The Reception of Classical German Literature in England, 1760–1860, Volume 1
THE RECEPTION OF CLASSICAL GERMAN LITERATURE IN ENGLAND, 1760–1860, VOLUME 1
A Documentary History from Contemporary Periodicals

Edited by
JOHN BOENING
The Reception of Classical German Literature in England, 1760-1860

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Volume 1

1977
In Memory of My Father
John Georg Boening
1898 - 1962
Contents of Series

PART I

General reviews of German literature; includes reviews of two or more authors, notices of anthologies, and appreciations devoted to an entire genre.

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Volume 3  Reviews published from 1835 to 1860.

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Acknowledgments

My interest in the reception of German literature in England began while I was still in graduate school. It has proven to be a fascinating and rewarding area in which to work, and I owe a great debt to two of my former teachers for having stimulated and encouraged my Anglo-German studies: to A. Owen Aldridge, in whose seminars on eighteenth-century English literary periodicals I first became aware of the rich store of contemporary evidence on British attitudes towards German literature; and to Ulrich Weisstein, who introduced me to the tools and approaches of comparative literature, who helped me to see the Anglo-German literary relationship in a wider critical perspective, and who guided my doctoral research on William Taylor of Norwich. If The Reception of Classical German Literature in England proves useful and informative to future scholarship, if it helps to illuminate this important but long-neglected confrontation between two great national literatures, part of the credit must belong to them.

A ten-volume facsimile collection of British reviews of German literature is not the kind of project one normally proposes to most publishers. It is also not the kind of project many publishers would be terribly eager to become involved with—it is time-consuming to design and prepare, expensive to produce, and yet limited by its very size and nature to a small, largely academic, market. Like most such improbable ventures, this project was the joint conception of a publisher and a prospective editor. It had its origins some years ago in a conversation with Peter Kemeny of Garland Publishing about the possibility of reprinting William Taylor's Historic Survey of German Poetry. In the course of our discussions, it occurred to both of us that a much larger reprint collection on Anglo-German literary relations might be both useful and feasible. My work with the British periodicals had given me some bibliographical experience in the area, and Garland's success in the production of other large facsimile series had given them the technical expertise for such a venture. The entire project has thus been a collaborative undertaking from the very beginning. In the two and a half years that have passed since my first discussions with Garland, the rising costs of publishing have forced us to modify our original conception slightly, but the present collection comes remarkably close to what we had envisioned when we began. The extensive scope and physical proportions of the collection are the product of our joint conviction that a documentary record of the reception of German literature in England would be a valuable scholarly resource. Garland's generous allowance of ten oversize volumes and their
willingness to undertake the tedious chore of designing composite pages made it possible for me to include the range and variety of materials without which the collection could not have done justice to its subject.

Much of the research for this project was made possible by a Visiting Scholar appointment in the Rackham Graduate School of the University of Michigan in the summer of 1975. Dean Wade Ellis and his colleagues at Rackham graciously made available the considerable scholarly resources of their institution, and I was particularly fortunate to have had at my disposal the fine collections and technical facilities of the Hatcher Library. The informed and generous assistance provided by so many persons on that library’s staff made my work in Ann Arbor a pleasure, and the technical accomplishments of its Photoduplication Department turned my frequent visits there into a memorable short course in modern reprographic technology.

In the process of identifying, locating, and obtaining reproducible copies of the periodicals from which this collection was compiled, I have become indebted to a great many other libraries and librarians throughout the country. I would like to express my appreciation to the Boston Public Library, the Brown University Library, the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, the Library of the University of California at Berkeley, the Library of Case-Western Reserve University, the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, the Library of Congress, the Cornell University Library, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Harvard University Libraries (especially to Ms. Martha Ramsey of the Houghton Reading Room), the Indiana University Libraries, the University of Iowa Libraries, the Milton S. Eisenhower Library at The Johns Hopkins University, the Michigan State University Library, the University of Minnesota Libraries (especially to Ms. Kathy Tezla of the Rare Book Division), the Newberry Library (especially to Ms. Patricia Weeks of the Main Reading Room), the New York Public Library, the Oberlin College Library, the Ohio State University Libraries, the Ohio Wesleyan University Library, the University of Pennsylvania Libraries, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries, the Smith College Library, the University of Wisconsin Library, the Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and the Yale University Libraries (especially to Mr. John Braswell at the Sterling and Mrs. Gay Gibson McDonald at the Beinecke) for their kind assistance. I owe special thanks to the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Collection at Yale for permission to reproduce valuable material from each of their holdings.

At a crucial stage in my editorial work, when my own funds for research were running dry, the University of Toledo came to my aid with an allowance from the Small Grants Fund administered by its Graduate School. At Toledo’s Carlson Library, Mrs. Alice Weaver saw to it that my considerable interlibrary-loan traffic was handled with care and dispatch. Mr. Ralph Carlson, Senior Editor at Garland, has been a continuing source of advice and encouragement for the past two years. His patience has often bordered on the remarkable, and his concern for the scholarly integrity of the project—at times when many publishers might have suggested expediencies or economies simply to advance a publication date or to reduce production costs—is warmly appreciated.
Ms. Lea Higgins and Ms. Karen Oppliger did much of the actual photocopying from the periodicals, Ms. Sylvia Davatz of Garland designed and prepared the composite volumes themselves, and Mrs. Jean Quigley helped type the introductory materials. All of them worked under a timetable that was sometimes oppressive, and their skill and efficiency deserve high praise. I would like to express my special gratitude to Elizabeth Boening, who cheerfully conceded square-foot after square-foot of our home to my steadily accumulating stacks of notes and photocopies, and whose encouragement more than once kept this project alive.

John Boening
Norwich, East Anglia
May 1977
Introduction to the Series

German literature has now for upwards of half a century been making some way in England. . . . The history of its progress here would illuminate the progress of more important things; would again exemplify what obstacles a new spiritual object, with its mixture of truth and falsehood, has to encounter from unwise enemies; still more from unwise friends.

Thomas Carlyle in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1831

If one were to enumerate the most important features of British literary and intellectual history over the past 250 years, one would have to rank high among them the reception and influence of German literature. From the second half of the eighteenth century through the first decades of the nineteenth, German books and ideas attracted, then gained, and finally held the fascinated—though not always approving—attention of a nation not usually given to such extraordinary interest in a foreign literature. Leslie Stephen retrospectively characterized these years as the “importation of German,” and they were witness to a succession of remarkable phenomena: the popularity of German religious poetry (perhaps through John Wesley’s influence) in the 1760s and 1770s; the rather sudden discovery of “serious” German literature by many important English literary figures in the 1780s (i.e., at a time when many social critics were concerned about the rising suicide rate allegedly caused by the public’s mania for *Werther*); the attempts to use German literature as a political scapegoat during the anti-Jacobin years of the 1790s and early 1800s; the coincidence of an informed interest in German literature and philosophy on the part of such influential figures as Coleridge with a popular appetite for German horror tales in the first decade of the nineteenth century; the revaluation of German culture prompted by the appearance of Mme. de Staël’s *De l’Allemagne* in 1813; Carlyle’s first attempts to present German literature as a “new spiritual object” in the 1820s and his subsequent displacement of William Taylor as its chief interpreter in England; the rise of Goethe to something of a near-deity in the 1830s and the gradually increasing “Teutophilia” of so many prominent Englishmen in the decades following.
Despite the acknowledged importance of these events and the currents they reveal, the reception of German literature in England is a subject often alluded to but sparsely studied today. When Bayard Quincy Morgan and Alexander Hohlfeld edited and published the bibliographical researches of the Wisconsin Anglo-German Project in their *German Literature in British Magazines, 1750-1860* nearly thirty years ago, many reviewers expressed the hope that the publication of this exceptionally comprehensive survey would set in motion a chain reaction of more—and more specialized—work in the field. The feeling seemed to be that with the appearance of these bibliographies the research which had been merely awaiting some sort of guidebook through the masses of periodicals in which evidence lay hidden would now finally get under way, that the English side of the Anglo-German literary relationship would finally be explored in detail, would finally be given its due attention. At the very least, reviewers thought, here was the inspiration and the starting point for numbers of doctoral dissertations. Unfortunately, both for the labor of love which went into Morgan and Hohlfeld's book and for literary scholarship in general, this expected and hoped-for generative reaction never took place.

Two conditions, I suspect, have been responsible. One lies in the understandable reluctance of scholars, and especially of graduate students, to undertake work that is considered "unfashionable." For many years—until very recently, in fact—the study of international literary reception, once one of the most energetically tilled fields of Comparative Literature, has been depreciated if not actively discouraged by influential teachers and theoreticians of the discipline, on the grounds that such studies were either too purely literary "history" (in an age when "criticism" was the watchword) or that they were essentially "extraliterary" pursuits, belonging to sociology, perhaps, or to the history of taste, but not fit subjects for the "literary" scholar or critic. Only in the last decade or so, with the rise of a reacknowledgment of the historicity of literature and of literary works of art, a reacknowledgment appropriately symbolized by the establishment of such journals as *New Literary History*, has the study of literary reception been given a new lease on life. This renewed interest in literary history has been accompanied by the promulgation of a number of theorems, such as the *Rezeptionsästhetik* of Hans Robert Jauss and others, which suggest that the posterity of a work of art has important critical, as well as historical, implications and may indeed provide the most salient framework for its evaluation and interpretation. In 1949—the "Goethe-Jahr" to which Morgan and Hohlfeld dedicated their project—the academic climate (at least in English-speaking countries) was far less hospitable to the prospects of reception-study. In the years since 1949 hardly a single British or American scholar has undertaken a major study of German literature in England, and part of the blame for this must fall on those who created an atmosphere in which the study of international literary relations could not expect a sympathetic hearing.

The other condition which helped to preclude the predicted outburst of research on Anglo-German literary relations following the appearance of Morgan/Hohlfeld, and which has continued to operate against a large-scale evaluation of the "importation of German," is a practical and logistical one: the materials for such an evaluation are scattered among so many printed and manuscript sources in so many libraries that resources beyond those normally available to most scholars would be required to examine or to copy them. Despite the Morgan/Hohlfeld bibliographies, for example, and despite the Union Lists we now have, an examination of the periodicals involved—even a preliminary scanning of
potentially relevant articles and reviews—would demand a great investment in time and funds. Though such an investment of means and energies might seem worthwhile to someone who has dedicated a major portion of his scholarly career to Anglo-German literary relations, it is hardly attractive to a graduate student meeting a candidacy deadline or to the scholar of English or German literature to whom the reception of German literature in England is but one of many interests. One of my aims in compiling *The Reception of Classical German Literature in England* was to help overcome this obstacle by making available in a single work a large proportion of the important British reviews cited in Morgan/Hohlfeld and, where possible, filling in some valuable materials not listed there. Although the collection makes no claim to being exhaustive, it does provide, I think, the materials for a comprehensive investigation of the German literary presence in England from 1760 to 1860.

Since the purpose of this collection is principally a documentary one, I have purposely refrained from prefacing the individual items with editorial or critical judgments, i.e., with remarks which would attempt to put each of them in “context” or in “perspective.” My feeling was that the interests of students and scholars alike would be better served if the documents were presented without the inevitably prejudicial “tags” or characterizations an editor is so often tempted to supply. Nonetheless, a few general remarks on what these reviews and articles, taken as a whole, tell us about the nature of the “importation of German” may be appropriate.

The reviews in British periodicals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries remind us, first, that the reception of German literature in England was a very complex process, if indeed it can be called a single process at all. They caution us against the ready acceptance of schemes which would characterize the influx of German books and ideas as a unified, relatively self-contained phenomenon, against, for example, Walter Schirmer’s allegation that the German literary presence in England rose, peaked, and ebbed like some unnatural tide which crossed the North Sea but once and which receded without leaving any lasting traces. A simplified scheme of this nature has its appeal, of course, but it stands in contradiction to the evidence. At Schirmer’s high tide, for instance, we find the periodicals and their editors far from unanimous in their views of things German. Even by the late 1820s, as Leslie Marchand notes in his study of the *Athenaeum*, the English literary world still had serious reservations about the merits of German writing:

The interest in German literature was not so great as might have been expected from the disciples of Coleridge. The fact is that the *Athenaeum* displayed a greater inclination to be kind to the transcendental philosophy, especially when given “real English feeling” by Coleridge or Carlyle, than to the belles-lettres of Germany, for the feeling that the latter was “escapist” in its tendencies was sufficiently strong to make the pre-Victorian moralists uneasy. [John] Sterling, writing to [Richard] Trench, July 24, 1829, of their friend Donne, says, he “does not intend to learn German. Perhaps he is right. Their works of imagination, as far as I can judge from translation, though very sweet in the mouth, are very bitter in the belly. I am more and more convinced that Goethe rescues the individual from contending passions, not to animate it with new life, but to bury it amid the pompous and beneath the mausoleum of art.” Sterling feared what Germany might do to Kemble, who was travelling there.

After midcentury, on the other hand, when by Schirmer’s account the German Einfluss (he uses the term loosely, to include both influence and reception) in England was all but over,
G. H. Lewes had published his famous Life of Goethe, Matthew Arnold had named his beloved dachshund “Geist,” and a semester or two of a German university had become de rigueur for English academics. All the while, British periodicals continued to react to German literature as individually and heterogeneously as they always had, each according to its respective allegiances, editorial predispositions, and publics.

Beyond reminding us of the complexity of the German literary presence in England, of what Ulrich Weisstein calls the inherent Vielschichtigkeit of all such contacts between one national literature and another, the contemporary reviews caution us to be more careful than we often have been in making—or in assuming—connections between the British reception of particular authors and the reception of German literature in general. This is especially true in the case of Goethe, whose reputation in England often stood in no direct relationship to British opinion of other German writers, despite Carlyle’s sustained effort to identify his “German master” with a certain “spiritual” quality he wished to find in an entire national literature. When one compares the English reviews of Goethe’s early works (Werther, for example, or Götz) with contemporary appreciations of Lessing, Wieland, or Herder, one sees a wide disparity between the British hostility towards the works of the young “Olympian” and the hospitality accorded those of his older contemporaries. Similarly, when one compares the veneration for Goethe which had established itself in England by midcentury (and which was later to culminate in the founding of the Goethe Society) with the residual distrust of German “speculative” and “metaphysical” fiction and poetry still found in many of the leading reviews, it becomes apparent that the reputations of German authors ran quite independent courses in England, courses by no means necessarily bound up with the reputation of their greatest countryman.

In addition to the cautionary lessons they provide, the reviews in this collection reveal (or confirm, to those who have long suspected) a succession of what the historians of science have called “paradigm shifts,” major conceptual changes in which one frame of reference is displaced by another, with a consequent revaluation of past judgments and interpretations. In the period from 1760 to 1860, for example, there appear to be a number of significant transformations in what the British considered to be particularly “German” about German literature. As a result of these transformations, British perceptions of individual German authors often changed markedly. The English reception of Lessing offers a telling illustration of how a given German author could come to be perceived as representing something quite different to two generations of British readers. During the 1780s and 1790s, when William Taylor of Norwich was the leading champion of German literature in the British press, Lessing was promoted as the chief representative of the enlightened, liberal spirit which Taylor claimed to have discovered in the new German literature. To him, Lessing represented the tendency—disdain for intolerance and superstition—most characteristic of this new spirit and which most warranted the attention of his English countrymen. For nearly fifty years, Taylor proselytized on behalf of this theorem of the “new German spirit,” writing literally hundreds of reviews and articles and becoming, in the process, the most influential interpreter of German literature in England.10

By 1830, however, when Taylor’s influence in the periodicals had begun to wane, Thomas Carlyle claimed to have discovered a quite different “spirit” in the literature of Germany, a spirit in which the Lessing so well known to Taylor’s readers could not be permitted to figure. The latter’s Enlightenment tendencies seemed to Carlyle to place him more
appropriately among the French *philosophes* (for whom the phlegmatic Scotsman had little patience) than among the truly "German" writers. As René Wellek and others have pointed out, Carlyle's idiosyncratic notion of "German-ness" led him to formulate a highly selective picture of German literature, in which such eighteenth-century authors as Herder and Wieland did not play any major part, and in which Lessing received no more than "cold respect for the skeptic who deserved to be a believer." In due course, Carlyle took it upon himself to become the chief spokesman for things German in England, a role he played well and long, and which in turn allowed him to superimpose his particular spiritual vision on much of the German literature available to his countrymen. Under his regency as its unofficial ambassador, the literature of Germany assumed a new shape in England, a shape not only radically different from that of a few decades earlier, but also very different from the Germans' own view of their literary past. The impact of this change on English perceptions of Lessing was profound: he was no longer the same author. The "Lessing" of Taylor's generation would scarcely be recognized in the "Lessing" of Carlyle's, an aspect of his reception not disclosed in frequency-of-mention graphs or in tabulations of "favorable" versus "unfavorable" mention. The example of Lessing reveals—as do many other similar cases—that the nature of literary reception is active rather than passive, that it is not a unidirectional transaction, and that each specific "reception" is accompanied by processes of mutual and reciprocal definition. The literary "emittor," be it a work, an author, or an entire national literature, is no more a constant in such processes than the "receptor." Just as there is more than one "England" to respond to German literature, so also is there then more than one "Lessing," more than one "Goethe," more than one "Faust." Many enumerative and statistical studies of German literature in England have failed to take such bilateral transformations into account, but perhaps the lively debates over *Rezeptionästhetik* will call them to the attention of future students of Anglo-German literary relations.

One further general statement might be made about the contemporary reviews in this collection: taken as a whole, they demonstrate that the reception of German literature in England often proceeds at a very different pace and in very different patterns from the *influence* of German literature (not to mention German philosophy, German "culture," and German scholarship) in England. Although reception and influence are inevitably related, the connections are often very elusive and complex. Since subsequence does not always imply consequence, and since a German author's influence in England (via the work of disciples, or through other intermediary persons or texts) may even occasionally have preceded his actual reception there, the temptation to account for one of these processes in terms of the other should best be avoided. The evidence shows that there is no necessary chronological relationship between reception and influence, and that they do not always operate in tandem. Readers familiar with the German influences on certain major British writers of the Romantic and Victorian periods will sometimes be surprised at the unlikely backgrounds—at the configuration of "receptions"—against which these influences made way.

The materials in this collection, then, may serve as both a stimulus to detailed research on the "importation of German" and as a documentary record against which the hypotheses and inferences suggested by secondary sources can be tested. Together with Morgan and Hohlfeld's analyses, Morgan's *Critical Bibliography*, and the specialized studies published by a previous generation of scholars, they may help to form the evidentiary base
upon which a full-scale account of the reception of German literature in England can finally be built.

* * *

In order to make The Reception of Classical German Literature in England useful to scholars with a wide range of interests, it has been divided into three parts. Part I is a chronological presentation of commentary on German literature in general. It also contains collective reviews of more than one German author, notices of important anthologies, and reactions to influential works about Germany and its culture (such as Mme. de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*). Part II collects reviews of individual German authors of the eighteenth century and the Goethezeit. The authors are arranged chronologically from Jakob Bodmer to E.T.A. Hoffmann, and the reviews of each are presented in order of their appearance. Part III is devoted to the English reception of Goethe and Schiller. The reviews of Goethe are arranged by work or group of works, the reviews of Schiller by period of his literary career. Within each category, the materials are again presented in order of their appearance. Parts II and III contain cross-references to the collective reviews of Part I.

This arrangement was suggested principally because the materials in this collection may be of particular interest to two large but fairly distinct groups of investigators: to Germanists, whose chief concern will most likely be with the English fortune of a particular German author or group of authors (i.e., with the "emittor"), and to scholars of English literature, whose interests will probably lie more in the English reaction itself or in the intellectual climate of a given period of British literary history. For the latter, the set also provides an index to the periodicals in which the reviews appeared.

The decision to use the dates 1760 and 1860 as the outer frame for this collection was not a difficult one to make. Within the century they define, one can trace the "importation of German" from its very earliest phases to the point at which the German literary presence in England had become so pervasive and diffuse that it cannot be adequately represented by a few reviews. With a few rare exceptions, there was hardly any English interest in German literature before the middle of the eighteenth century. Despite the Hanoverian monarchy and various political ties between Prussia and Great Britain, the German language was virtually unknown in England. The German states, by and large, had no special appeal to British travelers in the Continent and the francophone court of Frederick the Great did nothing to encourage foreign interest in German writing. In addition, there was before 1750 no German author of international stature whose works could help call attention to the literary activities of his less prominent countrymen. Apart from these considerations, the choice of 1760 as the point of departure for a collection such as this has another basis: before that date, the English periodicals in which the critical review was later to emerge as a separately important literary form were only beginning to give little more than plot summaries in their book notices. According to Hazlitt, it was William Taylor himself who first introduced the long critical essay (in his *Monthly Review* articles on German literature) to the English literary periodicals. This coincidence between the early reception of German literature and the rise of the review essay as a significant feature of English literary life has interesting implications, of course, but it also provides a conveniently appropriate nexus with which to begin a documentary record. It is for this reason, no doubt, that the organizers of the Wisconsin Anglo-German Project also chose the middle of the eighteenth century as
the starting point for their bibliographical studies. As a result of those studies, we have for
the period 1750-1860 the kind of scholarly resources without which a project like the present
one could never have been undertaken by a single person. The availability of these detailed
bibliographies for the years up to 1860 to a great extent determined the later limit of this
collection as well. Without the guidance they provide, an exhaustive search of British
periodicals for reviews of German literature worth reprinting would be a forbidding
prospect. For the years after 1860, moreover, a facsimile collection would be somewhat
redundant, since British periodicals of the later nineteenth century are far more readily
accessible to student and scholar alike than are hard-copy materials for the earlier years.

The choice of German authors to include was considerably more difficult, and made even
more so by the fine line which often barely demarcates the “literary” from the
“extraliterary.” Why include Lavater, for example, but not Winckelmann? In the final
selection, the degree of critical attention paid to an author of borderline literary standing by
English reviewers decided his inclusion or omission. Although the British periodicals did
publish lengthy translated excerpts from Winckelmann’s writings, these excerpts appeared,
for the most part, without editorial comment or criticism. The frequency-of-mention graphs
prepared by Morgan and Hohlfeld would therefore be as useful an index to the reception of
Winckelmann in England as would a gratuitous reprinting of the excerpts themselves
(neither can give us a meaningful picture, but a tabular presentation at least has the virtue
of compactness). Lavater, on the other hand, whose works on “physiognomy” are hardly
more “literary” than Winckelmann’s archaeological writings, attracted considerable and
sustained attention from English reviewers. This disparity is attributable in large part to the
changing form and function of the periodical reviews themselves from the 1760s, when
Winckelmann’s works appeared in England, to the period 1780-1810, when Physiognomy
attracted its English audiences, and it explains why Lavater is represented in Part II of this
collection while Winckelmann is not. It can also serve to illustrate the kinds of
considerations which in many cases made the selection of German authors more
complicated than a scheme determined solely by their posthumous reputations.

Ideally, a documentary record of the reception of German literature in England should
include an account of the reception of German philosophy, especially that of Kant and his
interpreters, but such an extension would have increased the size and scope of the project
beyond manageable—and publishable—proportions. The reader will find a number of
articles in Part I which allude to the relationship between British perceptions of German
philosophy and their perceptions of German literature. The British periodicals of the early
nineteenth century contain so many references to the philosophers themselves, however, that
another volume or two would have been required to present a representative sampling of
these materials.15

The list of periodicals from which the materials in these ten volumes were taken is as
extensive as space permitted. It is based on an examination of well over two hundred British
serials cited in Morgan/Hohlfeld or mentioned elsewhere as being important or
representative enough to warrant consideration. The final collection includes articles and
reviews from all of the major English literary periodicals (roughly in proportion to their
concern for German literature). In addition, it contains a broad sampling of opinion from
the more general magazines, including some popular religious publications. The English
audience for German literature was from the outset not limited to a small intellectual circle,
and a fair picture of British attitudes and opinions requires a broad canvas.

Of the periodicals on the final list, two deserve special mention. One is Nathan Drake's *Speculator*, which lasted only a single year (1790) but which has been called "the first organ of the Germanophile romanticists in England." Drake and his leading contributor, Edward Ashe, filled their monthly issues with translations from German works, criticism of German literature, and reports on the cultural life of the German capitals. The *Speculator* is particularly interesting because it appeared at a time when the literature of Germany had not yet gained a real foothold in England, and when many Englishmen were still very reluctant to acknowledge it a place among the great literatures of Europe. Drake's reasons for embracing such an unpopular cause have never been satisfactorily explained (he was a practicing physician and an essayist for most of his life) and his short-lived career as the publisher of a literary periodical deserves serious scholarly attention. The other rather "special" periodical is the *German Museum*. It also had a brief life (1800-1801), but in a sense it was an even riskier undertaking than the *Speculator*: in the midst of the wave of anti-German sentiment stirred up by the *Anti-Jacobin* reviewers and their political allies at the turn of the century, it proposed to offer English readers a continuing anthology of serious German writing. The venture was made even more audacious by the prominent place given in its first year's issues to Kantian philosophy and other highly controversial topics, along with polemical articles purporting to demonstrate that literature was being cultivated more zealously in Germany than in other European countries. Like the *Speculator*, the *German Museum* appears to have been the idea of amateur publishers; like the *Speculator*, the motives for its conception remain something of a mystery; and like the *Speculator*, it has not received the scholarly attention it deserves.

Each volume in the series has a table of contents giving the titles of the articles, the periodicals in which they appeared, and the year of publication. The headnotes to each item give the volume and page citation of the original article, as well as cross-references to Morgan/Hohlfeld for those materials catalogued there and to Jean-Marie Carré's *Goethe en Angleterre* for items cited in that work. Where the attribution of anonymous or pseudonymous contributions to the major periodicals has been established with some certainty and where these identifications can be verified in such works as the Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, they have been included in the headnotes. For attributions in the earlier years, information was gathered from such sources as Benjamin Christie Nangle's two-volume survey of the *Monthly Review*, Hill and Helen Shine's index to the *Quarterly*, Josephine Bauer's study of the *London Magazine*, and J. W. Robberds' biography of William Taylor. These are all readily accessible works, to be sure, but an exhaustive investigation of primary sources, cross-checked against the vast body of scholarly literature on the periodicals and their contributors, would have been a major undertaking in its own right, far beyond the scope of this project and the resources of its editor. For this reason, attributions based solely on internal evidence, "educated guesses," or marginalia, though tempting to include, have been omitted.

The oversize format of the volumes in this set was dictated by the wide range in size, page design, and typography of the original materials. A similar format was used by Garland with notable success in the production of Donald Reiman's *The Romantics Reviewed* (1972).
facsimile reproduction, it offers the dual advantages of fidelity and clarity: the materials can
in almost all instances be shown as they would have appeared to a contemporary reader.
Whatever inefficiencies such a format may sometimes cause in the use of page-space are thus
more than redressed by its scholarly merits. As in the Reiman volumes, the quality of
reproduction achieved by Garland Publishing is impressive. Although an occasional page
may appear slightly faint in places, or blemished, the fault lies in the condition of the
original from which it was photographed. In far more instances the facsimiles are in fact
improvements over the hard-copy pages from which they were made, with heightened
contrast and better resolution. If The Reception of Classical German Literature in England
thereby makes research a bit less tedious for scholars accustomed to working with faint,
brittle editions of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century periodicals or makes its subject
more attractive to potential investigators previously discouraged by the prospect of reading
yards upon yards of microfilm, it will have achieved one of its prime objectives.

Notes

1. For an overview of the history of Anglo-German literary relations, see Horst Oppel's two-volume
   Englisch-deutsche Literaturbeziehungen (Berlin, 1971), which provides a compact yet fairly well-rounded
   introduction to the subject, particularly for the nonspecialist.

2. "Teutophilia" is the term used by Frederick Faverty in his Matthew Arnold the Ethnologist (Chicago,
   1951) to characterize the extensive pro-German sentiment in nineteenth-century English literary and
   intellectual circles. It is an exaggeration, of course, to speak of mid-Victorian England principally in terms
   of its predilection for German books and ideas (there were countercurrents as well), but the Germanophilia
   of many British intellectuals and men of letters should not be underestimated. John Mander underscores
   this point in a well-known essay entitled "Must We Love the Germans" (Encounter, December 1969), citing
   H.A.L. Fisher's observation that Oxford and Cambridge "reverberated with the echoes of Teutonic
   learning." Though not a literary scholar—his work relies too heavily on such secondary sources as Walter
   Schirmer's Der Einfluss der deutschen Literatur auf die englische im 19. Jahrhundert (Halle, 1947)—
   Mander is one of the few modern writers who have attempted to discover the relationship between English
   perceptions of German literature and the larger historical and political aspects of Anglo-German relations.
   His Our German Cousins: Anglo-German Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries (London, 1974) puts the
   "importation of German" in an unusually interesting perspective.

3. Almost all of the "standard" works on the subject were published before 1940. B. Q. Morgan's Critical
   Bibliography of German Literature in English Translation appeared in 1938, and the most comprehensive
   bibliographical studies of individual authors, such as Carre's Goethe en Angleteere (Paris, 1920), Rea's
   Schiller's Dramas and Poems in England (London, 1906), and Todt's Lessing in England (Heidelberg,
   1912), as well as the most respected general surveys, such as Stockley's German Literature as Known in
   rpt. New York, 1963), are all a generation or more old, and with rare exceptions they have not been
   substantially updated—much less superseded—by more recent scholarship. Frederick Ewen’s The Prestige
   of Schiller in England (New York, 1954) is perhaps the only full-scale treatment of the reception of a
   classical German author in England to appear since the Second World War. It is ironic that the English
   reception of German literature attracted so little scholarly attention at a time when the crosscurrents of
   literary influence between Germany and England were being so vigorously explored (among the notable
   studies are those by Karl S. Guthke and Eudo Mason) and so carefully analyzed (in the many essays on the
   subject by René Wellek, for example).
4. (Madison, Wisc., 1949). The bibliographies in Morgan/Hohlfeld were prepared by Morton Mix, Martha Nicolai, and Walter Roloff in the course of their doctoral studies at Wisconsin.

5. See, for example, Claudio Guillén’s remarks on the subject in a paper entitled “The Aesthetics of Influence Studies,” Proceedings of the 2nd Triennial Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association (Chapel Hill, 1959), pp. 175-192; in his Literature as System (Princeton, 1970); and elsewhere. Guillén echoes the views of an entire generation of critics when he posits an “ontological gap” between the literary work of art and the world in which it exists, thereby driving a firm wedge between such “aesthetic” phenomena as literary influence and such essentially “social” processes as literary reception. In this scheme, the study of influence remains a proper concern for scholars of comparative literature, while the study of reception is relegated to the status of a Hilfswissenschaft, peripheral to the main business of literary scholarship. Before the recent revival of interest in hermeneutics and the “new” literary history, attempts to challenge this artificial separation usually bogged down in the terminological discussions (e.g., on the distinction between an author’s “Wirkung” and his “fortune”) so dear to comparatists.

6. There has lately been an outpouring of books, articles, and papers on the aesthetics of reception, especially in Germany. The best known of these remains Jauss’s Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft (Frankfurt, 1970).

7. The study of literary intermediaries and similar avenues of international literary exchange (the rapports de fait, as it were, between one national literature and another) has continued to flourish in France, where the Revue de littérature comparée, for example, regularly publishes articles on these and other aspects of reception.


12. The original Bibliography has been enlarged by a Supplement (New York, 1965).

13. See J. L. Haney, “German Literature in England Before 1790,” Americana Germanica, IV (1902), 144-154. Garold Davis’s German Thought and Culture in England (Chapel Hill, 1969) attempts to demonstrate that there was a significant German cultural presence in England in the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century, but this is a minority view, and it is not supported by what we know about English literary history (most major English authors were either oblivious to German literature or openly contemptuous of it) or by the views expressed in the contemporary periodicals.


15. I would also probably have needed the assistance of a coeditor, since the history of philosophical thought is a field for learned specialists, in which a literary perspective might produce dangerous distortions in the selection of materials.

17. Note, for example, the opinion of Robert Alves, a contemporary literary historian. Alves wrote in 1790 that "the Germans are generally reckoned too dull and phlegmatic a people to excel in literature; and therefore cannot figure much in our present subject; which is to take a view of the language and literature of the most enlightened nations in Europe." *Sketches of a History of Literature*, ed. Patrick O'Flaherty (Gainesville, Fla., 1967), p. 106.

18. There is a brief description of the German Museum in the "Historical Survey" section of Morgan/Hohlfeld, but the contents themselves are not cited individually in the book's main bibliographical lists. Hohlfeld suggests (p. 47) that the magazine was founded by the Rev. James Beresford, a sometime translator of German literature. Stokoe, on the other hand, defers to H. G. Fiedler's contention that the editor was probably the Rev. Peter Will. Fiedler gives his evidence in his "Goethe's Lyric Poems in English Translation," *MLR*, XVIII (1923), 52. Notices in contemporary periodicals that "Mr Will and Dr Willich Announce a Monthly German Museum" tend to support Fiedler's position.

19. Subtitled *Bibliographie critique et analytique*. Carré published two companion volumes with identical main titles, both in 1920. All references in the headnotes to this collection refer to the *Bibliographie*. Its sister work is an evaluative study of Goethe's reputation in England.


Abbreviations Used in the Headnotes


WIVP  *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals*, ed. Walter Houghton, *et. al.* Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1966 *et seq.* [two volumes have appeared to date].

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Part I

The three volumes which comprise Part I of this collection offer a broad sampling of British reactions to classical German literature from the 1760s through the middle of the nineteenth century. The year-by-year arrangement affords a chronological framework for the reviews of specific German authors contained in Parts II and III, and lends them a sense of context. Since every effort was made to represent the wide range of materials provided by the contemporary periodicals, the items in Part I make a rather eclectic collection. They include, for example, general criticism of German literature or its genres, collective reviews of two or more German authors, polemics on the dangers of German literary notions, letters commenting upon the quality of translations, articles concerned with the influence of German literature on English writers, and similarly varied kinds of documents. Some of the materials take the form of review essays, some the form of reports from correspondents abroad, some the form of letters to the editor, and some the form of discursive articles. In a few instances, the lines between these forms are blurred, quite possibly by intention (some letters to the editor were commissioned so that a magazine might present points of view with which it would rather not be directly associated). Besides these general appreciations—and depreciations—of German literature, Part I also contains a number of short reviews of individual German works which were not themselves particularly distinguished but which were nonetheless seen by the British as representative of certain literary tendencies in Germany and which therefore became a factor of some significance in determining British attitudes towards German literature as a whole (such as the immensely popular tales of terror and diablerie, the so-called Schauerromane brought to England by "Monk" Lewis and others). It also includes some reviews of German books which had little or no intrinsic importance but which provided their English "reviewers” with a convenient pretext for commenting on German literature generally.

The two long series which open Part I are important milestones in Anglo-German literary relations. The first of these, William Taylor's "The German Student," was the earliest extended—and favorable—account of German literature to appear in a major British periodical. Although many of the pieces Taylor wrote for the Monthly Magazine were later revised and collected into his Historic Survey of German Poetry (1828-1830), they deserve to be seen in their original form. In the years before Carlyle's rise to prominence, Taylor was the most influential propagandist for German literature in the British periodicals. His articles
are thus indispensable to an understanding of the forces which helped mold public opinion on matters German. Clarence Mangan may not have been quite the pioneer intermediary Taylor was, but his “Anthologia Germanica” series for the *Dublin University Magazine* (also later collected into book form) was similarly influential, serving to introduce many British readers to the lyric poetry of Germany. Mangan was a gifted translator, and his audience was a large one. While other translators and critics concentrated their efforts on German prose fiction, German drama, or on the works of a single German author, Mangan sought to display to his countrymen a wide selection of German poetry. The “Anthologia Germanica” does include the work of some German writers who cannot be called “classical” in any sense of the term, but its significant role in the “importation of German” nonetheless warrants it a prominent place in this collection.

Apart from these two extended series, the items in Part I are presented by year of their appearance. The infrequent exceptions to this arrangement are certain sequences of correspondence which form logical, independent units but which begin in one calendar year and end in the next (such as the “Letters on German Literature” to the *Monthly Register* in 1802 and 1803). The items in such sequences are therefore grouped together to preserve continuity. It is fitting—though quite coincidental—that a chronological account of British opinion on German literature begins with the kind of disparaging remarks made by the Monthly Review’s critic in 1764 and closes—just as coincidentally—with the less derisive but equally disapproving observations made by Cyrus Redding in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1860, if only because these two reactions, separated by nearly a century, demonstrate that the growing German literary presence in England did not necessarily bring with it a correspondingly uncritical attitude towards German books and their writers, and that the course of German literature in England cannot be deduced from graphs which plot a single ascending line. The fortunes of individual German authors abroad were every bit as diverse as they were at home.
The “German Student” Series (1818-1824)
By William Taylor of Norwich

See also reviews of Taylor’s Historic Survey of German Poetry (1828-1830), which incorporated many of these materials, in Volume 3
For the Monthly Magazine.
THE GERMAN STUDENT.
No. I.
SKETCH OF GERMAN LITERATURE PRIOR TO THE YEAR 1000.

Having sufficiently acquired the German language to understand the poetry, and the still more difficult prose, with which its fine literature abounds, I have lately undertaken a perusal of the leading writers, in chronological order, and propose offering to you some outlines of the phenomena which have most drawn my attention.

Should you be disposed progressively to insert these notices, you may entitle my successive papers, the German Student.

—First, a few words concerning the principal repositories of the older literature.

Schiller, in imitation of one Hickes, formed the first important systematic collection of ancient German poetry and prose, his Teutschatus having appeared in 1777: but, like its model, it contained too many prayers, hymns, and hemistichs; too few sagas, war-sagas, and romances.

In 1788, Boisser revived the attention of his countrymen to these studies, and obtained assistance, from the magistracy of Zurich, to print, after the manuscriptat, those remains of 140 minsters, which fill his two quarto's, Professor Miller, in 1784, continued this plan of compilation through two volumes more; and made known the great romance of the Nibelungen Singh, in 1798, extracted from the manuscripts at Copenhagen his Symbola ad Literatum Testamentum Antiquarum. And, in 1808, J. H. von der Heyen, a patriotic Prussian nobleman, published, at his own expense, a volume edited by Dr. Rinsehing, which contains St. George, King Rolf, Duke Ernest, Solomon, Wignamorc, and some other hiterto manuscript romances.

From these documents it appears, that the oldest monument of Uniadized, whence the modern German has sprung, is the Merse Gothic, or West Gothic, version of the Christian gospels. This was first edited by Jamius at Dorpark, in 1665, and is ascribed to Bishop Ufisborg, who was a native of Cappadox; was employed by the Galla of Walachia, as an embassy at Constantinople, in the year 378; and who thinned, consequently, under Valentinian and Varinius. Some antiquaries, however, have contended, that the Codex argenteus contains but a Frankish gospel of the age of Chilperic; and Westeins accords to that opinion, on the ground of its habitation coincidence with the Vulgate.

But Mickelis has pointed out many passages which must have been translated directly from the Greek; and conceives the alphabet employed, and the attempt to imitate a dactyl number by a peculiar grammatical inflection, to be indicative of a translator more connected with Constantinople than with Rome; he adds, therefore, the version to Ufisborg,—although he admits that it may have subsequently been corrected into closer correspondence with the Latin text.

Charlemagne is stated, by Eckhart, to have collected German poems; but, unfortunately, thisiman assembly has nowhere been preserved. The text, which he imposed on the emperor Saxum, when he compelled them, under pain of death, to conform to the laws, has been put on record, and read thus:—

Ech fuorsela Hubelei, ende Themor, ende Tueda, ende Swane Olo, ende allea then unbihe the hirre genisses sted. Which is, word for word, thus,—"I forsake the Devil, and Thor, and Wulcan, and the Saxans, and unto all the unhallowed ones, who are their comrades."

From this formulary of renunciation, it results plainly, that the prophet Odin is a different personage from the god Wulcan, and was so considered by his most zealous followers. The oath taken by the sons of Charlemagne to the French and German nations has also been preserved in the language of both countries. But the oldest Franks poetry is a metrical version of various passages from the Scriptures, by Ottred of Weissenburg, a monk, who studied at Fulda, and who wrote before the year 670.

This writer's rhymed patristics, hymned euchratic hymns, and rhymed ballads, in praise of the pieties and government of Louis P., or Louis II., king of the Franks, have been inserted by Hickes in his Grammar of the Frankish tongue. To the Vatican manuscript of Ottred is appended a ballad concerning St. George, which, in the structure of its metre and language, so much resembles the oldest productions of this author, that it may reasonably be ascribed to him; and, as it has been agreeably translated, line for line, and learnedly commented by the late Dr. Sawyers, in a volume of disquisitions, I shall here transcribe it.

George went to judgment, With much honour, From the market-place, And with a great multitude following: He proceeded to the ring To perform the sacred duty, Which then was highly celebrated, And most acceptable to God. He quitted the kingdoms of earth, And obtained the kingdom of Heaven. Thus did he do,— The illustrious Count George. Then hastened all The kings, who wished To see that man entering; But who did not wish to hear him.
The spirit of George was thereby honoured:
I speak truly, from the report of these men;
For he obtained
What he sought from God,
The holy George.
Then they suddenly adjudged him
To the prison;
Into which with him entered
Two beautiful angels:
There they found two women
To nourish his body;
When that sign was made to him.
George there prayed:
My God granted every thing
To the words of George;
He made the dumb to speak,
The deaf to hear,
The blind to see,
The lame to walk.
A pool stood nigh for many years;
It was dried up, and ran away quite.
This sign wrought there
George indeed.
When began the powerful man
To be exceedingly enraged;
He then ordered George to come forth,
He ordered him to be unclothed,
He ordered him to be violently beaten
With a sword wonderfully sharp.
All this I know to be altogether true.
George then arose, and recovered himself.
He wished to preach to those present,
And the heathen men
Placed George in a conspicuous situation.
Then began that powerful man
To be exceedingly enraged.
He then ordered George to be bound
To a wheel, and to be whirled round;
I tell you what is fact,
The wheels were broken in pieces.
This I know to be altogether true.
George then arose and recovered himself.
He then wanted to preach
To the heathen men;
And they put George in a conspicuous place.
Then he ordered George to be struck,
And commanded him to be violently scourged;
Many desired he should be beaten to pieces,
Or he should be a powder.
They laid him down.
They took his acknowledgment,—
They ordered George to rise;
He wrought many miracles,
As in fact he always does.
This I know to be true.
George then arose and recovered himself.
They ordered him instantly to preach.
Then he said:
I am assisted by faith;
Remember ye the devil
At every moment.
This is what St. George teaches.
Then he was permitted to go into the chamber
To the queen.
She began to listen to him.
Contemporary, or nearly so, with this ballad is a deistical creed, found in
Bavaria, at Weissenbrunn, and superscribed
Poetic Kulturhalt; that is, the
poet's preachment; but the author's name
is unknown. Superior in poetical merit,
though somewhat posterior in point of date, is the encomium on the victory of
Louis III. of France over the Normans,
which Hickes omits, but which Schiller
has edited. Other traces of vernacular
poetry, prior to the year 1000, may be
found in ecclesiastic writers; they consist
chiefly of songs by unlettered poets, dear
only to the memory of their contemporaries.
Solamn prohibitions occur, addressed
to the men, against getting by
heart and singing love-songs. A coarse
obscenity, no doubt, was leading feature
of these compositions. Other prohibi-
tions occur, addressed to the people,
against singing at the graves of their fore-
fathers, varius ididiades, meaning prob-
ably hearse-songs, in which heathen
divinities are mentioned, or addressed.
A quarrel between an archbishop of
Mayoy and a count of Babenberg is
stated to have been recorded, on account
of the great notoriety which it had
acquired, from the satirical ballad in
every body's mouth.
These are but scanty notices of the
early literature of the Germans. Some
idea, however, may be formed of that
portion of it which has perished, by
studying the remains of the Scandinavian
poetry, which reheated from within
the circle illuminated by the Christian
missionaries, and adapted a method of cele-
brating their heroes similar to that which
had been directed towards their gods.
The progress of kindred nations is neces-
sarily analogous; the Danes of the tenth
century are the Germans of the fifth;
that poetry, which retreated from within
the circle illuminated by the Christian
missionaries, will have lingered longer
on the eccentric shores of the Baltic;
and, possibly, we possess, with little
change of dialect, in the Edda of the
Icelanders, the very writings of the
Saxon Odin.