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New Perspectives on Imagology

Edited by

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Toward a Production-Oriented Imagology

Ulrike Kristina Köhler

Abstract

This article outlines a production-oriented imagology and equips the imagological toolkit with concepts and terminology from cultural memory studies, reception aesthetics, narratology, rhetoric, and text linguistics. It thereby presents the theoretical framework which makes it possible to analyse generic elements without a national connotation with regard to their function in generating a national image. Using as examples genres from English Romanticism and how they evoke Englishness, the article highlights the aesthetic complexity of national images and their range of variation. Simultaneously it paves the way for a more nuanced deconstruction of these images.

Keywords

imagology – production aesthetics – genre – implied reader – English Romanticism

1 Introduction

Imagology is invested in the deconstruction of national images, not least because it strives to disclose their fictional character and discriminatory potential. For this purpose, it has assembled a notable and differentiated toolkit, and has long developed into a structural analysis of national images (cf. Leerssen 2000, 271). At the same time, this objective resulted in a narrowing of its viewfinder to explicit representations of nations, such as national stereotypes and topoi. In doing so, imagology has largely overlooked that generic elements without a national connotation can also contribute to generating a national image. As a consequence, it lacks the analytical instruments for the investigation of these generic elements.

A production-oriented imagology, as presented in this article, assembles the missing tools to trace and deconstruct the different layers of complex

national images in a nuanced way. The article crystallizes the core aspects of production-oriented imagology as developed and tested in the monograph *Poetik der Nation. Englishness in der englischen Romantik* (Köhler 2019). First, a production-oriented imagology adopts a panoramic perspective, taking in a genre in its entirety and thus allowing to identify all generic elements be they narrative, aesthetic, rhetorical, formal, or of another kind. Then its viewfinder zooms in on the different generic elements, “putting” them “under the microscope” (Wellek 1963, 9) for a thorough examination. In order to be able to analyse them conclusively, the imagological toolkit has to be augmented with concepts and terminology from different fields of literary and cultural studies. To showcase the benefits of a production-oriented imagology, this article will outline the manifestations of Englishness as they show themselves in a range of genres with a variety of differing generic elements, including narrative, aesthetic, stylistic, formal, and rhetorical ones. Therefore the analysis focuses on the following four genres: the political essay, the travelogue, the Gothic novel, and balladry.¹ The article will spotlight the role of generic elements which are not weighted with national overtones, and how they interact with explicit representations of nations.

The cultural-historical context is English Romanticism, a period which peaked around 1800, ended in the 1830s, and was harbingered as early as the 1760s.² During this epoch, the concept of nation and nation building took centre stage, and literature played a crucial function in shaping the idea of the English nation. The Gothic novel “rose on the nationalist tide” (Miles 2007, 14–15), and poetry after 1800 was employed to foster nationalist sentiments (cf. Leerssen 2018, 109). The epoch is marked by a heightened interest in subjectivity, the imagination, the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque, as well as in sensibility. A mystified age of chivalry became an idealized past that the nation could turn to in search of its roots and values. Simultaneously, traditional order and hierarchy in both art and society were fiercely challenged. Romantic writers dismissed the neoclassical poetics of the eighteenth century which had its

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- 1 For a comparative case study of two travelogues see Sandra Vlasta's article in this volume (part 1, chapter 4). Moreover, Vlasta's article proposes an innovative imagological approach to travel writing since it integrates “how the genre-specific stylistic elements of multilingualism and intertextuality inform the performance of auto- and hetero-images” (Vlasta 2022, 112) in the genre.
 - 2 In his introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of British Romanticism*, David Duff (2018, 1) dates the beginning of English Romanticism to the year 1760. The handbook synthesizes the current state of research regarding English Romanticism. The different phases of the epoch are characterized in chapters 1–5. For a concise outline of the period see Casaliggi and Fermanis (2016).

epicentre in France as “a foreign, colonizing influence that had pushed British literature off its natural course” (Duff 2009, 33), and understood genres as forms to be transgressed and played with. These changes in art and literature were inseparably intertwined with the upheavals of contemporary history. The French Revolution shook Europe to its core. British radical forces (among them poets and intellectuals) hoped the revolutionary tidal wave would reach Britain, whereas conservatives saw in the unprecedented events on the continent a crisis of social stability and peace (cf. Gibson 1995, 111–115). Later on, the Napoleonic Wars brought about a change in the general perception of France.

Regarding the manifestations of Englishness in the four genres named above, this article builds on the findings of *Poetik der Nation. Englishness in der englischen Romantik* (Köhler 2019). The monograph examines the four genres in detail by looking at a representative corpus of each of them.³

2 Outlining a Production-Oriented Imagology

Imagological analysis can, as Joep Leerssen has pointed out, greatly benefit from analytical tools with a poetological-narratological angle (cf. Leerssen 2012, 16). A prerequisite to answering this call is the identification of the different generic elements, since they in turn point to the tools required for their analysis.

The political essay of the Romantic period is “a short, rhetorical and argumentative piece concerned to record and influence immediate events or conditions” (Christie [2005] 2008, 434). It is characterized by the audible and politically clearly positioned voice of the essayist, who addresses a like-minded audience and fiercely rejects an opposite position. Frequent topics are the French Revolution, the domestic parliamentary system, and the constitution. The level of rhetorical sophistication varies, and the political essay of the Romantic period is in its essence a shapeshifting hybrid, “a *real* Proteus” (Hardison 1989, 27, emphasis in the original), as it intercedes with the political pamphlet on the one hand and the philosophical essay on the other.⁴

3 A detailed outline of the corpora can be found in Köhler (2019) on pp. 56–58 for the political essay, on pp. 90–92 for the travelogue, on pp. 128–129 for the Gothic novel, and on pp. 166–168 for balladry.

4 Detailed definitions of the genres on which the analysed corpus of each of the four genres is based can be found on pp. 51–53 in Köhler (2019) for the political essay, on pp. 85–87 for the travelogue, for the Gothic novel on pp. 126–128, and on pp. 164–166 for balladry.

In the travelogue, a “traveling I” retraces a preceding journey and presents it in the form of a narrative (cf. Korte 1996, 1). During the Romantic period a “concern with the traveller’s subjective impressions, and a corresponding narratorial endeavour to chart the flux of thoughts and feelings” (Thompson [2005] 2008, 563) becomes characteristic of the genre. It is further marked by borrowings from the Gothic novel, and by anecdotes and comparisons between the own and the visited nation. Landscape descriptions framed in a rhetoric of the sublime and picturesque echo the contemporary discourse of aesthetics (cf. Butler 1998, 366). Moreover, intertextual references colour the visited country in the language of the familiar.

In the Gothic novel, the story typically revolves around an innocent, orphaned heroine, persecuted by a Gothic villain (cf. Milbank 2007, 155). The backdrop for these plot-driven stories is provided by an imaginary medieval South marked by sublime and picturesque landscapes, “mouldering castle[s] or monaster[ies]” (ibid.), ruled by a malicious, morally degenerate clergy. Recurrent elements are the (pseudo)supernatural and the motif of the doppehgänger. A canonized variation is Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* (1818). Employing the eternal ice of the North Pole for its canvas, the plot of persecution is transferred into the realm of science with his own creation haunting Victor Frankenstein.

Balladry, in the Romantic period, is an umbrella term that accommodates a wide range of texts (cf. Castein 1971, 9). Innovative poems such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) experiment with everyday language and portray an idealized rural population. Walter Scott’s more traditional ballads, such as *The Troubadour* (1815), tell stories of chivalry and minstrelsy, and thereby offer a projection surface for the commemoration of an imaginary national past. This also holds for the web of texts and paratexts that span around collected traditional ballads, which were displayed as the relics retrieved from bygone times.⁵ Less literary specimens of the genre such as John Thelwall’s *A Sheepsheering Song* (1795), which the radical orator published in his political magazine *The Tribune*, fuelled the heated discussion within the political arena (cf. Thelwall 1795a, 190–192) and were part of song culture.⁶

5 In 1765 Thomas Percy published *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, a collection of texts which triggered the Romantic balladry revival (cf. Roe [2005] 2008, 6).

6 For the construction of a national Self in political songs see Renée Vulto’s article in this volume (part 5, chapter 19).

2.1 *Expanding the Theoretical Toolkit*

The succinct genre definitions already point to the fields of literary and cultural theory which provide the concepts and the terminology for their analysis. By nature, narratology proves particularly resourceful for the prose genres. Wayne Booth's concept of the implied author forms the basis with which to capture the essayists inscribed in the political essay. The concept denotes a "second self" of the real author (Booth [1961] 2019, 151). In its essence, it is the understanding that authors leave an imprint of themselves revealing their values and decisions in each of their works (cf. *ibid.*). Usually, the implied author remains a rather abstract entity, a kind of "puppeteer" (*ibid.*) pulling the strings behind the scenes. In comparison, the implied essayists are easier to grasp. They appear as distinct political individuals with straightforward messages. Hence, political essays share characteristics with historical narratives. Like the latter, the political essay teaches how to "carry[] out intentions" (White [2004] 2007, 94), as it aims to create a bond between the essayist and the assumed like-minded audience, and to defy the political opponent. To be able to examine the rhetoric employed, the terms "Sprache der Nähe" (Koch and Oesterreicher 1985, 21)—"language of closeness"—and "fingierte Mündlichkeit" (Goetsch 1985, 202)—"feigned orality"—of text linguistics come into the picture.⁷

With regard to the travelogue and the Gothic novel—both in the broadest sense forms of narrative—Gérard Genette's narratological categories and terminology allow to examine the narrative situation and the adopted point of view, or, in Genette's terminology, the "*focalization*" (Genette [1972] 1983, 189, emphasis in the original) as separate units and in the necessary differentiated manner. Algirdas Greimas's structuralist model of fictional characters completes the genre-specific theoretical framework of the Gothic novel. Greimas understands fictional characters as regards their function within the plot.

1. The first kinds bring the help by acting in the direction of the desire or by facilitating communication.
2. The others, on the contrary, create obstacles by opposing either the realization of the desire or the communication of the object. These two bundles of functions can be attributed to two distinct actants that we will designate under the name of Helper vs. Opponent.

GREIMAS [1966] 1983, 205

⁷ The translations given here are my own.

To understand characters through their function within a plot makes it possible to read the recurrent storyline of the damsel in distress in the Gothic novel as a national narrative, something which will be elaborated on later in this article. The terminology of poetry analysis regarding stylistic devices, formal aspects, and rhythm helps to trace how images and other characteristic elements of poetry contribute indirectly to evoking Englishness. This is of particular interest for the analysis of balladry.

Since genres do not emerge *ex nihilo*, but are part of their sociocultural context and have a reception-aesthetic quality, central aspects of the concepts of cultural memory and reception aesthetics belong to the analytical repertoire of all four genres. In a broad sense, the term “cultural memory” refers to the reservoir of texts, images, and rituals circulating at a time or epoch (cf. Assmann 1988, 15). The term “accentuates the connection of memory on the one hand and socio-cultural contexts on the other” (Erl 2008, 4). It is collective, since “it is shared by a number of people and [...] it conveys to these people a collective, that is, cultural, identity” (Assmann 2008, 110).

Of consequence to the discussion here is the fact that texts and images activated in a genre allow conclusions to be drawn with regards to their audience. This does not mean the actual reader, who could be anyone, but rather the implied addressee who is inscribed in the fabric of the genre. The term “implied addressee” is modelled on the role Wolfgang Iser assigns to the recipient in his concept of the implied reader:

T]he role of the reader [...] is definable in terms of textual structure and structured acts. By bringing about a standpoint for the reader, the textual structure follows a basic rule of human perception, as our views of the world are always of a perspective nature. [...] By virtue of this standpoint, the reader is situated in such a position that he can assemble the meaning toward which the perspectives of the text have guided him.

ISER [1978] 1980, 38

A real reader of M.G. Lewis's *The Monk*, for example, could dismiss the story when the novice Matilda is revealed to be a demon, rejecting the idea of supernatural beings. The implied addressee, on the other hand, would accept the world in the way it unfolds in the novel. What is more, an implied addressee is able to decipher the novel in its entirety, understand allusions, intertextual references, and not least national stereotypes, whereas a real reader would not necessarily have the knowledge or the competences to do so.

2.2 *The Foundation of a Production-Oriented Imagology*

At the core of a production-oriented imagology is, of course, imagology. Therefore, the approach presented here builds on the theoretical insights of this field of research. First and foremost, this holds for the insight that national stereotypes function according to underlying mechanisms. National stereotypes—the fixed, simplified images of self and other—associate the Self and the Other with a limited set of often contrasting qualities (cf. Beller 2007, 429). Stereotypes are organized, as Leerssen has shown, according to specific “*imageme[s]*, [...] ‘blue print[s]’ underlying the various concrete, specific actualizations that can be textually encountered” (Leerssen 2000, 279, emphasis in the original). National topoi can also function as structural patterns involving diverse generic elements, including the characterization of figures and the plot. Luise Gottsched’s *Die Hausfranzösin oder die Mammsell* (1744) is one example from the corpus of German and French literature that Ruth Florack has examined. In this comedy, the dangerous influence of everything French is prominently embodied by a female French servant characterized by vanity and haughtiness who, despite her low rank, demands special treatment simply because she is French (cf. Florack 2007, 184). Intending to impose pressure on their masters, the foreign servants abduct a daughter of the house. Thus the topos of the selfish, fickle French becomes a plot-driving force (cf. *ibid.*, 185). Birgit Neumann also highlights the fact that different narrative components can contribute to evoking a national image (cf. Neumann 2009a, 66). As a result, she augments her imagological toolkit with the analytical terminology of narratology. To give one example, she employs Genette’s term “homodiegetic narrator” to describe the narrative situation in the eighteenth-century travelogue (cf. *ibid.*, 118).

Neumann also integrates aspects of cultural memory studies into her approach of a cultural and historical imagology, developed in *Rhetorik der Nation* (2009). With her interest in the impact of national stereotypes and images, Neumann draws the attention to the recipient. For the integration of reception aesthetics in the theoretical framework, imagology, in particular a production-oriented one, is largely indebted to Emer O’Sullivan, as she has shown that stereotypes function as a kind of literary shorthand (cf. O’Sullivan 1989, 57) which “triggers an extensively preprogrammed actualization of associations” (O’Sullivan 2005, 40). Hence, stereotypes exhibit a “recognition value” (Leerssen 2016, 19).

Imagology has also investigated the pseudoscientific underpinning of national stereotypes. These are the concepts of “national character” and climate theory. Both are based on the belief that “the core qualities of representatives

of groups and nations” (Zacharasiewicz 2010, 68) would show themselves in an apparent national character. Climate theory correlates the alleged character of entire populations and nations with the climate zone that they inhabit (cf. *ibid.*, 67–69). For a production-oriented approach which uses the genres of the Romantic period as an example, this is important for two reasons. Firstly, both climate theory and the belief in an existing national character were accepted “knowledge” during the Romantic period, and even appeared in nineteenth-century educational material for children (cf. O’Sullivan 2017, 60–63). Secondly, as will be explained later in this article, climate theory can be employed as a compass to identify characters of the Gothic novel as English, although they are nominally French, Italian, or Spanish.

3 The Interplay of Generic Elements with and without a National Connotation

Before spotlighting the elements which elicit Englishness in the political essay, the travelogue, the Gothic novel, and in balladry, the genre-specific manifestations of an English self-image will be presented in their essentials. In the political essay, the nation appears as a liberal community framed between tradition and vision. Beyond this, the English self-image takes shape in two contrasting variations, which are determined by the two prevailing political attitudes adopted in the texts. Conservative essays chart the nation as a hierarchical community gaining stability from its traditions, whereas radical essays envision the nation as a future-oriented democratic republic aware of its history. The understanding of a common national past functions as the unifying factor in the genre (cf. Köhler 2019, 82–83).

In the travelogue, the nation appears as a liberal republican society and well-organized superpower, with the middle class as the driving force. Subsequently, Englishness is associated with bourgeois norms. Male strength, righteousness, and the capacity to run an efficient administration complement female virtue and purity.⁸ Middle-class values seem to stem from an English capacity to recognize the transcendent in nature as the English “traveling I” in particular is drawn to contemplating sublime landscapes. Its philosophical underpinning is the idea that man faces the transcendent in sublime landscapes such as high mountains and deep ravines (cf. Burke [1757] 1998, 66). As a result, an indirect

8 A sense of superiority has also been diagnosed with regard to Victorian travelogues. In her article in this volume, Sandra Vlasta, for example, observes that Charles Dickens “never lets go of his superior position” (2022, 120) in his depiction of Genovese women.

claim to cultural hegemony is inherent here. Humour and Protestantism as an “ingredient” of an English self-image play a minor role, and Protestantism as an English characteristic becomes mainly evident in texts which trace an itinerary through Catholic countries. Due to its leap toward a republican society, revolutionary France—and to a lesser degree other European countries (e.g. Switzerland with its national hero Wilhelm Tell)—functions as a positive projection surface, albeit less prominently here than in political essays with a radical orientation (cf. Köhler 2019, 121–122).

The Gothic novel differs from the travelogue in that the aspect of the civilizational gravitates toward an Enlightened human sensibility and the faculty to empathize as the foundation of society. A female disposition marked by gentleness and sensibility has its counterpart in male readiness for self-sacrifice and chivalry. Another predominant characteristic of Englishness is its association with an Enlightened Protestantism (cf. *ibid.*, 160).

Balladry, on the other hand, associates Englishness with chivalry, military superiority, a sense of being earthborn, an awareness of the own heroic national past tinged with medievalism, and a capacity for humour. At the core of an English self-image is the understanding that the nation is a harmonious rural England, and at the same time a defiant seafaring community. Similar to the political essay, historicity is ascribed to the nation, even though the way it manifests itself in balladry differs from the manifestation in the prose genre, since in balladry it is mainly connected to an imaginary chivalric past and belligerent conflicts such as the defeat of the Armada (1588). Balladry portrays a range of different social groups as designing actors within the national community. They are the different voices in a polyphonic but harmonious chorus toasting the nation (cf. *ibid.*, 202). These different manifestations of an English self-image come into being because generic elements without a national connotation interact with elements which are explicit representations of nations.

3.1 *The Use and Function of National Stereotypes and Topoi*

In the political essay, the use and function of national stereotypes depend on the political attitude adopted in the texts. Conservative political essays employ them to delineate negative depictions of France, and they can, as in Burke's *Reflections of the Revolution in France* (1790), merge with a religious hetero-stereotype. The negative image of a superstitious Catholicism represents in this essay the newly established, and from a conservative perspective illegitimate, French rulers. In radical texts, stereotypes only exhibit a slight national tinge. The elements of the political essay explicitly associated with the nation are historical and mythological elements of cultural knowledge, which have

traditionally played a role in constructing an English self-image. These are the Norman Conquest (1066) and the myth of the Norman Yoke, according to which the Norman William the Conqueror had put an abrupt end to a free, egalitarian Anglo-Saxon society, replacing it with an iron-fisted foreign rule (cf. Newman [1987] 1997, 190). In addition, the Glorious Revolution (1688/1689), which led to a new contract between the monarch and the aristocracy, is another historical touchstone. If the constitution is mentioned, it is presented as a national achievement, heavily weighted with associations. The named elements fulfil a direct function in evoking Englishness, because they are employed to construct English history, and simultaneously activate the idea of English liberty.⁹

Due to the many encounters with “foreigners” depicted in the travelogue, representations of the national Other are a core element in this genre, and “provide formulaic communication aids” (Beller 2007, 430). Explicit comparisons of national Self and Other construct “binary-opposed character traits” (ibid., 433). Another form of comparison depicts the national Other in an explicit way, associating it with derogative and even discriminatory images. “Nothing, indeed, can equal the stupid obstinacy of some of these half alive beings” writes Mary Wollstonecraft in *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796) about Scandinavians, and she continues, “who seemed to have been made by Prometheus, when the fire he stole from Heaven was so exhausted, that he could only spare a spark to give life, not animation, to the inert clay” (Wollstonecraft [1796] 2009, 93). Here Englishness is implicitly outlined as the positive opposite of the national Other. The same mechanism is at work when the national Other is portrayed in anecdotes. Since anecdotes are meant to elicit laughter, Englishness is thereby linked to humour and the faculty to ridicule.¹⁰

In the Gothic novel, national stereotypes are an essential part of the depiction of characters, and merge with character types such as the damsel in distress. Climate theory is the compass that makes it possible to reveal that heroines and other positive characters, which are nominally French, Italian, or Spanish, match English stereotypes. According to eighteenth-century English theoreticians, including the influential William Falconer, a Northern climate fosters a phlegmatic temperament. In the Gothic novel the “phlegmatic genius of the North” (Falconer 1781, 85) shows itself in female and male characters alike. The angelic, gentle bride of Victor Frankenstein in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* epitomizes in the best possible way such a

9 For detailed explanations regarding this aspect see subchapter 4.5 in Köhler (2019, 63–69).

10 For a detailed analysis of the function of anecdotes and comparisons see subchapter 5.4 in Köhler (2019, 92–102).

character in its female manifestation: “The saintly soul of Elizabeth shone like a shrine-dedicated lamp in our peaceful home. [...] [H]er smile, her soft voice, the sweet glance of her celestial eyes, were ever there to bless and animate us” (Shelley [1818] 1994, 36).

In the Gothic novel, the characters are constructed as “opposing binaries” (Schmitt 1997, 13) based on the image of a “North-South opposition” (Leerssen 2000, 276). The depiction of the malicious Marchesa di Vivaldi, a character in Radcliffe’s *The Italian, or the Confessional of the Black Penitents. A Romance* (1797), reads as the negative counterpart of the English heroine in foreign disguise. Her character traits seem to be copied verbatim from a dictionary of epithets: “She was of violent passions, haughty, vindictive, yet crafty and deceitful” (Radcliffe [1797] 1998, 7).¹¹

Several ballads take the English gentleman as the model to stylize prominent figures of the army—Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington—as national heroes. Also specific to the genre are the auto-stereotypes of John Bull, the round-bellied, lower-class counterpart of the English gentleman, and Jack Tar, the image of the courageous English sailor, which appear onstage. Together with the auto-image of Merry England, in its essence the depiction of uplifting landscapes and gardens (cf. Blaicher 2000, 9), they contribute to represent England simultaneously as an indomitable seafaring nation and a harmonious rural community (cf. Köhler 2019, 202). The manifestation of Merry England in balladry corresponds with the appearance of the auto-image at the transition from the Romantic to the Victorian period, as described by Günther Blaicher (cf. Blaicher 2000, 63). Consequently, it solidifies in beautiful landscapes blended with images of popular culture, including mythic figures such as Robin Hood (cf. Köhler 2019, 189).¹²

3.2 *The Function of Generic Elements without a National Connotation*

Even if a national aspect is not evident at first glance, narrative elements can fulfil an indirect function in evoking Englishness. This holds for the Gothic novel and the travelogue in their genre-specific way. Building on Cannon Schmitt’s finding that in the Gothic novel “threatened femininity comes to stand in metonymically for the English nation itself” (1997, 2), the plot of the

11 For detailed explanations of how climate theory can be employed to identify the “true” nationality of the stock characters of the Gothic novel see subchapter 6.3 in Köhler (2019, 130–138). How climate theory can be applied to identify the “character” of Catholicism and Protestantism as it is sketched in the Gothic novel see subchapter 6.4 in Köhler (2019, 138–144).

12 For expanded explanations with regard to this aspect see subchapter 7.7 on pp. 189–195 in Köhler (2019).

damsel in distress can be read as a narration of the nation with therapeutic qualities. It addresses the fear of an external threat, while simultaneously suggesting that England, like the damsel in distress, will manage to keep its enemies at bay (cf. Köhler 2019, 160).

To realize this reading, it is necessary to identify the subtle allusions to the conflict with France and to determine the “true” nationality of the characters as it has been done with the help of climate theory. The narrative situation and the focalization support this interpretation in an indirect way, but no less forcefully. With exceptions, a heterodiegetic narrator, per definition “absent from the story he tells” (Genette [1972] 1983, 244), and thus apparently unbiased, prevails in the genre. Adopting a “zero focalization” (ibid., 189, emphasis in the original) that is no one’s perspective, the heterodiegetic viewpoint also suggests reliable objectivity. This way, the thoughts of the Gothic villain confirm the fears of the damsel in distress, and give proof of his malice and perverted desires. In Lewis’s *The Monk*, for example, the heterodiegetic narrator recounts the stirred-up emotions of the damsel in distress and her tormentor who represent the English nation and the foreign aggressor respectively. “With every moment the Friar’s passion became more ardent, and Antonia’s terror more intense” (Lewis [1796] 1998, 383).¹³

The analysis of the political essay and balladry gives evidence that tone, rhetoric, and formal elements also contribute to delineating the genre-specific manifestation of an English self-image. A pathetic and sensitive tone enriches and reaffirms the meaning of a representation that offers scanty facts. It also refers to the essayists and their understanding of the English nation. The varnish of pathos polishes the image of the national Other, turning it into a glowing projection surface for an empathy-driven English community. Moreover, two rhetorical techniques contribute indirectly to evoking Englishness within the political essay. The emphatic tone in which the reader is addressed conjures up a “we,” a sense of togetherness. The radical orator John Thelwall welcomes his audience with “Citizens, You assemble this evening” ([1795b] 2009, 255), and makes use of the already mentioned “language of closeness” and of a feigned orality. The conservative Strap Bodkin uses the same rhetorical device, and suggests with “Brother Farmers” (1793, 1) even greater familiarity. This contrasts with a rhetoric that distances the political opponent, doubting his or her righteousness and patriotic zeal. Edmund Burke, the most resonating conservative voice in the revolutionary controversy, denounces the clergyman Richard Price and his *A Discourse on the Love of our Country, delivered on Nov. 4, 1789* (1789)

13 For detailed explanations see subchapters 6.6 on pp. 150–157 and 6.8 on pp. 160–161 in Köhler (2019).

with the following poignant words: “For my part, I looked on that sermon as the public declaration of a man much connected with literary caballers, and intriguing philosophers; with political theologians, and theological politicians, both at home and abroad” (Burke [1790] 1964, 9). The technique of creating closeness on the one hand and distance on the other reinforces the political attitude, voiced in the respective essays, and this rhetorical strategy underpins either the traditional or the visionary outline of the nation.

In a number of ballads, a sublime-emphatic tone engulfs the nation in a sacred aura. Stylistic devices fulfil a pivotal role because imagery and puns serve to characterize nations. *A Droll Ballad* (1815) depicts Napoleon’s campaign against Russia as a failed excursion. Here the play on words, “Markoff he mark’d them off” (Anon. [1815] 1976, 488), to give one example, distorts the name of the Russian officer E.I. Markov in such a way that it resembles an English verb, which in turn is then employed to present the action on the battlefield in a humorous way.¹⁴ Here the core function of “entertaining [...] the readership” (Neumann 2009b, 280), as defined by Neumann for the rhetoric of national character, becomes evident. Apart from denigrating the national Other as an object of ridicule, the national Self is implicitly associated with superiority and humour. In some ballads, cross-rhymes frequently alternate with heroic couplets, which then serve to praise the deeds of the national heroes. Not only ballads centring on chivalry, such as Walter Scott’s *The Troubadour* whose protagonist is “[r]esolved for love and fame to fight” (Scott 1815, 255), but also the paratextual web, woven around the genre during the Romantic period, furnish the nation with mythic medieval roots.

Accordingly, formal elements also contribute to evoking Englishness indirectly. Aesthetic and philosophical concepts of the Romantic period take on an indirect but nonetheless significant function in giving Englishness its genre-specific colouring. The concepts of “imagination” and “sensibility,” even more those of the “sublime” and the “picturesque,” take on a salient role. An idealized image of the French Revolution and the faculty for social empathy are the foundation for Enlightened humanistic values, proposed in radical political essays as the coordinates of the own nation. Sensibility has also left its imprint on the Gothic novel, in particular on the heroines and their male counterparts, who exhibit a pronounced education of the heart. Since they epitomize the English nation, this characteristic appears to be specifically English. In the Gothic novel, the concept of the “imagination” also takes on an indirect function, interplaying here with an intertext widely known during

14 E.I. Markov was involved in a campaign against the retreating French troops (cf. Lieven [2009] 2010, 538/542).

the eighteenth century. John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563) received a national reading, and was available in the churches next to the Bible (cf. Colley [1992] 2005, 25). Words and graphic illustrations recount the suffering of Protestants tortured at the hands of the "Papist" inquisition during the brief reign of the Catholic Queen Mary. Accordingly, the book offers ample material to fill in the gaps in the mere schematic representation of a dark medieval Catholicism.¹⁵ Inherent in this image is a positive notion of an English Protestantism.

The sublime serves in balladry in part as rhetoric to set the national Self above the national Other. In travelogues, the sublime shapes the way in which landscapes are portrayed, and subsequently how the national Other is depicted. Its function regarding Englishness is indirect, and it is only possible to identify it if the transcendental dimension of the sublime is taken into account. In this interpretation, God reveals himself in contemplation of the sublime. It is the English "traveling I" who, standing *pars pro toto* for the nation, unlocks the transcendental dimension of the sublime in contemplating respective landscapes (the inhabitants of the toured country are usually not portrayed as onlookers).¹⁶

The picturesque in the travelogue serves to delineate the national Other as a tranquil and unencumbered place. Behind this image, England rises as a further advanced community in terms of civilization. This community needs a place of relief, allowing to factor out the war with France, the beginning of industrialization, and the harsh marks of the politics of enclosure which resulted in the fencing of hitherto common pasture. Employing a bridge as an image of transition, this becomes most evident in Dorothy Wordsworth's *Recollections of a Tour made in Scotland* (1874) where she writes: "We enter Scotland by crossing the river Sark; on the Scotch side of the bridge the ground is unenclosed pasturage" ([1874] 1997, 41).

In the political essay, the implied addressee appears as a well-informed reader who already holds the political position adopted in the essay. The elements of cultural knowledge focus on aspects of history. Since they receive no explanation, the implied addressee is characterized as a reader who is familiar with these elements and their context. Accordingly, the reader appears as one who is able to fill in details and to relate historical events to a national Self. The cultural frame of reference (in particular the national history) becomes thereby the link between the different readerships, ranging from radical religious Dissenters to traditional landowning farmers (cf. Köhler 2019, 78–79).

The sum of intertexts portrays the implied addressee in the travelogue as an educated member of the middle class. Because several intertexts presuppose

15 For detailed explanations see subchapter 6.4.2 on pp. 142–144 in Köhler (2019).

16 For detailed explanations see subchapter 5.7 on pp. 113–116 in Köhler (2019).

that the reader is, for example, expected to be familiar with English travelogues of previous decades, they connote the reader as “English” (cf. *ibid.*, 119–121).

Few Gothic novels mark the reader as English in an explicit way. Radcliffe's *The Italian, or the Confessional of the Black Penitents: A Romance* pictures the implied addressee as an English armchair traveller, because, like the English traveller of the frame narrative, the implied addressee is drawn into the blood-curdling events related in the embedded narrative (cf. *ibid.*, 153). Also, the gaps in this Gothic novel, as well as in the genre as a whole, connote the reader as English. In particular, the negative religious stereotypes which outline the image of a dark evil religious Other leave a gap when it comes to the depiction of the Self. What this Self is supposed to look like is already inscribed in the text; it materializes as the opposite of the negative Other. The implied addressee appears as a recipient who can fill in the gap in this contrast relation, and is then able to relate it to a religious and national Self. Subsequently, reception-aesthetic elements reinforce the norms and values advocated in the genre and which the plot and the polar organization of the characters connote as English.

In the case of balladry, it is appropriate to refer to a range of implied addressees, since this diverse genre addresses different social groups and assigns to them a significant role within the national community. The cultural knowledge activated in the genre also associates the reader with Englishness. This holds for the auto- and hetero-stereotypes and the knowledge about victorious battles of past centuries (cf. *ibid.*, 199–200).

4 A Word about Future Research, or the Flexible Character of a Production-Oriented Imagology

Using the manifestations of Englishness in genres of English Romanticism as an example, the preceding explanations have highlighted that national images are highly complex aesthetic constructs. They take shape through the interaction of diverse elements. National stereotypes and topoi certainly play a salient function, but of equal relevance are elements which are not nationally connoted. Of importance in all four analysed genres are elements appertaining to reception aesthetics and cultural memory. This indicates that these elements might also play a role in other genres, and consequently they should be given particular attention in future research.

Production-oriented imagology has an inherently flexible character and requires specific tailoring for each individual research question. Methodologically clearly anchored in a context-sensitive close reading, the approach

augments its analytical toolkit depending on the genre that is to be analysed. It offers the theoretical framework to identify all elements involved in evoking a national image, and it allows for an analysis of their respective function.

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