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The Representations of “Deutschtum” in the *Literary Gazette*, *Blackwood’s Magazine*, and the *New Monthly Magazine*, 1817-1821

Abstract I: Questo contributo esamina la rappresentazione dell’identità tedesca in una selezione di articoli pubblicati su *The Literary Gazette*, *Blackwood’s Magazine* e *The New Monthly Magazine* tra il 1817 e il 1826, sullo sfondo della politica britannica post-napoleonica. Lo studio indaga in che misura tali riviste abbiano mediato le tensioni tra preoccupazioni nazionali e impegno letterario transnazionale. Particolare attenzione è rivolta alle strategie retoriche e discorsive che offrono una rappresentazione dell’alterità culturale, unendo politiche nazionaliste e conservatrici all’interesse per la Confederazione Germanica di recente formazione. L’analisi sottolinea come la rappresentazione ambivalente del “Deutschtum” nei periodici romantici evidenzii il ruolo delle pressioni sociopolitiche nella costruzione della “Englishness” in dialogo con l’Europa.

Abstract II: This contribution examines the representation of German identity in a series of articles published in the *Literary Gazette*, *Blackwood’s Magazine* and the *New Monthly Magazine* between 1817 and 1826 against the backdrop of post-Napoleonic British politics. The study investigates the extent to which these periodicals mediated tensions between national concerns and transnational literary engagement. Specific attention is placed on the rhetorical and discursive strategies providing a representation of cultural otherness that combines nationalist conservative policies with an interest in the newly formed German Confederation. The ambivalent portrayal of “Deutschtum” in Romantic periodicals suggests the role of sociopolitical pressures in the construction of Englishness in dialogue with Europe.

Keywords: Deutschtum, Romantic periodicals, Transnationalism, British Romanticism.

Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the political geography established by the Congress of Vienna, the British cultural identity was shaped by a dual tension. On the one hand, conservative politics intensified censorship, as evidenced by the Peterloo Massacre and the “Six Acts”. In the aftermath of the events that occurred in Manchester in August 1819, Lord Liverpool’s government imposed harsher penalties, expanded the authority of sheriffs and magistrates, and increased taxes on printed materials to curb the spread of

radical ideals¹. This repressive climate sought to suppress dissent in response to the perceived threat of revolutionary contagion. Yet and perhaps paradoxically, this inward-looking political stance co-existed with a vibrant cultural openness to European influences, with British writers and intellectuals engaging with continental aesthetic theories, literary forms, and philosophical ideas. The duality between restriction and receptivity fostered a uniquely charged cultural environment, one in which Romantic writers navigated, negotiated, and often subverted the boundaries of national identity.

As Tim Fulford and Peter J. Kitson remark in *Romanticism and Colonialism*, the very idea of a “Romantic canon” should not be detached from “the later nineteenth-century cultural imperialism of Britain’s domination” (Fulford & Kitson 1998: 5). This view is echoed in scholarship that emphasises the role of the nation and the empire as macropolitical forces instrumental in shaping cultural production and identity formation in Romantic-period Britain. Particularly in poetry and fiction, the ensuing construction of alterity can thus be seen as a means of negotiating these national and imperial dynamics (Richardson & Hofkosh 1996: 1-11). In the post-Napoleonic era, however, such ideological stances co-existed and interacted with a cosmopolitan attitude that embraced foreign models and paradigms which, in turn, contributed to shaping contemporary aesthetic models. As Diego Saglia convincingly demonstrates, particularly between 1815 and 1830 British literary culture may be seen as resting on a composite palimpsest that simultaneously conflates national, international, and transnational contributions (Saglia 2018). The result was a dynamic framework that simultaneously resisted and absorbed national, international, and transnational elements.

In this context, the adjective “transnational” warrants some preliminary clarification. In *Flexible Citizenship* (1999), for instance, Aihwa Ong defines “transnationalism” from an anthropological perspective, focusing on “the cultural specificities of global processes, tracing the multiplicity of the uses and conceptions of ‘culture’”. In this sense, “transnationalism” differs from “transnationality”, which intends as “the condition of cultural interconnectedness and mobility across space” (Ong 1999: 4). From this perspective, the literary and print culture of the Romantic period arguably responds to national and transnational forces at once, largely because of the role of anthologies and periodicals. By circulating foreign works – and especially poetry – in translation, these publications provided an “archive of mobility” that dismantled national frameworks while fostering commonality and intersection (Stanford Friedman 2015: 77). Within this transnational literary ecology, the German case emerges as particularly significant. In its attempt at restoring political stability and conservative order, the Congress of Vienna had endorsed the creation of the *Deutscher Bund* (1815-1866), a confederation of thirty-nine predominantly German-speaking sovereign states providing

¹ Passed by the British Parliament in December 1819, the Six Acts aimed to suppress radical dissent and control public discourse. These comprised (1) the *Training Prevention Act*, banning unauthorised military drills; (2) the *Seizure of Arms Act*, authorising magistrates to confiscate weapons from individuals or groups suspected of posing a threat to public order; (3) the *Seditious Meetings Prevention Act*, restricting large public gatherings; (4) the *Misdemeanours Act*, reducing bail and limiting delays in trials to ensure swift punishment of political offenders; (5) the *Blasphemous and Seditious Libels Act*, imposing harsher penalties on radical publications; and (6) the *Newspaper and Stamp Duties Act*, extending taxes to cheap pamphlets to discourage radical publications. See Poole (2019: 383).

a framework for cooperation and mutual defence while maintaining political autonomy. German territories, and their shared identity, became the subject of interest and admiration for their intellectual and cultural legacy, but they were also kept under observation as a potential political and economic rival.

Despite their divergent outlook, periodicals such as the *Literary Gazette*, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and the *New Monthly Magazine* provided representations of German identity, or *Deutschtum*, that served ideological purposes while contributing to the contemporary literary and aesthetic debate. The noun "Deutschtum" literally translates as "Germanness", but the *Duden Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache* lists three meanings that should be borne in mind for the purposes of this argument:

- a. Gesamtheit der für die Deutschen typischen Lebensäußerungen; deutsche Wesensart;
- b. Zugehörigkeit zum deutschen Volk;
- c. Gesamtheit der deutschen Volksgruppen im Ausland (*Duden Online* 2025)².

This composite definition expresses the multifarious dimensions of the German identity from a cultural, national, and diasporic viewpoint. Although they are clearly hinged in contemporary discourses and debates, these aspects dwell on issues that are also relevant with reference to the post-Napoleonic context. Because each member state maintained political independence and self-governance within the union, the concept of a unified German identity remained still largely elusive, shaped by linguistic and cultural elements as opposed to political unity, and therefore frequently represented as transnational and semantically pliable.

While the *Literary Gazette* contributed to disseminating German literature and philosophy from a cosmopolitan perspective and offers a relevant framework for examining the Romantic-period interest in Germany, *Blackwood's* resorted to conservative rhetorical strategies to depict the Confederation as a buttress of traditional values. The *New Monthly* shows instead a more liberal stance, commending the domestic change brought about by Germany as a model for progress alternative to the French Revolution. In so doing, these periodicals shaped the contemporary public opinion by representing Germany as a canvas onto which British cultural and political identity could be negotiated. By focusing on the ideological frameworks that shapes the representation of *Deutschtum* in these publications, this article examines the role of periodicals in mediating foreign identities and consolidating national self-understanding in the Romantic period. More to the point, it argues that these publications functioned as dynamic sites of cultural production, intersecting literary criticism and political commentary to define the relationships between Britain and Germany at a period of intense social and ideological transformation.

1. Romantic Cosmopolitanism in the *Literary Gazette*

Founded by Henry Colbourn in 1817, the *Literary Gazette* had a circulation of about 4,000 copies per week, with sales possibly encouraged by the relatively low price of 1 shilling. The

² "a. The totality of expressions of life typical of the Germans; the German character or nature; b. Affiliation to the German people; c. The entirety of German ethnic groups living abroad" (my translation).

subtitle, *Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences*, states the aims of the magazine, which intended to refine taste through literature and culture. The “Preliminary Address” that appeared in the first issue, published on 25 January 1817, explicitly articulates the cosmopolitan outlook of the *Gazette*, welcoming the end of “a state of arduous and protracted warfare” so that exchanges with the Continent might improve national literature and taste. In particular, the address laments that the existing periodicals

uniformly embrace such a variety of particulars as to be precluded from exhibiting any thing like a detailed view of Literary History; and though some of them devote a few pages to this interesting object, in none will be found an exact account of instructive picture of the state of knowledge in other countries. The British public still remain very imperfectly acquainted with the progress made by their neighbours in discoveries which enrich, and refinements which embellish society; notwithstanding the facilities now afforded for this important species of information, so essential to the commerce of the genius, by the opening of the Continent, and the restoration of that intercourse which was so long suspended among the Nations of Europe (*Literary Gazette* 1817: 1).

The “Preliminary Address” highlights the insularity of the British literary landscape after years of conflicts, emphasising the need for Continental engagement. This editorial policy is at once mirrored and sustained by the structure of the *Gazette*, whose sections on “Original Correspondence” and “New Publications” signal its intention to situate British literary culture within a transnational context. Likewise, recurring sections on philosophical and scientific innovation, including insights into the proceedings of universities and learned societies, reveal an editorial policy that embraces progress while mediating between elite knowledge and public readership. This structure reflects a liberal, cosmopolitan ethos that balances a national focus with international awareness, seeking to cultivate a readership that values cross-cultural understanding. These aims were not devoid of commercial purposes, since Colburn’s own publishing firm relied on the *Gazette* to promote subscription plans boosting the sales, and therefore the circulation of foreign works³.

The *Gazette*, in other words, helps mediate German cultural and intellectual content for British audiences, but its engagement is uneven and shaped by an ideological framework aimed at negotiating national identity and reassessing Britain’s cultural primacy. The brief commentary published on 8 February 1817, for instance, inscribes Johann Heinrich Voss’ edition of Shakespeare’s plays within a post-Napoleonic climate of cultural diplomacy that celebrates Germany as a refined intellectual partner. Admiration, however, is framed by a reaffirmation of cultural supremacy insofar as the magazine emphasises the challenges of capturing the British national genius in a foreign language:

³ Henry Colburn had been publishing French works both in the original language and in translation since the beginning of his venture at the Conduit Street Library in 1806. He believed that his subscription plans would meet the favour of the reading public thanks to the “the various new arrangements” he had concluded “in London, and his Continental connexions” (Doherty Hudson 2023: 31; cf. also Sutherland & Melnyk 2018).

This is a very agreeable piece of intelligence to the friends of German literature, since they may justly expect from the pen of so distinguished a poet, a more spirited translation than the German language yet can boast, of the works of our immortal Bard (*Literary Gazette* 1817: 41).

The excerpt suggests that the *Literary Gazette* endorses a selective cosmopolitanism that subtly reinforces national pride and celebrates the intellectual and cultural legacy of Great Britain. At the same time, this transnational outlook embraces foreign models in an effort to refine domestic standards of taste, learning, and artistic achievement. Proof of this is the survey of the “Present State of the German Universities” that appeared on 14 February 1818, which consists of a detailed, chronological catalogue of the “Learned Established” that testifies to “the distinguished part which Germany is taking in the pursuits of science and literature in our times” (*Literary Gazette* 1818: 104). As Mark Schoenfield rightly suggests, the Romantic periodical press was at once a “repository” and a creator of “public opinion” – a concept that was popularised precisely at the time (Schoenfield 2009: 1-3). The editorial policy of the *Gazette* exemplifies the prominent role of periodicals in shaping public discourse, acting as influential mediators in the development, circulation, and reception of literary production across borders. Besides serving as outlets for news or commentaries, these publications provided a platform for the dissemination of scientific, social and political ideas. Periodicals, in other words, asserted their role as arbiters of cultural and aesthetic standards in the Romantic period. Another popular publication partaking these dynamics was *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, whose provocative editorial stance often engaged in heated debates and polemics.

2. *Blackwood’s* and the Conservative Values of Germany

Originally titled *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, and nicknamed *Maga*, *Blackwood’s Magazine* was conceived as a rival to the Whig-oriented *Edinburgh Review*. The magazine was launched in 1817, and its tone was often ferocious and scathing. This was mostly due to its main contributors, John Wilson, who wrote under the pseudonym of Christopher North, and John Gibson Lockhart, known by the penname “Z”. Lockhart’s notorious targets were Leigh Hunt and John Keats, whose works he lambasted for turning working-class speech into poetry (Dart 2003; Parker 2020). Deployed on aesthetic grounds, these attacks were also rife with political implications, which suggests the editors’ desire to validate and reinforce conservative cultural norms.

This conflation of culture, identity, and conservative values also accounts for the attention that *Blackwood’s* devoted to Germany. Despite the primacy initially held by French literature, interest in German poetry and writers had been growing steadily during the Napoleonic Wars, gaining popularity as tensions with France “reduced British gusto for French fare” (Johns 2018: 190). From November 1817 to May 1826, *Blackwood’s* featured twenty-one different contributions related to Germany, spanning from “Letters on the Present State” of the country to reviews of plays and commentaries on German editions of Greek works. Among the reasons accounting for the convergence of conservative politics with a novel interest in *Deutschtum* is the commercial threat represented by the recently established Con-

tinental power. Germany features extensively in the “Foreign Intelligence” section in *Blackwood's*, and in October 1817 the editors report that

There have been successively published in Prussian Holland, ordinances of the greatest importance, relative to the commerce and agriculture of that kingdom. These ordinances tend, in particular, to afford a full and entire liberty for industry to develop itself. It is said also, that when the Emperor Alexander shall arrive at Warsaw to remain there several months, he intends to examine minutely every thing which may contribute to the amelioration of the Poles. Agriculture is becoming more and more flourishing (*Blackwood's* 1818a: 102).

The column foregrounds the flourishing of German economy and the emergence of a modern, pan-German sentiment. The reference to recent political efforts to sustain commerce and agriculture signals the attempt made by the *Deutscher Bund* to modernise its economic structure. At the same time, the unwavering support of industrial development suggests liberal policies that encourage innovation and expansion, aspects which the conservative outlook embraced by *Blackwood's* intends to keep at bay. Moreover, the mention of Emperor Alexander's interest in the situation of Poland suggests a transregional consciousness seeking to unify cultural and linguistic communities under shared aspirations and values. In this way, *Maga* captures a transitional moment in which economic modernization intersects with the formation of a collective German identity, all while maintaining a tone of critical scrutiny and guarded observation.

The rise of a modern German state and its political and commercial implications are further explored in the “Letter on the Present State of Things” that was published in April 1818. The anonymous reader, allegedly writing from Düsseldorf, laments that Britain is so “amused and occupied with domestic trifles” that it “remains in a state of utter ignorance concerning many things that should at present rivet the attention of all European politicians” (*Blackwood's* 1818b: 24). Both Whigs and Tory politicians are criticised for misinterpreting the political and social situation in Germany, a fact that is functional to rebuking radical claims in Britain:

Germans who are dissatisfied with the state of affairs in their country, resemble the vulgar, illiterate, and despicable crew who are the present advocates of reform in England. If ever Britain needs a reform, I hope in God she will not listen to the advice of such men as recommend it to her now. But it argues the most deplorable ignorance on the part of any Englishman to suppose, that the discontented party in Germany bears any resemblance to that nest of croakers with which London is infested. We once needed a revolution, and we had it: it was brought about by such men as Hampden, Sidney, Fairfax and Milton (*Blackwood's* 1818b: 24).

The letter presents Germany as a nation enlivened by internal ferment. This condition, however, is framed through a comparison with the sociopolitical situation of Britain that is meant to reinforce conservative narratives resistant to reform. In so doing, *Blackwood's* legitimises reactionary positions by presenting change as destabilising, and bolsters its opposition against radical views by delegitimising them through rhetorical vilification. Moreover,

intellectual progress is called upon to deploy a narrative that is functional to reinforcing class-based elitism, hierarchy, and national pride.

In *The Making of English Reading Audiences* (1987), John P. Klancher argued that *Blackwood's* stylistic excesses were crucial in shaping the identity of the middle-class readership that the magazine aimed to target. This rhetorical strategy enabled *Maga* to promote a sense of intellectual centralisation, consolidating diverse reader experiences into a unified cultural and ideological framework. The result, Klancher contended, was “a concretely externalized world” (1987: 62) that instructed the middle-class to read itself by reading other classes. This is manifest when one considers the stance adopted by *Blackwood's* in presenting *Deutschtum*. The “Letter on the Present State of Things” recounts an alleged first-person experience, a recent trip along the Rhine, the Elbe, and the Danube that brought the anonymous writer into contact with the ferment enlivening Germany. Whilst this state is interpreted as naturally leading to change, the absence of revolutionary movements from the political agenda of the German Confederation is attributed to the character of its population, which is genealogically connected with the English. Violence and convulsion, the letter claims, “would ill accord with the habits and constitution of those in whose persons was never made manifested” (*Blackwood's* 1818b: 25). This representation of the manners of the German peoples, and their common identity, is functional to promoting a conservative ideology that intends to quench radical claims in Britain:

No one who knows any thing of the present state of Germany, – who is aware, that in that country, ruled as it almost every where is by a set of arbitrary despots, there prevails, upon every subject but one, the utmost possible liberty of thought and writing, – no one who is acquainted with the simple fact, that (if we except politics) the Germans are in truth very much like the same sort of people with the English, – that their ancestry is the same, – that their ancient institutions, their religious habits, and, above all, the tone and complexion of their literature, bear the strongest resemblance to ours, – that their favourite authors are, in truth, the intellectual children of our own; – no one who knows this, can be surprised with the general fact, that the Germans are at present a discontented people (*Blackwood's* 1818b: 25).

That German states are preparing for political change and aspiring to a different role in the post-Napoleonic geopolitical scenario is patent, but so is their avoidance of open conflict. Accordingly, the writer concludes that the parliament of the Rhine Province should enact appropriate political initiatives to ensure the prosperous development of the country and its people. This stance marks a change from the stereotypical representation of Germany in the literature of the time, particularly Gothic novels such as Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya; or, The Moor: A Romance of the Fifteenth Century* (1806), where Count Ardolph is depicted as a German naturally inclined to depravity⁴. Whilst an ambiguous attitude still shaped the

⁴ Dacre's novel offers various insights into the representation of cultural alterity in the Romantic period, from European to black otherness. Count Ardolph's homeland, Germany, is presented alongside Venice as the source of the moral contamination that sparks the downfall of the two female protagonists, Laurina and Victoria de Loredani (cf. Burley 2004).

representations of German culture in periodicals targeting women⁵, *Blackwood's* is telling of a change resulting from the conservative order re-established by the Congress of Vienna and the need to quench revolutionary waves at home, as the Peterloo Massacre and the repressive politics it brought about would soon reveal.

This attitude also shapes the review to Thomas Hodgskin's *Travels in the North of Germany* (1815), which appeared in February 1820. *Blackwood's* dismisses the memoir as "Two very bulky octavos" with "a cumbrous title-page" written by an unlearned, self-centred author whose intellectual reputation is repeatedly challenged:

his style of language alone sufficiently testifies him to be, of all elegant education, and no less manifestly a stranger to elegant society, either foreign or domestic – profoundly ignorant of history, both ancient and modern – possessing merely a sort of commonplace imperfect smattering of the doctrines of political economy, and a plentiful measure of vulgar assurance [...] (*Blackwood's* 1820: 536).

German history is framed as worthy of knowledge, and so are its literature and its philosophy. Consequently, they deserve an erudite style and a sound presentation for readers endowed with intelligence and education. Hodgskin, however, failed to do achieve both aims due to his political orientation and class, as the criticism of his Cockney background, and his association with both Leigh and Henry Hunt, reveal:

He is a literary Esquire, of the same class with some political Esquires, whose names have attained greater celebrity than his is ever likely to reach; in other words, he is a radical traveller and a Cockney philosopher – and if he finds readers at all, it must be either of the enlightened followers of Henry Hunt, Esquire, or among the still more enlightened admirers of Leigh Hunt, Esquire (*Blackwood's* 1820: 537).

Blackwood's flattered their commercial and professional readers by apparently casting them as the defenders of aristocratic values, high culture, and national culture and morality. In so doing, the magazine attacked the semi-educated, fashion-conscious urban readership that Hunt and his circle were addressing, and this also accounts for the allusion to Hodgskin's interest in political economy and his *Labour Defended against the Claims of Capital*. Published in 1815, the pamphlet collected Hodgskin's socialist views and his advocacy of trade unions against unbridled liberalism.⁶ In contrast to the ideal of organic social unity celebrated by *Deutschtum*, Hodgskin's radicalism represented a threat to the moral and economic order that *Blackwood's* sought to defend. Within this ideological frame, the references

⁵ According to Johns (2018: 191-192), women's interest in German literature in the Romantic period stemmed from their role as readers in circulating libraries. Besides popular Gothic novels, women favoured religious and moral works like Salomon Gessner's *The Death of Abel* (1761) and Christoph Martin Wieland's *Abraham* (1764). The fact that many translators at the time were women further reflects their engagement with German fiction and poetry.

⁶ Although he did not fully agree with Hodgskin's individualist leanings, Karl Marx welcomed his extension of David Ricardo's theory of value against capitalist exploitation, see Hollander (2008: 353-360).

to Henry “Orator” Hunt – whose talk to the Manchester working class in 1819 notoriously ended up in the Peterloo Massacre – and Leigh Hunt – whose *Examiner* was associated with a lower-class, radical readership – underscore the magazine’s attitude towards the destabilising potential of radical claims. In this light, Germany embodies a cultural model as well as an ideal refuge from the perceived chaos brought about by industrial unrest, free trade, and democratic demands. This ideological positioning enabled conservative readers targeted by *Blackwood’s* to imagine themselves as custodians of the nation’s political, cultural, and economic heritage, aligning their interests with those of the traditional elite (cf. Kelly 2013).

3. Liberal Values, Social Mobility: Germany in the *New Monthly*

A similar ideological stance shapes the construction of Germany and *Deutschtum* in the *New Monthly Magazine*, even though its editorial policy served opposite aims. Leaning towards Whig and liberal values and characterised by a progressive and cosmopolitan outlook, the periodical had been founded by Colburn in 1814 as an alternative to *Blackwood’s*. Its different positioning is evident in the essay “Germany – Past and Present”, which appeared in 1821 and criticises the class privileges that constrain the rise of the middle class in the German territories. The feudal character that forged *Deutschtum* over time and its medieval heritage, the writer states, were obliterated by the wave of libertarian uprising sparked by the French revolution. The result was a novel, cohesive and liberal political structure, but the separation of learning and commerce typical of Germany was only partly able to foster economic and intellectual development in a country characterised by political fragmentation. Only towards the end of the eighteenth century were social hierarchies progressively dismantled, binding previously divided citizens in response to a shared, external threat:

Oppressive privileges, and prescriptive abuses, were laid low; feudal severities annihilated; petty sovereignties abolished; the claims of birth confounded with those of merit: the sovereigns were taught the lesson of adversity; the people acquired energy and consciousness of strength; the barriers of rank were broken down, and the jarring citizens of the different states were, for the first time, united into *one nation of Germans* – one common interest, “*externus timor maximum concordiae vinculum*”⁷, for the first time united all (*New Monthly* 1821: 300; italics in the text).

Once the old feudal system and its small sovereignties were overthrown, merit began to outweigh birthright. In keeping with its editorial policy, the *New Monthly* adopted a reformist stance, at times bordering with radical ideals setting it in contrast to the more conservative tone embraced by *Blackwood’s*. This is evident in its support of the revolutionary cause in the development of an industrious and non-elitist German society. The representation of *Deutschtum* underlying this essay is still ideological, but its construction is instrumental to promoting liberal values in the Continent as well as in Britain. German aristocracy is commended for endorsing the middle-class ethos, supporting an economic order that encourages innovation and independent entrepreneurship against class privilege and birthright.

⁷ “External fear is the greatest bond of unity” (my translation).

In appreciating Germany and its social structure, the *New Monthly* implicitly celebrates English liberal values, supporting the rise of a rational, independent middle class empowered by intellectual and economic freedom. The allusion to the British context is concealed in the statement “the nation of barons is daily imbibing more of the spirit of ‘the nation of shopkeepers’” (*New Monthly* 1821: 302). The statement, which the Irish surgeon Barry Edward O’Meara famously attributed to Napoleon,⁸ celebrates Britain and Germany in that they encourage “the spirit of improvement, and the activity of talent” and foster “a mixed and middling class” of “important, independent, reasoning” individuals” (*New Monthly* 1821: 295, 302). By portraying the class struggle between the aristocracy and the middle class, the *New Monthly* appropriates the commitment to rationality, innovation, and civic unity inherent to *Deutschtum* to acclaim values shared by English liberals such as individual freedom, economic progress, and social reform.

4. Defining National Ideals, Negotiating Otherness

The multifarious representations of Germany and *Deutschtum* in British Romantic periodicals reveal the complex interplay between culture, ideology, and the discursive construction of national identities. In spite of their different editorial agendas, the *Literary Gazette*, *Blackwood’s* and the *New Monthly* appropriate and represent post-Napoleonic Germany and the character of its people as a cultural as well as a political symbol reflecting the anxieties and the aspirations of their readers. While *Blackwood’s* depicts German identity to affirm elitist ideals and reformist attempts in Britain, the *New Monthly* welcomes the cultural and commercial ferment enlivening the German Confederation as a model for liberal progress and middle-class empowerment, and as a state embracing political and economic modernity. In so doing, the periodical press of the Romantic period did not only look at the Continent to report on foreign affairs, but it also actively shaped cultural perceptions and political imaginaries by negotiating national otherness in such a way as to articulate ideological visions of social order. The rhetorical strategies exploited in these depictions of *Deutschtum* ultimately underscore the central role of Romantic print culture in mediating transnational ideas and in consolidating ideological narratives within the British public sphere.

The representations of Germany and *Deutschtum* in British Romantic periodicals illuminate the ideological entanglement of cultural exchange and national self-definition in the post-Napoleonic era. Far from being passive conduits of foreign reportage, publications such as the *Literary Gazette*, *Blackwood’s*, and the *New Monthly Magazine* actively shaped British perceptions of continental Europe, transforming Germany into a discursive space fit for negotiating domestic anxieties and aspirations. Notwithstanding their divergent political stances, these periodicals reveal the role of the Romantic press in framing transnational ideas into national narratives that mediate foreign identities during a period of profound transformation.

⁸ In *Napoleon in Exile*, Barry Edward O’Meara (1822: 52) reports Napoleon’s alleged statement, “You [i.e., the British] were greatly offended with me for having called you a *nation of shopkeepers*”. While O’Meara certainly accompanied Napoleon to St. Helena, the statement is not attested by other sources and was in fact introduced by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776).

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