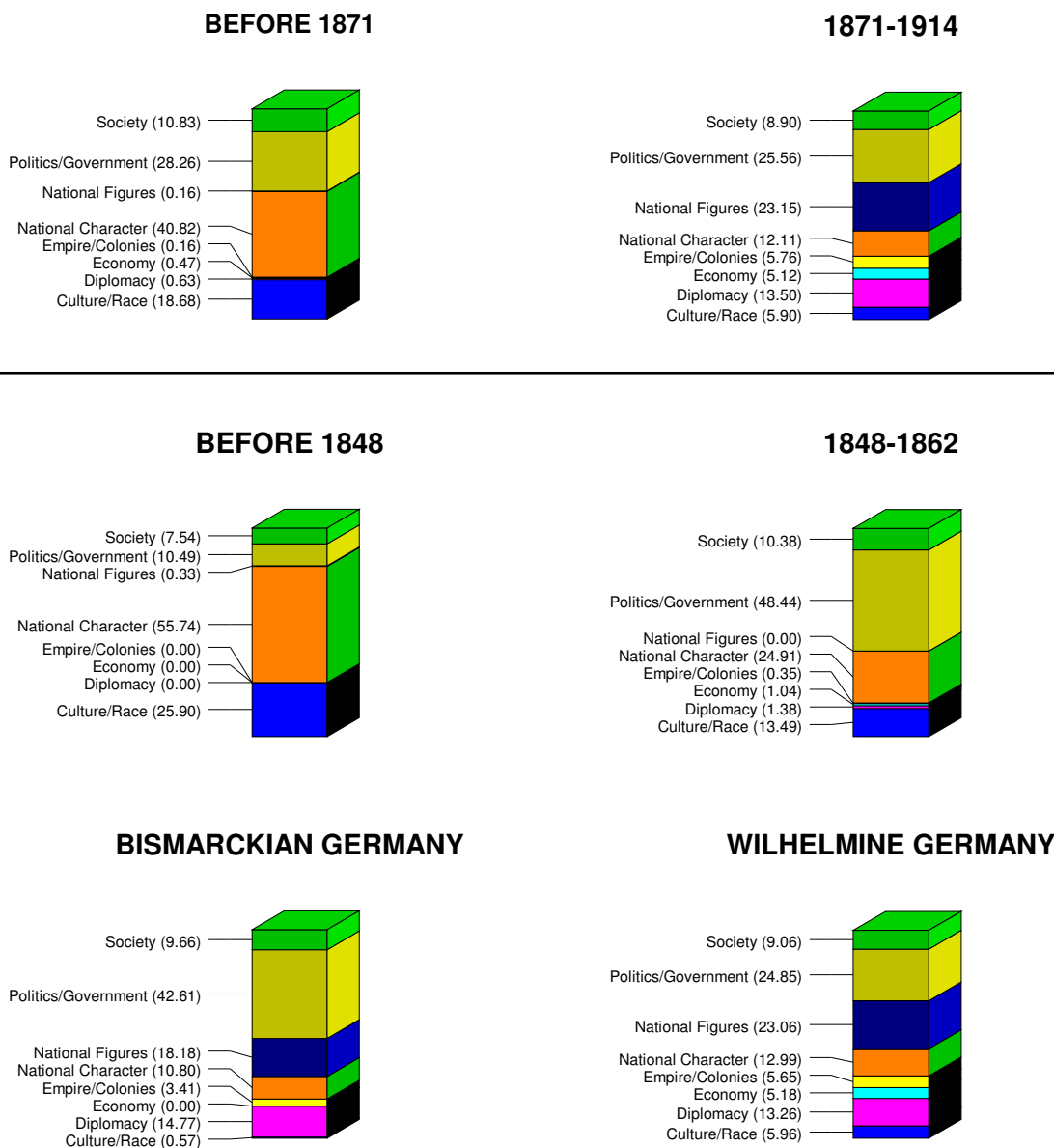


FIGURE 4. These rough tabulations show an increase in political stereotypes after 1848, and an emphasis on national figures with the elevation of Bismarck to the German Chancellorship. Likewise, the subjects of colonial expansion, diplomacy and economy became significant categories for stereotyping after 1871. The charts show the relative incidence of stereotyping within the designated subject categories in the periodical sources used (magazines only).

contextual boundaries in the case of separately targeted groups, such as German professors, peasants, Junkers or clerks, who were represented as possessing undesirable qualities endemic to the entire German “race.” Certain stereotypical images, like the rustic German Michael, the philosophically speculative German or the German bully, also transcended narrow definitions to act as powerful symbols of Anglo-German difference. While contextual emphasis clearly shifted over time in relation to events, stereotypes remained remarkably consistent, only taking on new forms with the emergence of “New Germany.” The strong pull of continuity, however, ensured the inevitable comparison, usually negative, of these newer images with older, time-honored stereotypes.

The printed evidence of stereotypes represents a point at which the investigation of subjective and objective realities come together, a nexus between psychology and history. Although the two disciplines seem to pursue opposite ends—psychology looking for subconscious motives using case histories, history trying to avoid speculation about subconscious motivation by discerning mentalities from historical records—an understanding of the psychology behind stereotypes can clarify their historical significance as more than mere sources of amusement.⁶⁹ A further methodological difference between psycho-historical research and histories of sociological phenomena lies in the distinction between individually held and consensual or “cultural” stereotypes.⁷⁰ The present study deals with stereotypes in print and visual media and only indirectly with the way individuals adapted them according to their own personalities. Evaluating the historical significance of the attitudes and values represented by these mental icons, without attempting to fathom the personal motivations of

⁶⁹See Peter Gay, *Freud for Historians* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 18, on methodological differences and the interdependency of history and psychology.

⁷⁰See Thomas F. Pettigrew, “Extending the Stereotype Concept,” chap. 9 in Hamilton, *Cognitive Processes*, pp. 312-15.

a generation of long-deceased writers, therefore requires some reference to the insights of contemporary psychology. The following chapters will explore some background thematic material, the canvas upon which late and post-Victorian images of Germany were painted, and discuss mentalities that encouraged sharp national distinctions and tended to cast Germany as Britain's opposite and arch nemesis.

II. STEREOTYPES, NATIONAL CHARACTER AND VICTORIAN IMPERIAL MYTH

Conscious Stereotyping in the Nineteenth Century

The term “stereotype,” once strictly printers’ jargon referring to a metal plate used for imprinting identical images, appeared occasionally in either a literary or national context during the nineteenth century. In 1890 Gladstone referred to Irish “discontent stereotyped in the experience of generations and of centuries” as a warning against the futility of Conservative half-way measures on



FIGURE 5. From *Review of Reviews* 15 (June 1897) : XIII.

the issue of Home Rule.¹ In 1893 the writer of an article on English characters in French fiction mentioned “the Englishman of the French stage who (except he be taken from history) is for the most part a commonplace and stereotyped figure.”² Some acknowledgement of stereotypical distortions entered the public media when British writers explored the parameters of their own national image through the perceptions of continental observers. An article published in 1890, entitled “John Bull Abroad,” applauded a shift in French caricature from the typical English

¹*Daily Telegraph*, 23 January 1890, p. 5.

²Arthur F. Davidson, “Some English Characters in French Fiction,” *Macmillan’s Magazine*, reprinted in *Living Age* 197 (April-June 1893) : 678.

“*milord*, . . . *triste*, prudish, and *gauche*” to a more flattering, cosmopolitan image. But the author himself portrayed the English tourist as a tweed-suited, pipe-smoking, recklessly spending rowdy who patronized “artistic nudities in the Rue de Rivoli” and terrorized waiters, “whom he abuses or knocks down, and, with a lordly air, throws them a napoleon wherewith to buy plaster.” This reflected self-image of a swashbuckling, plucky “Arry of world-wide fame,” who “can seldom divest himself of his English spectacles in looking on foreign habits and customs,” and who deserved reproach for letting his patriotism overrun the boundary of prejudice, nevertheless received a favorable comparison with the German:

. . . if his reputation for *grand seigneur* is on the wane, so also is his reputation for boorishness, insolence and self-sufficiency. This he has handed on to the German, who has inherited the reputation, and its consequent unpopularity, with this difference, that whereas John Bull, if he incurred dislike and ill-feeling, had a golden ointment wherewith to salve the wounds he inflicted, Herr von Donnerblitzen exaggerates the insolence and lacks the salve.³

If the general impression existed that the English unfairly saw the French as vain “fribbles and fools,” and that the French likewise viewed the British as “brutes and barbarians” with a “reputation for being disagreeable,” a similar revelation occasionally surfaced that images of Germans might be based more on English expectations and fears than on reality.⁴ As early as 1864 one writer for *Cornhill Magazine* suggested that German professors had been unfairly

³“John Bull Abroad,” *Temple Bar*, reprinted in *Living Age* 187 (October-December 1890), pp. 224, 227-28. The last quotation typifies the conception of Germany as a backward or undeveloped England (e.g., England’s “poor relation”), a semi-sanguine view that presumed similarity on the basis of racial and cultural kinship but clearly dissociated English from German character, even if only by a matter of degree.

⁴Quotations from Edward C. B. Dicey, “The Isolation of England,” *Fortnightly Review* 60 (July-December 1896) : 331, and “The Present Position of European Politics—Part 1: Germany,” *Fortnightly Review* 41 (January 1887) : 17.

characterized as “unpractical” when viewed from the vantage point of the “practical” English mind.⁵ During the 1890s a few articles even acknowledged a correspondence between changing times and changing impressions of Germany. The “sluggish, phlegmatic, prosaic sort of person, with few ideas beyond his pipe and his beer” had metamorphosed into a being “excitable, impulsive, and quick-tempered, with an abnormally long tongue,” a “curious mixture of prose and poetry,” of “cynical common sense and visionary sentimentality,” who had “little self-control, no reserve at all.”⁶ Famed journalist, E. J. Dillon, noted a similar change in the German image after the Kruger Telegram episode in 1896. “Honest, modest, Protestant Germany,” he wrote, the “mainstay of peace and order,” had become “the only blustering, scheming, and really dangerous power, on the Continent.” When referring to political freedoms, observed Dillon, “we are wont to sneer at the Germans as slaves.” Labeling the Germans “earnest monks of science,” he then sought to clear up a misconception: “In spite of all our withering denunciations of the fair-haired Teuton, in his invidious capacity as underpaid clerk and commercial tactician, he has no serious rival, all the world over, in the earnest pursuit of ideals and the self-denying cultivation of science.”⁷

⁵“German Professors,” *Cornhill* 10 (July-December 1864) : 352.

⁶“Cousins German,” *Cornhill* 17 (September 1891) : 295.

⁷E. J. Dillon, “Germany’s Foreign Policy” *Fortnightly Review*, reprinted in *Living Age*, 212 (January-March 1897) : 73. A long-time contributor to the *Fortnightly*, Dillon won recognition for his disclosure of Turkish atrocities in Armenia in 1895. A character sketch entitled “Dr. E. J. Dillon: Our Premier Journalist,” in the *Review of Reviews* 24 (July 1901) : 21-26, revealed this “knight-errant of journalism” to be fluent in German and an admirer of Kaiser Wilhelm II. As a measure of the contemporary emphasis placed on the connection between ethnicity, culture and character, Dillon’s “essentially combative” nature was attributed to his Irish ancestry and “the pessimism which forms the foundation of Dr. Dillon’s character” to his fondness for Schopenhauer.

There existed a sense among some journalists that British ignorance, irrationality and prejudice fed misperceptions of Germany. “What chiefly deters the English mind from following German affairs with any interest,” declared Louis Bamberger in 1892,

... is the state of tutelage in which, according to their impression, Germans are kept by their Government. They look down with contemptuous pity on the child-like attitude of German representative bodies towards their grandmotherly *régime*, and set little value on their acts.⁸

Bamberger, a German liberal, insisted that this “defective insight” into German political life had led to a “distorted and exaggerated estimate” of falsely juxtaposed news reports, leaving the prevailing impression “that a Socialist insurrection is impending in Germany, and that the Emperor is preparing to overcome it by the introduction of a monarchical dictatorship.”⁹ Seven years later, despite a steady increase in coverage of German affairs, Charles Copland Perry, the same writer who called Germany the “touchstone of our conduct,” described the attitude of most Englishmen:

Germany is simply a country which, for reasons best known to itself, keeps a very large army, possesses a good many autocratic and boorish officials, which has once or twice, in the person of its Emperor, had the impertinence to interfere with our own affairs and which persists in flooding our labour-markets with cheap clerks.¹⁰

Perry held that the British entertained an irrational view regarding the legacy of Bismarckian “unscrupulousness” and “wicked militarism,” and he argued that German diplomacy and military power were based on dire necessity, and that the Franco-Prussian War had been inevitable. But

⁸Louis Bamberger, “The German Crisis and the German Emperor,” *New Review*, 6 (April 1892) : 385.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 386.

¹⁰Perry, “Germany as an Object Lesson,” *Nineteenth Century*, pp. 526-27.

even this apologist for Germany and advocate of German educational and industrial models employed a litany of German stereotypes and managed to convey, in a sardonic reflection on the image shift from German Michael to menace, a vaguely dreadful warning:

A learned German professor with blue spectacles was in our eyes more a subject of derision than of disquietude, nor could we conceive that so unornamental a personage could in any way influence us either for good or evil. It is only recently that the scales have fallen from our eyes. Like the fellow-citizens of the Greek philosopher, we have been much surprised to find that the scientific investigations of which we had made so light could turn out water-wheels. Accustomed as we have been to regard the Germans as a nation of sentimentalists and unpractical theorists, we have now become painfully conscious that there are more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in our philosophy.¹¹

Germany's arrival in the world of commerce and industry indeed exposed the inaccuracy of the "old-fashioned philosophic German" stereotype, a revelation which generated what seemed to some writers an overcompensated image of the German arch rival. The world, wrote James H. Collins in 1911, "insists that he is a bugaboo, that Providence has endowed him with mysterious faculties not given to others, that he is irresistible in competition, and that behind his industrial development he is hiding a tremendous political programme."¹²

The preceding examples show a vague conception among British journalists of the pitfalls of stereotyping. Some recognized ulterior political motives behind the propagandistic use of the German "bogey," seeing in the nightmarish invasion fantasies of scaremongers a hidden agenda to garner support for increased armaments.¹³ The stereotyping process itself, however, as a

¹¹Ibid., pp. 528, 531, 534.

¹²James H. Collins, "The German at Home: I—The Orderly German Mind," *World's Work* 17 (February 1911) : 233.

¹³See P. W. Bunting in "The Journalistic Tour in Germany," *Contemporary Review* 92 (July 1907) : 14.

psychological mechanism fomenting prejudice, generally remained above suspicion. Awareness of the mere existence of stereotypes did not necessarily shatter a writer's belief in the rationality of national character, nor did it stifle the proliferation of stereotypes from his own pen. Writers capitalized on the seductive expediency of stereotypical images. And if they occasionally strove to avoid the perils of generalization about Germans, they did so as much through fear of inaccuracy due to German diversity as from any ethical or psychological principle.¹⁴ Stereotypes in nineteenth-century Britain may have provided a source of amusement or represented a sincere attempt at explanation, but they also encapsulated cultural distinctions in a way that defined British national character in opposition to alien groups, usually by accentuating a positive self-image and deprecating the other.

The Illusion of National Character

The use of stereotypes dates from antiquity, but nineteenth-century notions of national character, introduced through the romantic era historicism of Johannes Herder and later exploited by social Darwinists and racial theorists, invested national stereotypes with a new historical and pseudo-scientific significance. Only relatively recently have scholars rejected as invidious reductionism the belief in some inherent racial or ethnic component of personality, and yet the enigma of cultural or collective identity still lingers as a subject of speculation.¹⁵ French

¹⁴William Harbutt Dawson, *Germany and the Germans*, 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1894), vol. 1, pp. v-vi, claimed in his introduction to be an unprejudiced observer, clearing up many English misconceptions and studiously avoiding generalizations about German traits and peculiarities. He nevertheless discoursed at length on the German character and employed some familiar stereotyped figures.

¹⁵Maurice J. Farber, "The Problem of National Character: A Methodological Analysis," *Journal of Psychology* 30 (October 1950) : 307-16, recognized the impossibility of rationalizing

anthropologist Louis Dumont, referring to cultures as “living beings,” argued in 1986 that “national variants” in religion and philosophy, arising from and refining a sense of collective identity, led to Germany’s divergence from Western enlightenment ideals. While he shunned direct stereotyping, Dumont posed generalizations based on presumed cultural traits, such as the German’s “quasi-proverbial proclivity to obey.”¹⁶ Historians have also proven vulnerable to type-casting and sweeping generalizations based on national character. The statement, for example, concerning World War I that “the very virtue of the German people, as the servants of their rulers’ ambitions, made the danger of permanent slavery for Europe extreme” not only glosses over the complexities of pre-war German internal politics and ignores the Social

the irrational concept of national character. He pointed to problems that arise both in overlooking distinctions between social groups and in confusing nationality with psychological or other attributes. Only six years earlier, Otto Klineberg in “A Science of National Character,” *Journal of Social Psychology* 19 (February 1944) : 147-62, had stressed the importance of national character in devising propaganda for psychological warfare and conducting military operations, even though he had also looked askance at some of the wartime “psychoanalysis” of Nazi Germany and theories that posited a plausible reality or “kernel of truth” behind every stereotype.

¹⁶“Are Cultures Living Beings? German Identity in Interaction,” *Man*, n.s., 21 (December 1986) : 589-90. Dumont described Germany’s ideological “acculturation to modernity” as the manifestation of a duality between individual and collective identity (individualism versus holism), the former evident in Luther’s teachings, Pietism and the concept of *Bildung*, the latter in pan-Germanism and the idea of universal sovereignty, which underlay both Marxist class and Prussian state ideologies. In regard to German identity he wrote, “Externally the undisturbed permanence of holism (*accompanied by a strong bent to subordination*) and, internally, the formative influence of Luther (strengthening Christian individualism but confining it within the person) are two fundamental features that go far to make understandable the interplay of German culture with its environment and history.” (Italics added.)

Democratic Party's long-standing opposition to militarism, but also shifts the burden of war guilt onto the Germans' ethnic predispositions, as if they could not help themselves.¹⁷

Social psychologists since the mid-twentieth century have tried to concentrate on genuine cultural differences without projecting them onto cultural personae, avoiding what was dubbed the "fundamental attribution error," the tendency to attribute individual actions to personality traits regardless of situational factors.¹⁸ This new perspective discarded conventional Aristotelian notions of innate character disposition that had been propagated during Victorian times, particularly in connection with nationality. While more recent socio-psychological studies aim at rational explanations of cultural differences based on sociological or historical data, nearly all nineteenth-century literature on national character either assumed the existence of innate difference or never bothered to distinguish cultural from biological traits. The distinction between cultural identity and ethnicity remained too weak to ward off the irrational appeal of national myths and stereotypes that negated anxiety by bolstering a sense of superiority over

¹⁷George Macaulay Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century and After: 1782-1919* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 468. See also Gay, *Freud for Historians*, p. 134, who criticizes Max Weber's stereotype of the "driven tradesman," the embodiment of the Protestant ethic, thinking only of business and making money. Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, p. 202, also cites incidence of stereotypy in Salvador de Madriaga's *Portrait of Europe* and faults Barbara Tuchman in *The Guns of August* (1962) for referring to a combination of arrogance, rigidity and stupidity as a "natural quality in Germans whose expression so often fails to endear them to others."

¹⁸Stanley Milgram's Stanford study of obedience to authority, conducted in 1963, wherein a majority of subjects "shocked" their "students" to death in a sham learning experiment, revealed the fallacy of drawing conclusions about character based on experimental results. The fundamental attribution error seemed to stem partly from a strong Western cultural bias toward individualism and partly from a sense of denial among observers that one could act in a manner similar to test subjects in a given situation. L. Ross and R. Nisbett, *The Person and the Situation: Perspectives of Social Psychology* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991), pp. 56-58, reexamine the impact of situational factors on Milgram's results.

outside ethnic groups.¹⁹ Writers generally supported an ethnocentric hierarchical mentality by sanctioning national and racial stereotypes, and few recognized the psychological dynamic underlying nationalistic self-adulation with its reciprocal denigration of other nationalities.

While current research has veered away from national toward racial and gender stereotypes, the prevalence and persistence of late nineteenth-century notions of national character has repeatedly surfaced in studies since the 1950s. In 1959 a UNESCO-sponsored examination of French and German stereotypes held by other Europeans and themselves, found that participants characterized Germans as hard-working, practical, disciplined, submissive to authority, and domineering, even brutal, in their relations with other peoples. The French were perceived as friendly, easygoing, generous, light-hearted, artistic and gregarious, lazy, temperamental, impulsive and quarrelsome.²⁰ As a rule, respondents denied negative traits in their own national group and, perhaps more significantly, refused to apply the most popular, and subjective, self-assigned traits to other nationalities. German subjects considered themselves hardworking (80%) and brave (60.2%), while only a few conceded these qualities to the French (3.2% and 9.2% respectively). French subjects touted their generosity compared to the Germans

¹⁹Howard F. Stein, "Culture and Ethnicity or Group Fantasies: A Psychohistoric Paradigm of Group Identity," in *From Metaphor to Meaning: Papers in Psychoanalytic Anthropology*, Series in Ethnicity, Medicine, and Psychoanalysis, no. 2, ed. Stein and Maurice Apprey (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1987), pp. 122-24, 151. Stein used the term "maladaptive" culture to denote the impediment to rational ego or self-development posed by an ethnocentric orientation. The antidote to "cultural identification," according to Stein, lies in critical evaluation of cultural entanglements, in emotional integration and differentiation of the self from the cultural ingroup, and in casting out the idea of a demonic "other."

²⁰Erich Reigrotski and Nels Anderson, "National Stereotypes and Foreign Contacts," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 23 (Winter 1959-60) : 527. Respondents included Belgians (482 Flemish and 597 Walloons), French (2006), Germans (2041), and Dutch (1000).

(52.9% versus 1.5%), and considered themselves far less domineering (3.6% versus 59.6%) or cruel (0.6% versus 37.1%).²¹ Positive assumptions about national identity usually accompanied the assignment of negative qualities to an outgroup. More recent surveys that concentrate on some subtler nuances of stereotyping have nevertheless shown an enduring tendency among respondents to differentiate nationalities on the basis of traditional stereotypes.²² While national stereotypes are unlikely to be found in twenty-first century didactic treatises, they continue to pervade fiction, visual media and comedy.²³

The Psychology of Stereotyping

Research on stereotypes since the 1920s has followed three basic theoretical approaches: socio-cultural, psychodynamic and cognitive.²⁴ The first two define stereotype as a phenomenon of cultural conditioning and personality, while the third seeks the initial motivation for stereotyping in the perceptual process itself. According to the socio-cultural definition, stereotype precedes the use of reason and imposes its stamp, replete with traditional cultural values, on the evidence of our senses. Walter Lippmann first stated that culture defines

²¹Reigrotski and Anderson, “National Stereotypes,” pp. 517, 522.

²²See, for example, Richard H. Willis, “Ethnic and National Images: Peoples vs. Nations,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 22 (Summer 1968) : 186-201, and Alice H. Eagly and Mary E. Kite, “Are Stereotypes of Nationality Applied to Both Women and Men?” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53 (September 1987) : 451-62.

²³Satirical exploitation of this mother lode of comedic material can be seen, for example, in adult television cartoons like “The Simpsons” and “South Park.”

²⁴For a detailed discussion of these theoretical perspectives on stereotypes see Richard D. Ashmore and Frances K. Del Boca, “Conceptual Approaches to Stereotypes and Stereotyping,” in Hamilton, *Cognitive Processes*, pp. 2-8.

perceptions—“we define first and then see.” He compared the function of the stereotyping mind to “the doorkeeper at a costume ball who judges whether the guest has an appropriate masquerade.”²⁵ A Princeton University study done in 1933 by Katz and Braly, which tested similarities between individual prejudices and stereotypes found in popular magazines, confirmed the idea of a socio-cultural phenomenon.²⁶

The psychodynamic approach came into vogue after 1935 with Gordon Allport’s explanation of the link between stereotypes and prejudice, notably in their rationalizing and justifying functions.²⁷ Researchers subsequently found close associations between stereotypy and the rigid thinking symptomatic of authoritarianism, which added an even more sinister aspect: unquestioning, prejudicial acceptance of stereotypes signified a defective personality, a weak ego, and a mind prone to fascism due to a dependence on external authority rather than internalized values.²⁸ The authoritarian personality revealed itself through close identification with an ingroup, the use of double standards, hierarchical thinking, conformism and moralistic

²⁵Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, p. 81, 98. Current research bears out the idea that believing is seeing. See David L. Hamilton, “Illusory Correlation as a Basis for Stereotyping,” in Hamilton, *Cognitive Processes*, p. 137.

²⁶See Ashmore and Del Boca, “Conceptual Approaches to Stereotypes,” p. 6.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 7. Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1935), chap. 12, “Stereotypes in Our Culture,” pp. 189-204. Allport later countered psychodynamic reductionism of the early 1950s by distinguishing between a cognitive (natural) basis for stereotypes and an affective (prejudicial) use of them. See also Pettigrew, “Extending the Stereotype Concept,” pp. 312-13.

²⁸Adorno et al., *Authoritarian Personality*, pp. 51, 386, 454, 457, 632, 664-65, 747, 759. Critics were quick to dispute the fallacy of linking authoritarianism solely to the political Right and pointed to the Soviet Union as a prime example of authoritarianism of the Left. See Richard Christie, *Studies in the Scope and Method of the Authoritarian Personality* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1954), p. 27.

self-justification through the projection of negative qualities, including the responsibility for discrimination itself, onto an outgroup.²⁹ Despite their prejudicial nature, however, stereotypes were also found to involve objective cultural factors and seemed at times to operate on a rational or pseudorational level.³⁰ This realization inspired the cognitive approach, spearheaded by Henri Tajfel in 1969, which explained stereotypes as a function of categorization processes linked to perception but not necessarily prejudice.³¹ The cognitive school drew inspiration from the “economy of effort” hypothesis in Lippmann’s initial description.

Some definitive conceptions of stereotypes, which appear particularly relevant to the present study, include the following:

1. Stereotypes consist of **patterns** of traits that make up a “*Gestalt* attribution,” correlated with a social or cultural group³²

²⁹Adorno et. al., *Authoritarian Personality*, pp. 43-44, 173, 191-94, 204. The term, “anti-intraceptiveness, was coined to describe authoritarian lack of commiseration with others and an inability to “put oneself in another’s shoes,” combined with resistance to objective self criticism.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 655, 752, 754. See also H. D. Forbes, *Nationalism, Ethnocentrism and Personality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 21, 35, 52, 57-58, 97, 176-77, who contrasts contemporary authoritarianism with Plato’s Timocratic society (i.e., Spartan, warlike, authoritarian, conformist, honor-loving). Forbes also distinguishes between liberationist and authoritarian nationalism, the former being characteristic of democratic revolutions, the latter of imperialistic ventures. In either case propagandistic stereotypes might appear, but their use in the second instance would more likely be pathologically based on irrational fear, or an aggressive desire to dominate, rather than the genuine need for liberation from an oppressor. Ideally, a democratic revolution would seek to broaden, not narrow, the base of the ingroup (i.e., humanity over nationhood).

³¹Pettigrew, “Extending the Stereotype Concept,” p. 313.

³²Hamilton, “Illusory Correlation,” pp. 122-26, describes the process of matching particular traits with particular groups, which can become a source of bias through the tendency to associate undesirable behaviors or traits with lesser-known groups.

2. Global stereotypes encompass more specific subtypes, a fact which often leads to inconsistency and **contradiction**³³
3. Both cognitive and motivational processes, supported by social convention, make stereotypes extremely **persistent**
4. Stereotypes shape social interaction and contribute to the **de-individualization** of those targeted as outgroup members

These universal signatures of stereotyping certainly apply to nineteenth-century British views of Germany. Stereotypes of Germans from all walks of life combined an assortment of traits to form a convincingly generalized mental image. The diverse images that constituted the “German stereotype” could be tailored to idealized or demonized descriptions of radically different target groups and yet impose a certain blanket uniformity, notwithstanding efforts to characterize Germans as lacking a strong national identity compared with the British or French. Perceptions of historical change also played a role. The global German stereotype could accommodate temporal inconsistencies, so that a demonized “New Germany” could be seen as a radical departure from an idealized past. The late nineteenth-century stigmas of German unscrupulous trade practices, diplomatic blackmail and inept colonial administration, for example, directly opposed more traditional stereotypes of German honesty, loyalty and bureaucratic efficiency. The old stereotypes nevertheless persisted as nostalgic reminders of Germany’s innocuous past, even amid perceptions of a changing Germany. The emphasis on national stereotypes in nineteenth-century Britain represented a vain attempt to come to terms with changing political, economic and diplomatic realities that only served to de-individualize and superficially

³³Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, p. 195. The self-contradictory nature of stereotypes proved to Allport that attitudes, rather than genuine group traits, served as the basis for justifying prejudice toward a particular group.

categorize national outgroups. Popular definitions of national character supplanted Enlightenment concepts of individualism and free will with more generalized, prejudicial and immutable group traits.

Past and present theories define stereotypy as a tendency to categorize empirical data in response to a combination of natural mental limits, prejudice and insecurity.³⁴ The cultural framework from which these categories derive determines, for example, whether a character trait will be judged healthy or sick, familiar or strange, just or unjust, moral or perverse. Sander L. Gilman has theorized that such cultural reference points or “root-metaphors” fulfill a psychological “need to structure the world in familiar terms.”³⁵ The differentiation between self and the world during infancy, according to Gilman, parallels a split between “good” and “bad” arising from a feeling of control, or the lack of it, over the environment. The projection of negative aspects of the self onto a “bad” object provides an escape from contradictions present in self-integration. Gilman wrote that the act of projection

. . . saves the self from any confrontation with the contradictions present in the necessary integration of “bad” and “good” aspects of the self. The deep structure of our own sense

³⁴Ibid., p. 191. Allport wrote, “a stereotype is an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category.” Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, p. 89, and Ashmore and Del Boca, “Conceptual Approaches,” pp. 29-30, take note of the cognitive factors involved in the assimilation of information, either limited in itself or by the mind’s tendency to simplify complex and detailed masses of data. Adorno et al., *Authoritarian Personality*, p. 44, tend to see the categorization process as both cause and effect of prejudicially motivated rigid thinking.

³⁵Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, p. 22, borrowed the term from Stephen Pepper, to refer to a basic analogy drawn from “some area of commonsense fact” and extrapolated to other areas of experience. A root-metaphor resembles a paradigm, or model, governing the assimilation and explanation of factual data, similar to Lippmann’s cultural “canons.” See Lippman, *Public Opinion*, p. 120.

of self and the world is built upon the illusionary image of the world divided into two camps, “us” and “them.”

. . . Stereotypes are a crude set of mental representations of the world. They are palimpsests on which the initial bipolar representations are still vaguely legible. They perpetuate a needed sense of difference between the “self” and the “object,” which becomes the “Other.”³⁶

The self/other dichotomy, which remains constant despite the Protean nature of stereotypes, provides a conduit for the projection of self-directed negative feelings onto the other through either deprecatory or idealized images.³⁷ Through the mind’s natural tendency to simplify and categorize information, stereotypes provide a psychological defense mechanism against the assimilation of knowledge that would otherwise refine, and possibly soften, the distinction between self and other. Even within the context of an ethnic joke stereotypes displace anxiety by reaffirming the “self” at the expense of the “other” and asserting a sense of control over that which cannot be controlled. An example of this can be seen, according to Christie Davis, in the “stupid” Irish and “stingy” Scottish jokes that gained popularity in England during

³⁶Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, pp. 17-18, 22-25, speaks of “illness, sexuality, and race” as three broad categories used to differentiate self from other according to the following polarities: healthy/sick, good/bad, normal/deviant, moral/immoral, superior/inferior. Needless to say, these categories often overlap. Adorno et al., *Authoritarian Personality*, pp. 46-47, noted the polarizing tendency of stereotypes in images of strength and weakness.

³⁷Jungian theory holds that the self-stereotype, being an artificial reflection of cultural ideals, or super ego, represents an attempt to shore up a flagging self-image and thus requires a stereotype of the other on which to project negative qualities or unsublimated id drives. C. G. Jung, *The Undiscovered Self* (New York: New American Library of World Literature, 1964; originally published by Little, Brown & Co., 1959), p. 12. On the inherent dualism and contradictions within stereotypes see p. 29, n. 61 above.

the rise of industrialism in Britain because they delineated the polar extremes of failure in a capitalist society—namely, incompetence and self-defeating avarice.³⁸

Stereotypy becomes pathological when it involves the denial and projection of one's own fears and weaknesses onto the other, and when the acceptance of blanket generalizations exposes an inability to perceive significant individual differences among the stereotyped outgroup.³⁹ On a deeper psychological level the we/they polarity represents the self's struggle against annihilation at the expense of the other, an irrational inner conflict that can reinforce a self-defeating neurosis. What superficially appears to be a symbiotic relationship within the ingroup, such as one's own culture, race, class, or family, can become a "reciprocal parasitism," whereby individuality is sacrificed implicitly in order to strengthen collective identity in opposition to a third party or "triangulated enemy."⁴⁰ In the case of nationalism, stereotypes reinforce a psychologically negative, propagandistic ingroup mentality by creating a superficial unity among diverse social groups, so that nationalism becomes self-exultation, or exoneration, while internationalism implies a loss of national identity and "self." The inhabitants of two competing nations, lacking shared cultural values or common assumptions, will likely see themselves as irreconcilable rivals on many fronts, locked in a conflict pitting the "good" self against the "evil" other.⁴¹ This

³⁸Davis, "Ethnic Jokes, Moral Values and Social Boundaries," *British Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 3 (September 1982) : 387-90, defines ethnic jokes as "a means of providing a structure for an uncertain world," and an attempt to escape from "ethnic and economic anomie" (p. 393). Ethnic jokes project the fear of failure onto minorities and justify keeping them on the moral and social fringes.

³⁹Adorno et al., *Authoritarian Personality*, p. 806.

⁴⁰Stein, "Culture and Ethnicity," pp. 148-49.

⁴¹Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, p. 18.

phenomenon especially appears in relation to highly sensitive issues that lead to wholesale condemnation of the outgroup, such as occurred during “Made in Germany” phase of the Anglo-German trade rivalry that made headlines in 1896. Whether or not it actually challenges the ingroup’s way of life, the outgroup is apt to be perceived as malevolent or “wrong-headed,” and the sole obstacle in the way of progress.⁴²

Victorian Mentalities, National Myth and Empire

From the preceding discussion it appears remarkable that some of the adjuncts of stereotyping that encourage prejudice and a pathological differentiation between self and other correspond very closely with what historians have written about Victorian social conformity, internalized moralistic authoritarianism and hierarchical ingroup mentality.⁴³ The broader cultural Western European roots of moral authoritarianism have been explored by Erich Fromm in his famous book *Escape From Freedom*, in which he considered the internalized authoritarian conformism of Reformation Protestantism a psychological substitute for the discarded medieval Catholic hierarchy. Authoritarian submission, whether to a king, pope or substitute doctrine, argued Fromm, offered an illusory security that actually destroyed individual freedom along with

⁴²Lippman, *Public Opinion*, p. 127, and Forbes, *Nationalism, Ethnocentrism and Personality*, pp. 136-37. See also Adorno et al., *Authoritarian Personality*, p. 619, on the “key” idea, held among anti-Semites, that Jews are the source of all problems. Such pseudo-erudite formulae “reduce the complicated to the elementary,” and offer “emotional, narcissistic gratifications which tend to break down the barriers of rational self-criticism.”

⁴³See pp. 20-21 above. On the relationship between authoritarianism and moralism, see Adorno et al., *Authoritarian Personality*, pp. 153, 230, 385, 397, 406, 413, 458, 845.

its attendant anxieties.⁴⁴ Fromm's theories may be more directly applicable to the puritanical authoritarianism of England's seventeenth-century Cromwellian protectorate, although it seems noteworthy that despite the subsequent growth of political and economic individualism, in accordance with tenets expounded by John Stuart Mill, Adam Smith and others, and nineteenth-century liberal reforms that set England apart from much of Europe, Victorian authoritarian conformism and hierarchical thinking in terms of nationality, morality, class and race could still prevail.⁴⁵ Victorianism became synonymous with conformism, moralism and, if not prudery, the pressure to live up to a romantic ideal. If England became a "country of voluntary obedience" to a moral authority established within the confluence of Evangelical and Utilitarian movements, it was an authority all the more powerful and dogmatic because welded to the causes of individual political freedom and social reform.⁴⁶ G. M. Young described the early Victorian decades as an "age of acquiescence," of life accompanied by the sense "of being under a Code" and

⁴⁴Erich Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1941), pp. 22, 51, 134. Fromm interpreted Luther's absolute internal submission to God as a counterweight to his liberation from priestly authority, and his submission to princely authority as a displacement from the religious to the political sphere. Unlike the Lutheran Reformation, which strengthened princely authority in the many small states of Germany, Protestant sectarianism and the Puritan movement in England challenged religious conformity and gave a voice to political dissent (pp. 66, 77).

⁴⁵Paternalistic, authoritarian neo-feudalism were not wholly relegated to the realm of ideology, however. The political tenacity of the landed aristocracy in Britain, their domination of the House of Lords, Foreign Office, diplomatic corps and high bureaucratic state and imperial positions, and their cooption of new wealth through induction into the peerage and assimilation into high society, has been noted by Arno J. Mayer in *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), pp. 88-95.

⁴⁶*A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1: *A History of the English People in 1815*, trans. E. I. Watkin and D. A. Barker (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1924-51; reprint ed., New York: Peter Smith, 1950), pp. 509-11, 514.

characterized by a uniformity of artistic taste which itself provoked a movement toward deliberate exoticism.⁴⁷ Young spoke of a society in which the conflict between professed religious beliefs, practical ideals and intellect bred a self-righteous, sometimes consciously hypocritical, conformism that granted undue authority to public opinion and moralistic doctrine.⁴⁸

The moralistic component of British nationalism, which found expression in the idea of a providentially ordained mission, served both to justify British commercial and imperial expansion and, at the same time, to vilify the growth of competing empires. The broader implications of the Evangelical creed had established a moral basis for British acquisition of wealth and power, “that sense of being an Elect People which, set to a more blatant tune, became a principal element in Late Victorian Imperialism.”⁴⁹ This moralistic self-aggrandizement naturally implied a sense of ethnic superiority that shaped attitudes at the height of British imperialism. Peter Firchow wrote:

The consciousness of their innate moral superiority was the cause in the British public mind of the very natural conviction that any foreigner who opposed himself to the British will was *ipso facto* opposing the virtues of gentleness, chivalry, honor, sportsmanship, democracy and, in a word, civilization.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Young, *Portrait of an Age*, pp. 17, 154, 161-62. This assessment, of course, pertains to the “official” culture and excludes the underground pornographic press. Exoticism, in most cases, could be described as reserved by today’s standards. See also Hynes, *Edwardian Turn of Mind*, pp. 138-68, on the sought-after liberation from Victorian restraints.

⁴⁸Young, *Portrait of an Age*, pp. 16, 167, 253. See also Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, p. 399.

⁴⁹Young, *Portrait of an Age*, p. 4. See also Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, pp. 44-45. Mid-Victorian notions of physical and moral superiority, marking the British as an elect or chosen people, usually stood on comparisons with the French.

⁵⁰Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, p. 177.

The commingling of imperial status with positive perceptions of British national character reveals a psychological motive underlying Germanophobic opinion in British reactions to German industrial, trade, colonial and naval rivalries.

Britain's transition toward a "conscious policy of Imperialism" entailed a shift from expansion through commerce to a policy of annexation during the 1880s.⁵¹ Germany's bid for colonial power, which began with the proclamation in 1884 of a protectorate over the region around Angra Pequena in Southwest Africa, and which was followed by inroads in East Africa, the Cameroons and elsewhere, provoked an annexationist response from a British government formerly reluctant to take on unnecessary burdens of empire.⁵² Britain, having already annexed parts of South Africa and occupied Egypt, thus became embroiled in the "scramble" to draw lines on maps of Africa favorable to national security and prestige. Germany's actions also stimulated demands from British merchants for more government intervention in favor of British

⁵¹The phrase, first coined by John A. Hobson in *Imperialism: A Study* (London, 1902), is cited in Robin W. Winks, ed., *British Imperialism: Gold, God, Glory* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963), p. 14. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, pp. 66, 103, notes the misleading appearance of a break in continuity with earlier "unconscious" imperialism due primarily to greater publicity, but nevertheless remarks on the new imperative to preempt rivals through territorial acquisition. Graham D. Goodlad, *British Foreign and Imperial Policy, 1865-1919* (London, Routledge, 2000), pp. 29-37, presents a succinct discussion of the concept of a shift in late-Victorian colonial policy, from Hobson's theory of a governing economic motive to later arguments emphasizing colonial rivalry as an extension of European politics (D. K. Fieldhouse, A. J. P. Taylor) or theorizing a balance of strategic and economic considerations, beginning with the occupation of Egypt in 1882 (Ronald Robinson and Jack Gallagher).

⁵²Britain annexed Bechuanaland in order to provide a huge buffer territory to the east of German Southwest Africa and secured the unclaimed coastal territory between Natal and the Cape Colony on the east side in order to block German access to the landlocked Transvaal. In 1888 the British East Africa Company was granted a charter in response to German incursions into Sultan of Zanzibar's dominions. See Goodlad, *British Foreign and Imperial Policy*, pp. 33-34.

markets threatened by native uprisings and the designs of foreign rivals. Anglo-German colonial rivalry therefore became an important component of the new “imperialism of free trade” that gilded the chess game of international strategy, despite the fact that in Africa the commercial interests of Britain and Germany dovetailed in opposition to French and Portuguese protectionism.⁵³ Concerns over German colonial aims also gave impetus to the steady growth of Liberal imperialism and played a crucial role in stirring popular enthusiasm for empire, which culminated in what James Sturgis has called the “almost monolithic imperialist stance of the metropolitan press in 1900.”⁵⁴ During Gladstone’s second ministry fault lines had developed within the Liberal party between “Palmerstonians,” anxious to maintain Britain’s imperial prestige, and “Little Englander” non-interventionists. Radical imperialist leaders Joseph Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke supported the former position by urging a more “forward” policy against German intrusions in Africa.⁵⁵ The appointment of Joseph Chamberlain as

⁵³William G. Hynes, *The Economics of Empire: Britain, Africa and the New Imperialism 1870-95* (London, Longman Group, 1979), pp. 68-69, 73-77, notes the lobbying efforts of the Manchester cotton merchants and other groups seeking guarantees of free trade in response to the encroachment of foreign rivals on colonial markets. Pressure from commercial groups reacting to fears of recession, overproduction and the need for new markets also motivated the British annexation of Upper Burma in 1886, which was justified as a means of protecting India (pp. 54-55). David McLean, in “Finance and ‘Informal Empire’ before the First World War,” *Economic History Review*, n.s., vol. 29, no. 2 (May 1976), pp. 295-305, argues that British “free trade imperialism” in Turkey, Persia and China adhered to the strategy of achieving political influence, and thwarting German or French influence, through the support of British commercial and financial ventures in an attempt to exercise “control without formal responsibility” (p. 305).

⁵⁴Sturgis refers to the years from 1892 to 1902 as a “decade of conscious imperialism.” See “Britain and the New Imperialism,” in *British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. C.C. Eldridge, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984), p. 93, 96.

⁵⁵T. A. Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy, 1830-1886* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), pp. 169-72.

Colonial Secretary in 1895 meant the official endorsement of free trade imperialism and a more straightforward and ambitious policy of developing tropical colonies and dependencies as both a source of raw materials and a market for British industrial goods.⁵⁶

The new imperialism marked a departure from religious and moral considerations, which had characterized Gladstonian “reluctant” imperialism, toward a preoccupation with imperial and national power.⁵⁷ Social reform in the 1890s acquired an imperialistic motive that superseded the evangelical zeal of 1830s Benthamite reformism, just as imperial defense superseded fear of revolution as an impetus for reform legislation.⁵⁸ This change exacerbated a long-standing moral dilemma due to a perceived break from the idealism that had previously motivated missionary expeditions as well as domestic social policy during the reform era. Britain’s imperial destiny, once celebrated and endowed with a sense of mission by Carlyle, Kingsley and others, had become an article of faith to many only despite Liberal pangs of conscience.⁵⁹ The public perception of an innocent empire, a “loose and sometimes accidental association of units,” that

⁵⁶Hynes, *Economics of Empire*, pp. 138-42. Chamberlain’s appointment ironically coincided with a general improvement in the economy, which undercut commercial imperial motives.

⁵⁷Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy*, pp. 162-64, remarks on the “revivalist” tone of support for Gladstone prior to 1880 and the popularity of his speeches denouncing the jingoistic excesses of “Beaconsfieldism,” or Disraeli’s imperial policy. The theme of atonement can thus be seen as an undercurrent moderating, if not totally opposed to, imperialism.

⁵⁸See Elie Halevy, *History of the English People*, vol. 3, *The Triumph of Reform, 1830-1841*, pp. 162-63, on Evangelicalism and reform. See Kennedy, *Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 343, on Lord Roberts and the issue of imperial defense. Young, *Portrait of an Age*, pp. 100, 115, noted the shift from moral to national motives in educational reform with the Education Act of 1870.

⁵⁹Young, *Portrait of an Age*, p. 177, speaks of the “religious fervour” or “religious horror” indicative of opposing Victorian attitudes toward imperialism.

characterized the early British Empire had laid the foundation for claims of an empire without design.⁶⁰ With the policy shift toward annexation, the need arose to justify Britain's "noble" experiment in order to satisfy ethical scruples and to counter German criticisms of British imperialism, such as those leveled by popular historian and lecturer Heinrich von Treitschke.⁶¹ The traditional idea of "innocent" commercial expansionism, consonant with a divine mission to overcome and displace old, corrupt, decadent and tyrannical empires, was being challenged—an idea dating back to fifteenth and sixteenth-century anti-Hispanic, anti-Romish propagandistic appeals to providential favor.⁶²

The rise to imperial preeminence had put Britain in a less defensible position morally vis-a-vis Germany: was not Germany the new David and England the overgrown, decadent Goliath? This inversion of the imperial paradigm, which had formerly placed England as the heroic underdog, now cast England as the "weary Titan, staggering under the too-vast orb of his fate" or a "huge giant sprawling over the globe, with gouty fingers and toes stretched in every direction,

⁶⁰Eldridge, "Sinews of Empire: Changing Perspectives," in *British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 168.

⁶¹See both A. J. Hoover, *God, Germany, and Britain in the Great War* (New York: Praeger, 1989), p.68, and Charles E. McClelland, *The German Historians in England: A Study in Nineteenth-century Views* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 217.

⁶²William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend: The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558-1660*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1971), p. 131, cites a 1660 London pamphlet entitled *The Character of Spain: Or, an Epitome of Their Virtues and Vices*, published long after the cooling of military hostilities, as one of the early English treatises on national character. Despite a three-century time differential, some intriguing similarities can be found between sixteenth-century anti-Hispanism and nineteenth-century Germanophobia. Maltby mentions the prominent role of printed matter in demonizing the enemy (pp. 126-27), racial and moralistic religious arguments (pp. 104, 135), the portrayal of the English as liberators of native peoples (p. 128), and unfamiliarity with the target country (p. 138).

which cannot be approached without eliciting a scream.”⁶³ During the long interval before this conceptual “turning of the tables,” however, neo-classicism and romanticism had allowed a reappraisal of antiquity and folklore that smoothed over associations with paganism offensive to Christian sensibilities. Thenceforth, the rich repositories of imagery supplied both by national myth and the classical model of empire would prove serviceable to moralistic perspectives on the realities of nineteenth-century imperialism.

National Myth

Theories concerning the connection between national identity and stereotyping largely derive from attempts to explain nineteenth-century popular fascination with national character and cultural myth. National stereotypes became part of the cultural mythology of modern Europe through their supporting role as pillars of an obsession with antiquity or what Mircea Eliade called “historiographical anamnesis,” the effort to forge a link with primordial time as if through the remembrance of a past life.⁶⁴ The drive to establish a national identity often led to abuses of historicism that devolved into fantastic speculations about race and ancient origins, false comparisons with antiquity and suppositious parallels between contemporaneous events and great historical dramas, such as the rise and fall of Rome and the barbarian invasions. But this

⁶³The statements made respectively by Joseph Chamberlain, while Colonial Secretary, and Thomas Sanderson of the Foreign Office are quoted in Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 229.

⁶⁴Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1975; originally published, New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 136-38. Eliade states that Western historiography has substituted “a recollection of all that took place in historical Time” in place of mythical events that, in more traditional societies, establish a link with primordial time. In either case the link defines cultural behavior patterns, whether or not believed to be of supernatural origin.

European-wide phenomenon also stimulated an interest in national folklore. Romantic literature and popular folk tales enabled communion with the remote past for a much wider audience, and probably exercised a subtler and more tenacious influence, than didactic treatises on racial origins or national character.

The compression of historical time through national myth-making in Britain, which complemented the “domestication” of geographical space as one of the constituents of imperialism, succeeded most convincingly through anglicized versions of the King Arthur legend and the socially rehabilitated image of the outlaw hero, Robin Hood. Stephanie L. Barczewski has explained how the resuscitation of these two medieval warrior-heroes furthered cultural nationalism in their appeal to diverse, ideologically opposed groups.⁶⁵ The King Arthur legend lent itself to an imperialistic, muscular Christianity and missionary zeal as well as an aristocratic, conservative view of social reform, such as that championed by the Christian Socialists, who from the 1850s stressed community and the neo-feudal idea of mutual obligations and loyalties between classes in opposition to social equality and democratization through parliamentary reform. Arthurian heroes also became models for crusading, “knights-errant” of the realm who set out to right social injustices both at home and abroad. The chivalric metaphor not only

⁶⁵*Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 22, 46, 111, 155-58. Barczewski traces the work of scholars in the divestiture of the Arthurian legend of its Celtic and French origins in favor of Anglo-Saxon roots, from Malory’s *Morte d’Artur* to Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King* (1851). The recasting of Robin Hood from “Lord of Misrule” to gentleman bandit began with Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* and progressed through the nineteenth century. Barczewski, pp. 84-86, 97, 103, also points out a continuity between the nineteenth-century “retreat towards English culture,” based on pride in British linguistic accomplishments, and the nationalist revivals in Europe generated by Johann Gottfried von Herder’s emphasis on the importance of tradition, myth and legend in the development of national character.

invested imperial service with a sense of moral duty, as in the idea of rescuing backward peoples from slavery, superstition and oppression, but the Arthurian motif of Sir Perceval and Sir Galahad in quest of the Holy Grail also reinforced Christian themes and added sexual purity to the gentlemanly virtues of courage, loyalty and compassion.⁶⁶ By contrast, the isolationist legend of Robin Hood emphasized social equality, independence, and justice for the oppressed through the threat of rebellion. Robin Hood became an icon for various working-class groups, including the extremely popular Friendly Societies. After thematic elements of social class conflict had been softened through the invention of aristocratic origins and allegiance to Richard I, Robin Hood became a national symbol of pride in English character and Anglo-Saxon political institutions that accorded with the Whig interpretation of history.⁶⁷ Because of the depth of their appeal to socially diverse groups of men, women and children, both the King Arthur and Robin Hood legends inculcated a sense of national and racial unity.

Cultural myths contain root-metaphors worthy of consideration for imagological studies because they reveal stereotypes to be not merely isolated images but part of a world view that

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 62, 64-70, 220-21. Even as late as 1916 Baden Powell envisioned the Boy Scouts as young knights of the realm, saving the empire from the path of alleged Roman decadence. See Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, p. 133.

⁶⁷Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, pp. 77-79, 127. The exaggerated conflict between Saxon and Norman in later nineteenth-century treatments of Robin Hood, in comparison with Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820), concurred with racial arguments vaunting the triumph of superior Saxon legal, political and religious institutions over allegedly corrupt, Norman-imposed systems, two examples being the Magna Carta and Henry VIII's break with Rome. Newsome, *Victorian World Picture*, p. 189, cites William Theed's 1868 statue of Victoria and Albert in Saxon garb as an illustration of how the English folklore revival depended as much on its didactic value as on profit motive and antiquarian interest.

includes national self-image.⁶⁸ This fact becomes paramount in avoiding the trap of ascribing to stereotypes too localized a significance based on “self-interest,” such as selling newspapers or scaremongering.⁶⁹ But the obsession with myth also speaks volumes about the anxieties associated with a highly moralistic, hierarchical, authoritarian conformist mentality. The capacity of national myth for allowing a vicarious sense of self-worth, self-glorification or self-justification through mere identification with a larger group explains its success as both a propaganda medium and a means of establishing a moral basis for the perception of an orderly world. Whether by virtue of the struggle against evil or the dispensation of Providence, the entire British or Anglo-Saxon race and its imperial or national aims, or those of a particular subset class, could be exonerated in comparison with rivals. The Arthurian legend, the myth of the gentleman, and references to antiquity and race all supported an internal as well as external hierarchy that represented one of the sinews of empire.

The Lure of Antiquity

Appreciation of the splendors of ancient Greece and Rome in an age of imperialism often led to identification with those ancient models of empire, a vantage point which placed Germany

⁶⁸Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, pp. 181-83, defines imagology as “the study of national/ethnic/racial/cultural images or stereotypes as they appear in literary contexts.” He also sees an inherent political rationale for studies of group images and preconceived ideas that “exercise a determinable influence on group behavior.”

⁶⁹Gay, *Freud for Historians*, pp. 105-7, argues, in a somewhat different context, that self-interest rarely appears as a purely rational means to a material end, but usually represents a complex blend of materialism, narcissism, and altruism, defined not as a universal motive but by the claims and actions of the individuals or groups in question.

historically in opposition to “civilization.”⁷⁰ In 1854 Kingsley’s *Westward Ho!* likened the exploits of the sixteenth-century English sea dogs to those of the Greek heroes at Troy, Marathon and Salamis.⁷¹ The tendency to draw comparisons with the classical world led one anonymous writer to reason that hilly, coastal England spawned an active, Athenian-like race of busy traders while flat, dull, inland Germany produced conservative, Spartan agriculturalists. The analogy inferred British cultural superiority and portended inevitable conflict.⁷² Although patriotic writers extolled a British affiliation with Greek heroism and commercial acumen, the Roman/British capacity for empire building and administration became a more significant point of resemblance.⁷³ In some cases neo-Romanism implied a repudiation of the Greek ideal which, in the realm of intellectual cultivation, befit the Germans only too well. Frederic Harrison wrote in 1871:

⁷⁰Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, pp. 288-91, has documented the infatuation with Hellenic culture, especially an admiration for the Greek ideal of rounded self-development, in writers like Matthew Arnold, J. A. Symonds and Walter Pater. While their ideas opposed John Stuart Mill’s more Romantic conception of individuality, both schools recognized Goethe, ironically, as a modern proponent of self-development. See also Richard Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 331-34 on Hellenism and empire.

⁷¹Charles Kingsley, *Westward Ho!*, chap. 1, pp. 2-3, cited in Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, p. 324.

⁷²See “French, Germans and English,” *British Quarterly Review* 13 (February 1851) : 348.

⁷³Even the greatest of Germanophiles, Thomas Carlyle, had called the English a “dumb people” because, “Like the Old Romans, and some few others, *their* Epic Poem is written on the Earth’s surface.” But he also warned of the “Berserkir-rage” caged up within the breasts of these “silent” descendants of the ancient Teutons. See Carlyle’s *Past and Present* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1843) chap. 5, “The English,” quoted in *English Prose of the Victorian Era*, ed. Charles Frederick Harrold and William D. Templeman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938), pp. 224, 228.

In their later ages the Greeks, with their matchless mental gifts, were of almost no account as a nation; whilst the Romans, in cultivation far their inferiors, were foremost by the ascendancy of their national genius. The real strength of a nation, especially in these days, consists not in its achievements in science or art, but in the degree to which its national will can command the sympathies and give shape to the wants of the age.⁷⁴

Placed in the midst of an alarmist polemic for an interventionist policy against Germany during the siege of Paris at the close of the Franco-Prussian war, Harrison's paean to Rome deftly assuaged British imperial pride while paying tribute to the undeniable achievements of German scholarship. However, statements like "scratch the Junker, and you will find the lanzknecht [*sic*]" and "the fact that every German is a soldier, is itself a proof of a lower type of civilization" conveyed the gist of Harrison's message: namely, that England's "duty" lay with the cause of civilization against purportedly barbaric Germany.⁷⁵ Identification of Germany with Rome, when it occurred, tended to be negative. At least one writer found "something of the temper of ancient Rome about the German Empire" in its fondness of "massiveness," dramatic effect and pugnacity—elements which smacked of paganism.⁷⁶ Most comparisons with antiquity, however, accorded with Harrison's view and the idea of German reversion to ancestral pagan beliefs.⁷⁷

⁷⁴"The Duty of England," *Fortnightly Review* 9 n.s. (February 1871): pp. 145-66, reprinted in Frederic Harrison, *National and Social Problems* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908), p. 60.

⁷⁵Harrison, *National and Social Problems*, pp. 63-69.

⁷⁶John Twells Brex, comp., *Scaremongerings From the "Daily Mail": The Paper That Foretold the War 1896-1914* (London: Daily Mail, n.d.), p. 61.

⁷⁷Hoover, *God, Germany & Britain*, pp. 40-41, cites Louis Untermeyer, *Heinrich Heine: Paradox and Poet* (New York, 1937), Vol. I, p. 229, about the famous poet's often quoted 1834 prophecy that Germans were "reverting to type" and abandoning Christianity, and he remarks on the English clergy's perception of German neopaganism gained from Queen's College Professor of Modern History, J. A. Cramb's *Germany and England* (London, 1914).

This impression cropped up in various contexts, from criticism of Goethe to ridicule of German superstition and comments about “a pagan congregation of devout enthusiasts of the Wagnerian cult,” or “a considerable touch of paganism” in the Kaiser’s “ardent ancestor-worship.”⁷⁸

Imperialist identification with Rome continued throughout the latter nineteenth century from the Don Pacifico affair of 1850, when Palmerston had echoed a popular sentiment by declaring that, just as Rome protected any Roman citizen who could say *civis Romanus sum*, “the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect a British subject in whatever land he may be.”⁷⁹ In 1895 Chamberlain exhorted the British people to “build railroads [in Africa] as the Romans built roads,” and voiced the conviction that “the only dominion which can in any way compare with the British dominion is, of course, the old empire of the Romans.”⁸⁰ Lord Rosebery posed the rhetorical question in 1900, “Are we, like the Romans, not merely a brave,

⁷⁸Mander, *Our German Cousins*, p. 137, refers to Coleridge’s hatred of Goethe’s paganism. Dawson, *Germany and the Germans* 1: 376, reported that Ascension Day, the fortieth day after Easter, used to be sacred to Donar, the pagan German god of thunder, and that superstitious peasants would hide scissors and needles during storms lest harm would befall the crops. The quotes are from Katherine Blyth, “Sketches Made in Germany—No. 1,” *Nineteenth Century* 40 (September 1896) : 386, who hints at German paganism being in competition with Christianity, and Charles Lowe, “The Kaiser and His Family: A Study in Heredity,” *Pall Mall Magazine* 25 (October 1903) : 150.

⁷⁹Don Pacifico was a Moorish Jew and British subject whose claims against the Greek government prompted an anti-Semitic mob to burn his Athens residence. British support eventually led to an embargo and seizure of Greek vessels in the Piraeus followed by Greek capitulation. See *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates* (Commons), 3rd series, 112 (1850): 443-44, the debate on Don Pacifico and Greece, 25 June 1850, quoted in Kenneth Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1838-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), “Selected Documents,” pp. 301-2. Two days later Gladstone replied, “What then, Sir, was a Roman citizen? He was the member of a privileged class; he belonged to a conquering race, to a nation that held all others bound down by the strong arm of power.” Gladstone deplored the idea that the British were to be “the universal schoolmasters.” *Hansard’s*, pp. 575-76, quoted in Bourne, p. 306.

⁸⁰*Daily Telegraph*, 24 August 1895, p. 3.

but also a persistent, business-like, alert, governing people?”⁸¹ Even those who debunked British affinities with Rome sought out differences in order to show that Britain would prevail where its ancient counterpart failed. “If Imperial Rome had held at her disposal a small fraction of that mental vigour which is at the disposal of England now,” wrote J. B. Bury in 1896, “her Empire would never have succumbed, as it did, to the Germans.”⁸²

It would be inaccurate to say that all admirers of Rome despised Germany or that all Germanophiles necessarily detested Rome and its Latin “derivative,” France, but references to Rome versus Germany did attain a new historical significance in the minds of many nineteenth-century British writers and readers, usually to the detriment of Germany after 1871.⁸³ Germanophobes constantly hammered home the theme of an archetypal conflict between civilization and barbarism. Written at the high point of post Boer War Anglo-German hostility, Kipling’s inflammatory poem, “The Rowers,” with its use of the epithets “Goth” and “Hun” for Italy and Germany, implied Britain’s abrogation of imperial responsibility as the torchbearer of classical civilization:

⁸¹Lord Rosebery, “The British Empire,” reprinted from the *London Times* in *Living Age*, 22 December 1900, p. 734.

⁸²“The British and Roman Empire,” *Saturday Review*, 81 (June 1896): 645. Some Anglophile German historians of the mid-nineteenth century celebrated the idea of an English “New Rome” in opposition to similar French claims, an argument that enhanced the appeal of Anglo-German racial kinship while negating feelings of cultural inferiority to the French. See McClelland, *German Historians in England*, pp. 104-5.

⁸³The distinction between Roman and Teuton, or Goth, also applied to literary and religious comparisons of Classicism versus Romanticism and Christianity versus neopaganism, respectively. See Madame de Staël-Holstein, *Germany*, trans., O. W. Wight, 2 vols. (New York: H. W. Derby, 1861) : 1 : 198-201. See also Hoover, *God, Germany, and Britain*, pp. 40-41.

And ye tell us now of a secret vow
Ye have made with an open foe!

The dead they mocked are scarcely cold,
Our wounded are bleeding yet -
And ye tell us now that our strength is sold
To help them press for a debt!

In sight of peace - from the Narrow Seas
O'er half the world to run -
With a cheated crew, to league anew
With the Goth and the shameless Hun!⁸⁴

The classical metaphor provided a venerable framework upon which to hang distinctions and reaffirm traditional racial and national stereotypes, but it also served to admonish as well as bolster imperial pride. Only two months before Rosebery's empire speech George Bernard Shaw had warned his compatriots against the dangers of following in the footsteps of ill-fated Rome.⁸⁵ This pessimistic note sounded the ambivalence that darkened late-Victorian attitudes behind a facade of imperial self-assurance. The theme of imperial decline ran counter to early Victorian optimism about success through *laissez-faire* economics and the mirage of what later came to be

⁸⁴Quoted from A. J. A. Morris, *The Scaremongers: The Advocacy of War and Rearmament 1896-1914* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1984), p. 49. The poem, which appeared in the *Times*, 22 December 1902, kindled public outrage at British collaboration with Germany and Italy in blockading the Venezuelan coast amid reports that German warships had bombarded forts and sunk several gunboats (see p. 27 above). Kipling clearly referred to the bitter feelings aroused by German criticism of British troop conduct during the Boer War and the concurrent hysteria over German Anglophobia. The poem's title appears to be reminiscent of the anti-German satirical drama of a century earlier, "The Rovers" (see pp. 119 below).

⁸⁵*Fabianism and the Empire* (London: Grant Richards, 1900), p. 53, cited in Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform*, p. 130. In this famous manifesto Shaw argues against Free Trade because it would lead to Britain's dependence on her colonies and to a fate presaged by that of imperial Rome. Both Shaw and Rosebery used the Roman analogy to support an imperialist policy from opposite perspectives.

called “splendid isolation.”⁸⁶ The new strain of pessimism developed not only in response to Bismarckian Germany’s successful defiance of English political and economic models, but also in view of the need to chart a favorable diplomatic course through the steadily concretizing ice field of European alliances.

The rise of both America and Germany complicated the future of British world leadership and infused the issue of social reform with a new sense of urgency. Joseph Chamberlain and the Tariff Reform League emphasized the maintenance of empire for the welfare of the working class, while the Liberal Imperialists and Fabians argued for the improvement of working class conditions in order to breed a healthy, vigorous, imperial race. In either case, imperialists rejected free trade, “scoffed at Cobdenite or socialist proclamations of international friendship” and urged preparation against the “inevitable challenge of German power.”⁸⁷ Fear of Britain’s “inevitable” decline, along the lines of Gibbon’s Rome, became a constant source of anxiety which peaked during the Boer War with its supposed revelations of “racial degeneration” in anaemic combat troops.⁸⁸ Moreover, the promise of imperial greatness seemed to depend upon technical education, military efficiency, and solving the inequities facing an expanded industrial working class, problems for which the German model offered a number of possible solutions.⁸⁹

⁸⁶L. C. B. Seaman, *Victorian England: Aspects of English and Imperial History 1837-1901* (London and New York: Methuen & Co., 1973), pp. 394-95.

⁸⁷Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform*, p. 234-35.

⁸⁸Hynes, *Edwardian Turn of Mind*, p. 17-18, 23. See also Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 343.

⁸⁹The German *Realschulen*, the General Staff, and Bismarck’s State Socialism (i.e., worker’s Sickness and Accident Insurance) were widely discussed in relation to needed reforms.

While it provoked interminable sermonizing and opprobrium, the German example left no doubt as to the necessity of action, but the idea of a federated empire resting on state protection of industry and labor represented an imperialist holy grail nestled amidst the horrors of Germanization.⁹⁰

The Racial Argument

The twin specters of imperial decline and racial or moral degeneration sustained the romantic myth of Teutonic purity in opposition to classical models in general and decadent Rome in particular. The myth of German racial and moral purity, one of the earliest themes making up the German stereotype, can be traced in modern times to the late-renaissance rediscovery of Tacitus's *Germania*. Written in 98 A.D., this polemical ancient ethnography idealized German valor, love of freedom, simplicity and marital fidelity in contrast to decadent Rome.⁹¹ The lasting power of the Tacitean stereotype derived from the simplified Roman reference to unconquered regions east of the Rhine and north of the Danube and to its depiction of the myriad tribes subsumed under the name *Germani* as a unique, indigenous people with essentially homogenous and surprisingly admirable features, character, customs and religious beliefs.⁹² Exaggerated by

⁹⁰Germany played a double role in the debate on tariff reform as both model and enemy. Ambivalence over the ideal of German industrial expansion and its "Germanness" underlay much of the political rhetoric. See Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform*, p. 118.

⁹¹On this generally accepted view of Tacitus see *Complete Works of Tacitus*, ed. Moses Hadas, trans. Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodribb, *Germany and Its Tribes*, (New York: Random House, Inc., The Modern Library, 1942), p. xii and Kurt F. Reinhardt, *Germany: 2000 Years* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1950), p. 5.

⁹²Regarding the Germans as aboriginal and unalloyed with other races through immigration, Tacitus wrote: "who would leave Asia, or Africa, or Italy, for Germany with its wild country, its inclement skies, its sullen manners and aspect, unless indeed it were his home?" See Hadas,

sixteenth-century German humanists and co-opted by Anglo-Saxonists, the idealized portrait of Tacitus furnished a legacy of Germanic racial and moral superiority that, once connected with the idea of Anglo-German racial kinship, would prolong the death of Germanophilia in England.⁹³

Germanicism as a component of Anglo-Saxonism, which had begun to rival the earlier myth of British Trojan origins in the late Elizabethan era, would reach its most exuberant expression during the mid-nineteenth century. Historians and writers including Lord Macaulay, Sharon Turner, Thomas Carlyle, John Kemble, Goldwyn Smith, John R. Green, William Stubbs, James Anthony Froude, Charles Kingsley, Edward Freeman, and Lord Acton waxed eloquent on the greatness of the Anglo-Saxon race and its Germanic racial and political heritage.⁹⁴ Kingsley, probably the most exuberant proponent of this school, believed devoutly in the Teutonic origin of

Tacitus, p. 709.

⁹³The earliest historical works championing a Germanic heritage, and adhering closely to Tacitus, were William Camden's *Britannia* (1586) and *Remaines Concerning Britain* (1605), followed by Richard (Rowlands) Verstegen's *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* (1605) which ran to five editions by 1673. Verstegen had dropped his family name and adopted his grandfather's German name. Anglo-Saxonism also figured prominently in numerous revisions of the Norman Conquest throughout the seventeenth century and in panegyrics to Germanic racial origin such as John Hare's *St. Edward's Ghost* (1647) and Richard Hawkins's *A Discourse of the Nationall Excellencies of England* (1658). See Hugh A. MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1982), pp. 45-49, 59-63, 81-82.

⁹⁴The Germanic origins of English political freedom, a notion derived from the description in Tacitus of the Saxon *Witan* or open council, appeared in the writings of Baron de Montesquieu, David Hume and others during the eighteenth century. See MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History*, pp. 91-92. Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 114-15, discusses the racially Germanophilic historical school that developed at Oxford under Thomas Arnold, William Stubbs, T. H. Green and others even before the advent of general admiration for German scholarship.

English law and constitutionalism and saw in the English working man a descendant of the ancient Germanic tribesman:

The nearest type which we can see now is, I fancy, the English sailor, or the English navy. A great, simple, honest, baby—full of power and fun, very coarse and plain spoken at times: but if treated like a human being, most affectionate, susceptible, even sentimental and superstitious; fond of gambling, brute excitement, childish amusements in the intervals of enormous exertion; quarrelsome among themselves, as boys are, and with a spirit of wild independence which seems to be strength; but which, till it be disciplined into loyal obedience and self-sacrifice, is mere weakness; and beneath all a deep practical shrewdness, an indomitable perseverance, when once roused by need.⁹⁵

Citing Tacitus, Kingsley deemed stereotypical chaste self-restraint the source of Teutonic virility and moral strength that defeated the supposedly corrupt and degenerate Romans.⁹⁶ As a warning to his contemporaries he cast England in the role of decadent Rome, quoting an absurdly ethnocentric analogy on the subject of moral decay: “No tongue may tell the orgies enacted, with the aid of French cooks, Italian singers, and foreign artistes of all sorts.”⁹⁷ That Kingsley really intended a special distinction for Anglo-Saxons becomes clear in his saga of the struggle between the Germanic “Forest Children” and the Roman “Trolls,” where he took pains to separate “false, vain, capricious” Franks (French), “lazy” Goths (Italians), and “cruel” but proud Visigoths (Spanish) from the allegedly cruel but “most pure” Saxons. Imagining a sequel to the *Nibelungenlied* in the Teutonic quarrel over the spoils of Rome, Kingsley considered the English ancestors fortunate to have left the continent, and to have preserved “unstained the old

⁹⁵Charles Kingsley, *The Roman and the Teuton* (Cambridge and London: Macmillan & Co., 1864) pp. 6-7, 9.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

⁹⁷Quoted from John George Sheppard, *The Fall of Rome and the Rise of New Nationalities* (London, New York: G. Routledge, Warne & Routledge, 1861), in Kingsley, *The Roman and the Teuton*, p. 25.

Teutonic faith and virtue” by avoiding such a demoralizing conflict.⁹⁸ Thus, even at its height Teutophilia contained the seeds of its own destruction through racial hair-splitting that would acquire even greater political and moral significance to British observers of post-Bismarckian, expansionist Germany.

The racial component of the Tacitean stereotype gained credibility during the nineteenth century through the desire to equate contemporary political or cultural entities, and national character, with preconceived over-simplifications of the distant past. British racialists depended upon Tacitus, for example, when asserting the superiority of “pure” northern Teutonic peoples over “mongrel”, decadent southern Latin races or, conversely, comparing the deficits of German racial homogeneity unfavorably with more heterogeneous Anglo-Saxons. Nineteenth-century ethnologists supported the stereotypical polarity between Northern “industrial” and Southern “sensual” Europeans by claiming for Anglo-Saxons and Teutons the successful qualities of the former (i.e., reason, industry, thrift, morality) and disowning traits associated with the imperial and moral decline of the latter (i.e., emotionality, laziness, extravagance, eroticism).⁹⁹ Such arguments served to prognosticate or rationalize the imperial or economic predominance of

⁹⁸Kingsley, *The Roman and the Teuton*, pp. 8-9, 17. Saxons were cruel only because they were indifferent to passion and sensuality.

⁹⁹In an 1898 review of two books on racial/national character, Edmond Demolins’ *À quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-saxons* (Paris, 1897) and Di Guglielmo Ferrero’s *L’Europa Giovane: Studie Viaggi nel paesi del Nord* (Milan, 1897), the traits of chastity (with a reference to Tacitus) and the capacity to endure monotony made the key difference that gave rise to the economic superiority of the Northern over the Southern European races. See Gwynn, “The Success of the Anglo-Saxons,” *Edinburgh Review*, Reprinted in *Living Age* 217 (April-June 1898) : 353-55, 360. The persistence of the North/South racial dichotomy, which figured prominently in sixteenth-century anti-Hispanism (see Maltby, *Black Legend*, p. 104), is also discussed in Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, p. 25, and Mander, *Our German Cousins*, p. 52.

Anglo-Saxon and Germanic Europeans according to a deterministic racial hierarchy, often based on pseudo-scientific assumptions about cranial capacity or skull shape.¹⁰⁰ The further assertion of British superiority over Germans and Scandinavians was justified by emphasizing the unique heritage of the British racial mixture. The more “plastic” character resulting from a happy confluence of Teutonic (Nordic), Iberian (Mediterranean) and Mongolian (Alpine) qualities, so one argument ran, set Anglo-Saxons apart from their racially “pure” Germanic cousins (see table 3, p. 81).¹⁰¹ Innate flexibility and adaptability resulting from this racial fusion supposedly enabled the British to avoid religious and socio-political extremism and to “bend to dynastic and political storms in a manner which it is to be feared the pure Teuton may find difficult to achieve under similar circumstances.”¹⁰²

The Tacitean stereotype of racial distinctiveness lost cogency not only because the argument for racial purity cut both ways, but also because the false sense of racial and cultural unity ascribed to the Germans was controverted by observations of German racial and political

¹⁰⁰On craniometry and the selective manipulation of criteria to obtain prejudicial results see Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1981), pp. 74, 85.

¹⁰¹Such convoluted reasoning can be found in Macnamara, *Origin and Character of the British People*, pp. 164, 213-14, and especially pp. 222-23, where he considers the unalloyed Teutonic strain to be overly aggressive and self-destructive. The rationalization of national stereotypes through pre-conceived racial categories based on craniometry can also be seen, for example, in the supposed Ibero-Mongoloid mixture that formed the “lazy, rollicking, merry Irishman of the caricaturist” (p. 208).

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 226. The idea of racial mixture as the key to adaptability and survival of the fittest echoed a familiar theme propounded during the 1870s and 80s by Herbert Spencer and others. The benefits of racial mingling, however, did not apply to intermarriage between blacks and whites. See Robert C. Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Thought* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979), pp. 189, 229.

TABLE 3

MACNAMARA'S RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EUROPEANS,
TYPICAL OF LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY VIEWS

THE RACES OF EUROPE

IBERIAN	MONGOLOID	TEUTONIC
chivalrous	religious	self-reliant
courteous	peace-loving	self-respecting
patriotic	imaginative	reliable
impulsive	sensitive	patriotic
ostentatious	artistic	orderly
proud	hospitable	freedom-loving
musical	indolent	laborious
cruel	unstable	slow
passionate	lacking individuality	persevering
revengeful		courageous
unreliable		warlike
		enterprising
		domineering

Source: Nottige Charles Macnamara, *Origin and Character of the British People* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1900) pp. 215-16.

diversity. The “network of boundaries” and mixture of races that defined the small states of “middle” Germany seemed symptomatic of a national defect supposed to be the outgrowth of political particularism.¹⁰³ Even the larger states of Prussia and Bavaria, which embodied the stereotypical opposites of North and South Germany, represented a racial and cultural antithesis. Prussians were considered to be infused with Slavic blood and caricatured as aloof, warlike, orderly and domineering in contrast to gregarious, artistic and effusive Bavarians, who more

¹⁰³Quoted from William Howitt, *Life in Germany* (London: G. Routledge & Co., 1849, first edition published as *The Student Life of Germany* (London, 1841), p. 178. See also “Peasant Life in Germany,” *Westminster Review* 66 (July-October 1856) : 57-58, on how German peasants had substituted race and allegiance to province for individualism and thus lacked “individualization in features and expression.”

resembled the French and Italians. Although the critique of pure Teutonism proved more acerbic than the counter-theme of German racial and cultural heterogeneity, the prevalence of both views allowed condemnation of German national character as either in-bred and obnoxious or polymorphous and lacking distinction.¹⁰⁴

As older Germanophilic notions of racial kinship gave way to a clarification of Anglo-German differences, the very proximity of Anglo-Saxons and Teutons in the Anglocentric racial hierarchy, taken together with the old saw about Anglo-German religious and cultural affinities, ironically provoked a kind of national one-upmanship waged through the relentless pursuit of distinctions. British conceptions of racial character during the nineteenth century generally imbued Anglo-Saxons with all of the Teutonic, or German, virtues and none of the vices. Britons, for example, had supposedly inherited mechanical ability, deliberation, ethics and sexual morality without the plodding stolidity, inflexibility, gloominess and pugnacity of the Germans. Imperial rivalry exacerbated the obsession with Anglo-German racial and cultural distinctions on both sides of the North Sea. Treitschke, for one, played a major part in converting the sentimental myth of Anglo-German affinity to one of perpetual rivalry when he began to formulate a contrast between competing “Anglo-Saxon” and “Teutonic” cultures, a theme that resonated with Pan-Germanists.¹⁰⁵ On the British side, one author voiced a typical late

¹⁰⁴When Matthew Arnold criticized Richard Strauss’s *Sinfonia Domestica* as a typically “ugly and ignoble” product of Teutonic *Kultur*, his words found favor with audiences for whom Teutonism had become synonymous with archaism and tactlessness. See Barbara Tuchman, *The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War, 1890-1914* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), p. 373.

¹⁰⁵McClelland, *German Historians and England*, pp. 188, 222, dates the negative shift in German views of England from 1871. Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), p. 202, refers

nineteenth-century attitude: that England, since the time of the Norman Conquest, had become the home of “that heterogenous but most distinctive race, to whom the Germans were and have ever since been foreigners, whatever their share in a common ancestry.”¹⁰⁶

British assertions of racial superiority produced other absurdities, such as the contention that Frederick the Great owed his greatness to English genes, but they also exposed a firm belief in the inherent moral ascendancy of British racial character which accompanied an equally strong distrust and dislike of Germany on many fronts.¹⁰⁷ Righteous indignation over German trade practices, for example, stemmed from the contention that superior breeding and morals prevented British tradesmen and merchants from producing and selling inferior goods, and thus from competing effectively in foreign markets against cheaper German products.¹⁰⁸ In diplomatic relations, an air of condescension and suspicion towards the German character accompanied the assumption that a non-aggression pact with Germany would simply become a licence for German

to the emphasis placed on Anglo-German distinctions in the early writings of Moeller van der Bruck and other Pan-Germanists.

¹⁰⁶Arthur Shadwell, “The German Colony in London.” *National Review* 26 (February 1896) : 798.

¹⁰⁷W.H. Wilkins, “The First Queen of Prussia,” *Nineteenth Century* 49 (April 1901) : 678. Sophie Charlotte, sister to George I and maternal grandmother of Frederick the Great, married Prussia’s Frederick III, who was described as deformed and “of anything but an amiable reputation.” She, on the other hand, had English blood and possessed, “in no small degree, the beauty, dignity, and personal charm characteristic of the race, which even the infusion of sluggish German blood could not mar” (p. 667).

¹⁰⁸See Clavell Tripp, “German Versus English Trade in the East,” *Nineteenth Century* 43 (February 1898) : 193-95. Perry, “Germany as an Object Lesson,” pp. 525-37, warned against the assumption of English superiority in trade.

bullying.¹⁰⁹ The hardening of racial attitudes during the Victorian Era became an indispensable component of imperialism to which comparative craniologies and evangelical missions lent an air of scientific and moral validity. The “romantic racism” that defined an intra-European hierarchy based on national character merely represented the upper tier of a broader prejudice against “primitive” non-Europeans who lacked any claim to a “civilized” past and thus became the hapless victims of imperial “philanthropy.”¹¹⁰ Placement of British Anglo-Saxons at the top of this racial hierarchy, whether by virtue of “pure” Aryan lineage or a wholesome European racial synthesis, provided an organic rationale for imperial hegemony to which the United States, not Germany, could logically be seen as Britain’s Anglo-Saxon heir apparent.

While stereotypes served as building blocks for a hierarchical world view, which temporarily reduced anxiety and increased “self-esteem” through the denigration of other nationalities, they also embodied categorical “truths” which ultimately supported a pseudo-biological, “Darwinian” interpretation of world history.¹¹¹ Well before the publication of

¹⁰⁹Robert B. Mowatt, “Great Britain and Germany in the Early Twentieth Century,” *English Historical Review* 46 (July 1931) : 436-37. An example can be found in Francis de Pressense, “The Dual and Triple Alliances and Great Britain,” *Nineteenth Century*, reprinted in *Living Age* 216 (January-March 1898) : 165.

¹¹⁰Christine Bolt, “Race and the Victorians,” in Eldridge, *British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 127-30. Stein, *From Metaphor to Meaning*, p. 131, also notes the tendency among early ethnologists to distinguish between “primitive” and “modern” races. In the case of Macnamara, *Origin of the English People*, pp. 192-97, the division between the dolichocephalic or “long-headed” races, including the Iberian and the Teutonic or Aryan (Nordic) subtypes, and the brachycephalic or “broad-skulled” Mongolian peoples defined a human family tree of generalized anatomical and national character distinctions.

¹¹¹Bolt, “Race and the Victorians,” pp. 130-31. See Adorno, *Authoritarian Personality*, p. 807, and Forbes, *Nationalism, Ethnocentrism and Personality*, p. 32, on the externalization of values projected in stereotypes which offers at best only a temporary escape from self-examination and anxiety.

Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, theories about social evolution, lacking any scientific basis, maintained contemporary conservative racist and sexist ideologies.¹¹² Blunt statements about the extermination of weak races and the inevitability of mass suffering, however, not only provided ammunition for virulent racists and militant imperialists, but in the process also stigmatized social Darwinism itself as an anti-Enlightenment, anti-Utopian, and "un-Christian" excuse for social and imperial exploitation.¹¹³ Neo-Darwinist geneticism of the 1890s disturbed the dream of evolutionary progress through environmental means. It also provoked a moralistic reaction from neo-Lamarckian social reformers who targeted the influence of German biologists August Weissmann and Ernst Haeckel and the so-called "tough" school of Darwinistic Nietzscheans.¹¹⁴ The equation of Nietzsche with barbarism, *Machtpolitik* and Prussian militarism constituted an

¹¹²Peter Dickens, *Social Darwinism: Linking Evolutionary Thought to Social Theory* (Buckingham, UK & Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), 7-8, 15, 19, 21, refers mainly to the work of Herbert Spencer, who coined the term "survival of the fittest" ten years before the publication of Darwin's famous work, but also mentions John Lubbock, who applied Darwin's idea of natural selection to Eurocentric racial theory.

¹¹³Bannister, *Social Darwinism*, pp. 3, 9-11, 53-54, cites quotations from Spencer's *Social Statics*, originally published in 1850, and *Social Statics, Abridged and Revised* (1891) to show that he strongly reaffirmed his original conception of ruthless natural selection despite reform efforts motivated by his theories.

¹¹⁴Bannister, *Social Darwinism*, p. 132, 138. The new interest in genetics was spurred by Weismann's theories on heredity (germ plasm) and the rediscovery of Gregor Mendel's experimental work. Haeckel synthesized folkish and racist romanticism with social Darwinist ideology into a monistic view of man as totally subject to natural forces, a view that spurned the scientific validity of historical and theological values. Although some British and American writers rivaled the extremity of Haeckel's ideas, the weaker political tradition of liberal individualism in Germany probably allowed for greater propagation of the "collective Darwinism" that was to become the core of Nazi ideology. See George J. Stein, "Biological Science and the Roots of Nazism," *American Scientist*, 76 (January-February 1988) : 55-56.

important facet of the negative Social Darwinian (originally anti-Spencerian) stereotype.¹¹⁵

Despite the fact that Nietzsche ridiculed Darwin's theory, and despite the existence of a contrary or "tender" view of Nietzsche, the common attitude prevailed that Nietzsche, as H. L. Mencken expressed it, was to Darwin, Spencer and Huxley "what Beelzebub is to a trio of bad boys."¹¹⁶

Even if "Darwinism was a convenient brush with which to tar racists, and vice versa," the moral and scientific controversy surrounding the "survival of the fittest" doctrine involved questions of attitude and policy that rarely challenged the paradigm of a racial hierarchy.¹¹⁷ Social

imperialists and social Darwinist reformers employed the same prejudices as the more extreme polygeneticists and militant imperialists, but toward opposite ends. The fact that both adherents and critics of social Darwinism could find common ground in vilifying the Germans typifies the double-edged nature of late nineteenth-century British Germanophobia and its logical absurdity.

Social Darwinism, eugenics and the fixation on racial distinctiveness reflected concerns over racial degeneration and the belief that evolution somehow entailed a diminution of racial vigor. Paradoxically, these fears and social imperialist angst stimulated calls for emulating the German model, particularly in education. It is nevertheless interesting that War Secretary, Lord Haldane, felt it necessary in 1901 to qualify his pitch for educational reform according to the German example with praise for the allegedly superior courage and doggedness of Anglo-Saxons

¹¹⁵Bannister, *Social Darwinism*, pp. 202, 208-9.

¹¹⁶H. L. Mencken, *Prejudices*, 3rd. ser. (New York, 1922), p. 129, quoted in Bannister, p. 210.

¹¹⁷Bannister, *Social Darwinism*, pp. 184-86. Darwin's *Descent of Man* reinforced the notion of a hierarchical progression from barbarism to civilization, but carefully avoided a racial interpretation.

in order to dispel the idea of a “decaying race.”¹¹⁸ Despite reluctant acknowledgment of superior training methods, resistance to the German educational model and a refuge for vanity could be found in ethnocentric arguments and the shadowy realm of national character. Mid-century distinctions between the German methodical “creature of form” and the self-educated, adaptable Englishman resonated fifty years later in charges that German higher education cultivated the head at the expense of character.¹¹⁹ The publication of Edwin Earnest William’s *Made in Germany* in 1896, a troubling discourse on Britain’s eroded industrial base, rekindled advocacy for educational reform along German lines, but resistance to the “tyrannical” Prussian model continued to reflect hostility toward the alleged evils of state control, deleterious effects on character, and the basic incompatibility of national temperaments.¹²⁰

Belief in race as the primary determinant of character implied that reversion to ancestral type was inevitable and that social and national policy should be formulated on a racial basis.¹²¹

¹¹⁸See Richard B. Haldane, “Great Britain and Germany: A Study in Education,” *Monthly Review* 5 (November 1901) : 48.

¹¹⁹Compare William Howitt, *The Rural and Domestic Life of Germany* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1843; originally, London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1842), pp. 185-86, with Dawson, *Germany and the Germans*, vol. 1, pp. 172-75.

¹²⁰Edwin Earnest Williams, *Made in Germany*, 4th edition, (London: William Heinemann, 1896). An alarmist polemic advocating the German model in technical education can be found in “The Decline and Fall of British Industrial Supremacy: An Appeal for Instant Action Ere it be Too Late,” *Review of Reviews*, 14 (July 1896) : 83. See also Halevy, *Triumph of Reform*, pp. 221-22, on English aversion to the Prussian model, and George Haines, IV, *Essays On German Influence Upon English Education and Science, 1850-1919* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1957), pp. 138-39, and the chapter on “The German Model” for a discussion of contemporary criticisms.

¹²¹Macnamara, *Origin of the English People*, p. 212, for example, saw a “reversion to the Iberian type at the expense of the Teutonic element” in the smaller stature and darker complexion of London’s laboring classes. A stint in the British navy was prescribed to reverse this tendency (p. 231). He also predicted a time “not far distant when vast hordes of the Mongolian or the

Despite the mirage of diplomatic security based on Anglo-German racial affinity, the biological view of imperial rivalry as a competition between races pitted England against Germany as “natural rivals” rather than friendly cousins.¹²² Years before Joseph Chamberlain’s failed efforts to promote an Anglo-Saxon/Teutonic alliance with Germany, the advocacy for imperial federation and preparation for inevitable war with Germany had acquired a racial basis, one derived from the pseudo-Darwinian idea of nations as “species in the making.”¹²³ Ford Maddox Ford mockingly described the inevitable outcome of a future determined according to the dictates of national character with a warning about the peril of English slackness:

We are the people who will win terrific victories against enormous odds—in the game of tennis, or in the other game of tennis that used to be played with stone balls. But in the end, some Prussian, some Jew, or some Radical politician will sleeplessly get the best of us and take away the prizes of our game.”¹²⁴

brachycephalic race, will again overwhelm China and ultimately the whole of Asia” (p. 220).

¹²²MacDougall, *Racial Myth in British History*, pp. 128-29, writes that the myth of a racial alliance with Germany lingered on in moribund form until the outbreak of World War I.

¹²³[A Biologist], “A Biological View of Our Foreign Policy” *Saturday Review* 81 (February 1896) : 118-20.

¹²⁴Ford Maddox Hueffer [Ford], “High Germany 1: How It Feels to Be Members of Subject Races,” *Saturday Review* 112 (30 September 1911) : 422. Ford’s name change represents his growing anti-Germanism and his resignation to peer pressure. See Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, pp. 90-99.

III. EARLY AND RECURRING THEMES

The German reputation in Europe, since the time of Julius Caesar up to the twentieth century, evolved from barbarian anonymity to the pinnacle of artistic, scholarly and scientific achievement, but at each stage the German stereotype always reincorporated some remnants of the past. In the case of Germany, the good/bad, competent/incompetent, normal/abnormal dualism intrinsic to stereotypes accrued a sense of historical verity that colored contemporary images in the eyes of foreigners. This may be partly attributable to a long-standing uncertainty regarding German political and national identity in comparison with Britain, France or Spain, for example, which had become established nation-states centuries before German unification in 1871. From the perspective of many late nineteenth-century British writers, Germany remained an ambiguous ethnic and diplomatic entity, even though the larger states of Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony and Hanover, had been well defined through either diplomatic alliances, cultural or dynastic connections. Attempts to delineate German national character consequently relied on a mass of contradictory stereotypes that contained both geographical and temporal discrepancies. North Germany, South Germany, “Old Germany” and “New Germany” all carried their own subset of characteristics and character traits. Some powerful motifs persisted throughout the centuries, however, to form a tradition of influential, if conflicting, themes.

The Moral Barbarian

Just as the Tacitean stereotype had conferred status on the German image through the ancient imprimatur of racial distinctiveness, and controverted in its own day the implied inferiority of the generic name, *Germanii*, as well as many negative assumptions about half-animal barbarians hostile to civilization, it would also present early modern Germans a worthy pedigree that offered redemption from hitherto ignominious origins.¹ This presumed identity, resurrected in the fifteenth century, would sustain yearnings for a political and ethnic unity that centuries of tribal warfare and imperial aspirations had failed to provide. It also furnished the historical basis for an evolving cult of Germanicism, paradoxically opposed to and yet entwined with the Roman imperial legacy, that traced a tortuous continuity from the time of the Gothic migrations to the Nazi era.² German humanists cited Tacitus to refute derogatory images of Germans disseminated by foreigners, and the Tacitean stereotype of moral and martial superiority served as a cornerstone of the national mythology built around the defeat of invading Roman legions in 9 A.D. by Germanic warriors under the leadership of Arminius. Ulrich von Hutten's Latin dialogue of the same name, published in 1528, revived this ancient heroic figure to

¹Julius Caesar considered the Germans more savage and less amenable to civilization than the defeated Gauls, from whom he learned the name in 53 B.C. See Herwig Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 3-7, 12.

²Ibid., p. 10, Wolfram quotes Heinz Gollwitzer, "Zum politischen Germanismus des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts," *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel*: 282 ff. Veröffentlichungen des Max Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 36, 1, (Gottingen, 1971), who wrote of "a multifarious continuity stretching from the Spanish mythos of the Goths to the Germanicism of the German humanists and the baroque Germanic consciousness in western and central Europe, to Montesquieu and the international cultural Germanicism of the eighteenth century." Wolfram added nineteenth-century political Germanicism and its "vulgarized imitations," including its criminal application by the Nazis, in the twentieth.

symbolize Reformation Germany's defiance of Rome.³ Tacitus thus became the primary source for the earliest outpourings of German "nationalism" as well as subsequent theories of German racial and cultural superiority.⁴ The venerable stereotype even translated into nineteenth-century British affirmations about the Germans' character and social customs, such as their "unsuspecting openness of heart," good nature and hospitality, or their "strict and severe" matrimonial bond and "superior sexual morality."⁵

This idealized portrait contained blemishes, however, which also possessed staying power. Tacitus, after all, did consider the Germans to be barbarians, albeit uniquely moral ones, and he described them as violent, slothful and prone to gambling and drunkenness. Moreover, some "positive" aspects of the stereotype implied certain character deficiencies. "A race without either natural or acquired cunning," for example, seemed both morally innocuous and politically defective.⁶ These contradictions reemerged nearly two millennia later as British writers seemed to borrow from the Tacitean stereotype an attitude of nostalgic idealization mixed with condescension, or moral condemnation, that reverberated with the inherent good/bad duality of

³Hagen Schulze, *Germany: A New History*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 47-49.

⁴Nationalism used here refers more to cultural, racial and linguistic pride than to exaltation of a political state, although an ethnic territoriality, as in the idea of "German lands," certainly existed. On the incipient nationalism engendered with the publication of the *Germania* in 1500 see *The New Cambridge Modern History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), vol. 1, *The Renaissance*, edited by G. R. Potter, pp. 67, 118. See also MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History*, pp. 42-44.

⁵These quotations appear, respectively, in the following: "Germany," A review of the book by Charles Julius Weber, *Blackwood's Magazine* 48 (July 1840): 127; Charles Lowe, "The Women of Germany," *Young Woman* 1 (January 1893) : 117; "Success of the Anglo-Saxons," p. 354.

⁶Hadas, *Tacitus*, p. 720.

the stereotype itself. The derivative strains of this duality can be seen in Romantic anti-modernist images of chivalrous German nobles, honest craftsmen and naive peasants that arose and endured even amidst accusations of artistic mediocrity and virulent moralistic reactions against German literature and biblical and aesthetic criticism. The ancient stereotype also embodied contradictory traits later used to differentiate northern from southern Germans—disciplined, warlike, sober Prussians from lazy, beer-drinking, hospitable Bavarians.

Another Renaissance document, Machiavelli's *Description of German Affairs*, written in 1512, reinforced the image of German military valor and added the traits of industry and thrift, characterizations that gained prominence much later in connection with the German economic model and Anglo-German trade rivalry of the late nineteenth century.⁷ Machiavelli's remarks on the Spartan simplicity of German domestic life echoed those of Tacitus, and his admiration for German military and social virtues generated an idealized image.⁸ Again, however, serious weaknesses flawed this prototype of the German military model. Machiavelli observed that, because political divisions undermined the military strength of the Emperor and princes, Germany could not accomplish great things. He also noted a lack of independence and initiative on the battlefield stating, "They are excellent in a field-fight, but for the storming of a town, they

⁷ The source used here is an English publication entitled *The Works of the Famous Nicholas Machiavel, Citizen and Secretary of Florence*, trans. unknown, (London: printed for R. Clavel, Cha. Harper, Jonathan Robinson, Joh. Amery, A. and J. Churchil, 1694), "The State of Germany." pp. 265-68. A more recent translation entitled "Portraits of the Affairs of Germany" can be found in Anthony J. Pansini, *Niccolo Machiavelli and the United States of America*, 6 vols. (Glenvale, NY: Glenvale Press, 1969), vol. 3: *Political Works*, pp. 649-52.

⁸J. R. Hale, in *Machiavelli and Renaissance Italy* (London: English Universities Press, 1961), p. 107, suggests that Machiavelli used "a somewhat idealized Germany as a stalking-horse" to attack his fellow citizens' dependence on mercenaries, love of display and reluctance to pay taxes.

are good for nothing; and but little to defend one: and generally where the men cannot keep their old orders, and manage themselves with room enough, they are worth but little.”⁹ These perceived flaws anticipated nineteenth-century “unpolitical” and “methodical” German stereotypes that presumed German mediocrity and inflexibility, traits contrasted to the British self-stereotype of innate capacity to govern and “pluck.” In 1893, for example, prognosticators of an imaginary European “Great War” envisioned “Teutonic courage and discipline” in the heat of battle, as well as the precision of movement and perfect “mechanism” of German troops and supply lines, but also the fatal absurdities of German regimentation:

And how bravely those Germans fought! And now, looking back in cold blood, how needlessly were they butchered! Exactly opposite where I stood, their infantry moved forward with even more than the precision of a parade; in little squads, but shoulder to shoulder, with all the rigidity of a birthday review. I could even see the officers halting and actually correcting the alignment. Needless to say, these living targets were riddled through and through in the very moment of their pedantic folly.¹⁰

Mockery of “pipeclayed” Germans and their military maneuvers—“the run after a running foe is the cream of German tactics”—accompanied a serious hope that German “dependence and docility,” lack of adaptability and staying power would ameliorate the threat of what the world considered a model army.¹¹ An article in *Cornhill Magazine* shortly after the outbreak of World

⁹Machiavelli, “State of Germany,” p. 267

¹⁰The author, supposed to be an American correspondent, exclaimed, “How the veterans of our Civil War would have scoffed at this slave-driver’s discipline!” See Rear Admiral Colomb et al., *The Great War of 189_: A Forecast* (London: William Heinemann, 1893), p. 274. See also pp. 119, 176, 217.

¹¹[Linesman], “German War,” *Blackwood’s* 172 (November 1902) : 726-27. Pipeclay, used to polish swords and other metal soldierly accouterments, also means routine and implies an excessive fondness for parade-ground drill or attention to correctness in dress. See also “The Nightmare of Germany,” *Spectator*, reprinted in *Living Age* 212 (January-March 1901) : 59-60.

War I hypothesized that German soldiers, being accustomed to “thinking in grooves” and incapable of acting as individuals, had grown dependent on closed-order maneuvers. English readers could take comfort in the belief that German mental inflexibility would be no match for British initiative and pluck on the battlefield. The writer further extrapolated from this “unpliability” of the German mind, which “unfits him for dealing with alien or inferior races,” an incapacity for empire that would not (and should not) challenge British imperial ascendancy.¹²

The German military reputation, which had acquired a dark side in association with images of barbarians opposed to Rome, received a fillip with the exploits of German mercenaries or *Landesknechten* who, along with Spanish troops under Charles V, carried out the brutal Sack of Rome in 1527.¹³ Even though the most threatening aspects of German militarism did not gain prominence until the expansion of Germany in the nineteenth and the rise of Nazism in the twentieth centuries, the affiliation of the Germanic warrior with Goth, Vandal and Hun remained a persistent theme. As one post-World War II translator remarked, the *Germania*, “a detailed account of a great people that had already begun to be a European problem in the first century of our era, should still have a message for us in the twentieth.”¹⁴

¹²Gilbert Coleridge, “Thinking in Open Order,” *Cornhill Magazine* 111 (May 1915) : 616-19.

¹³The Sack of Rome became a symbol of excessive brutality in subsequent literature. The onus of barbarity was shifted onto the German *Landesknechten* in Gucciardini’s *Storia d’Italia*, which went through three editions (1579, 1599 and 1618) in the English translation by Geoffrey Fenton entitled, *The Historie of Guicciardini, Containing the Warres of Italy*. Cited in Maltby, *Black Legend*, p. 8.

¹⁴H. Mattingly, trans., *Tacitus on Britain and Germany*, Penguin Books, (Bungay, Suffolk: Richard Clay & Co., 1948), p. 7.

The Tacitean stereotype greatly influenced nineteenth-century British commentary on German character, as did the Roman/barbarian duality and Machiavelli's images of virtuous, yet oddly self-compromised, Germans. These ideas found a reflection in the writings of French authoress Madame de Staël, who implanted, or at least encouraged, in English minds the notion that modern German culture betrayed intrinsic national and racial characteristics peculiar to Germany. German romanticism and philosophical idealism could be seen as a divergence from mainstream European culture, classicism, French realism and British empiricism—a divergence which intimated the transmogrification of ancient inherent differences stemming from Germany's barbarian, non-Roman past. De Staël also stamped the German predilection for romanticism, mysticism and chivalry as an indigenous quality wholly separate from classical Greek or Roman influence.¹⁵ Although de Staël's popular work, translated and published in 1813 as *Germany*, furnished a much-needed antidote for the triple dose of bad translations, scathing ridicule and venomous criticism that had poisoned early appreciation of German literature in Britain, readers imbibed much more than a mere treatise on literature in her sweeping commentary on German politics, history, geography, religion and social life. De Staël restored and updated the moral barbarian stereotype in many respects, substituting for the demarcation between primitive tribal societies and the superior culture, technical proficiency and civic organization of imperial Rome

¹⁵She based this conclusion partly on the literary device of allusion to providence rather than fate. See de Staël, *Germany* 1 : 198, 200, 204. Because the manuscript of *De l'Allemagne* had been indicted by Napoleon in 1810 for being too sympathetic to Germany, and thus anti-French, a smuggled copy first saw publication in England in 1813, both in translation and in the original French. On the early condemnation of German literature by English anti-Jacobin critics, to be discussed in more detail below, and de Staël's reconstructive influence, see B. Q. Morgan and A. R. Hohlfeld, *German Literature in British Magazines 1750-1860* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949) : 52.

the contrast between socio-economically backward, politically medieval Germany and post-Enlightenment, culturally sophisticated, post-revolutionary, but also repressive France under Napoleon. Nevertheless, the affinities between her idealized portrait of Germany and the work of her ancient predecessor did not escape the attention of the German poet and wit Heinrich Heine:

. . . by her praise of the intellectual life and idealism of Germany she really intends to censure the contemporary realism of the French and the material pomp of the imperial epoch. Her book *De l'Allemagne* resembles in this respect the *Germania* of Tacitus, who perhaps by his apology of the Germans intended to write an indirect satire against his countrymen.¹⁶

De Staël lauded the prevalence of Christian virtues, charity and morality in Germany, calling it a land of “poets and thinkers,” artistically original and intellectually honest, yet politically naive. Just as she echoed Tacitus in her admiration for German simplicity, honesty and marital fidelity, however, she also nurtured the convictions of her predecessors that inherent weaknesses negated any threat that Germany might pose to the security and prestige of other nations. Whereas Tacitus believed that Germans could be easily overcome by indulging their vice for drink, and whereas Machiavelli noted the disunity and political particularism of Germany that persisted in her own time, de Staël’s argument rested largely on a stereotype of German culture and character itself, the ingredients of which comprised a recipe for political mediocrity: Germans indulged without restraint in abstract metaphysics and, in stark contrast to the perspicacious French, tended to “wrap in obscurity what was before clear.”¹⁷ German

¹⁶From *Werke*, VII, p. 122: “Deutschland,” I, quoted in Emma Gertrude Jaek, *Madame De Staël and the Spread of German Literature*, Germanic Literature and Culture series, Julius Goebel, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1915), p. 64. For examples of this similarity see de Staël, *Germany* 1 : 44, 133.

¹⁷de Staël, *Germany* 1 : 133. See also pp. 44, 51.

impracticality and clumsiness blended anomalously with a tedious adherence to detail and an overly serious nature, which added a somber note to the theme of self-defeatism. Even the independence of spirit and originality that de Staël so admired in German literature seemed incongruously hemmed in by narrow codes of social conduct and ingrown traditions of chivalry that had spawned excessive and tiresomely pointless displays of elegant manners. She also observed an unbridgeable gulf between idealistic men of letters and Machiavellian German statesmen. Her assessment of Prussia's Frederick the Great as more French than German simply provided the exception that proved the rule of German political incapacity or lack of integration.¹⁸

De Staël's admiration for Germany found its limits in the heroic efforts of individuals who had achieved an intellectual or artistic ascendancy over the bleak confines of German social life and climate. While she praised the high rate of literacy in Germany, and a certain freedom from French self-adulation and the tyranny of public opinion, she deplored the boredom of existence, the bland conversation and lack of patriotism that she found there. Despite noting superficial geographical differences between a cold, contemplative North and a vegetative, more sociable South, she deemed all of Germany a land of "repose, indolence and reflection" that offered wholesome serenity but little in the way of excitement or stimulation. The positive qualities of sincerity, diligence and the power of reflection which she discerned in the German character should therefore be considered within the context of her initial impression of German

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 41, 67, 69, 80, 87, 100, 105, 123, 319.

life: “Stoves, beer, and the smoke of tobacco surround all the common people of Germany with a thick and hot atmosphere, from which they are never inclined to escape.”¹⁹

The German Boor

The revival of Tacitus, which satisfied a longing for historical greatness among sixteenth-century German nobles and scholars, represented in part a reaction against a much less glorious portrait of German life that had emerged since the late middle ages. Historian Hajo Holborn wrote that “gluttony and drunkenness were, according to native and foreign testimony, much worse than elsewhere.”²⁰ This German reputation for excess had caused Aventinus (1477-1534) to lament

All of the other nations speak evil of us, scolding us as a people who are no good except in carousing and revelling . . . , and they call us the coarse, senselessly drinking Germans, always intoxicated, never sober.²¹

Even though Tacitus had mentioned a German propensity for drunkenness, his revised idealization of an innate moral sense mollified, as it had done in the first century, this image of German unbridled revelry, which Sebastian Brandt aptly satirized and canonized in his widely popular *Narrenschiff*, or *Ship of Fools*.²² Even amidst the implied social criticism in Brandt’s

¹⁹Ibid., p. 38. See also pp. 34, 39, 63, 76, 97.

²⁰Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany 1648-1945*, 3 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), vol. 1: *The Reformation*, pp. 116-17.

²¹From the *Chronicles of Bavaria*, quoted in Reinhardt, *Germany: 2000 Years*, p. 184.

²²The first English translation of Sebastian Brandt’s *Das Narrenschiff*, (Basle: Johann Bergmann, 1497), appeared as *The Shyppe of Fooles* (London: W. de Worde, 1509). Charles H. Herford, *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886), p. 324, described Brandt’s work as a classic of Humanism that inspired Erasmus’s *Praise of Folly*.

work, however, the ancient characterization of innocent artlessness remained unobscured.

British literary scholar Charles H. Herford, writing in 1886, pointed out a telling comparison of sixteenth-century German and English fool literature. In contrast to the deceitful fool of English literature, he wrote,

. . . Brandt has his own country in view, and he gives enormous space to the riotous sensuality for which Germany was then and long afterwards a bye-word, while he has little to say of the subtle duplicities of which, as the patriots of the next generation exultingly boasted, the guileless Teuton had never been accused.²³

Herford drew a broader distinction when comparing German and English versions of a derivative genre of fool literature modeled on the exploits of Frederick Dedekind's *Grobianus*, the quintessential boor featured in a form of satire described as "an aggressive and militant grossness, trampling on refinement and glorifying in its own excesses."²⁴ A few lines may illustrate the point:

Both eate and drinke so much, that thou both drunke and filld maist bee,
Till when, nor rest nor quiet must be looked for of thee.
And if of hickets or of sobs thou use to utter store,
They both are signes which future vomites use to goe before.
Let not the newness of the thing seeme beastly in thine eies,
But boldly make all those which hinder thy proceedings rise,
And casting that which thy queasy stomacke not agreeth,
Return unto the table, having slightly washt thy teeth.

²³*Literary Relations of England and Germany*, pp. 338-39.

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 380-81. Frederick Dedekind's *Grobianus*, originally in Latin (Frankfurt: n.p., 1549) first appeared in English translation as *The School of Slovenrie, or Cato Turned Wrong Side Outward*, trans. R. F. Gent (London: Valentine Simmes, 1605), but this must have been a rare edition because Herford, p. 389, cites *Grobianus; or, the Compleat Booby*, trans. Roger Bull, (London: T. Cooper, 1739) as the first widely known translation.

And being set, take care again to fill thy belly strait,
And in the rowme of all thats gone, thrust in another baite.²⁵

Despite being the penultimate expression of excessive behavior and bad taste, Grobianism, through its sheer unconventionality, nevertheless stimulated nostalgia for naturalness and lost Arcadian simplicity. From this duality Herford could infer a clear difference between English and German sensibilities. The English version of Grobianus resembled the cynical fop, the eccentric scholar or misanthrope who exposes the insincerity of social conventions, a concept Herford regarded as too subtle for Dedekind's Germany in which he found "a society too intolerably natural to even affect refinement."²⁶

The stereotypical German boor, initially perpetrated by German social satirists, would adopt various guises throughout the nineteenth century, often in conjunction with figures vastly different from the aggressively overindulgent dandy depicted in Grobianus. The stigma of obtuse unmannerliness would be applied to German students as well as their favorite target, the bourgeois *Philister*, to swaggering Prussian officers, to know-it-all professors and to German social customs in general. The effectiveness of these nineteenth-century stereotypes probably owed something to the freshness of Grobianism as a literary image in the late eighteenth century. Herford described this abrupt transition:

²⁵Frederich Dedekind, *The School of Slovenrie*, reproduced in *Palestra* (Berlin: Mayer & Müller, 1904) 38 : 88.

²⁶Herford concluded, "the contrast which Dedekind found in the German society of his day between the 'respectable' burgher and the wilfully offensive boor, was qualified by the finer contrast of which English society afforded suggestions, between the devotees of social convention and of the 'simplicity of nature.'" *Literary Relations of England and Germany*, p. 397.

Some forty years after the translation of *Grobianus*, polite England was weeping over the translated *Werther*. The typical German figure of the later eighteenth century follows hard upon the last traces of the typical figure of the sixteenth; the master of callous brutality and phlegmatic ill-breeding leaves the stage as the classical victim of sentimental passion enters it.²⁷

The fine line separating appreciation of primitive simplicity from abhorrence of primitive crudity reveals the paradoxical nature of both the moral barbarian and German boor stereotypes, their negative aspects featuring images of uncivilized behavior, backwardness, cruelty and a lack of taste or refinement. Even though de Staël reintroduced into nineteenth-century Britain an image of naive and austere Germans largely devoid of Grobian vulgarity, the stigma of German boorishness continued to figure prominently in later national comparisons, and often implied a laxity of character more fundamental than mere rudeness. A reference to bad manners as “German breeding” prompted one writer in 1840 to ponder the hypothetical case of a fly in a glass of wine: the Italian would call the waiter to take it away, the Frenchman would remove the fly and drink the wine, the German would drink the wine fly and all, and the English John Bull would throw the glass against the wall with an indignant “God-damn.”²⁸ Some seventy years later Ford Maddox Ford would relate a similar tale of German gross negligence. An “immense drayman,” having drunk “at one draught” a pot of ale into which some malicious pranksters had dropped a dead mouse, wiped his mouth on his sleeve and then remarked, “‘A hop or a Cork!’ to the wonder and admiration of all beholders.”²⁹

²⁷Ibid., p. 398.

²⁸“Germany,” *Blackwood’s*, p.126.

²⁹Hueffer [Ford], “How It Feels to Be Members of Subject Races,” p. 422.

Nineteenth-century British criticism of German slovenliness, gluttony, drunkenness, bad manners, and indifference to the suffering of others seemed to extend the Grobian tradition to society at large. “Villages are said to be always distinguished by an extraordinary degree of dirt and slovenliness,” wrote William Howitt in 1842, during one of his German tours. He described the rural homes as “often pestiferous with unsavory smells, of which the inhabitants appear totally unconscious.”³⁰ The stigma of uncleanness applied even to Berlin where “along every street, and before every house, even in the finest parts of the city and the neighborhood of the king’s palace, is a stagnant sink, which fills the whole air with its rank odor.” Howitt then related a tale of callous indifference that exposed a sinister core of insensitivity masked by mere surface grossness. A little boy of five or six, having been pushed into one of those fetid sinks, began to “cry most piteously.” Howitt continued,

It was in a crowded part of town but nobody seemed to take much notice; we therefore asked the boy where he lived, and he showed us a little girl near his own age, who was standing by and knitting most composedly. This he said was his sister, and he would get her to go home with him and say how he became so dirtied, or he should be beaten; but she kept knitting on. . . . it was not till one good man seized her sternly by the arm and forced her along, that the little stoic would move a foot, or anything but her knitting needles.³¹

Howitt remarked that this “apathy” seemed perplexing in a people “who in their domestic relations and in their literature exhibited so much feeling.” Similarly, physical manifestations of slovenliness or gluttony to some writers could betray more serious philosophical or ethical deficiencies. German students, or *Burschenschaften*, for example, were considered “a race to be eschewed by all who had a wholesome reverence for soap and a horror for Kantian philosophy.”

³⁰Howitt, *Rural and Domestic Life of Germany*, pp. 22, 90.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 85.

An obese, “triple-chinned” German professor, whose “small, pig-eyes peered out from under their pent-house above a mass of pendulous and quivering cheek,” expounded a theory of racial territorialism according to which, strictly speaking, England belonged to Germany.³²

A more innocuous, if no less deplorable, image of German gluttony, laziness and drunkenness continued to be a favorite topic into the 1890s. One anonymous writer scorned the German *Mittagessen*, or midday meal, saying “no highly-civilized nation dines heavily in the middle of the day,” and opined that “the Germans hold, with certain of the ancient philosophers, that their souls are situated in their stomachs.”³³ A more detailed treatise on the German penchant for a leisurely existence of eating, drinking and smoking graced the pages of *Gentleman’s Magazine* in 1895. Some excerpts follow:

The German out-of-doors spends most of his time walking from one restaurant to another, and always smokes: a cigar is as invariable a feature on his face as the carefully-cultivated moustache; . . . Even the German workman smokes them during the many moments of leisure which occur in his work, for he does not hurry or overtire himself; The end and aim of every German expedition is the restaurant; after seeing twenty of these establishments in two hundred yards of street, one realizes how extensively they must be patronized. . . .

. . . The Germans have a habit of taking all their courses on one plate, which is not very inviting, and, like Dr. Johnson, have been known to snort over their food. . . .

. . . Beer is, with the love of music, the great national characteristic, and the methods employed in the beer-clubs, to drink as much as possible, suggest the orgies of some of the Roman emperors. Perhaps it is due to this excessive drinking, and the smoky atmosphere of the restaurants, that so many of the Germans have eyes which look as if they had been boiled, and wear spectacles so much more generally than the English.³⁴

³²“A Glimpse At Germany and Its Parliament,” *Blackwood’s* 64 (November 1848) : 516, 526, 528-29.

³³“Cousins German,” *Cornhill*, pp. 295, 297.

³⁴Vernon Rendall, “The Germans At Home,” *Gentleman’s Magazine* 278 (February 1895) : 177, 179, 182-83.

The gluttony of German theatre patrons became legendary. A commentator for *Cassell's Family Magazine* in 1898 described the ritual gorging between acts:

As these worthy citizens with their wives emerge from the theatre, they call loudly for beer and various eatables, and, sitting down, commence to devour their food with astonishing rapidity. The interval lasts but ten minutes, and they intend to make the best use of their time. Presently a bell rings loudly, and back to our seats we all hurry, the supper consumers finishing the last fragments of their meal *en route*. Several, we notice, are still furtively munching when actually back in their stalls. After each act—astonishing though it may seem—there is a repetition of the process I have described. Their appetites seem positively to increase rather than diminish after each attack upon the eatables.³⁵

Another source commented:

A sine qua non of every German theatre is a large foyer, flanked by cold buffets which are piled with heaps of greasy-looking “doorsteps” of bread and sausage amid innumerable glasses of beer and lemonade. Every German theatrical performance is interrupted for a twenty minutes’ interval in the middle, when the entire audience storms the buffets, satisfies its appetite, and then solemnly defiles in procession round the foyer. It is a truly extraordinary sight to see a smart audience at the Opera gathered about these sandwich counters, wolfing down “Butterbrödchen” as if they had not had a meal for a week.³⁶

The image of the slovenly boor complimented the concept of backward or agricultural Germany. Berlin, often labeled a dull and uninspiring city, a “sprawling commercial town in the middle of a sandy plain,” and a “provincial town” in comparison to the great capitals of Europe, seemed an appropriate environment for the dull, indolent, self-indulgent Prussian:

Fortunately, the Prussian is an optimist who looks on his immediate surroundings with a superb indifference. He needs little in this life and seems to expect less in the next. So long as he can sit in a tree-shaded garden, smoke tobacco, drink lager-beer, and listen to a band, he is perfectly happy. The stern joy of violent physical exercise he cannot understand, preferring rather to cultivate philosophy and a portly figure. Occasionally he is considerate, frequently he is kind. But now and again the English visitor finds himself

³⁵B. Fletcher Robinson, “Berlin: A Capital at Play,” *Cassell's Family Magazine* (February 1898) : 235.

³⁶F. W. Wile, *Our German Cousins* (London; The Daily Mail, n.d.) : 52-53.

recalling with satisfaction the answer of the schoolboy who, when asked to describe the manners and customs of a certain tribe, laconically replied, "These people have no manners, and their customs are beastly."³⁷

The Pious/Godless German

Superceding the legacies of ancient, mediaeval and renaissance sources, developments in the sixteenth century would add an entirely new dimension to the image of Germany in English minds. Before the Henrician Reformation and Protestant sectarianism established theological boundaries, the Lutheran Reformation exerted a profound, albeit "heretical," influence in England through doors opened by the Lollards, book merchants, and Cambridge scholars who gathered at the White Horse tavern "Little Germany" to discuss Lutheran doctrines.³⁸ The image of Lutheran piety and a Protestantism which "sprang from the heart of the German race and from that indestructible love of freedom of mind" would survive as a positive virtue of Old Germany even at the height of the Anglo-German antagonism.³⁹ But within the span of a single generation following the Anglican split from Rome in 1534, the birthplace of the Protestant Reformation became known more as a land of sorcery and diabolism. This shift in viewpoint depended a great deal on religious fanaticism and superstition in Germany itself, amplified not a little by sectarian

³⁷Robinson, "Berlin: A Capital at Play," p. 227.

³⁸A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), pp. 36-37, 68-69. Theology and financial considerations also dictated policy when in 1535 Henry VIII refused to accept the Confession of Augsburg and Lutheranism as the price of admission to the Schmalkaldic League (p. 175).

³⁹"England's Relations With Germany," *Quarterly Review* 183 (April 1896) : 547. This article presented a sympathetic view of German imperial ambitions, from unification to colonial expansion, even after Kaiser Wilhelm II's infamous Kruger Telegram of January 1896, although it preceded Germany's ambitious naval building program launched in March of 1898.

rivalry, anti-Catholicism and its reaction, and by Luther's own writings about portents and the omnipresence of the devil in various guises. The worst abuses of this pathological obsession with the occult culminated in the "collective insanity" and debasement of law that extended witchcraft persecutions throughout Germany into parts of Europe and beyond.⁴⁰

Drawing upon the fame of Paracelsus and the Faustian legend, Germany's notoriety as a place of witchcraft and demonic possession had received great impetus from the publication by two German Dominicans of the *Malleus Maleficarum* or "Witches' Hammer," in 1486.⁴¹ This inquisitors "bible," sanctioned by a papal Bull declaring witchcraft heretical, laid the foundation for the classical conception of the stereotypical witch found in the *dramatis personae* of early English witch stories and plays.⁴² Herford attributed the negative shift in Germany's reputation partly to a comparative loss of literary and civic prestige as England made advances in commerce, politics and literature, even supplanting Germany as the stronghold of Protestantism.

⁴⁰Rinehardt, *Germany: 2000 Years*, pp. 265-68, cites Luther's *Explanation of the Monkish Calf of Freiberg in Saxony*, published in 1522, Melanchthon's *The Popish Ass in Rome*, and the raft of *Teufels-literatur* generated by Lutheran preoccupation with the devil. According to Rinehardt, witch persecution in Germany claimed 100,000 German victims. Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 567, mentions the marked susceptibility of Germany and the Alps to this form of collective hysteria and oppression.

⁴¹Paracelsus or Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541) earned his reputation for wizardry as a Swiss alchemist and extraordinarily gifted physician. See Davies, *Europe*, p. 489. Doctor Georg Faust (1480?-1541), arch sorcerer, physician and alchemist, later fictionalized as Johann Faust, claimed through his mastery of black magic to have engineered the conquest of Rome in 1527. See Rinehardt, *Germany: 2000 Years*, p. 266.

⁴²Herford, *Literary Relations*, pp. 220-23, 232-37, cites three Elizabethan works as examples: Thomas Middleton's (d. 1627) *The Witch*, Thomas Heywood's (d. 1641) *The Lancashire Witches*, and Thomas Dekker's (1570?-1641?) *The Witch of Edmonton*. He also traces its influence, and elements of Teutonic mythology (e.g., "the mystic Norns"), to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (p. 236).

He also blamed English indifference to German political history and preoccupation with a “literature of marvels,” prodigy collections and cheap leaflets advertizing “Wonderful strange Newes from Germany” full of portents, curiosities and bizarre tales of the supernatural.⁴³ The elements of grim reality and fantasy interwoven in tales of German diabolism that drifted into England on a tide of frenzied Protestant piety left their mark in English minds. In the devolution of German witch stories one could see, “a sort of hideous travesty of the Faust motive;—the diabolic intercourse in a more repulsive form, the supernatural powers put to a baser use.”⁴⁴

If superstition held less sway three centuries later, the association of horror and the supernatural with Germany survived in the enormously popular neo-Gothic novel, which featured “dungeons of sinister castles hidden in German forests, or convents where nuns found recreation in flogging screaming novices.”⁴⁵ Gottfried A. Bürger’s romantic poem, *Lenore*, a widely read and reviewed example of German horror and macabre imagery, went through six translations,

⁴³*Literary Relations*, pp. 165-79. Herford’s citations include the following two works: *A Briefe Collection and compendious extract of strange and memorable thinges, gathered out of the Cosmographie of S. Munster* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1572, available in German as early as 1537) and Stephen Batman’s *The Doome* (London: Ralphe Nubery, 1581) which presented a translation and supplementation of Conrad Lycosthenes’s portent collection, *Prodigiorum ac ostentorum chronicon* (Basel: Henricum Petri, 1557). He describes the contents of the popular fare as

“... massacres, and earthquakes, storms, executions and apparitions, monstrous births and bodies raised from the dead, fasting girls and ‘damnable sorcerers,’ strange signs in the air, prophecies in the mouth of rustics and of sages, visions of angels, mysterious glimpses of the Wandering Jew” (p. 174).

⁴⁴*Literary Relations*, p. 179.

⁴⁵Altick, *The English Common Reader*, p.289, notes the popularity of the neo-Gothic novel amongst working-class readers of the 1820s.

one by Walter Scott, and numerous editions between 1796 and 1846.⁴⁶ The story revolved around a young girl who blames providence for the disappearance of her soldier-lover. The lover's phantom appears at midnight, on horseback, to carry his unsuspecting mistress to the final completion of their union—in the grave. De Staël remarked on the play's macabre imagery and spoke of German terror as “a relic of the northern mythology—a disposition naturally inspired by the long nights of a northern climate.” She explained the relatively rapid decline of terror in English poetry by comparing English with German character:

Imagination in England is almost always inspired by sensibility; the imaginations of the Germans is sometimes rude and wild: the religion of England is more austere, that of Germany more vague: and the poetry of the two nations must necessarily bear the impression of their religious sentiments.⁴⁷

Despite its popularity the macabre aspect of German literature also drew protests. An early attack on German drama complained of “the strange and preposterous partiality for the Gothic productions of the German school; the distempered rage for the gloomy, the horrible, the disconnected, the disproportioned, and the improbable.”⁴⁸ Nevertheless, critical objections to

⁴⁶V. Stockley, *German Literature as Known in England, 1750-1830* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1929), p. 7. See also Morgan, *German Literature in British Magazines*, pp. 42-43.

⁴⁷*Germany* 1 : 152, 233-36.

⁴⁸William Preston, *Edinburgh Magazine*, 1802, quoted in Morgan, *German Literature in British Magazines*, pp. 46-47. Preston's distinction between Gothic and classical literature also weighed heavily against the Germans, “its ponderous masses, its elaborate littleness, and capricious profusion of ornament” standing in abject humility beside “the sublime simplicity, the chaste symmetry, the harmonious integrity of the Greek and Roman models . . . to which the best modern writers have formed themselves.”

German horror, mysticism, extravagance, sentimentality and indecency only temporarily quelled the influx of *Märchen* or tales, translated “from the German,” into England.⁴⁹

By the 1890s images of witch Sabbaths at the “haunted” Brocken served better as inspiration for English literary “tourists” than as fodder for moralistic literary critics. *Good Words* referred to this infamous peak in the Hartz mountain range as:

. . . since time immemorial the Pandemonium of Europe and the only spot which persecuting incredulity has left to the adepts in the black art, where all the witches and wizards of the civilised world still assemble, on May morning, to commune with their horned Master and to celebrate under his guidance their unholy orgies.”⁵⁰

German horror, and English appreciation of it, confirmed the sixteenth-century literary tradition of monstrosities, marvels, superstition and witchcraft persecutions associated with Germany, which provided, as in the case of Tacitus’s *Germania*, a ready reference when needed.

Given the so-called Protestant “affinities” between England and the land of Luther, one might search for reasons, besides literary mass appeal, why the diabolical image of Germany persisted along with its obverse, German piety. In 1732 the idea of racial kinship, Protestant gratitude for the German Reformation and the feeling that Germany had surpassed England in the arts and sciences supported the argument that the English could not “depreciate” Germans without “defaming themselves.”⁵¹ This sanguine view, however, encountered resistance not only because it went against the grain of isolationist British nationalism but also because it overlooked some very real differences involving theological doctrine and the role of religion in the political

⁴⁹Morgan, *German Literature in British Magazines*, pp. 62-63.

⁵⁰C. A. Channer. “The Hartz District and Its Towns,” *Good Words* 35 (March 1894) : 167.

⁵¹*London Magazine*, (1732) 1 : 129, quoted in Morgan, *German Literature in British Magazines*, p. 38.

histories of both nations. The importance of doctrinal distinctions, such as the strength of Erasmian or Calvinist, as opposed to Lutheran, influences in England lie beyond the scope of this paper.⁵² However, England's evolution from Protestant prince-worship to "civil courage" through martyrdom, exile and Puritan parliamentary opposition indicates a historical basis for British antipathy to German religious institutions.⁵³ Even thirty years before Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* of 1870, British writers opposed to state interference with religious liberties criticized the Prussian Evangelical Church as a "foul blot upon the mild and paternal character" of the Prussian government.⁵⁴ Apart from such institutional and political criticisms, however, other aspects of German religious thought and practice both fascinated and repelled English minds.

German religious influence in England was plagued by delay, ambivalence and neglect in a way that would later characterize the halting acknowledgment of German literature in England. German hymns, which helped inspire English spiritual poetry, appeared in translation as early as

⁵²The influence of Erasmus on early English humanism and the split with Luther over the issue of free will has been dealt with in Johan Huizinga's classic *Erasmus and the Age of Reformation*, trans. F. Hupman (New York: Harper & Row, 1957). Dickens, *English Reformation*, pp. 231, 238-39, speaks of Archbishop Cranmer's failure to establish a link with Melancthon and the Lutherans, and the consequent predominance of non-Lutheran, even anti-Lutheran, influences in England that prevented "Protestant thought from consolidating in its earlier forms."

⁵³Dickens, *English Reformation*, p. 330. Elie Halevy had written of the theological individualism that "constituted no small factor in the republicanism of the Cromwellians." See *History of the English People*, p. 352.

⁵⁴"Germany," *Blackwood's*, p.134. See also "The Archbishop of Cologne and the King of Prussia," *Blackwood's* 43 (June 1838) : 766, and, a later argument against its effectiveness in raising peasant morals in Richard Heath, "The Prussian Rural Labourer and the Evangelical Church," *Contemporary Review* 75 (May 1899) : 735.

1539, but restrictions on congregational hymn-singing delayed publication of major collections until the eighteenth century.⁵⁵ Anton Wilhelm Boehme, court chaplain of the first two Hanoverian Georges, translated several devotional works that stimulated a brief flurry of interest between 1706 and 1716, but a more significant religious link between England and Germany took shape in the Wesleyan/Moravian connection. John Wesley and his brother Charles first encountered the German Moravians in 1735 while aboard a ship bound from England to the American colony of Georgia. Wesley admired the Moravians' "servile" humility, meekness and courage, and he recorded in his journal of 25 October the reactions of his shipmates during a storm at sea:

In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, "Were you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, No." I asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" He replied mildly, "No; our women and children are not afraid to die." From them I went to their crying trembling neighbours, and pointed out to them the difference, in the hour of trial, between him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not.⁵⁶

On returning to England Wesley pursued his connections with the Moravians and, with his brother, translated and published several volumes of hymns from the German. Wesley's spiritual transformation, the driving force behind the "Great Awakening" in England, apparently drew inspiration from the German Pietist doctrine of personal salvation by faith as preached by

⁵⁵Garold N. Davis, *German Thought and Culture in England 1700-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1969), p. 15, writes, "hymn singing was frowned upon by many churches until well into the eighteenth century and beyond." He provides ample evidence of the hymn's literary influence, however.

⁵⁶Quoted in Davis, *German Thought and Culture*, p. 25.

the German Moravians.⁵⁷ His infatuation with the Moravians, and the religious emotionalism of both Pietism and Wesleyanism, encouraged the acceptance in England of German literature that possessed a “sentimental, moralizing, didactic tendency” which appealed to the middle-classes of both countries during the eighteenth century.⁵⁸

But the Methodist/Moravian connection proved to be a mixed blessing for the image of Germany in England. Widespread opposition to Methodism in England resulted in attacks on the Moravians, and Wesley himself eventually split from the Moravians largely due to personal differences with Count Zinzendorf, the sect’s leader in England.⁵⁹ In 1740 he wrote, “Is not the Count all in all? Are not the rest mere shadows; calling him Rabbi; almost implicitly both believing and obeying him?”⁶⁰ Despite Zinzendorf’s popularity among the upper classes in London and Oxford, many objected to Moravian doctrines and practices, such as the reference to Jesus as the “bridegroom of the soul” in the Count’s hymns. In *Hymns extracted from the Brethren’s Book* (1749) Wesley ridiculed repulsive imagery emphasizing the wounds of Christ,

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 29-30, 42-43. Davis connects the subjectivity and emotionalism of these hymns to the roots of English romanticism, particularly in the work of Shelley (pp. 37-40).

⁵⁸John P. Hoskins, “German Influence on Religious Life and Thought in America during the Colonial Period,” *Princeton Theological Review* 5 (1907) : 235, quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 39.

⁵⁹An anonymous sheet entitled *The Moravians Compared and Detected* (London: Knapton, 1754) labeled the Moravians “ridiculous, obscene, and detestable.” Quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, pp. 38-39.

⁶⁰Wesley’s letter to the Moravian Brethren (1740), quoted in Clifford W. Towleson, *Moravian and Methodist*, (London: n.p., 1957), p. 203, cited by Davis, *German Thought and Culture*, p. 60, who also comments on Wesley’s aversion to mysticism (p. 35).

the so-called “blood and wounds hymns.”⁶¹ His rejection of the grotesque element seems to foreshadow a British repulsion from, and grim fascination with, associations of the macabre with German religion, as with literature, during the nineteenth century.⁶² William Howitt in 1842 described a German graveyard where newly made graves revealed fragments of bone, teeth and even “sculls [*sic*] nearly whole” on the surface. “We observed at the base of the church,” he continued, “a large hole, descending into a vault, which had a strange appearance.”⁶³ Complaining that “the love of the people for bloody imagery is here again peculiarly conspicuous,” he described one of the wayside shrines in Germany:

In a side chapel is a red sepulchre, with all its solemn apparatus and deathly figures. In the chapel hang various paintings, but the people flock with eager zeal to one—that of Christ just taken down from the cross, with copious streams of blood running from hands, feet and side. You see the people touching this blood and then kissing their hand. Not one wound, nor one stream of gore, that they do not greedily rub their fingers on again and again, and as often kiss them, as if they could never be satisfied.⁶⁴

German mysticism and works of biblical criticism, although widely available in translation during the eighteenth century, met with general distrust amongst the English clergy. Many English theologians condemned Earnst Moritz Arndt’s conception of the “kingdom of God [within]” as heretical, and even Wesley found distasteful William Law’s translation and

⁶¹Davis, *German Thought and Culture*, pp. 61-62. Zinzendorf dropped the offensive hymns from the “London” song book in 1754 after being warned of *Leichtsinnigkeit*, or carelessness, by another German poet, Gerhardt Tersteegen.

⁶²Holborn, *The Reformation*, p. 118, refers to the macabre tradition of the famous German paintings of suffering Christ by Mathias Grunewald (1480-1529), who portrayed “the world in all its gruesome horror.”

⁶³Howitt, *Rural and Domestic Life of Germany*, p. 19.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 132.

exposition of the works of Jacob Boehme.⁶⁵ German biblical criticism, which began filtering into England in the 1820s and 30s, brought an overwhelming negative reaction that dwarfed any interest shown by Broad Church liberals in Strauss's *Leben Jesu* and other translations of German theology and rationalism. The publication of *Essays and Reviews* (1860), a scholarly excursus on literal historical and scientific explanations of the Bible, compiled by a group of English theologians, triggered a firestorm of opposition that resulted in the suspension from benefices of two contributing clerics and a declaration of protest signed by 11,000 English clergymen. The work also met with disfavor from some prominent political figures, including abolitionist William Wilberforce, and future Prime Ministers Gladstone and Salisbury.⁶⁶ Against the onslaught of liberal theology and "Higher Criticism" from Germany, the Catholic Church offered a refuge to the Tractarians of the Oxford movement led by Cardinal Newman, who decried the dangers of "continental infection" upon hearing that Lutheran bishops from Prussia sought Anglican ordination. The fact that distrust of German influences coincided with a revival of orthodox Christianity made the reaction against German theology all the more powerful and vehement.⁶⁷

Despite a long history of theological divergence, disputation and distrust, the argument for Protestant solidarity reappeared consistently in regard to nineteenth-century Anglo-German relations. Queen Victoria expressed her willingness to declare England sympathetic to Protestant

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 52. William Law's edition of the works of Boehme appeared in four volumes between 1764 and 1781. See Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 39.

⁶⁶Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 107, indicates a religious component to Salisbury's Germanophobia.

⁶⁷Mander, *Our German Cousins*, pp. 150-1. Halevy, *Triumph of Reform*, pp. 160, 208.

Germany in the event of an unprovoked attack by Catholic France, and many, including a majority of the English press, supported Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* against the Ultramontanes and the doctrine of papal infallibility, at least in purpose if not in method. British ardor cooled quickly, however, upon consideration of Bismarck's tyrannical tactics, fears of German aggression against France and Belgium and, not least, pro-Irish and Catholic sentiments in Britain.⁶⁸

The mirage of Anglo-German religious affinity would ultimately shatter in an eruption of religious chauvinism during the decades prior to World War I. The apocalyptic sense of fighting a cosmic war between good and evil became a predominant theme in the writings and sermons of British theologians and would result in a thorough revision of German history built on the worst aspects of the German stereotype. Opinion held that critical rationalism had diverted Germany from true religious faith toward a barbaric reverence for the State and an unholy glorification of *Machtpolitik*, a supposition which implied a degeneracy or inherent weakness in Germans, a childish, mechanical susceptibility to the teachings of evil philosophers (Nietzsche) and the whims of megalomaniac rulers (the Kaiser).⁶⁹ Positive aspects of the German character, such as chivalry, piety and morality had supposedly been abandoned or corrupted in the reversion to neopaganism.⁷⁰ Such streams of invective only broadened the ideological gulf opened with

⁶⁸Sizeable minorities in each country, Catholics in Germany and Irish in Britain, worked to counteract already weak Anglo-German Protestant sympathies. See Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 106-8.

⁶⁹Hoover, *God, Germany, and Britain*, pp. 69, 74.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 23-42.

British rejection of German devotional works, biblical criticism and metaphysical speculation on the nature of God.

British Reactions to German Literature

Although the scope of this study does not warrant a comprehensive review of British receptivity to German literature, historians of the subject tend to agree that recognition of German literary achievement met with some unusual resistance in England. John Mander wrote: “The evolution of German intellectual life—*Deutscher Geist*— was seriously out of phase with English appreciation of it, with the result that the picture remained always a little cloudy, and at times very seriously distorted”⁷¹ The reception of German literature in England suffered from what Mander called “a fatal compound of ignorance and ambivalence . . . German piety might be ridiculed at one moment; German ‘immorality’ the next.” This “embryonic English reaction to things German” revealed itself in the reaction to two popular, but diametrically opposed, genres: works of religious piety or pastoral works, the so-called “sentimental and moral” tale “from the German,” and the violently emotional *Sturm und Drang* creations of the Romantic writers.⁷² Early enthusiasm for both types withered under the satirical blasts and ridicule of British reviewers, and a revival of interest in Germany’s literary renaissance had to wait at least a decade for a reappraisal by Madame de Staël, and longer for the advocacy of Thomas Carlyle.

⁷¹John Mander, *Our German Cousins*, p. 20.

⁷²Ibid., p. 24, 27-28. The “two kinds” of literature anticipates a dichotomy between good and bad Germans which represents a factor in stereotyping that permits the pretense of rational judgement while pigeonholing the target group according to its perceived positive and negative aspects. This phenomenon is discussed in reference to anti-Semitism in Adorno, *Authoritarian Personality*, p. 622.

Timing presented a major obstacle to the appreciation of German literature in Britain because reasonably good translations of *Märchen*, or German tales, and works by Gessner, Wieland, Lessing, Goethe and Schiller became widely available only after 1790 amidst news of revolution in France. Moreover, a reversal of early sympathies with the revolution, as expressed in the writings of Coleridge, Wordsworth, and political essayist William Godwin, led to a conservative reaction, stoked by invasion fears, which associated German literature with extreme liberalism and the questioning of authority. This incipient trend, marked by virulent attacks on German works by British critics, contradicted the longer term reality of a Francophobic motive for the appreciation of German literature discussed by Elie Halevy:

The French Revolution placed an abyss between the literature of England and France. Meanwhile German literature was coming to birth, a literature of sentiment, romance and unbridled fancy. To put the imagination to school in Germany and to compose Gothic romances was to collaborate with the anti-Gallican and anti-Jacobin movement.⁷³

While Francophobia did encourage receptivity to German literature during the Napoleonic Wars, turn-of-the-century literary critics, aligned with the conservative anti-Jacobin movement in Britain, placed the German literati squarely in the camp of the enemy. In 1799 the *Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine* launched a vicious and highly politicized crusade against the initial popularity of German works, deploring:

. . . a glaring depravity of taste, as displayed in the extreme eagerness for foreign productions, and a systematic design to extend such depravity by a regular importation of exotic poison from the envenomed crucibles of the literary and political alchemists of the new German school. . . . Even an act of despotism when exercised for the purpose of rescuing

⁷³Halevy, *A History of the English People*, p. 446.

mankind from the worse species of oppression—the subjugation of the mind to the degrading tyranny of Philosophism—would be entitled to applause . . .⁷⁴

Such extreme reactions from ultra-conservative journals wrought a noticeable change even in some mainstream periodicals previously friendly to German literature.⁷⁵ The tenor of the times proved so unfavorable that one early Germanophile’s literary venture, James Beresford’s *German Museum*, begun in 1800, folded after the third volume amid a barrage of scathing attacks from the *Anti-Jacobin Review*.⁷⁶

British receptivity to German literature followed a generally predictable pattern, with the lion’s share of attention and acclaim eventually going to the works of Goethe and Schiller. This broad perspective, however, minimizes some dramatic and curious anomalies that delayed a widespread appreciation of Germany’s late eighteenth-century literary renaissance until Victoria’s reign.⁷⁷ German traveler, C. A. G. Goede, after debunking the idea that English readers were well-versed in German literature, aptly summarized the situation in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century: “Many English consider German literature immoral and dangerous, but they have formed this hasty opinion on some trifling German novels, which too

⁷⁴*Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine* 4 (1799) : VI ff., quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 45.

⁷⁵Both the *Monthly Mirror* and the *Critical Review* belong in this latter category. See Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 46.

⁷⁶Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 47-48. The publication’s complete title was *The German Museum or Monthly Repository of the Literature of Germany, the North and the Continent in General*. In the preface to his final volume Beresford explained that, “depending in a material degree on the number of supporters, prudence forbid [*sic*] us to comply any longer with the wishes of a small, though respectable and chosen, host of friends and compels us to give way to imperious necessity.”

⁷⁷Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 64.

easily find their way from circulating libraries to the toilet of beauty.”⁷⁸ The lapse in appreciation depended on more than just scanty knowledge of German and bad translations; it was also a function of popular tastes and sentiments. Hysterical reactions followed translations of Goethe’s novel, *The Sorrows of Werther*, and Schiller’s play, *The Robbers*, the chief objections to these works revolving around questions of moral character and fears of their effect on society. *Werther* drew blame as an apology for suicide, its baleful influence suspected in an often-repeated account of the self-inflicted death of a woman under whose pillow a copy of the novel had been found.⁷⁹ Schiller, like Goethe deemed a revolutionary, was denounced for making criminals heroes and advocating overthrow of the social order.⁸⁰ In 1798 the *Anti-Jacobin Review* published *The Rovers*, an extremely popular parody of *The Robbers* and Goethe’s *Stella* which caricatured some of the worst tendencies in German drama and successfully initiated a wave of ridicule that stunted early enthusiasm for German literature.⁸¹ *The Rovers* dealt as much with the character of

⁷⁸A *Foreigner’s Opinion of England*, vol. 2, chap. 7 (London: n.p., 1802) quoted in Stockley, *German Literature*, p. 8.

⁷⁹Suicide having been popularly known as the “Englishman’s malady,” one indignant reviewer hoped to “blot out this foul national reproach.” See *European Magazine* 19 (1791) : 184, quoted in Stockley, *German Literature*, p. 24.

⁸⁰Frank Woodyer Stockoe, *German Influences in the English Romantic Period 1788-1818* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1926), p. 16. Stockoe noted that even the effusive praise of Schiller in Henry Mackenzie’s influential lecture, published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* in 1790 and reprinted in the *Edinburgh Magazine* that same year, came with a warning that the play “covers the natural deformity of criminal actions with the veil of high sentiment and virtuous feeling” (p. 29).

⁸¹Morgan, *British Magazines*, pp. 45, 84. The complete title of the satire, *The Rovers; or the Double Arrangement*, referred to the original version of Goethe’s *Stella*, published in 1776, which involved a ménage à trois between a man and two women. Goethe revised the work in 1816 to end tragically, but this version never reached the British public.

Germans and German writers as with any specific literary abuses, and it precipitated a wholesale condemnation of German society, the literati themselves being labeled “men of profligate lives and abandoned characters.”⁸² English writer and moralist, Hannah More, promoting the nineteenth-century stereotype of women as the guardians of public virtue, called “loudly” upon the women of Germany to oppose

the irruption [*sic*] of those swarms of publications now daily issuing from the banks of the Danube, which, like their ravaging predecessors of the darker ages, though with far other and more fatal arms, are overrunning civil society.⁸³

But even attempts to vindicate Germany’s greatest writers by excusing romantic excess as an expression of German character succeeded rather in distorting the image of Germans in general:

What would be with us extravagance is with them but nature. Characters not very dissimilar to those of Moor and Werter [*sic*] are not unfrequent in Germany. It is from the state of human society in that country that the wild, terrific pathos and sublimity of the German works of genius take their origin.⁸⁴

The unfortunate fact that conservative English tastes ran to the sentimental melodramas of August von Kotzebue must be considered yet another consequence and cause of the negative first impression of German literature in England.⁸⁵ This intense, but relatively short-lived,

⁸²*Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine* 4 (1799) : VI ff., quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 45. See also Stockley, *German Literature*, pp. 2-3, and Stockoe, *German Influences*, p. 20.

⁸³Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for T. Cadell jun. and W. Davies, 1799). From an extract printed in the *Edinburgh Review* 12 (1799) : 354, quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 46. Note the early reference to Huns.

⁸⁴*Monthly Magazine* 5 (1798), pp. 172 f., quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 47.

⁸⁵Morgan, *British Magazines*, pp. 44, 53-54, 96. The murder of reactionary writer Kotzebue by Jena student Karl Sand, a fanatical member of the *Burschenschaft*, or revolutionary student corps, suggests the possibility of an early Anglophobic component of German nationalism, especially in light of the incongruity between generally approving, even enthusiastic, British

obsession with mediocrity not only deflected interest away from more substantial works, but also served to legitimize the wave of anti-German reaction and ridicule that had quelled initial enthusiasm. Germnaophile critic Henry Crabb Robinson scolded the editors of the *Monthly Register* in a series of letters published in 1802: “You know nothing about German literature. . . . Kotzebue’s and Iffland’s plays and Lafontaine’s novels are not German literature.”⁸⁶ Nevertheless, a typical review of German literature at the close of the eighteenth century expressed, at best, a polite condescension:

The German works which have faintly aspired to the name of genius have not yet been tried by the voice of time; and such are the remaining marks of barbarism and prolixity (the latter a most unclassical defect), that it will probably be long before Germany shall produce a classical author, admitted like those of England, France, Spain, and Italy, into universal fame. In short, we admire the Germans merely as disciples, but cannot venerate them as masters; nor can candour abstain from a smile, when a German critic pronounces the dictates of his own imperfect taste upon the works of more enlightened nations.⁸⁷

Such lofty contempt for things German anticipated similar attitudes found in later articles on national character and other subjects far removed from literature.

audiences and widespread German objections to Kotzebue’s sentimental excesses and their effect on the portrayal of German national character abroad. While it became generally acknowledged that Sand acted alone, his fellow *Burschen* worshiped him as a “misguided martyr” after his execution in 1916 by the Prussian government.

⁸⁶From “German Literature. By a gentleman resident in one of the most popular of the German universities,” *The Monthly Register and Encyclopedic Magazine* (1802) 1 : 397, quoted in Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 55. Henry Crabb Robinson was an Englishman living in Weimar, Germany who knew Goethe, Schiller and Wieland, and was one of the group surrounding the English literary Germanophiles: Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, Liegh Hunt and De Quincey. See Mander, *German Cousins*, pp. 31-32.

⁸⁷From a review of Wilhelm Rander’s *Tour Through Germany* (London: Longman, 1801) in the *Critical Review* (December 1801), quoted in Stokoe, *German Influences*, p. 44.

Because the admirers of German letters seem to have been much less outspoken than the critics, caution must be exercised in judging the reception of German literature solely on the basis of the reviews. If Crabb Robinson seems like a lone voice, however, it may reflect the fact that some of the major writers of his generation influenced by German literature—Coleridge, Wordsworth, Scott, Southey and Lamb—defy definition as a Germanophilic “school.” They may have admired Germany, as did many of their contemporaries, in reaction to France and Jacobinism, but their German influences often proved to be superficial and their Germanophilia only lukewarm.⁸⁸ Coleridge’s interest in German philosophy, especially Kantian, led him to live and study for several months in Germany during the winter of 1798-9. He nonetheless found Kant’s moral teaching “stoical and loveless” and rejected what he considered Goethe’s “blasphemous” paganism and immorality.⁸⁹ While Coleridge’s praises of German literature caught the attention of his contemporaries, his generalizations and comments seem to anticipate much of the criticism of the following century. “There is a nimiety, a too-muchness in all Germans,” he wrote in his *Table Talk*, “it is the national fault.” He imputed to the Germans a moral ambiguity and considered them not poets but “good metaphysicians and critics: they criticized on principles previously laid down.” According to Coleridge, German literary style was “merely a method

⁸⁸Mander, *Our German Cousins*, p. 126. Stokoe, *German Influences*, pp. 86-87, 114, discusses both the rather specialized interests of Scott and Wordsworth’s, “insularity,” or distance from German literature. See also Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 51.

⁸⁹Mander, *Our German Cousins*, pp. 132, 138, 149.

acquired by them as we have acquired a style.”⁹⁰ Such were the faint praises of one of the era’s foremost literary figures.

Madame de Staël’s *Germany* redeemed to some extent the blackened reputations of Goethe and Schiller and generated much popular interest in German literature. Her explanation of the English prejudice against German literature rested principally on a difference in national character: the Germans “take pleasure in the ideal” while the English love “their laws, their manners, and their forms of worship.” “The Germans,” she wrote, “are to the human mind what pioneers are to an army,” while the English have “a dread of new systems.”⁹¹ De Staël’s work inspired Thomas Carlyle, Britain’s greatest champion of German culture during the nineteenth century, who improved receptivity to German literature through his literary, historical and critical writings.⁹² But the attraction exerted by Carlyle over his fellow Victorians partook more of a search for religion, which he found in an eclectic conception of “German Idealism,” than in any deep understanding of his mentors: Goethe, Kant, Fichte and Novalis.⁹³ Carlyle’s hero worship and his glorification of the Christian-feudal past appealed to the Victorian desire for salvation from atheism, loneliness and isolation, the by-products of a modern, democratic-industrial society.⁹⁴ The fact that Carlyle had never met Goethe, his “messiah,” and only at the age of sixty

⁹⁰*Table Talk*, vol. 2, pp. 54, 344; Allsop *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 4, quoted in Stokoe, *German Influences*, p. 142.

⁹¹de Staël, *Germany*, 1 : 150-51.

⁹²L. H. C. Thomas, “Germany, German Literature and Mid Nineteenth-Century British Novelists,” chap. 3, in L. H. C. Thomas, ed., *Affinities* (London: Oswald Wolff, n.d.), p. 36.

⁹³Mander, *Our German Cousins*, pp. 93, 100-101.

⁹⁴Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, pp. 77, 311.

visited Germany, where he complained about the beds, noisy hotels and food, reveals Carlyle's Germany to have been largely a product of his imagination.⁹⁵ The decline of his influence, which began long before his death in 1881, indicates not only that a Victorian appetite for eccentric, and often bombastic, soul-searching had abated, but also possibly that the real Germany was not living up to the ideal he had created.

Later nineteenth-century commentary on the German language and literature repeated many of the earlier criticisms, although with less vehemence. Literary reviews and even general articles on Germany harped on the "awful" German language with its "unreadable," "crabbed letters," "plumping phrases" and "cyclopean sentences," or its "clumsy" and "antediluvian" styles.⁹⁶ But gradual acceptance of German literature brought more benign appraisals of German literary "nobility," "purity," "dignity," "inward truth," and "psychological depth," of "sincere," "free, lofty and joyful" style and "good, true, beautiful and important" content.⁹⁷ Earlier dismissal of Goethe as "absurd, puerile, incongruous, vulgar and affected," of German authors as "pathetic," or of German literary taste as the "vulgarity of pacific, comfortable Burghers, occupied with stuffing, cooking, and providing for their coarse personal

⁹⁵Thomas, "German Literature and Mid Nineteenth-Century British Novelists," p. 38. See also Mander, *Our German Cousins*, pp. 104-6, on how Carlyle's Calvinist orientation distorted his interpretation of Goethe, in particular his translation of *Entsagen*, or moderation, as "renunciation."

⁹⁶Vernon Rendall, "The Germans At Home," pp.183-84; Henry W. Wolff, "German Anglophobia," *Monthly Review* 3 (April 1901) : 63; A. Eubule Evans, "Germany Under the Empire," *Contemporary Review*, reprinted in *Living Age* 207 (January-March 1896) : 542-43; "Germany," *Blackwood's*, p.121; "Traits and Tendencies of German Literature," *Blackwood's* 50 (August 1841) : 150.

⁹⁷"Germany," *Blackwood's*, p.122; S. C. de Soissons, "The Modern German Novel," *Contemporary Review* 85 (February 1904) : 246-54.

accommodations,” faded with the advent of more balanced and differentiated criticisms of a wider array of authors.⁹⁸ German writers had also gained a reputation for originality and inventiveness, and had benefitted from a popular conception of romanticism, the “romance that lurks in every German heart.”⁹⁹ But resistance to crediting Germans with literary ability lingered on into the 1890s with absurd claims such as the insistence on the Semitic origin of all talented German writers, an assessment reminiscent of the allowance made in 1856 for the Gallic wit of half-Jewish Heinrich Heine: “he is as much German as a pheasant [*sic*] is an English bird, or a potato an Irish vegetable.”¹⁰⁰ A genuine appreciation of German literature did take root in Britain, but only against a persistent reaction that had less to do with lack of appreciation than with national prejudice. No sooner had Germany “arrived” than the charge was leveled that all her greatness lay in the past, and that an “abundance of mediocrity” in the “land of Goethe” had brought about the “falling off of genuine literary productions.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁸“German Genius and Taste,” Review of Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship*, *Edinburgh Review* 42 (August 1825) : 414-17. Compare this review with Elizabeth Lee, “German Drama of Today,” *Cornhill*, reprinted in *Living Age*. 234 (July-September 1902) : 156-66, or de Soissons, “The Modern German Novel,” *Contemporary Review* , pp. 246-54.

⁹⁹Lee, “German Drama of Today,” *Cornhill*, p. 166. Positive comments and praise for imaginative, enthusiastic and “ingenious” elements in German literature appear as early as 1825 along with harsh criticisms in “German Genius and Taste,” *Edinburgh Review*, pp. 414-16.

¹⁰⁰“German Wit: Heinrich Heine,” *Westminster Review* 65 (January 1856) : 6-7. Charles Lowe, Berlin correspondent of the Times and biographer of Wilhelm II, expressed the idea that no true Teutonic literature, only Semitic, existed in the German language, and that most of the leading authors and actors in Germany were Jewish. See “The German Newspaper Press,” *Nineteenth Century* 30 (December 1891) : 868, and “The New Emperor and His New Chancellor,” *National Review*, 18 (September 1891) : 29.

¹⁰¹Von Seckendorff, “William the Cad,” *Free Review* 8 (July 1897) : 338-39.

If the foregoing synopsis of British reactions to German letters seems overly negative, it nevertheless exposes the critical voice that played continuously in the reviews and magazines. Whether or not a reader of Kant or Goethe, or some popular translation, ever paused to consider the author's Germanness seems less relevant than the negative summation of German national character that gained momentum in the press. This early negativity underscores the fact that British Germanophobia before World War I did not spring spontaneously from the soil of diplomatic and political antagonism alone. British contempt for things German covered all aspects of German culture from literature, religion and philosophy to social customs, education, business and politics, each of which came under the lens of British scrutiny during the nineteenth century. Germany's evolution within two decades of Bismarck's accession to power from England's "poor relation" into a formidable competitor for world power and market share only increased the intensity and shifted the direction of the antagonism. Writers after 1871 began to examine the meteoric rise of Germany closely and, according to contemporary social theory, to conceive of the British and German Empires locked in a Darwinian struggle for supremacy, a theme kept alive in the public imagination through popular invasion scare literature. A remarkable continuity nevertheless existed in the opinions of writers separated by more than two generations. The same patronizing air of grudging admiration mixed with contempt, ridicule and moral condemnation remained, only with this major difference: the new alarmism shifted its focus away from the deleterious effects of German "speculative" philosophy and "immoral" literature onto the more "concrete" phantoms of military invasion and economic sabotage.

Backward Germany

The theme of backwardness permeated nearly all stereotypes of Old Germany—that is, Germany prior to widespread recognition of literary and scholarly achievement, nineteenth-century military victories, political unification and economic expansion. The history of witch persecutions, the devastation and horrors of the Thirty Years War, from 1618 to 1648, as well as the decline of the once prosperous Hanse towns, furnished a dismal picture of petty feudal tyrants lording it over servile bürgerers and backward, superstitious peasants. Economic relations between England and Germany declined and remained depressed during the seventeenth century. High tariffs on books, the lack of translators and the vogue of French literature, combined with a dearth of literary output in Germany itself, conspired to stifle any great knowledge or appreciation of German literature in England, even at a time when English writers, particularly Shakespeare, exerted an important influence in Germany. The Hanoverian Georges did little to remedy this situation and “their bad manners and personal insignificance tended to develop in the English aristocracy a certain feeling of superiority and even contempt.”¹⁰²

Longstanding indifference to German political affairs continued until 1755, when the statesmanship and military exploits of Frederick the Great won broad English admiration and sympathy. But British receptivity to a Germany of rising intellectual and political significance confronted some devastating obstacles after a century of relative neglect. B. Q. Morgan has observed:

¹⁰²Morgan, *British Magazines*, p. 37, also mentions German familiarity with Joseph Addison, John Milton, Ossian, Thomas Percy, Alexander Pope, Samuel Richardson, the Earl of Shaftesbury, James Thomson, and Edward Young.

Reliable knowledge of the German people's language, culture, and ideals came slowly. It is not surprising, therefore, that when sporadic interest in some phase of German culture did develop, it should take the form of extravagant praise or bitter denunciation. There was no broad, comprehensive view of German conditions, no fair standard for a comparison or correlation of values.¹⁰³

On the eve of Germany's late eighteenth-century literary and cultural renaissance British knowledge of Germany remained paltry and affected by earlier stereotypical themes: the moral, yet unrefined barbarians of Tacitus, German piety versus Faustian diabolism, the simplistic, natural fool versus the slovenly boor, the industrious yet politically inept bürger. These conflicting images reflected an ambivalence toward the Germans that found expression in British reactions to German culture.

As events in Europe during the nineteenth century turned more attention to German politics, the unpolitical German became the dominant theme of another stereotypical duality, especially during the revolutionary period of 1848 when fanatical students, know-it-all professors and reactionary aristocrats posed familiar figures. The Old German image of the politically and socially naive, rustic "German Michael," the antithesis of political fanaticism, would survive even amidst the harsh glare of Bismarckian era nationalism and fears of Germany's growing economic and military power. Declared as late as the 1890s to be "typical of the views still held by the vast majority of Englishmen on the Kaiser's subjects," this embodiment of England's "poor relation" has been described as follows:

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 39.

He is a shaggy-looking scamp, this fellow, wearing an English railway-porter's cap, a kind of bunched Norfolk jacket and trousers stuffed into Russian peasant top-boots; he smokes a long porcelain pipe, and, of course, wears blue glasses.¹⁰⁴

During the nineteenth century the image of "New Germany" emerged with stereotypes of automaton soldiers, cruel officers, meddling officials, unscrupulous merchants, plodding clerks, inept colonists, servile workers and peasants, politically retrograde women and degenerate children. These negative images would serve as self-satisfying foils to notions of British superiority and would provide ammunition against proponents of the German model in education, trade practices and military discipline during an era of accelerating economic, colonial and diplomatic rivalry.



FIGURE 6. The German Michael. From *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday* (January 18 1896), p. 19.

Additionally, the stigma of diplomatic duplicity and blackmail would arise from the policies of Bismarck and his successors under Wilhelm II. These two national figures personified different aspects of a modern yet strangely feudal New Germany, an image that, in some respects, would be built upon the ruins of the old. By destroying the idealistic Old German image of morality, honesty and heroism, under the pretense of revealing some horrible truth lurking within,

¹⁰⁴Wile, *Our German Cousins*, p. 9. The persistence of the German Michael stereotype reinforced a general belief in fast-growing Germany's political and emotional immaturity. See Hoover, *God, Germany and Britain*, p. 57.

Germanophobes could indulge in a kind of reactionary iconoclasm. Indeed, both old and new images tended to be negative because the Old German “virtues” always bore a taint of inferiority, while even the most positive assessments of New Germany carried an implicit warning to either emulate or fall prey to the new menace.

The dualistic nature of stereotypes allowed their connection with either positive or negative imagery. Wishful thinkers entertained the moral stereotype of Tacitus and the themes of racial and Protestant affinities despite charges of German reversion to barbarism. And while some ridiculed German political naivete, many still stuck to a belief in Germany’s eventual evolution toward the English constitutional model. Some ultra-escapists simply denied the capacity of the Germans to become a serious rival and dwelt on images of a quaint, picturesque and backward Germany. Alarmists tended to adopt the more Machiavellian imagery of Germans as capable and industrious but immoral or amoral. They frequently coupled these stereotypes with the themes of inevitable war and German opposition to civilization and Christianity.

IV. NEW GERMANY: STEREOTYPES AND CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF GERMANY DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Despite harsh criticism still being meted out to German writers and philosophers during pre-Victorian decades, interest in the land and people of Goethe and Schiller did survive the earlier onslaught of anti-Jacobin Germanophobia in Britain. In fact, the German stereotype retained many, if not all, of the positive characteristics inherited from Tacitus which became incorporated in the image of Old Germany, a combination of Madame de Staël's cultivated land of chivalric ideals, honesty and moral uprightness with the conception of Germany as England's poor relation, striving to be like England herself. *Blackwood's*, for example, approved of this blend of wholesome mediocrity, portraying Hanoverian soldiers as honest, sober, music-loving, scientifically knowledgeable, and, if "adapted . . . not for great public distinction," leading well-mannered, pure and simple lives.¹ Such conditional admiration included an admission that Germans displayed the "Protestant" virtues of humility, modesty, thrift and industry, combined with more originality, less status consciousness, and a greater capacity for enjoying life than the English.² By the 1890s, however, even German *Gemüthlichkeit*, a word signifying inward as

¹"The King's German Legion," vol. 43 (June 1838) : 741, 743.

²"Cousins German," *Cornhill*, pp. 297-98. Self-criticism centering on the English incapacity for enjoying life compared with, for example, French *joie de vivre* did not impinge upon the overriding assumption of British cultural superiority, but represented rather a price to be paid for imperial greatness. See Gwynn, "Success of the Anglo-Saxons," p. 354, on English ready acceptance of a monotonous and monogamous existence.

well as outward “cheerfulness” or “comfort,” which described a positive facet of the Old or South German stereotype opposite in nature to English “stiffness and reserve,” appeared to be threatened with extinction under modern Germany’s “consciousness of new-born dignity”.³ How this transition came about, and how German political developments gave rise to stereotypes of German political ineptitude as a means of both preserving an air of British superiority and projecting the worst aspects of nationalism and imperialism onto the Germans, is the subject of this chapter.

Even before imperial rivalries developed between Britain and Germany during the mid-1880s, a psychological rivalry had been played out on cultural grounds, as seen in negative British reactions to German literature and theology. This game of national one-up-man-ship also extended to political and social commentary as German nationalism, reform and revolutionary movements became items of interest in British periodicals. Defining German national character often served as a vicarious means of predicting future outcomes, particularly during the revolutionary year of 1848 and, later, in coming to terms with Bismarckian Germany’s transition from the innocuous and cultured land once admired by Prince Albert and Queen Victoria toward the Prussian model of militaristic diplomacy and efficient, but reactionary, government. Throughout the century British writers produced a significant body of literature aimed at exposing the “German Mind” or “German Character,” seen either as an inherent cause or result of socio-economic, political and cultural realities. These excursions into “things German” included general descriptions of Germany as well as more specialized social commentary about

³Evans, “Germany Under the Empire,” pp. 548-49. For an earlier description of *Gemüthlichkeit* see “Germany,” *Blackwood’s*, p. 127.

various facets of German life. “Touring” articles, written more in the narrative tradition of de Staël than functional guides such as Baedeker’s, continued to highlight the quaint and curious features of pastoral Old Germany, but did not hesitate to register complaints about modern developments or point out lingering areas of German backwardness amidst rapid modernization. More specialized articles that targeted New Germany usually dealt with particular issues, institutions or groups, either for purposes of comparison with English equivalents or to argue a case for or against the German model. Many of the statements about German character, however, exude a timeless quality, as if the Germans would always be of a singular nature, the boundaries of which extended to encompass contradictions born of changed circumstances. Biographical articles also provided a window on German character by endeavoring to discover how famous, or infamous, individuals fit or departed from the stereotypical mold.

A new strain of Germanophobia followed political developments in Germany from the end of the Napoleonic Wars, through German unification and the foundation of Empire in 1871, up to the advent of World War I propaganda. Perception of Old German political incapacity and subservience to authority receded before apprehensions about fanatical nationalism, socialism, Bismarckian *Machtpolitik* and, eventually, imperial ambition. It would be misleading, however, to present this shift from old to new as a linear progression from good to bad, or from innocuous to menacing, concomitant with Germany’s rise to great power status. Many demeaning traits which constituted a mark of inferiority in the Old German stereotype remained in place. While Germany’s expansion in the latter nineteenth century generated new concerns and appraisals, sometimes positive as in the case of the German educational or industrial models, the emergence of new, disturbing stereotypical elements also evoked an idealized portrait of Germany’s past as a

hopeful reminder of the Germans' "true" nature. This persistent belief in the comfortable, innocuous, older stereotype found expression, for example, in images of a pastoral, romantic South versus an aggrandizing Prussian North, or a liberal Anglophilic versus a conservative Anglophobic Germany. Such wishful thinking furnished, in a frustratingly vague way, continual hope for Germany's transition toward an English-style constitutional monarchy, much as the notion of racial kinship was touted as the basis for an Anglo-German diplomatic alliance. However, the idealized image of pacific, pure, wholesome, Anglophile, impractical, unpolitical, agricultural Old Germany also became the proverbial straw man behind which everything objectionable about New Germany could be revealed and lambasted. The perceived Prussianization of German politics, German militarism, imperial rivalry and diplomatic blackmail presented both Liberals and Conservatives multiple rationales for alarmist Germanophobia, which news of growing German Anglophobia at the century's end, and the outrageous statements of Kaiser Wilhelm II, only served to exacerbate. To a great extent, therefore, the idealized or innocuous aspects of the Old German stereotype represented what British writers and readers wished to see, and the threatening or deplorable aspects of New Germany what they feared.

The Unpolitical German

Political affiliation in Britain, while it had virtually no bearing on the use or non-use of stereotypes, naturally gave rise to a significant disparity of opinion on Germany. British Liberals generally entertained optimism about gradual German political evolution toward an English-style parliamentary system, and to this end supported and praised German progressives and socialists.

In contrast, British Conservatives usually remained skeptical of German statesmanship and political maturity, especially in light of a rising socialist movement, and thus emphasized the appropriateness and importance of maintaining the authoritarian Prussian monarchical system for the Germans' own sake. To backward-looking Conservatives Germany presented a living tableau of a glorified feudal past, whereas most Liberals sympathized with the struggle for freedom of England's "continental cousin" against formidable obstacles born of unfavorable historical circumstances. Germanophiles on both sides thus nurtured idealized images: the Liberal ideal originating in a vague notion of a historical German, or Saxon, "love of freedom"; the Conservative counterpart exemplified by the Prussian model of enlightened and efficient monarchy. Despite this division, both Liberals and Conservatives could mock German political ineptitude in the struggle against, or acquiescence to, autocratic rule, and consider Germany a hopelessly backward conglomeration of largely anachronistic feudal states. It seems nonetheless remarkable that conservative *Blackwood's* estimations of German disunity, lack of patriotism, political ineptitude and degradation during the 1830s and 40s would resound in the Liberal-Radical *Westminster* and *Fortnightly* reviews during the 1890s and 1900s. British readers learned once again that Germans are "particularists by nature," that they "are neither by nature or habit a political people," that they lacked "sound political instinct."⁴

⁴"The Archbishop of Cologne and the King of Prussia," *Blackwood's*, p. 767; "Germany," *Blackwood's*, p. 130; W. Miller, "The Making of Germany," *Westminster Review* 133 (February 1890) : 126; [Calchas], "Will Germany Fail?" *Fortnightly Review* 69 (April 1901) : 576-77, 589.

Early Nationalism, German Students and Dueling

Notwithstanding late eighteenth-century British anti-Jacobin Germanophobia, which remained circumscribed within the purview of literary criticism, the first cracks in the broader paradigm of Old German passivity and patience appeared with reports of the rise of German nationalism after Napoleon's defeat. *Blackwood's* review of "Hodgskin's Travels in Germany" (1820) reported that the "ancient temper of calmness and mildness" of the German people had given way to a "diseased state of the public mind," indicated by the accolades heaped on political writers whose "wild theories and visionary doctrines," promulgated "with a rashness and wickedness," had unexpectedly found favor "among a nation whose habits are in general those of good sense and moderation." This dangerous "fermentation" of popular discontent had arisen from the effect of "narrow-minded" government policy on a people "degraded to the most perfect indifference" to death and suffering.⁵ While the more Conservative, Germanophilic reviewer generally agreed with Hodgskin as to this state of affairs in Germany, he objected to the writer's denigration of the tombs of sovereigns, his unflattering opinions of German literature and philosophy, his attack on George IV's Hanover policy, and what he perceived as an attempt to portray all governments as an "artful contrivance of tyrants" to be swept away and supplanted with "pure reason." Indicative of the emotional controversy excited by divergent opinions on Germany, which had become a laboratory for political speculation, he also blasted Hodgskin as a "literary esquire . . . radical traveler and Cockney philosopher," whose limited knowledge did not justify the "extravagant arrogance" of his pronouncements on German life and society.⁶

⁵"Hodgskin's Travels in Germany," *Blackwood's* 6 (February 1820) : 541-42.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 536-37.

Liberals and Conservatives could agree, however, in their disapproval of the activities of German student unions, or *Burschenschaften*, the most literal symbol of “Young” Germany, whose strange blend of quasi-religious, neo-feudal, revolutionary, radical nationalism certainly appeared at odds with the idealized English model of a more secular, utilitarian evolution toward parliamentary government.⁷ The liberal nationalist student movement had been suppressed under the 1819 Carlsbad Decrees, which implemented the “Metternich system” of strict censorship, espionage and university supervision after the murder of reactionary writer and journalist August von Kotzebue.⁸ Whether or not the murder of this once enormously popular writer prejudiced English minds against the *Burschenschaft*, a significant body of opinion likely held that the suppression of the universal *Burschenschaft* movement allowed German nature to return to its “inherent” morality and propriety.⁹ Descriptions of fanaticism and rowdy behavior overwhelmed any admiration for the student corps’ patriotic spirit or defense of academic freedom. In fact, the superficial aspects of the *Burschen* phenomenon as a departure from more benign circumstances remained the focus of criticism without regard to philosophical complexities or socio-political realities prompting *Burschenschaft* ideology.¹⁰ In 1824 the

⁷“Young Germany” originally connoted a very positive image of cultured Anglophile German liberals who wanted to see Germany move toward parliamentary reforms. But the designation could also signify the more raucous nationalism of the German student-corps and could be used interchangeably with “New Germany” to stress a rising potential military, economic and imperial menace (see p. 11 above).

⁸See p. 120, n. 85 above.

⁹See Howitt, *Life in Germany*, pp. 92, 94.

¹⁰Such as, for example, student leader Karl Follen’s use of religion as an integrating factor for the movement, or his pessimistic distrust of all government as a means of justifying alienated, dispossessed intellectuals in a corporative system. See Leonard Krieger, *The German Idea of*

Liberal *Edinburgh Review* characterized the typical German student as arrogant, holding “ludicrously erroneous ideas of honour,” and defending only the supposed “academic” freedoms to act and dress contrary to custom and to “besot himself with beer and tobacco.” Such “disorderly Teutonic youths” treated outsiders with contempt, lacked humility and discipline in comparison with “sober” British students or their own fellow German citizens, and wasted their academic years indulging in scandalous behavior before graduating to *Burghertum* and Philistinism.¹¹ But, more importantly, from a political perspective German student activism stood in stark contrast to the idealized image of a “patient,” “educated” and “enlightened” people deserving, but denied, constitutional concessions from an autocratic government—an image more aptly suited to the intellectual and Anglophile Young Germany movement of the 1830s. True to his Liberal stance, the writer for the *Edinburgh* scorned any “partiality for Prussian despotism” and denounced arguments that Germans were content to live under arbitrary government or that they would thus be better prepared for a real constitution, seeing in delay, rather, a cause of contention, bitterness and a spur to radical groups.¹²

From the 1820s onward student exemplars of Gothic barbarism were deemed excitable, crazy, medieval and murderous and, although conceded to be “leaders of the mobs, or the heroes of the barricades” during the revolutionary period of 1848, were also considered “vapouring,” “hot-headed,” “*fancied* enthusiasts,” and the *Burschenschaften* regarded as “pretty safety valves

Freedom (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 268-69.

¹¹“A Tour in Germany,” *Edinburgh Review* 41 (October 1824) : 80-82, 85.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 91, 93-95.

enough to let off the exuberance of studentic steam.”¹³ This somewhat contradictory image of German students as posturing, yet potentially harmful, juveniles survived into the 1890s, not only in descriptions of a “truly dangerous class” of “superficially book-learned” individuals who had obtained a “sufficient smattering of letters, philosophy, economics, and science enough to make them the readiest tools of the agitator,” but also in accounts of student dueling, where the sham-comical and threatening elements of the stereotype came together.¹⁴ Despite an early notion that student societies, with their staunch devotion to patriotism and honor, promoted the *Alt Deutsche* virtues of sincerity and strict chastity, German dueling, especially student dueling, posed a source of frustration for German liberals and a disappointment for British Germanophiles who sought similarities with England in the emergence of New Germany.¹⁵ From the mid-1820s, when the *Edinburgh Review* and *Blackwood's* reported on the commonplace occurrence of student duels provoked on the slightest pretext, until the outbreak of World War I, a perverse fascination kept alive in the British press what became a traditional antipathy for this curious and ominous relic of feudal times.¹⁶

¹³“Germany,” *Blackwood's*, p. 133; “A Glimpse At Germany and Its Parliament,” *Blackwood's*, p. 530; “What Would Revolutionizing Germany Be At?” *Blackwood's* 64 (September 1848) : 374-75.

¹⁴“Mr. Dawson’s *The Germans*,” *Saturday Review* 77 (February 1894) : 207. Many British readers no doubt believed, as did the Prussian government, that the *Burschen* were “secret and really revolutionary associations.” See “Fritz Reuter and the German Students’ Clubs,” *Review of Reviews* 11 (April 1895) : 348.

¹⁵Apologies for German student dueling can be found in “Letters From the Continent” No.II, *Blackwood's* 17 (March 1825) : 330-31, 334, and Howitt, *Life in Germany*, pp. 46-49.

¹⁶Early reports of student dueling can be found in “A Tour in Germany,” *Edinburgh Review*, p. 80 and J. G., “Letters From the Continent” No.I, on German duelling, *Blackwood's* 16 (November 1824) : 557-59. On how Evangelicals, as part of the reform movement, had

The German student stereotype retained its suggestive power, especially when it resurfaced during the 1890s after the youthful Kaiser Wilhelm II's accession to power. It offered a convenient symbol of unbridled, irresponsible nationalism mixed with immature politics and neo-feudal militarism, all of which seemed to prognosticate Germany's ominous future direction.¹⁷ In 1893 *Ludgate's Magazine* published a luridly illustrated narrative entitled "Student Duelling [*sic*] in Germany" in which the author recounted his firsthand experience witnessing the *Mensur*, or ritualized sword-fight, between students. He wrote from the perspective of an English tourist encountering the strange appearance of the many students whose "square, good-humored faces, . . . were so seamed across and across with sword-cuts that it was hard to tell where the smile ended and the scars began."¹⁸ On the way to the dueling grounds he recalled a conversation with one of the participants: "'Lot's of blood let this morning,' said a warlike Teuton as he stuffed his mouth full of sausage. I shuddered, and took another sip of cognac." When he asked this "murderous youth" his reason for fighting and discovered the provocation to be nothing more than the rude stare of a stranger, he remarked to himself, "What a curious thing this sense of honour is!" and vainly tried to "deprecate" the youth's "politely

helped to discredited dueling among the English aristocracy during the 1820s and 30s see Elie Halevy, *Triumph of Reform*, p. 162. Taking the high moral ground on dueling could bolster national self-image as seen in the view that the persistence of the practice in France was due to a greater degree of "animal spirits" among a people with fewer religious scruples. See Edward Lytton Bulwer, *England and the English*, ed., Standish Meacham, in *Classics of British Historical Literature*, John Clive, gen. ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), originally published in 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, publisher, 1833), p. 60.

¹⁷George W. Smalley, "A Visit to Prince Bismarck," *Fortnightly Review*, reprinted in *Living Age* 198 (July-September 1893) : 654, for example, described Wilhelm II as "boyish, and even schoolboyish."

¹⁸"Student Duelling in Germany," *Ludgate's Magazine* 6 (November 1893) : 43.

disguised contempt” at hearing that an Oxford undergraduate in a similar situation “would not thirst for the stranger’s blood.”¹⁹ The comical elements of this grisly tale stand out in the “sleepy-eyed policeman,” who “knows . . . what is afoot” (“Boys will be boys, and if the Kaiser and Prince Bismarck don’t mind, why should a poor, simple *Schutzmann* trouble his head about the matter?”) and the “inevitable and omnipresent glass of beer,” but the ghastly results of this “quiet and gentle passage of arms” reveal the barbarity of the custom. In one duel the defeated loses “a piece of the scalp about two inches long and one broad,” in another “his cheek is laid open from the upper lip to the ear, and two teeth are cut clean asunder” before the injured are patched up by the attending doctor (“How like a butcher he looked!”).²⁰

The reference to the indulgent policeman would have reminded many readers of Wilhelm II’s defense of the *Mensuren* to a meeting of German students in Bonn, May 1891, when he stated his hope that “the spirit which is fostered in their *Corps*, and which is steeled by strength and courage, will be preserved, and that you will always take delight in handling the rapier.”²¹ Referring to this imperial faux pas, Charles Lowe, Wilhelm’s English biographer and frequent apologist, commented euphemistically in the conservative *National Review* at the time that “the young Emperor is apt to let himself be carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment.”²² But the Kaiser’s pronouncements, as well as reports of dueling deaths in Germany, received enough publicity in the British press well into the twentieth century to reinforce the seeming ubiquity of

¹⁹Ibid., p. 44.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 44, 47-48.

²¹Quoted in Dawson, *Germany and the Germans*, vol. 1, p. 247.

²²Lowe, “The New Emperor and His New Chancellor,” p. 27.

what had long been seen as uncivilized, ungentlemanly behavior.²³ In March of 1890, for example, the *Pall Mall Gazette* reported some details of the kaiser's dueling edict which made an encounter between officers permissible when personal violence had been offered without apology, or an insult had been proffered to a lady relative or betrothed of the challenging officer.²⁴ In the *New Review* of June 1896 Karl Blind accused the German government of impeding the reform of this "hideous face-slashing" practice.²⁵ The *Free Review* in 1897 bluntly paraphrased the kaiser's military code of honor, "'that the civilian has no honour to speak of, and that it is the duty of every soldier to kill or maim that contemptible creature who dares to offend him.'"²⁶ And while the *Mensur* rarely ended in a fatality as compared with duels using sabers or pistols, which was more likely in an encounter between army officers, the fact that authority figures, such as professors and government officials, condoned or encouraged the technically illegal practice as a form of institutionalized violence accentuated a very clear distinction between English and German societies.²⁷

²³An article entitled "Fatal Duel Between German officers," *Morning Post*, as late as 12 May 1911, p. 10, described the rules of combat as pistols at fifteen paces, the exchange of shots to continue until one of the duelists was rendered unable to fight.

²⁴"The Kaiser's Dueling Edict," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 25 March 1890, p. 4.

²⁵Karl Blind, "The Duelling Craze," *New Review* 14 (June 1896) : 663.

²⁶Von Seckendorff, "William the Cad," *Free Review*, p. 343.

²⁷According to Norbert Elias, *The Germans* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 63-65, 155-58, the nineteenth-century rise of Prussian Germany to a position of power through a series of military victories over Denmark (1864), Austria (1866) and France (1871), and the incorporation of portions of the German middle class into the establishment through student fraternities and dueling societies, led to the adoption of an aristocratic "warrior code" in place of a humanitarian code. The new "aristocracy" of senior civil servants, university professors and students (i.e., anyone who could engage in a duel) traded the freedom of the

Old German Passivity and Servility: 1830-48

Dueling and dueling scars among German students and army officers presented a glaring refutation of modernity, but the apparent toleration of this “warrior code” of conduct posed an even greater obstacle to hopes for Germany’s development toward an acceptable civilian parliamentary government. Fear of the consequences of dueling on German society, both from injustices perpetrated with impunity and from its general acceptance, which implied an inherent civic weakness on the part of the *Bürgerthum*, gave psychological leverage to the stereotype of “inbred” militarism. Despite civilian antipathy to army duels expressed by German liberals in 1848 and during the 1850s, the survival of the practice only confirmed the nearly ubiquitous image of German political backwardness in British periodical literature.²⁸ The pervasive notion of German submissiveness and servility, which formed the counterpart to bullyism carried on by army officers and students, and which represented one of the most damning consequences of Old German passivity, affected English evaluations of Germany for most of the century.

By 1840 reviewers from opposite political poles concluded that earlier travel accounts had yielded only a very superficial and limited knowledge of Germany and that England remained in a state of ignorance regarding her continental cousin. But these admissions scarcely impeded stereotyping of Germans by British writers. In a comprehensive critique of contemporary travel literature the *Westminster Review* complained about British ignorance of the “intricacies of German politics, the state of manners, and domestic life” and yet mocked one

masses for social prestige and a more circumscribed, symbolic freedom from the state’s “monopoly of violence.”

²⁸The German liberals’ anti-dueling stance is discussed in Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army 1640-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 126.

author in particular as naive and deficient in her portrayal of German national character by writing, “even the serious Germans cracked an occasional joke at Mrs. T’s expense . . . phlegm itself could not resist the temptation.”²⁹ *Blackwood’s* blamed the Germans themselves for being overlooked culturally by the “vain” French and “proud” British, and concluded that “slavish submission” to Louis XIV during the “era of Frenchification” had bred a “self-disowning character” and a lack of self-respect that forced the German intellect to retire “behind huge fortifications of lumbering erudition and thorny metaphysics.” Madame de Staël, who only “blew away the mists”, and Thomas Carlyle, “the great apostle of the Teutonic gospel,” both won praise for acquainting the British with the merits of German literature, but runaway enthusiasm for German culture only provoked disparagement:

. . . we will not exchange our classic Edinburgh or our titanic London for any elegant cabinet city of a Carlsruhe, spread out in courtly elegance like a lady’s fan, on the foreground stiffly adorned with long Lombardy poplars, while behind some dark sombre Schartzwald [*sic*], instinct with robbers and hobgoblins, frowns. The Goethe-maniac and Kantian apostles of Germanism, may phrase as mystically as they will; we will not exchange our British soil, where on we walk erect, for any sublime ballooning, devil knows wither, in the crescent boat of German metaphysics. We will not admit Goethe into partnership with Shakespeare.³⁰

In Charles Julius Weber, author of a four-volume “self-portrait” of his own native Germany, *Blackwood’s* had found “a brain well stored with curious scraps of book learning, such as every German must have,” and a “fluent breadth of wit . . . so far as a German can be witty.” Weber described, “methodically, as a German will,” a Germany that opened up a rich panoply of stereotypes. He compared cheerful South Germany with the “dreary,” “phlegmatic” and

²⁹“German Tourists,” *Westminster Review* 22 (April 1835) : 517, 520.

³⁰“Germany,” *Blackwood’s*, pp. 119-20, 122-23.

melancholy North whose inhabitants, like their “stepmother Nature” are “serious, monotonous, unfriendly, unwieldy, colder, more watery, more sandy . . . not cheerful, merry, and communicative, like the sons of the southern hills—without wine, without harp and song.” Weber’s comments on German national character, which the *Blackwood’s* reviewer found “particularly edifying,” painted the disarming image of a kind-hearted, earnest people who enjoyed an increased longevity due to purer morals—shades of Tacitus—and described the typical German as “earthy” and “not so nimble, merry and witty as the Frenchman . . . not so proud, whimsical and dry as the Briton; not so lazy, bigoted, and miserly as the Italian: but a plain downright honest unpretending specimen of humanity, indefatigable, solid, quiet, sensible and valiant.”³¹

The negative elements of the Old German stereotype in Weber’s work included “morbid sensibility,” superstition, pedantry, rudeness, slowness, “lumbering heaviness,” phlegm (“The North German postilion exemplifies the truly phlegmatic character, . . . nothing discomposes him so long as his pipe only smokes and his schnapps is paid.”) and servility, “pusillanimous humility,” a “dull tame submissiveness, which begot our woeful spirit of imitation, our pompous concern about trifles, and our wonderfully low estimate of our own dignity—a very dog’s humility.” Servility tarnished the stereotype of the rustic simpleton or German Michael, who “allows himself to be kicked in the rear quietly, and then asks *Was beliebt?* (What’s your will?).” The German use of certain “respectful” phrases in addressing titled personages allegedly signified a “moral debasement,” an observation indicative of the extent to which the stereotype of

³¹Ibid., pp. 124-25, 127.

political subservience had undermined evaluations of German culture and character.³² Weber attempted to soften these national character defects by appealing to the “historical grandeur” of the Teutonic race, to Germany’s medieval prominence and Christian humility, or to her newer reputation for intellectual superiority, erudition and scientific accuracy. For English writers, and probably readers, however, the negative qualities of German servility, phlegm, artistic mediocrity and political ineptitude were not so easily dismissed, because they characterized an older, more innocuous Germany that entertained no pretense of rivalry with allegedly superior English culture.

Within the paradigm of German political backwardness and inertia, German heroic resistance to French domination seemed in retrospect to be an anomaly. Napoleon’s occupation therefore supposedly benefitted Germany, not only by breaking up the Holy Roman Empire and removing an obstacle to national self-determination, but also because loose, dull and heavy Germans needed bracing, sharpening and spurring—they wanted a soul, something the English and French already had. Seven years of Napoleonic tyranny since the Battle of Jena in October 1806 had served to “regenerate national pride in response to French vanity.” By God’s grace the “instinct good in human nature . . . burst the clogs and bandages of hereditary baseness.” “One leap brought the Prussian people from the lowest depth of baseness to the proudest pinnacle of heroism. . . . every vulgar jäger in a green coat was a hero.”³³

³²Ibid., pp. 128-30.

³³“Reminiscences of the Year 1813 in Germany,” *Blackwood’s* 48 (December 1840) : 746-48.

British reactions to German political developments during the first half of the nineteenth century appear to have imbibed the spirit of anti-Jacobin hysteria and ridicule that had initially greeted German literary accomplishment at the close of the eighteenth century. Support for the “mild and paternal character” of the Prussian government accompanied distrust of “subversive” revolutionary ideas and movements simmering in Germany during the 1830s and 40s.³⁴ This attitude was based on the idea that German particularism and disunity, despite a developed cultural and ethnic sense of nationhood, had bred an indifference to “executive affairs” and political realities. Social quietism, combined with “intellectual restlessness,” a peculiar passion for “metaphysical and fantastic subjects” and a “propensity to theorize, not merely beyond, but in utter neglect and contempt of experience,” had supposedly created a dangerous condition in Germany.³⁵ An infectious enthusiasm for ideas among Germans steeped in “immense erudition” and “pedagogism,” if invested in revolutionary ideologies and put into practice, could potentially upset the “equilibrium of the social and moral order” and disturb the “uniform course of progressive improvement and prosperity.”³⁶ The double irony of German political incapacity producing unempirical philosophy or literature tainted at its source, which in turn could propagate political fanaticism, underscores the key importance of the unpolitical German stereotype in establishing a perspective on political developments in Germany. Due to the premium placed on national character, uncertainties and misgivings regarding the Germans seemed to amplify the specter of menacing and portentous political changes in Germany,

³⁴“Germany,” *Blackwood’s*, pp. 130-31, 134.

³⁵“The Archbishop of Cologne and the King of Prussia,” *Blackwood’s*, p. 767.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 768.

especially when measured in opposition to an idealized English pragmatism and model of political development.

Unrevolutionary Germany: 1848

The stigma of German political ineptitude, defined so thoroughly by the 1840s with various pronouncements in *Blackwood's* about German political degradation, disunity, indifference and lack of patriotism, came to full fruition in reports of revolutionary activity and the convocation of the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848. Still the predominant source of information in the monthly magazines on German political developments, *Blackwood's* mockingly lamented the lost glories of “old Father Rhine,” who, despite his “conceitedly-vulgar airs” and “overrated allurements,” yet retained a “spurious halo” of kindly reminiscences for the English tourist, but who had lately been despoiled by Young Germany in its “revolutionary frenzy” of the “charm of foreign bustle and movement.” The unfortunate fact that Germany had followed France’s lead and caught the “St. Vitus of revolution” created a problem for English tourists:

Since Germany, with its newborn cry for imperial unity, has appeared inclined to turn back again, in new revolutionary spirit, to old feudal times, the Rhenish hotel-keepers seem to think that they ought to appear in the characters of the old robber-knights.³⁷

Besides encountering formerly “active and obsequious” waiters, now growing fat and “pale with ill-humour at their diminished *trinkgelder*,” the English traveler, according to *Blackwood's*, might well wonder at the “bombastic and unpractical dreams” of German scholars, “children as they may be in political life,” pursuing the “ill-defined idol . . . of German unity,” or at the “general herd of men,” like a “flock of sheep”—or “pack of wolves”—taking up the

³⁷“What Would Revolutionizing Germany Be At?” *Blackwood's*, p. 373.

insane cry of over-enthusiastic students for a united Germany. The “long-pretended spirit of romance” in Germany seemed to be giving way to the pretense of “symbol-loving” Germans, fond of “parading the dress” of revolution and the “ostentatious display of the new-old imperial, so-called national cockade, the red, black, and gold colors of the old German Empire.” The events of 1848 represented, from *Blackwood’s* perspective, an aberration or a “drunken fit” of revolution and a departure from the old Germany of “patriarchal” and “peacefully disposed” cities—more specifically, from the once contented serenity of conservative South Germany. It supposedly followed that, despite the “rude, ready eloquence” of some individual speakers, the Germans, “proverbially vague in their philosophical theories, . . . show themselves still more so in their political views.”³⁸

In a second article appearing only two months later, *Blackwood’s* reconfirmed the observation that quiet Germany had embraced anarchy. Radicalism was in vogue in Frankfurt and in Cologne, “always a nest of rascality and filth, where ”the writer found “miscreants in blouses, belching out their unholy hymns of revolution” and the manners of the people, under the influence of irresponsible demagogues, to have become “rude and ruffianly in the extreme.” The article summarized the political situation in Germany: the Rhenish states, swayed by France and revolutionaries with the help of “expatriated journalists and crack-brained political poets,” had granted constitutions by the score, while Prussia, whose policy “has always been of the most tortuous and deceptive kind,” had affected liberalism in order to distinguish herself from Austria. The public address delivered on 18 March 1848 by the Prussian king Frederick Wilhelm IV, who “remained true to his original character of charlatan,” stood as a singular testament to “royal

³⁸Ibid., pp. 373-75, 378, 382.

confidence in public sottishness and credulity.” Germany’s leading democrats, “however wild in their principles,” were credited with seeing through this ruse, but they had become distracted from their primary goal of establishing democratic freedoms and fixated instead upon the “dim phantom of German unity.”³⁹ The Frankfurt Parliament, described as a “motley assemblage” whose countenances “were generally mean and vulgar, and in some cases absurdly bizarre,” was filled with “incapable” politicians with “wild and crude ideas,” uncomprehending bürgerers and merchant “fattened on tobacco and beer,” “crazy students in their medieval garb,” professors and the stereotypical “recluse scholar . . . proverbially a man unfit to manage his own affairs.” Revolutionary excesses, such as the brutal murder of Prince Felix Lichnowsky at the gates of Frankfurt by a “cowardly and rascal rout,” were condemned and likened to another atrocity of that fateful year, namely “the unexampled abomination of Christian men adopting cannibalism, . . . as was the case not a month ago at Messina!” As to the Assembly and German political aspirations: “Heaven help the idiots! [W]hat would they be at? They have got all manner of constitutions, liberty of the press—though there is not a man in Germany who could write a decent leading article—and a great deal more freedom than is good for them already.”⁴⁰

While the “ludicrously tragic” drama of 1848 and its aftermath continued to be attributed to the intransigence of Frederick William IV and a “tyranny of professors” acting as state functionaries, the idea also persisted that the reflective character and passivity of the Germans

³⁹“A Glimpse At Germany and Its Parliament,” *Blackwood’s*, pp. 516-19, 521.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 530-33.

themselves contributed to their own political deficiencies.⁴¹ Despite earlier charges that German speculative philosophy had bred a contempt for sober inquiry and created an un-Christian, egotistical and godless contempt for authority in a generation of Germans that sought change through violent revolution, the perception endured that incapacity for political revolution itself distinguished Germany from France and England.⁴² An 1898 retrospective in the *Review of Reviews* characterized the events of 1848 in Germany as a revolution that “stood still before thrones” and reiterated the common theme that the German “revolution” bore no resemblance to the great historic revolutions of 1640 and 1688 in England, or those of 1789, 1830 and 1848 in France.⁴³ The attribution of Germany’s still-born revolution primarily to the German’s unpolitical nature tended to gloss over many real political factors.⁴⁴ German political retardation was also considered a result of historical circumstances, such as political disunity, particularism

⁴¹Miller, “The Making of Germany,” *Westminster Review*, p. 132; “German Professors,” *Cornhill*, p. 342, 346; “French, Germans and English,” *British Quarterly Review*, pp. 351-53.

⁴²See “Results of German Philosophy,” *British Quarterly Review* 7 (May 1848) : 406, 426-29.

⁴³“The First German Parliament,” *Review of Reviews* 17 (March 1898) : 245. Many readers probably shared the sentiment that “Freedom may have died in Germany in 1848, but the cause of Freedom never dies,” expressed in “The Jubilee of the Awakening,” *Review of Reviews* 17 (March 1898) : 339.

⁴⁴For example, T. C. W. Blanning, *Reform and Revolution in Mainz, 1743-1803* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974) points to a philosophical divergence from the French and English enlightenment in the German conceptual association of political liberty with state authority, and other factors which include political fragmentation and the subsequent isolation of peasant revolts, generally favorable economic conditions, enlightened reforms, the intelligentsia’s vested interest in the bureaucracy, the conservative solidarity of guilds, and disenchantment with French laissez-faire economics and resentment over the real or imagined depredations of French invaders. See also T. C. W. Blanning, “German Jacobins and the French Revolution,” *Historical Journal* 23 (1980) : 985-1002.

and lack of centralization, that impeded the adoption of British-style civil liberties, ministerial responsibility and parliamentary government. The weak imperial system that preceded attempts to achieve political liberty had allegedly allowed petty kings and princes, “neither fearing God nor regarding man,” to flourish under an amorphous and chaotic regime headed by an impotent Emperor. These grim realities, plus the depredations of war and foreign invasion, the cowardice and incompetence of their own rulers, were believed to have left the German people “destitute till quite recently of any feeling of nationality.”⁴⁵ In 1901 the *Spectator* blamed the “utter lack of German public spirit” during the previous century on “generations of incoherence” stemming from centuries of existence as a mere “geographical expression” and “shadowy Imperial power” prior to German unification. New Germany dominated by Prussia and “hypnotized by the generations of Hohenzollern influence,” had still not made significant strides politically since the events of 1848 and 1870.⁴⁶

New Germany and the Old Stereotype

The Germany that arose within twenty years after the wars of unification to new heights of military, economic and industrial power caused a realignment of the old stereotype. At mid-century Germans could be pejoratively labeled “conservative agriculturalists” and accused of leading dull, unchanging, inland existences which made them non-commercial and impractical,

⁴⁵Miller, “The Making of Germany,” pp.141-42. See also “The Making of Germany,” *Quarterly Review* 173 (July 1891) : 165; Perry, “Germany as an Object Lesson,” p. 528; and Frederick Dernburg, “The Kaiser and His Chancellor,” *Contemporary Review* 92 (December 1907) : 715-16.

⁴⁶“German Characteristics,” *The Spectator*, reprinted in *Living Age* 228 (January-March 1901) : 129-30.

given to reflection and intellectual endeavor—qualities that, when combined with the constant threat of foreign invasion and consequent necessity of a large standing army, were believed to have bred an “unresisting obedience” to authority.⁴⁷ By the 1890s, however, German industrial advances had largely relegated the “agricultural” label to descriptions of quaint, rural areas, forcing the once broadly applied image of “backwardness” to become more narrowly focused on German politics and social life. In June of 1897 the *Contemporary Review* published an article by a writer under the pseudonym of “Germanicus” that summed up the British Liberal view of German political life during the Wilhelmine Era:

The Germans have not yet had their 1688, nor their 1789; and we cannot believe that they will be spared the experience of England and of France. The literary Golden Age in Germany also arrived a century later than the similar epochs in the two Western European countries. Notwithstanding Sadowa and Sedan, notwithstanding their superior chemical industry and their Röntgen rays, the Germans, as a political body, are a hundred years behind the English or French nation. They boast of a Constitution, a Parliament, and all the other paraphernalia of modern government. But the Emperor nevertheless considers himself the master, just as James II. did.⁴⁸

Contrast the above quotation with a more Conservative, apologetic view expressed five years later by Charles Lowe in *Pall Mall Magazine*, in which he attempted to dispel the notion of Germany “Under the Iron Heel” of an autocratic Emperor by distinguishing the Kaiser’s more limited powers as “little more than a figure-head” of the German Empire from his political powers as King of Prussia. Lowe explained away apprehensions about the “patriarchal

⁴⁷“French, Germans and English,” *British Quarterly Review*, pp. 347-78, 351-53. The author employed the classical metaphor of liberal, Athenian, busy traders versus conservative, Spartan farmer-soldiers in order to distinguish active, energetic and commercial “Anglo-Germans” from their Teutonic continental cousins.

⁴⁸“Germans and Their Kaiser,” *Contemporary Review* 71 (June 1897) : 805. The same quote reappeared the following month in Von Seckendorff, “William the Cad,” p. 469.

opportunities which present themselves for the assertion of his imperious character,” claiming that the Kaiser’s authority was checked by the Prussian constitution which “secures a very large measure of political power and personal liberty to the people—quite as much as is good for them in the peculiar circumstances of their geographical and military position as a ‘besieged fortress’ in the centre of Europe.”⁴⁹ The conservative, pro-monarchical stance was spelled out by *Blackwood’s* in 1890 when it called the Prussian crown “one of the best governments and purest administrations in the world,” and praised Frederick Wilhelm IV, despite his “mental state bordering on insanity,” for rejecting the proposals of the 1848 Frankfurt Parliament which would have made the monarch a “slave to triumphant democracy.” The monarchical imposition of a constitution had preserved the German “conservative character” and “profound notions of duty,” which had been imbibed from the philosophy of Kant and the poetry of Schiller. These had imparted distinct competitive advantages for a German Empire, “safer in the hands of the

⁴⁹“The Kaiser and His Family,” *Pall Mall Magazine*, 158-59. Roger Fletcher has argued quite the opposite in “Social Historians and Wilhelmine Politics,” pp. 88-89, 102-3. The “barely disguised dictatorship” of the Prussian monarchical government “ruled the roost” in Germany, Fletcher wrote, through the dual roles of Prussian king/German Kaiser and Prime Minister/Chancellor, supported through the three-tier suffrage system in the Lower House or Chamber of Deputies by disproportionately represented ‘parties of order’ (i.e., wealthy land-owners and industrialists), and by the fact that Prussia controlled the Bundesrat or Federal Council which had veto power over Reichstag legislation. Fletcher concluded that the “theoretically all-powerful Imperial government” of Germany under Wilhelm II found itself practically immobilized not due to any constitutional checks but to three factors: a decline in authority and prestige of the executive after Bismarck’s dismissal; mounting, but largely ineffectual, pressure from the left in the Reichstag toward democratic parliamentary reforms; and anti-government propaganda from Conservative-led nationalist pressure groups (e.g., the Pan-German League and the Navy League) who promoted a popular nationalism opposed to existing government institutions as well as democratic reforms.

powerful and prudent administrators.”⁵⁰ The *Quarterly Review* in 1891 advanced a similarly undemocratic line of political Germanophilia in a eulogy of the Hegelian ideal of state interests superseding individual rights, which in Britain could have been

. . . nearly represented by the English Court . . . before the authority of the Crown had been annihilated, the House of Lords reduced to the shadow of a great name, the House of Commons turned into an auction mart, . . . trading upon passions and prejudice of a populace incapable of understanding even the rudiments of the questions whereof it has been constituted the supreme arbiter.⁵¹

Germany, that “noble and puissant nation,” ruled by “true kings of men” who were instilled with an “organic morality,” who commanded a “patriot army” and who presided over political institutions that “offered orderly expression to popular sentiment” and guaranteed “a rational amount of individual freedom,” stood as a “bulwark of law and order” amidst a Europe of peoples given over to “anarchy and self-government by the basest.”⁵²

Conservatives by no means monopolized positive appraisals of the German government that either admired what was good for the Germans or what made Germany a powerful imperial rival. In April 1899 the Liberal-Unionist *Nineteenth Century* published an article by Charles Copland Perry in which he advised Britons to reassess their antipathy for German political institutions and modify their attitude of “lofty superiority” and “amused contempt” toward Germany. He summarized the typical British attitude as follows:

⁵⁰Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, “The Prussian Monarch and the Revolution of 1848” *Blackwood’s* 147 (May 1890) : 617, 622-23. Frederick Wilhelm IV was also credited for listening to Anglophile advisors, a school of men “now dead and gone forever,” who sought to establish a British-style parliamentary system in Prussia (p. 620).

⁵¹“The Making of Germany,” *Quarterly Review*, pp. 175-76.

⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 179.

. . . Germany is simply a country which, for reasons best known to itself, keeps a very large army, possesses a good many autocratic and boorish officials, which has once or twice, in the person of its Emperor, had the impertinence to interfere with our own affairs and which persists in flooding our labour-markets with cheap clerks.⁵³

Perry argued that Anglo-German “differences of conception and character” derived from historical causes: insular Britain advanced through prosperity, war-ravaged Germany through adversity. He insisted that the “paternal” government, which “moves our pity and contempt,” originated from a sense of personal responsibility on the part of Germany’s rulers for the purpose of implanting “the conception of obedience, discipline, duty, simplicity of life, and moral responsibility” in German minds. He considered the British system, in comparison, to be plagued by “continually shifting authority that tends to deaden the sense of moral responsibility” in British leaders. Perry held that paternalism offered distinct practical imperial advantages over the “fatalism” of democracy, through which “humanity and reason are so often sacrificed to the fetish of individual liberty, that the vital interests of the many are at the mercy of the few.” But he also regretted the “transparent hypocrisy of regarding the collective ignorance of the many as the omniscient voice of Providence.”⁵⁴ In the *Fortnightly Review* of May 1895, William Harbutt Dawson acknowledged that pre-Bismarckian Prussia, though lacking real civic or political freedoms, was benevolent despotism or “patriarchalism in its best form,” with “tolerable, and even good” laws and an “efficient and honest” bureaucracy. Dawson admitted only the remotest possibility, however, that the antiquated system preserved under Bismarck’s reactionary

⁵³Perry, “Germany as an Object Lesson” *Nineteenth Century*, p. 527.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 529-31.

supervision would ever be overturned by a Liberal majority in the Reichstag or by revolution.⁵⁵

Tempered praise for Prussia's "incorruptible bureaucracy" sometimes rested on the racial argument that German "Caesarism" differed from its endemic Latin counterpart only because it was antithetical to Teutonic, or German, character.⁵⁶ Racially-based Germanophilia, however, often played into the hands of Germanophobes because assumptions about the "German spirit of thoroughness," or the "immense vitality of the Teutonic stock," made the observation that Germany possessed "the most efficient national directory in the world" more a cause for concern than a mark of praise.⁵⁷

British magazines from the mid-1880s through 1914 tended to reduce Germany's internal political struggles and competing economic and social class interests down to a formula pitting overbearing and burdensome government against civic weakness, an interpretation which made the German people appear politically indifferent, apathetic or childish. In 1890 the *Saturday Review* wrote that Germans "know perfectly well that their votes will not, in all probability, be followed by any serious change of government," and that "the peculiar relations of the German parliament and the German Crown enable Germans . . . to play at opposition and fronde."⁵⁸ The source of the German political malaise was believed to have sprung from blind veneration of the Hohenzollern dynasty, "an ecstatic and mystic religion" and a "species of fanaticism which is

⁵⁵William Harbutt Dawson, "Prince Bismarck and the Prussian Monarchy," *Fortnightly Review* 57 (May 1895) : 746.

⁵⁶Gwynn, "The Success of the Anglo-Saxons," p. 355.

⁵⁷[Calchas], "Will Germany Fail?" *Fortnightly Review*, pp. 586-87.

⁵⁸"The German Elections," *Saturday Review* 69 (March 1890) : 252.

without a parallel in history.”⁵⁹ In 1893 the *Fortnightly Review* echoed these sentiments, stating that parliamentary institutions “are not founded in the hearts of the people” and “the German people play at parliaments,” that Bismarck had established the “kingly principle” in German public life, and that Wilhelm II was attempting to make the government the arbiter of German consciences by making the emperor into a pope.⁶⁰

In contrast to the undisputed, if unscrupulous, political savvy of Bismarck, Wilhelm more easily fit the unpolitical German stereotype with the added imprimatur that his “want of real political capacity is coupled with the most energetic self-confidence known to mankind.”⁶¹ During a brief honeymoon period after the removal of Bismarck in 1890, the Kaiser’s new government presented a “favourable” prospect and hopes ran high for an end to heavy-handed government and press manipulation. But revelations of Wilhelm’s “extremely autocratic” nature quickly reversed earlier optimism.⁶² To many, Bismarck’s dismissal itself and the Kaiser’s failure to wean German workers away from socialism through appeals to their patriotism presented ample proof of his political incompetence. Writers more frequently criticized

⁵⁹Bamberger, “German Crisis and the German Emperor,” p. 397.

⁶⁰Smalley, “A Visit to Prince Bismarck,” pp. 656-57. The comment about the kaiser’s religious pretensions refers to his backing of the failed Zedlitz School Bill of 1892 that would have made religious instruction in primary schools both “denominational and compulsory.” Intended as a sop to the Catholic Center party and a way to counteract Socialism, the bill, which extended to the clergy of the predominating sect at any given school the authority to advise and even correct teachers, aroused widespread opposition in “cultured and sceptical” Germany, particularly from moderates and the Left, before being dropped. See “The Question of Religious Instruction in Prussian Schools” in *Review of Reviews* 5 (February 1892), p. 275.

⁶¹ “Progress of the World” *Review of Reviews* 5 (February 1892), p. 227.

⁶²See “The Change of Government in Germany,” *Fortnightly Review* 48 (August 1890) : 294, 304; and Bamberger, “German Crisis and the German Emperor,” p. 397.

Germany as an “over-administered” nation, staffed with servile officials and dominated through a “Philistine” and “ridiculous” inspired press, whose fulsome praise of the government “reeks of the gutters of ancient Byzantium.”⁶³ Little hope for change was foreseen by those who considered German national character to be “essentially conservative.” *Leisure Hour* in 1894 concluded that “in spite of the humane and ideal bias of the German character, there is no country where there is less hope that any reform will be put into action. The Germans are still, as they always were, pure theorists.”⁶⁴ Germany was described as a land where “the feudal system still obtains,” and where the German constitution “admits of both absolutism and a Parliament, and public opinion is not strong enough to shake off the old fetters of subservient obedience.” But regional diversity within Germany itself also hinted at the possibility of “political surprises” in a nation where “party contests are rife.”⁶⁵ Despite this apparent contradiction, and muted admiration for the “peculiarity of local patriotism” and the alacrity with which Germans volunteered for unpaid public office or municipal service, the monolithic stereotype of German political ineptitude and indifference prevailed.⁶⁶

⁶³See “An Over-administered Nation,” *Macmillan’s Magazine* 66 (May 1892) and Sidney Whitman, “The Berlin Reconciliation,” *New Review* 10 (March 1894) : 346-48.

⁶⁴“The Peoples of Europe—Germany,” pt. 1, *Leisure Hour* 43 (January-April 1894) : 173, 175.

⁶⁵“The Peoples of Europe—Germany,” pt. 4, p. 386. As an example of such diversity the author states, “There is more resemblance between a Hamburger and an Englishman than between a Hamburger and a Prussian” (p. 387).

⁶⁶Two notable contemporary studies have examined “local” politics and its relation to German nationalism, countering the idea of Prussian-imposed national allegiance with evidence of local and regional autonomy. Mack Walker’s *German Home Towns: Community, State and General Estate, 1648-1871* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971) looks at the roots of political homogeneity and conformism in towns averaging 10,000 inhabitants, which constituted over a

The diversity of political parties in Germany did not dissolve the stereotype of political incapacity. There was “no Mr. Gladstone” as chief of the opposition in a political system that seemed “vague and formless” except for imperial authority.⁶⁷ German Progressives, although generally admired, appeared weak and ineffectual against the fanatical obstructionism and tenacity of the Conservative agrarians, or Junkers, and the protectionist “tergiversation” of the National Liberals.⁶⁸ The German Center Party appeared to consist of backward, bigoted and small-minded “enemies of a really free movement” in a system regarded as a “caricature of genuine Parliamentary government,” and Social Democrats, despite some acknowledgment of pragmatic political opportunism, were criticized as doctrinaire Utopians, chasing the “grandiose dream of a socialistic paradise.”⁶⁹ German women were not spared criticism, despite sympathy for their plight in a nation where they allegedly endured a status akin to beasts of burden. Though educated to a “higher standard of mere book-learning,” than English women, German women could boast of no Jane Austen, no George Eliot, no Miss Braddons or class of

quarter of the German population; Abigail Green’s *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) challenges the assumption that particularism opposed nationalism by finding similarities between nineteenth-century German nationalism and earlier state patriotism in Hanover, Saxony and Württemberg.

⁶⁷“The German Elections,” *The Economist*, reprinted in *Living Age* 218 (July-September 1898) : 405.

⁶⁸William H. Dawson, “The German Agrarian Movement,” *Contemporary Review* 87 (January 1905) : 68, 70-71, 74-76.

⁶⁹Eduard Bernstein, “The German Elections and the Social Democrats,” *Contemporary Review* 91 (April 1907) : 481, 484-86. H. B. Butler, “The German Elections and After,” *Contemporary Review* 91 (March 1907) : 402-3.

fashionable women of the world.⁷⁰ Neither the image of the domestic *haus-frau*, for which the German Empress herself posed as the royal model, nor the stereotypical flaxen-haired, blue-eyed, angelic Gretchen approached the Englishwoman's interest in female suffrage or social work.⁷¹

Criticism of the German newspaper press usually emphasized either its lack of political content or its pro-government and Anglophobic bias. Although praised as well-written, high-minded and patriotic, German newspapers contained no letters to the editor—no “voices from the crowd”—and therefore could not be relied upon to arouse Germans from the torpor of political apathy (“a stone which cannot easily be set rolling”).⁷² Many newspapers were counted as ready tools of a paternal government. The repressive *Lèse-Majesté* laws, which allowed prosecution of journalists who criticized the Kaiser or his government, redeemed to a great extent the reputations of martyred German journalists in British publications normally accustomed to condemning journalistic toadyism or reacting to German Anglophobia.⁷³ In 1895 the prosecutions of Social Democrat leader, Wilhelm Liebknecht, and Dr. Hans Delbrück, editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, were considered “absurd” and “childish,” symptomatic of the

⁷⁰At least, this was the view of Lowe in “The Women of Germany,” pp. 116-17.

⁷¹See Arthur Warren, “Empress William II,” *Woman at Home* 3 (October 1894) : 44; “Gretchen at Home,” *Chamber's Journal* 13 (June 1896) : 395; and Alys Russell, “The Woman's Movement in Germany,” *Nineteenth Century* 40 (July 1896) : 97-98. See also Mary Mack Wall, “The Enslavement of Married Women in Germany,” *Englishwoman's Review* 27 (July 1896) : 151, on the unfair and “uncivilized” German marriage laws.

⁷²Lowe, “German Newspaper Press,” pp. 857-58.

⁷³“The Germans and Freedom of Thought,” *Spectator* 80 (January 1898) : 158.

“young mad cap on the throne.”⁷⁴ In 1898 British magazines also mocked the sentencing of Herr Trojan, editor of the satirical *Kladderadatsch*, to two months in prison for publication of his “Mailed Fist” cartoon ridiculing the Kaiser’s statement that a good Prussian soldier must also be a good Christian. The cartoon represented Alexander the Great, Leonidas, Napoleon I and “that scoffing Voltairean, Frederic the Great, listening with amused contempt to the Kaiser’s dictum.”⁷⁵ Despite the fact that the *Review of Reviews* regularly reproduced cartoons from German satirical magazines, such as *Simplicissimus* and *Kladderadatsch*, a general impression of the German press as either politically indifferent or subservient persisted.

In June and July of 1907, in the aftermath of a flurry of journalistic hostility referred to as the Anglo-German paper war, the *Contemporary Review* reported on the visit of some English journalists who commented on the state of affairs in Germany. Although united in the hope and belief that Anglophobia had waned and that Germany sought better relations with England, writers differed significantly in their assessments of German politics and potential diplomatic outcomes. The milder appraisal reaffirmed the old stereotype of German blind allegiance to the whims of an earnest and energetic government; the more worrisome appraisal interpreted Germany’s “domineering ambition” and policy of the “mailed-fist” as the will of the people.⁷⁶

⁷⁴See “Lèse-Majesté Gone Mad: Liberty of the Press in Germany,” *Review of Reviews* 12 (October 1895) : 514.

⁷⁵“Progress of the World: Making Himself Ridiculous,” *Review of Reviews* 17 (January-June 1898) : 115.

⁷⁶Frederich Dernburg, “Germany and England: The Visit of the English Journalists,” 91 (June 1907) : 764-65; Bunting, “The Journalistic Tour in Germany,” pp. 9, 13.

Anglo-German rivalry and the problem of German Anglophobia had made judgements about German political ability seem like an empty exercise.

V. IMPERIAL RIVALRY AND DIPLOMATIC ANTAGONISM

The various Anglo-German rivalries which developed during the latter nineteenth century significantly affected British conceptions of German character because stereotypes often devolved from, and presented explanations for, Germany's perceived historical role on the world stage. During the mid-1880s, as Germany acquired territories in West Africa, British writers also began to recognize Germany's challenge to British industrial supremacy. Germany appeared to be a formidable competitor, poised on the opposite shore of the North Sea with the world's largest army. The old stereotype of Germany as Britain's inferior racial cousin could only provide weak assurances that the Germans would come to their senses and restore the natural order of things by relinquishing their aspirations to world power; otherwise, Germany would upset the balance of power and lead the world to the brink of catastrophe. The answer to the question of "Who are the Germans?" was largely a moral one which depended upon the questioner's point of view. Many writers dealt with the threat of imperial Germany by drawing national comparisons, such as British versus German colonial administration or trade practices, and then extrapolating perceived differences toward a broader comparison of British and German character within the over-arching context of an ethnic/racial hierarchy.

Anglo-German Colonial Rivalry

The advent of German colonial rivalry, joining Belgian and French, became a thorn in the side of British imperial pretensions, a development foreseen by Bismarck who had been reluctant to embark on an expansionist course. German incursions into the hinterlands of East Africa, for example, and intrigues involving the Sultan of Zanzibar within Britain's perceived sphere of influence, brought forth reactions in the press to the British government's apparent complacency in defending its own interests. With the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 the Germans gave up claims to Uganda and Witu on the East African coast in exchange for Heligoland, a small island in the North Sea near the mouth of the Elbe of no strategic importance to Britain. The frontiers of German and British East Africa were also extended west of Lake Victoria to the Congo State. The agreement, which actually settled territorial disputes in East Africa to Britain's advantage, was disparaged as a "policy of surrender" and "a melancholy monument erected over the grave of our lost opportunities."¹ But the perception that Germany worked at cross-purposes to British interests in Africa came to the fore when German protests cancelled a provision of Britain's Congo Treaty with King Leopold that in 1894 had leased a strip of land adjacent to the German East African frontier to Britain, thereby frustrating the long-cherished imperialist dream of a Cape to Cairo railway. This development signified the Wilhelmine government's more openly confrontational policy since Bismarck's dismissal in March of 1890.

¹V. Lovett Cameron, "England and Germany in Africa," pt. 2, *Fortnightly Review* 48 (July 1890) : 129. In a postscript to the article, which was written before the agreement was signed, the *Fortnightly's* editor regretted not having been able to "substitute congratulation for criticism" of Britain's "humiliating capitulation." (pp. 163-4). See also "Progress of the World: The Anglo-German Agreement," *Review of Reviews* 2 (July 1890) : 5.

The most revealing facet of British opposition to German colonial expansion in East Africa appears in its focus on national character. Reviled as an arrogant and acquisitive parvenu, Germany was taken to task for imitating the “methods of the cuckoo” and acting like “a dog who leaves his own plate of dinner before he has begun, to seize the dinner on another dog’s plate.”² The fear that Germany was bent on “the humiliation and the spoliation of England,” compounded by a belief in the German national characteristics of perseverance and patience, actually galvanized British imperial ambitions.³ Writers condemned German methods and motives and criticized British complacency:

There is a large unoccupied uncoloured space on the map between Angola, the Zambesi, and the Congo Free State which she might explore and settle and paint Prussian blue if she has any stomach for the adventure. But as a rule the work of opening out new country is not to her taste. It is so much more easy and pleasant to leave that to Englishmen, and when they have overcome all the difficulties and dangers that await the first explorers and settlers, to walk in after them and turn them out either by force or by negotiation, the latter method as a rule being preferred, as it is found by experience to be the less troublesome and more efficacious of the two.

In surveying the negotiations between England and Germany as a whole, one is struck by three things: the impudence (it is a strong word, but no milder will serve) of the claims made by Germany, the humbleness, not to say subserviency of England in the face of those claims, and the evidence of a feeling, perhaps quite unconsciously betrayed by Lord Salisbury, that England is unequal to the burden of empire.⁴

Opposition to the Anglo-German Agreement also focused on the moral consequences of handing 2000 Heligolandians “over to the tender mercies of German militarism.”⁵

²Earnest W. Beckett, “England and Germany in Africa,” pt. 3, pp. 148-49, 152, 150.

³“Progress of the World: The Anglo-German Agreement,” p. 6; Beckett, “England and Germany in Africa,” p. 160.

⁴Beckett, “England and Germany in Africa,” pp. 162, 148, 159.

⁵“Progress of the World: The Anglo-German Agreement,” p. 8. The Heligolandians were given the option of assuming English nationality.

Much of the opposition to German colonial expansion relied on the same moral arguments used to justify Britain's imperialist ventures: only Britain could be trusted to ensure the abolition of slavery and fulfill "white man's burden," the responsibility to civilize native populations. British writers accused Germany of "plunder" and "outrage" in dealing with native populations, and of concluding unscrupulous and "valueless" treaties with native chiefs. "Such are the methods of Dr. Peters for introducing German civilization in British territory," commented *Blackwood's* on the exploits of German colonial propagandist and explorer, Karl Peters.⁶ The German presence in East Africa and Zanzibar, and the "truculence of German officials and adventurers" described as "masterful, domineering, and using the language of conquest," drew blame for inciting native uprisings and interfering with British efforts to suppress Arab slave-trading in the region.⁷ The *Pall Mall Gazette* reported on the positive reaction to the Anglo-German Agreement in Zanzibar:

. . . the foreign residents received the news of the English protectorate with the greatest satisfaction, as they feel sure commerce will increase. The English are popular, whereas the Germans frighten the Africans, displease the Europeans, and terrorize the Arabs. The German residents are greatly disappointed.⁸

On 15 September 1890, the *Daily Telegraph* broke the "startling news" that the German administrator in Bagamoyo on the German East African coast had published an official notice allowing open trading of slaves and the recovery of runaways.⁹ The scandal attracted widespread

⁶"German Aims in East Africa," *Blackwood's* 147 (May 1890) : 702, 700, 705, 690, 693.

⁷Harold A. Perry, "Traditions of German Colonization," *Macmillan's Magazine* 62 (June 1890) :120; Cameron, "England and Germany in Africa," p. 140.

⁸*Pall Mall Gazette*, 26 July 1890, p. 5.

⁹*Daily Telegraph*, 15 September 1890, p. 5.

condemnation, particularly in the Liberal press, which prompted an unconvincing denial from the German Foreign Office. German officials sought to palliate the action as merely a sanction of the status quo and as an assertion of Germany's protectorate rights to follow a "cautious approach" toward abolition in lieu of the Sultan of Zanzibar's emancipation decree, which was issued under the British protectorate.¹⁰ Attempts by the German government to extricate itself from this public relations morass only fed Germanophobic opinion, even though the German suppression of Arab slave-trader insurrections received some recognition.¹¹ Germany stood "disgraced before the civilized world" for abrogating the anti-slavery provisions of the 1884 Berlin Conference and the 1890 Brussels Act, and, worse yet, for allowing the infidel Sultan to voice complaints about European hypocrisy.¹² In 1890, before the full flowering of Anglo-German antagonism, the *Daily Telegraph* expressed a mixture of moral outrage and sympathetic Germanophilia in regard to the slave-trade scandal:

It is deplorable, not only on moral grounds, but because nothing is more eminently calculated to wound the feelings and ruffle the susceptibilities of Englishmen than any encouragement of such a vile and infamous trade on the part of a nation for which they entertain sincere esteem, regard, and admiration.¹³

¹⁰Compare "Blacks and Blacklegs," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 September 1890, p. 1, with the milder coverage in the conservative *Standard*, 18 September 1890, p. 5, which basically accepts the German denial and criticizes the "painful impression" made by "recent severe articles in the English press" and the "false news" circulated by enemies of Germany. The German rationale for the proclamation was reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, 18 September 1890, p. 5.

¹¹*Daily Telegraph*, 17 September 1890, p. 5. From 1888 to 1890 the German explorer and administrator, Captain Hermann von Wissmann, succeeded in quelling the Arab rebellion, at one point even joined by the British in blockading the coast.

¹²"Blacks and Blacklegs", p. 1.

¹³*Daily Telegraph*, 18 September 1890, p. 5.

British criticism of German colonial policies persisted and increased in severity during the 1890s. In 1897 the *Saturday Review* charged that German importation of arms and ammunition had “renewed and re-inspired” the slave trade and imperiled the lives of missionaries and traders. In addition, German atrocities, such as the flogging of women, and Germany’s proneness to tyranny had allegedly stilted German colonial development.¹⁴ Kenneth Mackenzie has remarked on the chorus of dissent against German colonial methods in the British press and the consensus that Teutonic cruelty was largely to blame.¹⁵ Not only was the humanitarian issue concerning the treatment of native populations a major concern, but also at stake was the success of European colonialism and imperial enterprise.¹⁶ In 1892 Robert Louis Stevenson committed to print a litany of charges alleging German abuse of Samoan natives and official attempts to suppress the reporting of native grievances. While Stevenson did not completely exonerate England’s record of dealing with native populations, he peppered his criticism of German methods with comments about German “touchiness,” secrecy and other national traits that clearly marked the Germans as intrinsically ill-suited for colonial rule.¹⁷ Indeed, the whole concept of German colonialism was deemed suspect, having supposedly grown

¹⁴“German Loyalty and Honesty,” *Saturday Review* 83 (January 1897) : 106.

¹⁵“Some British Reactions to German Colonial Methods, 1885-1907,” *Historical Journal* 17 (1974) :167, 173-75.

¹⁶Complaints of native unrest in reaction to German rule in Africa were not unfounded. Robert D. Jackson recounts the results of German brutality in “Resistance to the German Invasion of the Tanganyikan Coast, 1888-1891,” in Robert I. Rotbury and Ali A. Mazrui, eds, *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 37-79.

¹⁷*A Footnote to History: Eight Years of Trouble in Samoa* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905, first published in 1892), pp. 34, 38, 119, 239, 246.

out of a far-fetched, whimsical Hohenzollern tradition of piracy and land-lubbing failure resurgent in the fantasies of the “young Caesar,” Kaiser Wilhelm II.¹⁸ In a very short time, however, Germany had evolved from an upstart colonial rival to an imperial menace. German colonial rivalry, which in 1890 had seemed to be motivated by envy and a policy of harassment, had become a sinister attempt to “stab England in the dark,” and a plot to convert South Africa into a German-Dutch colony.¹⁹

Economic Rivalry

Anglo-German trade rivalry in the press followed much the same course as colonial rivalry. By 1897 Germany became England’s “most dangerous rival,” accused of counterfeiting British commercial marks and flooding England with cheap articles “Made in Germany.”²⁰ The German economic “peril” to England, an imaginary fear because of mutual trade benefits, seemed to be rooted in the German capacity for plodding industry and enterprise.²¹ Every positive model of German economic success, however, was accompanied by criticism of German

¹⁸Perry, “Traditions of German Colonization,” pp. 113, 115-19, mocked the Kaiser’s ambition to succeed where his ancestor, Frederick William, the Great Elector of Brandenburg, had failed. Piratical associations, stemming from the Elector’s dependence on the Dutch buccaneer, Benjanim Raule, and his failure to establish a lasting colony on the Guinea coast, led the Elector’s successor, Frederick William I, to abandon the colonial cause.

¹⁹compare “German Aims in East Africa,” *Blackwood’s* 147 (May 1890) : 691-92, and “German Designs in South Africa: Conspiracy in the Transvaal,” *Review of Reviews* 13 (February 1896) : 139.

²⁰Henry Birchenough, “England’s Opportunity,” *Nineteenth Century* 42 (July 1897) : 3, 6.

²¹“The German Peril,” *Blackwood’s* 163 (January 1898) : 108-9.

immoral methods and trading practices which constituted a form of parasitism.²² Germans, who were labeled “shopkeepers, always; merchants never,” supposedly produced cheap, inferior wares to be sold through enterprises that were “bounty-fed, and existing only by subsidies and the sweat of mankind.”²³ The caricature of the German clerk as an invaluable commercial weapon in the Anglo-German trade war carried with it the conviction that his acceptance of a low salary for an unrewarding job was the result of an oppressive political and economic system.²⁴

The Diplomatic Antagonism

The Anglo-German antagonism cannot be linked to any direct territorial conflict such as arose between England and France during the colonial and Napoleonic wars, or between England and Russia during the Crimean War. More often than not, England found itself allied, though not always formally, with Austria and Prussia against any expansionism that threatened the European power balance and its own strategic interests. No real cause for Anglo-German antagonism existed until Bismarck took up the reins of diplomacy in Prussia. In February of 1864, the sixteen year dispute between Denmark and Germany over the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein culminated in the invasion of Jutland by Prussian forces. Even though Britain, since the days of Palmerston, had acted as a technically neutral mediator in this quarrel, the sudden transfer of 300,000 Danes to German rule stung British ambassadors with a

²²Ibid., p. 107.

²³Tripp, “German Versus English Trade,” p. 194; “Industrial Progress by the Germans,” *Review of Reviews* 17 (January-June 1898) : 143-44.

²⁴J. J. Finlay, “The Genesis of the German Clerk,” *Fortnightly Review* 66 (September 1899) : 533-34.

feeling of diplomatic impotence. Despite Queen Victoria's pro-German sympathies, the Danish Wars set off a public reaction in Britain that revealed an impulsive and irrational anti-Germanism through displays of animosity which usually exhibited a complete misunderstanding or ignorance of the complexities of the situation.²⁵ The Schleswig-Holstein issue remained a bone of contention in the history of Anglo-German diplomatic relations that nationalists on both sides could exploit.²⁶

The Danish Question also perpetuated the image of the German, or Prussian, bully which would gain further momentum during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1, especially in later criticisms of German administration in the annexed territory of Alsace-Lorraine. Indeed, 1871 marks a watershed in the shift of British sympathies away from Germany and toward France after the demise of Napoleon III.²⁷ Following the declaration of war on July 19, 1870, the *Times* had

²⁵See Keith A. P. Sandiford, *Great Britain and the Schleswig-Holstein Question 1848-64: a Study in Diplomacy, Politics and Public Opinion* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), pp. 81, 116, 145, 150, 155, and Chapter 6, "British Reaction to the Dano-German War." The Queen's influence during the Danish Crisis depended more on the cabinet's desire to avoid an Anglo-German War than from any shared pro-German sentiment (p. 148). Even the Queen's attitude toward Prussia changed dramatically, however, after the extinction of Coburg and other petty states and the incorporation of larger states, including Hanover, into the North German Confederation under Prussian control.

²⁶See "The North Schleswig Question," *Review of Reviews* 19 (June 1899) : 55; "Why Europe Hates England," *Review of Reviews* 21 (December 1900) : 556; and Louis Egerton, "The Hungry Hohenzollerns," *New Century Review* 3 (February 1898) : 135. At the June 1895 opening of the Kiel Canal, which ran from the North Sea to the Baltic through territory once governed by Danes, one writer remarked, "The Duchies were ripped from Denmark by a process none too scrupulous, and England played a sorry part in a cynical transaction." See "Buns, Bunting, Bunkham," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 21 June 1895, p. 1.

²⁷Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 22-24, argues that a gradual abandonment of suspicions against France, accompanied by a growing realization of German power after 1871, led to a reversal of previous inclinations. There was no abrupt break in diplomatic relations, however.

branded the French a “vain race,” but by September 2, the day of the French capitulation at Sedan, the same paper poured out its sympathy for “Unhappy France”:

. . . we are overborne with sympathy for the unhappy nation. A people of so many virtues, gifted beyond all other races with vivacity, swiftness of intelligence and emotional energy— people which has carried into the lowest ranks of life the education of social civility, threatens to become once more politically bankrupt.²⁸

The military success of Bismarckian Germany did not win unqualified admiration even in an age fascinated with military accomplishments. As the arrogant Prussian quickly supplanted the arrogant Frenchman, and Bismarck assumed the role of a new Napoleon, one writer asked, “can any success earn complete absolution for the mixture of craft and force which in seven years has so enlarged the borders of Prussia as to make of a second-rate kingdom the arbiter of Europe, the possessor of a million armed men?”²⁹ Images of German militarism and Machiavellian foreign policy reminiscent of Frederick the Great stayed fresh in the British periodical press through World War I, recasting old notions of German philosophical idealism and political naivete. Events such as the Moroccan Crises in 1905 and 1911, and the Zabern Affair in 1913, would further instil the association between German diplomacy and militarism and would bolster the image of Germany as an international bully and menace.³⁰

²⁸“France and Germany,” *Times*, 19 July 1870, p. 5. “Unhappy France,” *Times*, 2 September 1870, p. 7. After asking if the French passion for military display had produced the catastrophe that led to their downfall, the writer stated, “we hope that the fearful experience of this war will uproot it forever.”

²⁹C. C. C., “France and Germany,” letter to the editor of the *Times*, 1 August 1870, p. 9. See also an article reprinted from the *New York Times* that appeared in the *London Times* on 19 September 1870, p. 10, recounting an anecdote that described the “habitual arrogance” of a Prussian soldier who refused to accept the gentlemanly hospitality of his French captors.

³⁰The Kaiser’s policy of the “mailed fist,” became manifest in the arrival of the German gunboat *Panther* at the port of Agadir during the Second Moroccan Crisis. The action served

During the 1890s Anglo-German diplomatic relations took a decidedly negative turn.³¹ Several factors have contributed to this view, most important being the adoption in both countries of policies designed to enhance imperial prestige. After Bismarck's dismissal in 1890, Kaiser Wilhelm II's embarkation on a new course of *Weltpolitik* based on colonial and naval expansion threatened the very foundations of British policy. German foreign policy also became more stridently anti-British under pressure from nationalist groups like the Pan-German and Navy Leagues.³² In England, the electoral gains of the Unionist coalition in 1895 reflected popular imperialism and increasing concerns over Anglo-German colonial and trade rivalries. The elevation of Joseph Chamberlain to the office of Colonial Secretary indicated the government's resolve to support a more active and vocal imperial policy. Fears of diplomatic isolation and encirclement, respectively, plagued British and German policy makers.³³ Despite

only to increase Germany's isolation and further cement the Anglo-French Entente. The Zabern Affair occurred when insulting remarks made by a Prussian lieutenant to his recruits about the local populace of the Alsation town of Zabern touched off public disorders that were dealt with summarily by the garrison commander, Colonel von Reuter. Reuter escaped reprimand and his actions were sanctioned by the Kaiser. The incident demonstrated the predominance of the Prussian military clique in the upper echelons of German government as well as the ineffectiveness of the Reichstag and civil law. See Gordon A. Craig, *Germany 1866-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 298-99.

³¹See Kenneth Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 180, and Craig, *Germany*, pp. 330-31. See also Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 218, who describes the anti-German trend in Britain in the years 1892-95 as a shift in attitude rather than policy.

³²Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 224. Through the policy of "the mailed fist" (i.e., military and naval strength) Kaiser Wilhelm II hoped to cow Britain into an alliance.

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 446-47. A key element in the German fear of encirclement, the so-called "Copenhagen complex," referred to the British attack on the Danish fleet in 1807 as proof of a long-standing, Machiavellian policy of English navalism which implied the possibility of a British pre-emptive strike against the fledgling German fleet. See Charles E. McClelland, *The*

the German refusal to consider naval reductions, which posed a major obstacle to an alliance, these fears stimulated various attempts at an Anglo-German understanding 1887 to 1901.³⁴

The question as to why Britain and Germany never entered into any formal agreement regarding the European power balance defies any simple explanation.³⁵ Economic rivalry and ideological differences certainly contributed to the Anglo-German antagonism, but their importance should be weighed carefully in assessing the British position. Germany's remarkable political and economic metamorphosis into a fledgling world power and formidable competitor would not in itself explain the diplomatic antagonism were it not for Germany's geographical proximity to England—the economic expansion of the United States was equally dramatic.³⁶ Nor would the ideological gulf separating “liberal” England from “reactionary” Prussian-dominated

German Historians and England, pp. 211-12.

³⁴See H. W. Koch, “The Anglo-German Alliance Negotiations: Missed Opportunity or Myth?” *History* 13 (October 1969) : 386, and Gooch, *Studies in Diplomacy and Statecraft*, p. 65. See also Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army 1640-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 257-94, on German military interference in foreign policy from the Napoleonic period through World War I, especially the pernicious effect of German naval attachés on diplomatic efforts to ease the Anglo-German naval rivalry.

³⁵This question arises in the search for causes of World War I. Gordon Craig, *Germany*, pp. 244-45, points to the lack of coordination and direction in Wilhelminian Germany's foreign policy, and its effect at the British Foreign Office, as a destabilizing factor. See also Joachim Remak, “1914—The Third Balkan War: Origins Reconsidered,” *Journal of Modern History* 43 (September 1971) : 361, on German diplomatic risk-taking during the twenty-five years prior to world War I and Britain's failure to make a clear declaration of support for Belgian inviolability. Paul Schroeder, “World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak,” *Journal of Modern History* 44 (September 1972) : 344-45, explains Britain's unwillingness to abandon the policy of a free hand toward Europe and failure to adopt policies that might have averted war, namely the maintenance of Austrian integrity and a power balance in the Balkans, as symptomatic of a universal, imperialistic short-sightedness.

³⁶Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 464-65.

Germany have necessarily precluded an entente, like the one signed with Japan in 1902 or Russia in 1907. Underlying the mutual distrust and suspicion in diplomatic and government circles that hampered attempts at constructive negotiation, the global strategies of the two nations remained diametrically opposed: England committed to preserving empire by maintaining the European status quo and Germany bent on expanding empire by changing it. The antagonism continued as long as the governments in each country refused to compromise.³⁷ The ill-conceived German policy of winning British cooperation through humiliation only played into the hands of Germanophobes in the British press and Foreign Office who advocated a tougher policy toward Germany.

Historians of the period have not overlooked the power of public opinion and the close relationship that had developed between the press and the British Foreign Office by the 1890s.³⁸ The makers of British foreign policy, even if they wanted to, could not have insulated themselves from the effects of peer pressure and public hysteria. Public reactions to the Kruger Telegram, *Daily Telegraph* Affair and other such incidents demonstrated the ease with which intense resentment, aroused by the Kaiser's indiscretions and the perception of diplomatic chicanery on the part of the Germans, could quickly escalate into a storm of outrage. The manifestation of British mass hysteria over everything from German invasion plots to reports of spies and Zeppelin attacks also raises questions about the historical causes and effects of delusional

³⁷Ibid., p. 470.

³⁸Works that deal with extensively with ties between the press and the Foreign Office include the following: Oron James Hale, *Publicity and Diplomacy: With Special Reference to England and Germany 1890-1914* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1940); Morris, *The Scaremongers*; and Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*.

psychology.³⁹ British writers even reacted hysterically, or reported such reactions, to fears of diplomatic isolation, perceived German threats to British administrative, industrial and mercantile superiority and to reports of German Anglophobia.⁴⁰ The fear of being humiliated by a stereotyped and demonized rival only confirmed Germanophobic opinion in Britain that had existed since the early days of Bismarck's chancellorship.

Group psychology also may have played a part in policymaking through the presence of a conformist mentality shared by many prominent members of the British government, clergy, press and Foreign Office.⁴¹ Irving L. Janis applied the Orwellian term "groupthink" to the concurrence-seeking that overrules critical or rational thinking in a cohesive ingroup of the kind that matches descriptions of the Foreign Office prior to World War I, with its cliquish esprit de corps, charged atmosphere, exclusiveness, secrecy and shared stereotypes of the enemy.⁴² The

³⁹The invasion scare literature began in earnest in 1875 with the publication of Chesney's tale of "The Battle of Dorking" by *Blackwood's Magazine* and after an article entitled "Is War in Sight?" appeared in the *Berlin Post* and caused panic in France. On incidents of mass hysteria before and during the war see Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, pp. 98, 167-69, and Alfred M. Gollin, "England Is No Longer An Island: The Phantom Airship Scare of 1909," *Albion* 13 (January 1981): 43-54.

⁴⁰For example see A. S. Quick, "England in Hysterics," *New Century Review* 5 (January-June 1899) : 311-313, and J. A. Hobson, *The German Panic* (London: Cobden Club, printed by Cassell & Company, 1913), pp. 9-10, 28. Projection or characterization of Germans as hysterical can be found in Wile, *Our German Cousins*, p. 37, and in Evans, "Germany Under the Empire," p. 544. An excerpt of the latter article also appeared entitled "The Touchiness of the German," in *Review of Reviews* 13 (January-June 1896) : 140.

⁴¹Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 432, refers to the role of the "Official Mind" and the "permeation of ideas, consultations, influences and shared prejudices across the borderline between it and the 'outside world'."

⁴²Irving L. Janis, "Groupthink Among Policy-Makers," chap. 15 in George M. Kren and Leon H. Rappoport, eds., *Varieties of Psychohistory* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1976), p. 321. See also Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, pp. 16, 19, 20, 26.

case of Eyre Crowe, senior clerk at the Foreign Office, deserves special mention. Born in Leipzig, educated in Germany and France, and having ties to Germany through birth and marriage, he became the leading German expert at the Foreign Office as well as the most virulent critic of any attempt at an Anglo-German understanding. Shortly after his promotion to Senior Clerk he penned the famous Crowe Memorandum of 1907 which expressed his views, and the views of the senior hierarchy, on German diplomatic blackmail and the inevitability of Anglo-German confrontation.⁴³ Crowe's ironic vilification as a German sympathizer in 1915 seems hardly surprising when one considers the maligning of a scapegoat to be a common product of the interplay between hysteria and ideological conformism.⁴⁴

⁴³Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, pp. 110-117. See Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 266-7, on the division in the Foreign Office between those who wanted to follow a hard-line policy toward Germany and those motivated by a more general policy of "easing Britain's global difficulties."

⁴⁴The pre-ordained failure of the Haldane Mission to Berlin in 1912 has been seen as a face-saving way of dispensing with further attempts at forging an Anglo-German understanding. See Stephen J. Koss, *Lord Haldane: Scapegoat for Liberalism* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1969).

VI. CONCLUSION

Stereotypical literature defined what it meant to be British, rather than German, through biased comparisons which, taken as a whole, present a classic example of psychological rivalry aggravated by a threatened sense of self versus other. The Germans functioned, Peter Firchow wrote, as the “defective mirror image” of the English through which national self-image could be differentiated, maintained and reinforced.¹ From the foundation of the German Empire in 1871 up to World War I and beyond, the bipolar representation of Anglo-German character distinctions through stereotypes provided a convenient means of projecting negative aspects of the British national self-image onto the Germans. Railing against German tacit approval of Turkish Armenian massacres, German complicity in the East African Arab slave trade or maltreatment of native populations, to cite a few examples, opened up ample moral high ground upon which to retreat from national self-criticism. After negative British reactions to German culture had proven the time-honored notion of Anglo-German racial and cultural affinity to be illusory, the emergence of Germany as a great power and arch rival destroyed it.

As growing interest in German affairs brought increased press coverage, the strenuous efforts to dissociate British from German national character in the later decades of the nineteenth century almost warrant a re-coining of the sixteenth-century proverb: “familiarity breeds

¹Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, p. 184.

contempt.”² Originally intended as a warning against loss of respect through unrestrained fraternization with social inferiors, and a reminder of the importance of maintaining official decorum, the adage can be applied to shifting British attitudes toward Germans in at least two respects. First, it describes the superior attitude of those who reacted with jealousy and ridicule to what they perceived as German cultural pretensions and imperial ambitions. Second, it can be construed as a delusional familiarity with German stereotypes which did not involve any real social interaction but instead promoted false and uncritical assumptions of Anglo-German affinity based on idealized, sentimental and unthreatening images. New images of German Anglophobia and imperial rivalry stimulated a reactionary iconoclasm that demonized Germany as Britain’s polar opposite, arch nemesis or evil twin. In a narrower sense, which nevertheless resonated in the press, the strained relations between King Edward VII and his nephew Kaiser Wilhelm II, who personified many of the worst aspects of New Germany, certainly suffered from an excess of forced familiarity on the Kaiser’s part.

The suspicious attitude toward Germany and numerous vituperative statements about German character expressed in nineteenth-century British periodicals seems to indicate some deep-seated national antipathy or neurosis. When placed within the context of imperial rivalry and the British conception of national selfhood, the attitudes expressed in stereotypical and Germanophobic literature take on new importance as one of the psychological “sinews” of the British empire.

²*Oxford English Dictionary*, rev. ed. (1971), s.v. “familiarity”.

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VITA

Born in Wilmington, Delaware, on Friday 22 December 1950, William F. Bertollette, in 1969, enrolled at the University of Delaware where he studied literature, film and music. In 1972 William transferred to the University of California at Hayward where he expanded his knowledge of music theory, honed his piano playing skills, and furthered his photographic experience. He also began researching topics in European history and studying documentary film making under the guidance of Professor Richard C. Raack. William received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies, with English concentration, in August of 1975 and began to pursue a career as a part-time jazz pianist.

In 1980, William embarked on a three-month backpacking tour through the diverse landscapes of Europe, taking photographs and visiting the historical architectural landmarks and museums of London, Paris, Amsterdam, Florence, Rome, Athens, and many other cities. After returning, William established residence in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he worked as a musician and photographer before enrolling in the graduate program in history at Louisiana State University. William was awarded a two-year graduate assistantship during completion of the course work for a Master of Arts degree. He later supplemented his income and developed skills as a database programmer, tutor and videographer while writing the thesis.

William's interest in the relationship between psychology and history, specifically in the interface between social psychology, politics and diplomacy in modern Europe, has led him to

broaden his inquiries to encompass cultural interactions between East and West. He is particularly interested in the disparity between perceived cultural differences and real contrasts in philosophical and religious orientation.