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Chapter 17

Solitude in Early Nineteenth-Century German-Speaking Europe

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The German word *Einsamkeit* translates both as loneliness and solitude. As in English, in the German language, loneliness meant originally physically being alone, 'oneliness' or 'singleness', that was often framed as a religious experience, a communion with God.[1] Luther's translation of the Bible established a new semantic field for the word *Einsamkeit* that was understood in terms of isolation and being alone instead of communion or togetherness. The secularization and modernization of society further created new meanings for *Einsamkeit* that became a key concept for the dynamics of individualization that shaped modern Western culture in particular.

A new cultural significance given to solitude, selfhood and an inner self was fostered by expanding literacy and print culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Texts and the invention of print culture enabled not only new means of communication but also new tools for self-study, and for the cultivation of the self.[2] The German middle-classes, who were gaining a new foothold in society, adopted the ideal of positive solitude into their emotional culture. As meanings related to *Einsamkeit* became increasingly secularized, it gained also new importance in German-speaking Europe, not least from around 1800.[3] The Romantic era in German-speaking Europe was paradoxically characterized by a cult of solitude (*Einsamkeit*) and a cult of sociability (*Geselligkeit*). The aftermath of the French Revolution, Napoleonic Wars, emerging modern civil society and rising nationalism shaped public discourse and created ongoing cultural reflections on

the relationship between the individual, society and nation.[4] The press played a major part in this, becoming an important cultural forum for debates on the right kind of means of cultivating and educating citizens for the needs of modernizing and secularizing society.

This chapter investigates loneliness and solitude (*Einsamkeit*) in the German-language press before 1850. By framing loneliness in the context of early nineteenth-century literary culture, it demonstrates how new print cultures shaped new cultural meanings related to the ideal of solitude and the cultivation of the internal self. Instead of so-called ego-documents, such as diaries or biographies, this chapter focuses on the press, the major public forum of the time, which by the mid-1800s had adopted an important role in shaping subjectivity and emotions. The main source material is provided by the full-text searchable digital databases of the Austrian National Library and Bavarian State Library. The ANNO Austrian Newspapers Online electronic reading room of the Austrian National Library contains over 20 million pages, of which about 90 per cent is available for full text search. The digiPress collection of the Bavarian State Library is considerably smaller, containing in June 2021 approximately 7.8 million pages. The collections partly overlap, especially in the case of eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century material and contain a comprehensive corpus of the press material from the period under investigation, though a vast number of periodicals that appeared in German-speaking Europe before 1850 are missing from these digital databases.

Recently, due to large national and international digitalization projects, and new approaches in the field of digital history, historical newspapers and periodicals have attracted a great deal of attention as an under-researched historical source material that can provide novel insights into the production of knowledge and structures of feeling in the long nineteenth century.[5] The body of literature exploring emotions from a historical perspective has emphasized that emotions are always dependent upon their historical and cultural context. The body, in which emotions are born and felt, is always shaped by the conditions of a shared social world and thus deeply historical by nature.[6]

Instead of understanding emotions through ahistorical biological or psychological models, the historical approach to the study of emotions is interested in ways in which emotions give shape and are shaped by cultural patterns and social formations that change in time. Because the processes of identifying, valuing, regulating and expressing emotions are deeply cultural, it is significant to look into the cultural forms and social practices that sustain them. The newspapers and periodicals were not only associated with the new bourgeois public sphere, but they were also privately read, interpreted — and felt. By addressing the various meanings of loneliness and describing ways of cultivating loneliness into sublime solitude, the newspapers shed light on the performative aspects of loneliness, and how it is culturally and historically constructed at various points in time.

Expanding print culture in German-speaking Europe

German-speaking Europe was a politically and culturally fragmented area before the unification of Germany in 1871. Early nineteenth-century German states, which consisted of numerous small kingdoms and city states, were organized in 1815 under the German Confederation (*Deutscher Bund*), which was an alliance that existed until the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866. The German Confederation was created at the Congress of Vienna, as a means of establishing new political order and stability in Europe in the aftermath of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815). As part of this process, supranational censorship regulations, the Carlsbad Decrees, were established in 1819. Despite censorship and economic obstacles, from the eighteenth century onwards, the number of newspapers increased. They played an important role as mediators of information and producers of knowledge, by serving as forums for political discussion and negotiation on cultural attitudes, meanings and ideas among the rising German middle-classes.[7]

The expansion of modern print culture had vast ramifications in early nineteenth-century German-speaking Europe. Up until this point, German-speaking Europe was an important centre for the spread and development of printing technology, as well as the largest media market in the

world, in terms of number of newspapers and journals.[8] Research on the German press has emphasized its vast diversity and local character before the unification of Germany in 1871, when the first national newspapers started to appear.[9] Yet, by the early nineteenth century, new printing technologies and the development of the infrastructure of roads and postal networks enabled German-language publications to circulate in a heterogenous and cross-border media space that included German-speaking areas within and beyond Central Europe.[10]

In addition to the press, book markets were expanding as well and books shaped new understandings on emotions. The Swiss doctor Johann Georg Zimmermann had been preoccupied with the theme of solitude since the 1750s, and one of his treatises came out already a year before Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* [*Sorrows of Young Werther*] (1774) became a literary phenomenon in German-speaking Europe. However, it was more than a decade later when Zimmermann's main work, a book titled *Über die Einsamkeit* (1784–85), became an immense success. Reprinted several times, and often cited and commented on in the press, it became the authoritative work on the dynamics between loneliness and solitude well into the nineteenth century.[11]

The new cultural evaluation of solitude and loneliness has often been framed in the context of the political history of early nineteenth-century German-language Europe. The aftermath of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars were marked by disillusionment, the repercussions of the experience of violence and a shared disappointment in fellow human beings.[12] These painful experiences echoed in the press for a long time, as they emerged, for example, in a *feuilleton* text, translated from French to German and published by *Der Adler* in 1840, in which a man withdrew from the company of other people after the French Revolution and retreated voluntarily to loneliness instead.[13] According to Annette Richards, a fascination with interiority, melancholy and solitude marked northern German culture in the second half of the eighteenth century, characterizing the culture of the politically repressed and excessively ordered bourgeoisie. The

internal world of thought and emotion provided freedom that was lacking in daily political and social life.[14] In addition to political retreat and repression, the focus on the internal self was also attached to ideas about social transformations and development. In an era of new pedagogical ideas and educational reforms, self-development and self-cultivation were understood as social forces, and as a way of improving society. In German-speaking Europe, in particular, the ideal of *Bildung,* as a means of internal self-development, gained huge cultural importance.[15] The cultivation of the self became a significant part of the newly emerging modern bourgeois culture.[16]

The ways in which solitude was discussed in early-nineteenth-century German-language periodicals are related to the fact that newspapers and magazines were mainly created by non-professional correspondents and writers, who often had an academic background or worked as teachers alongside their journalistic activities. Before 1848 and the professionalisation of journalism the structures and practices of the modern press were still under development. As the learned networks of academics and teachers across German-language Europe started to shape the German press, interest in the theme of solitude intertwined with the newly emerging notion that journalism should not just serve to aid communication but also self-reflection and self-observation of society.[17]

Romanticism and solitude

One of the main intellectual and cultural movements that shaped the meaning of loneliness was Romanticism (*c.*1790–1850). The German Romantic movement was preoccupied with the theme of solitude, and loners, hermits and pilgrims became significant literary and pictorial figures.[18] At the same time, loneliness and solitude became increasingly associated with nature, gaining religious meanings in pastoral literature that emphasized God-in-nature.[19] In England, for example, Lord Byron's *Childe Harold* (1812) influenced romantic notions of solitude.[20] The German-language press transmitted these ideas to the public sphere, where they surfaced retrospectively for decades.

In 1833, the *Wiener Theater-Zeitung* published an article dedicated to Byron's views on solitude.[21] Although the Romantic movement is strongly associated with fiction, the press participated in the network of texts that gave it impetus. Early journals and newspapers included all sorts of material, and texts conveyed feelings as well as intellectual ideas.[22] From the eighteenth century onward, loneliness was celebrated in the press in a variety of genres, including poems and lyrics such as 'Ode to the Solitude', published by the Berlin-based *Neue Mannigfaltigkeiten* in 1776.[23]

In this context, especially in the early 1800s, *Einsamkeit* was predominantly understood as solitude instead of loneliness, and was often associated with art, creativity, imagination, philosophy and religion. It represented an escape from the rules and games of the social world and was described in terms of peace and quiet, as the 'healer of the soul'.[24] Especially for a writer, solitude was described as essential, as a precondition for developing thoughts, ideas, and the scope of imagination. This idea was shared widely, and, for instance, Goethe emphasized in his autobiography *Dichtung und Wahrheit* [*From my Life: Poetry and Truth* (1811–1833)] solitude as a creative state and a precondition for artistic work.[25] The German nineteenth-century discourses thus contributed in a significant way to the long historical tradition of associating solitude with creativity.[26] Moreover, the experience of solitude was something to be shared in art. In music, it could be seen as a source of comfort.[27]

Similarly, lines of lyric poetry were seen as a way of sharing solitude, as words transmitted an emotional experience of the poet to the reader, who could recognize and share the feeling despite distance in space or time.[28] For example, an article published in the *Illustrirte Zeitung* in 1843 depicted how readers were able to hike at the Kickelhahn mountain in Thüringen, and, there alone in their solitude above the world, reminiscent the famous lines of Goethe from the poem, 'Über allen Gipfeln' (1780): O'er all the hilltops / Is quiet now, / In all the treetops / Hearest thou / Hardly a breath; / The birds are asleep in the trees: / Wait, soon like these / Thou too shalt rest.[29]

Figure 17.1.

Figure 17.1. Caspar David Friedrich (1744–1840), ‘Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer’ (1817/1818). Oil on canvas. © SHK/Hamburger Kunsthalle/bpk. Source: Photo by Elke Waldorf. Image reproduced courtesy of the Hamburger Kunsthalle.

The association between nature and solitude was part of the wider cultural framework of the Romantic movement. The idea of losing oneself in nature was especially influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (*Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire,* 1782).[30] German Romanticism heavily emphasized individual experience of nature and retreat from society. In periodicals too, solitude was associated with nature and far-away places, in contrast to urban life.[31] The German word ‘*Waldeinsamkeit*’, which literally means ‘forest loneliness’ was one of the key concepts of the era, signifying a connectedness with the nature. It was mentioned in the press in various texts including poems and historical narratives.[32]

Solitude also became increasingly represented in visual form. For example, the iconic painting of Caspar David Friedrich, ‘The Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog’ (Figure X.1), presented an embodiment of the cultural meanings related to nature and solitude, displaying a rejection of sociability. As the art historian Johannes Grave has pointed out, despite being one of the most well-known images portraying solitude, it is not an isolated example, but a part of a larger visual tradition, in which figures turn their backs to the viewer and make them spectators of loneliness.[33] In the modern era, and in the Romantic period in particular, different medias multiplied understandings of solitude, transforming it into a shared cultural experience that was staged and

performed along the lines of a continuum of cultural representations that portrayed what being alone looked and felt like.[34]

Solitude as a cultural practice

Jan and Aleida Assmann have approached solitude as a way of understanding the dynamics of individualization that has shaped the modern Western culture in particular. The invention of print culture played a major role here, as it enabled not only new means of communication but also new tools for self-study, and for the cultivation of the self. Solitude became increasingly supported and sustained by texts and textuality (*schriftgestützte Einsamkeit*). Print enabled communication without interaction (*interaktionsfreie Kommunikation*) and established a new kind of understanding of solitude that was embodied by the figure of a lonely reader in the company of books.[35]

The linkage between reading and experiencing loneliness was thus significant in the early nineteenth-century discourses that were built upon a new interest and evaluations of books and textuality as well as an understanding of their didactic function in shaping and cultivating the self. The training and education of emotions was a vital part of the German-language discussion that was heavily guided by the notion of *Bildung.*[36] Accordingly, in terms of *Einsamkeit*, readers were advised to cultivate loneliness into a positive, ennobling solitude as part of their quest for personal growth and self-development. In addition to publishing articles on the benefits of solitude, the press also circulated advertisements for guidebooks that contained advice on themes such as 'what is good for the youth' and 'how to use the lonely hours'.[37]

For example, the Austrian periodical *Österreichisches Bürgerblatt für Verstand, Herz und gute Laune* published in 1824 a series of articles dedicated to solitude, and concluded with a text that celebrated the many benefits of solitude as a masculine virtue that supported social life: 'I am not talking about any monastic separation from the world, not of a completely secluded life; I'm

talking about a man who seeks his exquisite joy in his room, and does not appear too often outside of his house, so as not to seem idle'.[38] Like many other texts on the subject, this piece of writing emphasized the dangers of a wrong kind of company, and the contagiousness of harmful emotions and practices on a young vulnerable person. Instead of engaging with the wrong kind of company, young men were advised to concentrate on their studies and work, on their own rooms and daily routines. Solitude was especially to be sought in nature; walking in the countryside at a beautiful time of the year, summer mornings and bright nights and moonlight were mentioned in association with the search for the virtuous solitude that was good for the soul, strengthening the character of a young man.

Early on, from the eighteenth century onwards, the mention of *Einsamkeit* often took place in religious contexts, in addition to reports on state affairs and social life. The first mention of 'Einsamkeit' that appeared on digiPress Bayern was the 1699 *Historische Remarques über neuesten Sachen in Europa* from Hamburg, where it was used in the context of the religious life of a Dominican monk.[39] In 1731, the newspaper *Wiener Zeitung* published an advertisement for a book by a Jesuit priest that guided spiritual exercises (*geistliche exercitia*) in solitude for fifteen minutes a day.[40] This kind of religious training drew from the Jesuist tradition of Christian meditation and contemplation in silence and solitude as described by Ignatius Loyola's sixteenth-century *Exercitia Spiritualia*. However, in the early nineteenth century, the meanings of spiritual retreat, ascetism and religious training gave way to a more secularized cultivation of the self for the sake of the society and social life with fellow human beings. Even daily papers could give advice on how to seek solitude and use loneliness for self-development and cultivation of the self, such as the *Augsburger Tagblatt* did in 1833: 'So search for loneliness from time to time, you will surely always return to the circle of your fellow beings calmer stronger and more determined'.[41] The newspaper advised readers to use loneliness to adjust to the change of emotions and steer through emotional turbulence caused by social life, just as self-help literature later shaped selfhood and subjectivity.

The German cultural theorist Thomas Macho discusses solitude as an experience that requires cultural practices through which it is confronted and coped with, but also constructed and sustained. By drawing on ideas on the technology of the self by Michel Foucault and bodily techniques by Marcel Mauss, he suggests that solitude as a cultural practice requires a doubling of the self (*Selbstverdobblung*). In order to come to terms with loneliness and being alone, a person has to create some kind of a relationship with themselves, which requires certain techniques of being alone in one's own company without losing one's mind. Furthermore, as Macho reminds us, all cultural techniques have to be learned and trained. Texts are vital for this practice.[42]

The expanding print culture and increase of literacy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries played an important role in shaping solitude as a cultural technique. It has been estimated that the literacy rate increased from about 15 percent around 1800 to 40 percent in the 1840s.[43] The new cultural evaluation of reading has often been referred to as a zest for reading (*Lesesucht*). At the same time literary culture established a canon of literary texts, which were cited and referenced in the press.

Engaging in a conversation with the literary-philosophical canon of solitude, by citing writers such as Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592), and his phrase of feeling most alone in a crowd of other people, served also as means of social distinction of the learned.[44] During the Napoleonic wars, historical accounts associated solitude with historical figures, such as Socrates, which resonated with the contemporary fascination with ancient Greece, and the German identification with Greek instead of Roman culture.[45] Later in the 1840s, virtuous solitude was associated with both past and contemporary philosophers and writers such as Fichte, Locke, Milton, Rousseau and Byron, who were said to have preferred solitude, especially in their youth.[46] There was thus a strong literary-philosophical tradition that shaped the meanings of loneliness in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, at the same time new bourgeois associations, reading societies, and civil organizations were taking shape and shaping the modernizing society.[47] The *Zeitung für die*

elegante Welt, for instance, celebrated in 1813 learned associations that prevented misanthropic solitary melancholy and supported sociability.[48] Accordingly, the ongoing the dynamics between solitude and sociability became one of the main characteristics of early nineteenth-century German culture.

Solitude and sociability

The existing scholarship has unravelled the many ways in which in the early nineteenth-century two modes of human existence, solitude and sociability, gained significance in relation to one another. Around 1800, the contrast between the ideals of solitude and sociability became a major paradox of the time, both within and beyond German-speaking Europe.[49] Zimmermann's texts played an important part in this process, affecting the way in which solitude and sociability were juxtaposed and defined in relation to each other. Moreover, there were two wider traditions, suggests Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf, that came across in the discursive field surrounding loneliness and sociability, the idea of *zoon politikon* ['political animal', social being] from antiquity and the Christian religious tradition that emphasized retreat and solitude.[50] The quest was to find a balance between the two.

Zimmermann suggested that man was made for sociability but needed solitude in order to be happy. In the same vein, in periodicals it was often suggested that both modes of existence were vital for *Bildung* and cultivated humanity in different ways; the pseudonym M. from Göttingen suggested in the *Hanauisches Magazin* in 1794 that while sociability was vital for learning social mores, moral codes and practices of everyday life, loneliness cultivated the soul.[51] This idea of the importance of both internal and external cultivation persisted long into the nineteenth century. Understanding loneliness as a mode of internal cultivation of the self was attached to new theories of emotions, in which especially moral sentiments and virtuous emotions were highly evaluated and distinguished from harmful passions.[52]

Because the cultivation of the self was so intimately attached to new theories on emotions, it mattered a great deal why a person sought to be alone. Already Zimmermann drew a distinction between beneficial retreat to solitude and withdrawal from social life for the wrong reasons, such as shame, failed projects, shyness, melancholia and other diseases of the soul. All of these would cause a negative loneliness that was bad for the human spirit. It was important to avoid negative emotions, and especially hatred, and cultivate noble and virtuous feelings instead.[53] In early nineteenth-century press articles, loneliness was often evaluated in accordance with the motives for retreating from the company of other people. Good solitude arose from noble feelings and aimed for the virtuous cultivation of the self (*Tugendmittel*) whereas misanthropy, shyness and such negative emotions as hatred or excess melancholy were seen as dangerous and created the wrong kind of loneliness. However, even negative loneliness was better than bad company:

> Happy are those whom God lets to live in the company of good, friendly people. But wisdom, equity and love for our own good require that we are not too strict in our demands on those among whom we want to live our lives. For complete isolation from the world is a far greater evil than the company of mediocre people. Yet, loneliness has also its advantages, which cannot be overlooked. Instead of living with evil, harmful, malicious, insidious people, would loneliness certainly be a lesser evil. [54]

The theme of bad company preoccupied contemporaries and it was considered dangerous for young people, and for young women in particular. Moreover, as positive solitude was understood as a distinctively masculine virtue, the solitude or loneliness of young women was rarely mentioned in the press. Instead, as the weaker sex, women were seen as constantly allured by the superficial entertainment of social life.[55] For example, the popular *Illustrirte Zeitung*, which was known for its visual illustrations, published in 1843 an article titled 'The flowers of the Forest' (*Die Blumen des Waldes*), a story of lonely flowers in the wood that want to be in a garden instead, in

order to be seen and admired, presenting thus an allegory of young women who long for the social life (Figure X.2).[56]

Figure 17.2.

Figure 17.2. The flowers of the forest. *Illustrirte Zeitung* 26 August 1843. Source: Image reproduced courtesy of The National Library of Finland.

Towards the mid-century new publications in the fields of medicine and popular psychology started to challenge the philosophical-literary tradition that had dominated the discussion of 'Einsamkeit'. For instance, in the 1830s the Austrian *Populäre österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung* took a strong stand for the benefits of sociability, criticizing Zimmermann's idealized or positive view of solitude and doctors who 'forbid sociability'.[57] In another issue the journal wrote that socializing only with the dead by reading books could ruin the health of young men who should associate themselves with the living instead: 'Man is made for man. Night and loneliness create only ghosts'.[58] The article saw loneliness as a problem whereas joyfulness and sociability were signs of good health. Moreover, state of mind was seen as dependent on the performance of the body including digestion and circulation of the blood. Mind and body were thus not seen as separate, but physical stimulation and bodily practices were essential in creating and managing inner feelings.[59]

Consequently, although Zimmermann's ideas on the benefits of solitude were highly influential, understandings of loneliness became more nuanced and complex due to the emergence of new popular psychology that intertwined with new educational ideas and co-existing theories on emotions. For instance, in the first decades of the nineteenth century it was not uncommon to suggest that solitude was necessary for the growing up in balance with the world, and being alone soothed excess nerve stimuli.[60] Yet, at the same time, it was pointed out that shutting a child alone in a room in a forced solitude could be harmful for its development,[61] an argument that resonates

with contemporary understandings that loneliness in childhood is often harmful and can lead to loneliness as an adult.[62]

The case of loneliness presents an example of how ideas of the human psyche change over time. Although the modern pathologization of loneliness as a mental affliction in medical literature did not exist before the late eighteenth-century, solitude was discussed in the medical literature and attached with positive and negative connotations.[63] The 1800s was a transitional era from the premodern to modern understanding of loneliness.[64] Medical discourse changed its focus from the old humoral tradition, dating from the antiquity, towards modern psychology, but also incorporated contemporary dietetics, which emphasized the relationship between body and soul.[65] Moreover, in an era of industrialization and modernization, loneliness was newly understood in terms of psychosocial isolation.

One distinctive theme in the discussion on solitude in German-language newspapers and periodicals was the distinction between forced and voluntary solitude. Forced, involuntary solitude or loneliness was often associated with prisons. As prison sentences became increasingly preferred over corporal punishments, there was new public debate and awareness around prison sentences and their effects on prisoners.[66] New trade journals in the fields of law and health science, which evolved from more general academic publications, formed a new platform for the discussion on legal aspects of prison sentences and what kind of effect loneliness and long-term isolation had on inmates.[67] Medical journals and those in the field of popular psychology also paid attention to the issue.[68] For example the *Populäre Österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung* reported in 1839 that a French commission had investigated the isolation practices that were used by the United States prison system, reporting that these were causing grave harm to the prisoners, leading to a variety of emotional disturbances, from emotional coldness and lack of feeling to revengefulness and despair.[69] Moreover, the negative effect of loneliness and isolation on the emotional life, mind and psyche of the prisoners surfaced in general newspapers, which reported from different countries

such as United States and Russia, providing international perspective and comparisons on the subject.[70]

Prison sentences were justified at the turn of the nineteenth century as a means of fostering moral subjects through isolation that enabled self-conversation and self-awareness through which the wrongdoers became sensitized to the 'voice of good'. At the same time prisons, suggests Michel Foucault, signify a transition from the punishment of the body to the punishment of the soul.[71] Early nineteenth-century discourses on loneliness shed light on the complex meanings of this transition. While voluntarily solitude was seen as vital for the ideal of cultivating an autonomous subject, forced solitude could easily lead to violating humanity. Forced solitude was thus a very grave punishment in a culture that evaluated the balance between sociability and solitude as means of pursuing the full potential of human selfhood and experience.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the ways in which solitude, as a recognizable experience and a term, came to existence in the German-speaking Europe around 1800, entangling with new ideas about subjectivity and individuality on the one hand and the ideal of sociability on the other. Johann Georg Zimmerman's *Über die Einsamkeit* (1784–85) circulated widely in the German-speaking Europe, finding also wide resonance in the growing press. In the early nineteenth century, solitude emerged as a new cultural practice and technique, which was sustained and supported by reading and growing textuality. It was understood increasingly as a secular mode of existence within the society, as a cultivation of the self.

The fragmented German-speaking Europe, which consisted of different small states, kingdoms and city states, was joined together by newly emerging literary culture, that created textual networks and reading communities across state borders and fostered new shared identities.[72] The practices of writing and reading were thus not only means of cultivating selfhood but also

communication and connection across time and space. Scholars in the field of media history have emphasized the bond between media and nationalist practices in the German lands.[73] Benedict Anderson's famous idea of nation states as 'imagined communities' suggests that the construction of the nineteenth-century nation depended on cultural representations and material culture, which supported a national imaginary that tied people together and gave them a shared identity.[74] It could be further argued that nation, as an imagined community, can also be seen as an emotional community as people who do not otherwise meet are bound together by media representations.[75] Where the British press has been associated with the new 'emotional public opinion' that helped to construct national community and identity around shared emotional norms and values,[76] so too the early-nineteenth-century German-language press can be approached as an important vehicle that circulated novel ways of understanding emotions that spread synchronically to a wide geographical area.[77]

The discussion on solitude was connected to the political, social and cultural history of the German states in the aftermath to the French Revolution. During and after the Napoleonic Wars, the understanding of loneliness and solitude intertwined with Romanticism's emphasis on subjectivity and interiority. The rising middle-classes that still lacked political influence paid growing interest to human interiority and subjective experiences. At the same time, training and cultivating emotions were a vital part of the bourgeois *Bildung* and pedagogical reformations of the early nineteenth century.

Cultivating loneliness in accordance with the ideal of solitude was addressed in various periodical publications that cited not only Zimmermann, but also other literary-philosophical texts on loneliness and solitude. On the other hand, Zimmerman's ideas about solitude were also contested in various periodicals, which increased towards the mid-century, and as they started to specialize in various fields, such as medicine or popular psychology. The literary-philosophical tradition still persisted in the German-language discussion on solitude and affected the ways in

which being alone was understood and evaluated among the literate reading public. The press provides thus not only new insight into the changing cultural and secular meanings of solitude in the early nineteenth-century German-speaking Europe but it also sheds light on how mass-produced periodicals and expanding print culture have helped to shape ideas about selfhood and subjectivity in the modern era.

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[1] Fay Bound Alberti, *A Biography of Loneliness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 10, 18–19.

[2] Aleida Assman and Jan Assman, 'Einleitung: Schrift, Gott und Einsamkeit. Einführende Bemerkungen', in *Einsamkeit. Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation VI,* ed. Aleida Assman and Jan Assmann (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2000), 13–14.

[3] 'Einsamkeit', *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm (DWB)*. Online-Version. Trier Center for Digital Humanities, http://dwb.uni-trier.de/de/, accessed 11 June, 2021; Kathrin Wittler, 'Einsamkeit: Ein literarisches Gefühl im 18. Jahrhundert', *Deutsches Vierteljahrschrift für Literatur und Geisteswissenschaft* 87 (2013):188–89(197).

[4] Susanne Schmid, 'Einleitung', in *Einsamkeit und Geselligkeit um 1800*, ed. Susanne Schmid (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2008), 7–8, 11–12.

[5] See the seminal study of Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (New York: Verso, 2013). On German case see Matt Erling and Lynne Tatlock, 'Introduction: "Distant Reading" and the Historiography of Nineteenth-Century German Literature', in *Distant Readings: Topologies of German Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Matt Erling and Lynne Tatlock (New York: Camden House, 2014), 1–25. The notion of the 'structure of feeling' was originally coined by Raymond Williams in the 1960s.

[6] See further Monique Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is that what makes them have history?) A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 193–220.

[7] On censorship and the emergence of newspapers and periodicals in the German-speaking Europe see further Rudolf Stöber, *Deutsche Pressegeschichte*. *Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, 3rd ed. (Cologne: Herbert von Halem Verlag, 2014), 141–42; Frank Bösch, *Mass Media and Historical Change: Germany in International Perspective, 1400 to the Present* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Konrad Dussel, *Die Deutsche Tagespresse im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Lit, 2011), 12–18.

[8] Bösch, *Mass Media*, 2, 13.

[9] See further Dussel, *Die Deutsche Tagespresse*; Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

[10] Also German-language publications in foreign countries, such as *Wiburgs Mancherley*, a very small-scale publication from the Scandinavian frontier of the Russian Empire, could echo the German discourses surrounding solitude. See 'Monrepos', *Wiburgs Mancherley*, 1 July 1821, The National Library of Finland.

[11] Johann Georg Zimmermann, *Von der Einsamkeit* (Hannover and Leipzig, 1780).

[12] On the emotional culture during and after the French Revolution, see further William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 139–210. On the impact of the French Revolution on German Romanticism see also Asko Nivala, 'Enlightenment, Revolution and Melancholy', in *The Routledge Companion to the Cultural History of the Western Word*, ed. Alessandro Arcangeli, Jörg Rogge and Hannu Salmi (New York: Routledge, 2020), 372–87.

[13] 'Feuilleton. Die beiden Verlassenen. (Frei, nach einer französischen Erzählung)', *Der Adler* 3 February 1840.

[14] Annette Richards, 'The Music of Solitude', in *Einsamkeit*, ed. Assmann and Assmann, 80.

[15] See Georg Bollenbeck, *Bildung und Kultur: Glanz und Elend eines deutschen Deutungsmusters* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1994), 143–48; Michael Maurer, *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Ein Leben als Werk* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2016), 168–69.

[16] See e.g. Peter Gay, *The Naked Heart. Bourgeois Experience from Victoria to Freud* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 35 and passim.

[17] Thomas Birkner, *Das Selbstgespräch der Zeit. Die Geschichte des Journalismus in Deutschland 1605–1914* (Cologne: Herbert von Halem Verlag, 2012), 17, 86.

[18] Antje Arnold, Walter Pape and Norbert Wichard, 'Vorwort', in *Einsamkeit und Pilgerschaft. Figurationen und Inszenierungen in der Romantik,* ed. Antje Arnold, Walter Pape and Norbert Wichard (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), vii–xiii.

[19] Alberti, *Biography of Loneliness*, 22.

[20] See e.g. Frederic Burwick, 'Solitude', in *Romanticism: Keywords* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 296–9,

[21] 'Byron's Ansichten von der Einsamkeit', *Wiener Theater-Zeitung* (*Bäuerles Theaterzeitung*) 9 September 1833.

[22] Cf. Alberti, *Biography of Loneliness*, 17–18.

[23] 'Ode an die Einsamkeit', *Neue Mannigfaltigkeiten*, 16 November 1776.

[24] 'Von der Einsamkeit', *Österreichisches Bürgerblatt*, 27 October and 11 and 14 December 1846.

[25] 'Meine Sachen, die so viel Beifall gefunden hatten, waren Kinder der Einsamkeit'. Cited in Wittler, 'Einsamkeit', 202.

[26] Cf. Olivia Laing, *The Lonely City: Adventures in the Art of Being* (Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2016); Alberti, *Biography of Loneliness*, 7, 12.

[27] 'Winkelzüge und Streifereien im Gebiete der Tonkunst', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 12 September 1844.

[28] 'Blätter aus Böhmen', *Sonntagsblätter*, 29 September 1844.

[29] ‘Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh’, / In allen Wipfeln spürst Du / Kaum einen Hauch – / Die Vöglein schweigen im Walde – / Warte nur – / Balde ruhest Du auch’. ‘Deutsche Bäder II. Ein Besuch im Ilmenau‘, *Illustrirte Zeitung*, 30 September 1843. Originally the poem ‘Über allen Gipfeln’ (1780) was written on a wall of a hunting lodge on the mountain. English translation from Wanderer’s Nightsong II by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

[30] Roger Paulin, ‘Die Einsamkeit des Gelehrten: Friedrich Schlegel zwischen Welt und Studierstube’, in *Einsamkeit und Pilgerschaft*, ed. Arnold, Pape and Wichard, 197, 202.

[31] E.g. ‘Das Landleben und Stadtleben’, *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, 4 July 1811; ‘Eine Erzählung vom Meere’, *Wiener Theaterzeitung*, 6 November 1830.

[32] See e.g. the poem dedicated to Ludwig Tieck, the poet who coined the word ‘*Waldeinsamkeit*’, ‘An L. Tieck. Promenaden eines Berliners in seiner Vaterstadt’, *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*, 23 September 1824; ‘Der Berggeist and die Histionen’, *Ansbacher Tagblatt für Stadt und Land*, 30 May 1845, ‘Poesie. Tristan und Isolde’, *Neue Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, 25 February 1843. Cf. ‘Waldeinsamkeit’, *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm (DWB)*, Online-Version, Trier Center for Digital Humanities, http://dwb.uni-trier.de/de/; https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/waldeinsamkeit, accessed 11 June 2021.

[33] Johannes Grave, ‘Beobachtete Einsamkeit: Zum Verhältnis von Rückenfigur und Betrachter bei Caspar David Friedrich’, in *Einsamkeit und Pilgerschaft*, ed. Arnold, Pape and Wichard, 183–96.

[34] See Assmann and Assmann, ‘Einleitung’, 26; Schmidt, ‘Einleitung’, 10.

[35] Assmann and Assmann, ‘Einleitung’, 13–14.

[36] Wittler, ‘Einsamkeit’, 200–204.

[37] The BLAST tool for digital text reuse detection makes it possible to track down what kind of texts were reprinted and reused in the early nineteenth-century newspapers and periodicals. For example, the *Klagenfurter Zeitung* advertised a book titled *Der geistliche Führer der Jugend* in 1846-47: http://viral.utu.fi/cluster/57537 and *Wiener Zeitung* promoted *Lehren und Erfahrungen für*

junge Frauenzimmer zur Bildung des Herzens 1830-35: http://viral.utu.fi/cluster/276988. Viral Culture, interface of the project 'Viral Culture in Early Nineteenth-Century Europe', based at the University of Turku, Finland, accessed 1 June 2021, http://viral.utu.fi.

[38] 'Ich rede da von keiner mönchischen Absonderung von der Welt, nicht von einem ganz einschichtigen Leben; ich rede von einem Manne, der sein vorzügliches Vergnügen und seine Freude auf seinem Zimmer sucht, der sich nicht gar zu oft außer seinem Hause sehen läßt,um kein Müßiggänger zu scheinen'. 'Auch einige Gedanken über Einsamkeit oder einsameres Leben', *Österreichisches Bürgerblatt für Verstand, Herz und gute Laune*, 8 March 1824.

[39] 'Deutschland', *Historische Remarques über neuesten Sachen in Europa*, 21 March 1699. See also 'Aus dem Brandenburgischen', *Reichspostreuter* 9 July 1771; 'Gelehrte Sachen', *Reichspostreuter*, 2 April 1767.

[40] 'NB. Bei dem Verleger', *Wiener Zeitung*, 1 March and 12 December 1731.

[41] 'Suche also von Zeit zur Zeit die Einsamkeit, du wirst gewiss jedesmal b e s s e r, r u h i g e r, k r ä f t i g e r und e n t s c h l o s s e n e r in den Kreis deiner Mitmenschen zurückkehren'. 'Nutzen der Einsamkeit', *Augsburger Tagblatt*, 27 May 1833. Original emphasis. All translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

[42] Thomas Macho, 'Mit sich allein. Einsamkeit als Kulturtechnik', in *Einsamkeit*, ed. Assmann and Assmann, 27–28.

[43] Rolf Engelsing, *Analphabetentum und Lektüre: Zur Sozialgeschichte des Lesens in Deutschland zwischen feudaler und industrieller Gesellschaft* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1973), 61–62*,* 70, 85.

[44] Zimmermann, *Von der Einsamkeit*, 2. On the solitude and loneliness of the learned and educated see e.g. Roger Paulin, 'Die Einsamkeit des Gelehrten', 169–82. See also Schmidt, 'Einleitung', 14. Cf. Barbara Taylor, 'Philosophical Solitude: David Hume versus Jean-Jacques Rousseau', *History Workshop Journal* 89 (2020): 1–21.

[45] 'Einsamkeit', *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, 26 September 1816.

[46] 'Von der Einsamkeit', *Österreichisches Bürgerblatt*, 10 December 1846.

[47] Schmid, 'Einleitung', 12.

[48] 'Was beabsichtigen gebildete Stände bei der Stiftung geselliger Vereine', *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, 6 September 1813. This periodical alone gave 440 hits for the key word 'Einsamkeit' in ANNO database between 1801–1825, https://anno.onb.ac.at/anno, accessed 1 June 2021.

[49] Schmid, 'Einleitung'.

[50] Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf, 'Unheilbare Phantasie und heillose Vernunft: Johann Georg Zimmermann: Über die Einsamkeit (1784/85)', in *Einsamkeit*, ed. Assmann and Assmann, 268.

[51] 'Die Einsamkeit', *Hanauisches Magazin*, 1 January,1794. Cf. Tilman Borsche, 'Die Einsamkeit des Denkens', in *Einsamkeit*, ed. Assmann and Assmann, 52, 63–64.

[52] Frevert, 'Defining Emotions', 1–31. Cf. Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[53] Zimmermann, *Über die Einsamkeit* (Troppau, 1785), 44, 84–91, 119.

[54] 'Glücklich ist der, den Gott in Gesellschaft guter, freundlicher Menschen leben läßt: aber Weisheit, Billigkeit und Liebe zu unserm eigenen Besten erfordert es, daß wir in unsern Forderungen an Andere, mit denen wir zusammen leben wollen, nicht zu strenge feyn. Denn gänzliche Absonderung von der Welt ist ein weit größeres Übel, als die Gesellschaft sehr mittelmäßiger Menschen. Dennoch hat auch die Einsamkeit ihre Vortheile, die nicht zu verkennen sind. Ehe man mit bösen, schädlichen, schadenfrohen, heimtückischen Menschen leben soll, wäre freylich die Einsamkeit ein geringeres Übel. […] Auch einige Gedanken über Einsamkeit oder einsameres Leben', *Österreichisches Bürgerblatt für Verstand, Herz und gute Laune*, 5 March 1824.

[55] See also Zimmermann, *Über die Einsamkeit*, 11, 26–27.

[56] 'Die Blumen des Waldes', *Illustrirte Zeitung*, 26 August 1843.

[57] 'Geselligkeit. Nach Dr. Unzer', *Populäre österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung*, 24 December 1834. See also 'Gefahren der Einsamkeit', *Populäre österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung*, 31 October 1836; 'Miscellen: Einsamkeit und Geselligkeit', *Populäre österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung*, 24 September 1838.

[58] 'Der Mensch ist für den Mensch geschaffen; Nacht und Einsamkeit schaffen Gespenster'. 'Über den allseitig verderblichen Einfluss der Furcht auf den Menschen, und über die Mittel sie zu beseitigen', *Populäre österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung*, 17 September 1831.

[59] Cf. Zimmermann, *Von der Einsamkeit*, 7, 27. The idea of stimulating and controlling emotions through bodily action links to the early nineteenth-century ideas on dietetics, physical exercise and bodily training as means of emotional cultivation. See further Heikki Lempa, *Beyond Gymnasium. Educating the Middle-class Bodies in Classical Germany* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2007).

[60] An anonymous review of a book *Malerische und historische Reise in Spanien* by Alexandre de Laborde. *Zeitung fur die elegante Welt*, 22 December 1809.

[61] 'Erziehungsbilder', *Österreichisches Bürgerblatt für Verstand, Herz und gute Laune*, 20 February 1824.

[62] Alberti, *A Biography of Loneliness*, 10.

[63] Alberti, *A Biography of Loneliness*, 21.

[64] Wittler, 'Einsamkeit', 187–88.

[65] Alberti, *A Biography of Loneliness*, 26–27.

[66] See further Richard J. Evans, *Rituals of Retribution. Capital Punishment in Germany 1600–1987* (Oxford: University Press, 1996), 240–84.

[67] See C.J.A. Mittelmeier, 'Der neueste Zustand der Gefängnisseinrichtungen in England und englische Erfahrungen über Einzelnhaft', *Kritische Zeitschrift für Rechtwissenschaft und Gesetzgebung des Auslandes: Beilage* (1851).

[68] 'Einige Bemerkungen über das zu Ratheziehen der Aerzte bei Einrichtung der Strafhäuser', *Populäre österreichishce Gesundheits-Zeitung*, 30 March 1840.

[69] 'Miscellen', *Populäre Österreichische Gesundheits-Zeitung*, 14 February 1839.

[70] 'Das östliche Bußhaus in Philadelphia', *Transsilvania (Beiblatt zum Siebenbürger Boten)*, 7 April 1843; 'Das pennsylvanische Strafsystem betreffend', *Vereinigte Ofner-Pester Zeitung*, 21 April 1844.

[71] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of Prison* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 122–23.

[72] For instance, Zimmermann used the word 'Germany' (*Teutschland*) when discussing solitude. Zimmermann, *Über die Einsamkeit*, 26.

[73] Bösch, *Mass Media*.

[74] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 1991), 1–7.

[75] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context* 1, no. 1 (2010): 12; Jan Plamper, 'The History of Emotions. An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 253.

[76] Katie Barclay, 'Emotions, the Law and the Press in Britain: Seduction and Breach of Promise Suits, 1780–1830' , *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39 (2016): 267–84.

[77] Ute Frevert, 'Emotional Knowledge: Modern Developments' , in *Emotional Lexicons*, ed. Frevert et al., 268–69.