

## INTRODUCTION

The Age of Enlightenment was an age of cosmopolitanism. It saw European intellectuals meet and discuss ideas in the coffee-houses and salons of London and Paris; it saw the founding of international periodicals such as *Le Journal des Savans* (1665–1782) and *Acta Eruditorum* (1682–1731); it saw all manner of literature sweep with unprecedented rapidity from one vernacular to the next. The great figures of the Enlightenment were not women, and yet it was also the age of women's increased participation in cultural life. There has been little consideration of how women shared in the enthusiasm for things foreign, how their works were received abroad, and what links might have existed between women in different countries.

Benedikte Naubert (1756–1819) was one of Germany's first professional female authors, with an output encompassing novels, short stories, and fairy tales. It soon becomes apparent that her productions should be viewed in the context of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Anglo-German literary relations. Six titles claim to be 'aus dem Englischen' or 'nach dem Englischen'. A number of others appear to have British settings or protagonists, such as *Edwy und Elgiva oder die Wunder des heiligen Dunstan: Eine altenglische Geschichte* (1791). In addition, her work made its way across the Channel in translation and is said to have influenced the likes of Ann Radcliffe, M. G. Lewis, and Sir Walter Scott.

Naubert's publications have been largely neglected because they were popular and, like much work by women, invited the label 'trivial'. However, modern critics have recognized that literary history (or indeed any history) is determined by the ideologies of those who construct it. They have investigated the processes through which literature is placed in hierarchies. It is acknowledged, for instance, that the vilification of mass culture as feminine was used for over a century to define what was different and superior about modernist art.<sup>1</sup> Critics now argue for the re-evaluation of so-called lowbrow culture on its own terms.<sup>2</sup> In any case, disarmed of pretensions to uncover absolute systems or truths, the literary historian can better approach the past by taking into account what the majority of people were actually reading, and by acknowledging the fluidity and interdependence of the 'high' and 'low'. In this light, the examination of Naubert's oeuvre in a transnational perspective takes on a new urgency. She may have been one of many women who dominated an area of cultural life that has

not always been accepted as relevant. The central line of inquiry in the following study is therefore this: is it possible to detect evidence of a cross-cultural female literary tradition, perhaps operating on the level of widely read but non-canonical literature? The study will use the example of Naubert as a starting-point for exploring a whole new area of Anglo-German literary relations.

Recently, Naubert has begun to receive more scholarly attention. Some of her work has been made available in microfiche editions, in reprints, on CD-ROM and on the internet.<sup>3</sup> There are still only two monographs on the author: Kurt Schreinert's *Studien zu den Vergangenheitsromanen der Benedikte Naubert: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des historischen Romans in Deutschland* (1941) and Victoria Scheibler's *Phantasie und Wirklichkeit: Benedikte Naubert im Spiegel ihrer späten Romane und Erzählungen (1802–1820)* (1997). Nevertheless, there is a growing body of research on various aspects of her work: on historiography,<sup>4</sup> on her portrayal of women,<sup>5</sup> on her so-called Gothic fiction,<sup>6</sup> and above all on her fairy tales.<sup>7</sup>

There has been no in-depth analysis of Naubert's relations to English culture.<sup>8</sup> As Naubert published for the most part anonymously, critics have not even managed to establish accurate bibliographical information on what the author wrote, what she translated and which works were translated abroad. There are some scattered pronouncements on Naubert and English literature which will be discussed in more detail in the appropriate chapters. Comments by earlier critics have often been repeated in later studies and are in need of revision. The works of Christine Touaillon and Schreinert have become important points of reference. In her book published in 1919 on the eighteenth-century *Frauenroman*, Touaillon commented that Naubert's family novels follow the models of Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, and Oliver Goldsmith. Critics have quoted (and misquoted) Touaillon but have not added any evaluation of their own.<sup>9</sup> Schreinert devoted a paragraph of his monograph to Naubert's reception in Britain, suggesting that the novel *Elisabeth, Erbin von Toggenburg* influenced Radcliffe, that the story 'Die Fischer' influenced Lewis, and that the format of the historical novels was adapted by Scott.<sup>10</sup> The connection between Naubert and Lewis was explored further by Karl Guthke, who drew attention to Lewis's translation of *Elisabeth, Erbin von Toggenburg* and to his borrowings from the fairy tales.<sup>11</sup> Guthke's interpretation is not satisfactory, however, as his interest is in Lewis rather than Naubert, and what he writes is unduly coloured by a determination to raise Lewis above the level of a 'trivial' author like Naubert. The connection between Naubert and Scott was reiterated by Frauke Reitemeier.<sup>12</sup> Reitemeier evaluated structural elements in a range of early German and English historical novels and concluded that Scott probably owed a greater debt to Naubert than to any of his predecessors. Her interest is in Scott rather than Naubert and, since she does not give space to anything more than fairly

superficial descriptions of Naubert's works, she does not really add new insights to Schreinert's suggestions.

Naubert's relations to English culture are occasionally referred to in the recent scholarship on Naubert. Above all, critics have noted the influence of English literature on the fairy tales. Helmut Fischer discussed Naubert's coupling of English and German myth in 'Die hamelschen Kinder oder das Märchen vom Ritter St Georg', while Jeannine Blackwell remarked that throughout the *Neue Volksmärchen der Deutschen* Naubert 'used British as well as German sources' and 'often combined two or three legends in the same tale'.<sup>13</sup> Both interpret this as amounting to nothing more than a tendency towards cosmopolitanism. Anita Runge, meanwhile, proposes that the fusion of English and German myth was probably in answer to Herder's essay 'Von Ähnlichkeit der mittleren englischen und deutschen Dichtung' (1777).<sup>14</sup> This suggestion obviously needs to be examined more closely. Runge, with the other editors of the new reprint of the *Neue Volksmärchen*, has given some indication of the impressive range of English sources Naubert used in her tales. There remains a pressing need to establish the influence of English literature on Naubert's *œuvre* as a whole.

One or two critics have given tantalizing hints about the subject of female tradition. Schreinert mentions in a footnote: 'Übrigens hat der Roman *Toggenburg* seinerseits motivisch auf den "gotischen" Roman eingewirkt, und zwar auf die Werke der Ann Radcliffe, wie denn überhaupt zwischen den englischen Frauenromanen des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts und der Naubert eigentümliche Wechselbeziehungen bestehen, über die ich an anderer Stelle handeln werde.'<sup>15</sup> He never carried out his intention. Since then, others have drawn parallels between Naubert and English women writers, although not in any great depth. Robert Ignatius Le Tellier pointed to similar plot motifs used by Naubert and Radcliffe and to correspondences in their 'view of the world', but is really looking for crossovers in German and English Romanticism and finds them in Radcliffe and Karl Grosse.<sup>16</sup> Even more imprecisely, Christine E. Cullens claimed that all novels produced by women in this period in Germany and Britain — including Naubert's *Herrmann von Unna* — have the common theme of 'female difficulties'.<sup>17</sup> And while surveying the German Gothic novel, Silke Arnold-de Simine could not fail to notice that women at the time in England and Germany were reading and translating each other's work. She looked briefly at Naubert in relation to Sophia Lee and Ann Radcliffe and asserted: 'Äußerst bemerkenswert ist dabei die Tatsache, daß nahezu alle Übersetzer ihrer Romane, soweit bekannt, Frauen sind.'<sup>18</sup> Once again, though, it is not the primary focus of her research.<sup>19</sup>

The book is divided into five chapters. Chapter One sets out in more detail the literary and socio-historical framework, and confronts the theoretical issues surrounding 'female' literary 'tradition'. The next three chapters look at Naubert's reception of English literature. Chapter Two examines Naubert's

translations from English. It seeks to clarify which works and authors Naubert translated, in what circumstances, and to what ends. Chapter Three explores how her translations and her wider knowledge of English literature influenced her fiction in its overall design. It looks to see which English literary models — by men and by women — were most important for her development as a writer. Chapter Four focuses on representations of Britain in the historical novels and fairy tales. It questions how far Naubert's Anglophilia might constitute a specifically female response to contemporary political discourses. Finally, attention is given to the flow of literature in the other direction. Chapter Five considers Naubert's reception in Britain. It describes the historical circumstances which gave rise to the translations of her texts, and asks whether male and female translators, readers and writers approached her work in different ways. The book offers a case-study of one individual writer. Chapters Two to Five, however, begin with general remarks about women writers and the area under consideration, in order to place the work of Benedikte Naubert in a wider perspective.

1. See Andreas Huyssen, 'Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other', in *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture*, ed. by Tania Modleski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 188–207.
2. See, for example, *Zur Dichotomisierung von hoher und niederer Literatur*, ed. by Christa Bürger and others (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1982).
3. Nine novels and three fairy-tale collections are included in the microform sets 'Bibliothek der deutschen Literatur' and 'Edition Corvey'. The following have been reprinted: Benedikte Naubert, *Heerfort und Klärchen: Etwas für empfindsame Seelen*, ed. by Gerhard Sauder, 2 vols (Frankfurt: Reiffenstein, 1779; repr. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1982); Benedikte Naubert, *Neue Volksmärchen der Deutschen*, ed. by Marianne Henn and others, 4 vols (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2001); 'Die weiße Frau', in *Mein tapfres Herz: Texte deutschsprachiger Schriftstellerinnen des 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Christine Heinzius (Munich: Goldmann, 2001). Three novels and two fairy-tale collections are available on the following CD-ROM: *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen*, Digitale Bibliothek 45 (ISBN 3-89853-145-7). *Alme oder ägyptische Märchen* can be found on the webpages of the 'Projekt Gutenberg' <<http://www.gutenberg2000.de/naubert/alme/alme.htm>> [accessed 26 June 2003], and *Geschichte der Gräfin Thekla von Thum oder Szenen aus dem dreissigjährigen Kriege* in 'Sophie: A Digital Library of Early German Women's Writing' <<http://humanities.byu.edu/annex1/Sophie/Naubert/HTMpages/Home.htm>> [accessed 26 June 2003]. A further four works are due to be added to 'Sophie'.
4. See Lieselotte E. Kurth, 'Historiographie und historischer Roman: Kritik und Theorie im 18. Jahrhundert', *Modern Language Notes*, 79 (1964), 337–62; Jeannine Blackwell, 'Die verlorene Lehre der Benedikte Naubert: Die Verbindung zwischen Phantasie und Geschichtsschreibung', in *Untersuchungen zum Roman von Frauen um 1800*, ed. by Helga Gallas and Magdalene Heuser (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), pp. 148–59.
5. See Jeannine Blackwell, 'Weibliche Gelehrsamkeit oder die Grenzen der Toleranz: Die Fälle Karsch, Naubert und Gottsched', in *Lessing und die Toleranz* (Sonderband zum Lessing Yearbook), ed. by Peter Freimark and others (Munich: Edition Text + Kritik, 1996), pp. 325–39; Hee-Kyung Kim-Park, *Mutter-Tochter-Beziehungen in den Romanen von Frauen im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert* (Königstein/Taunus: Helmer, 2000), pp. 129–56.
6. See Silke Arnold-de Simine, *Leichen im Keller: Zu Fragen des Gender in Angstinszenierungen der Schauer- und Kriminalliteratur (1790–1830)* (St Ingbert: Röhrig, 2000), especially pp. 245–65.
7. See Helmut Fischer, 'Literarische Transformation: "Die hamelschen Kinder oder das Märchen vom Ritter S. Georg"', in *Geschichte und Geschichten*, ed. by Norbert Humbug (Hildesheim: Lax, 1985), pp. 159–66; Jeannine Blackwell, 'Fractured Fairy Tales: German Women Authors and the Grimm Tradition', *Germanic Review*, 62 (1987), 162–74; Shawn C. Jarvis, 'The Vanished Woman of Great Influence: Benedikte Naubert's Legacy and the German Women's Fairy Tales',

- in *In the Shadow of Olympus: German Women Writers around 1800*, ed. by Katherine R. Goodman and others (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 189–209; Anita Runge, *Literarische Praxis von Frauen um 1800: Briefroman, Autobiographie, Märchen* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1997), pp. 149–231; Marie-Josephine Diamond, 'Benedikte Naubert's "Der kurze Mantel": The Spiders in the Web of the Romantic Fairy Tale', *New Comparison*, 27–28 (1999), 59–71; Anne Thiel, 'From Woman to Woman: Benedikte Naubert's "Der kurze Mantel"', in *Harmony in Discord: German Women Writers in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. by Laura Martin (Oxford: Lang, 2001), pp. 125–43.
8. 'English' is used throughout the study in the sense of 'English-language'.
  9. See Christine Touaillon, *Der deutsche Frauenroman des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1919), pp. 261–78. See also *Heerfort und Klärchen*, p. 4\*; *Neue Volksmärchen*, IV, 343–44.
  10. See Kurt Schreinert, *Studien zu den Vergangenheitsromanen der Benedikte Naubert: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des historischen Romans in Deutschland*, Germanische Studien, 230 (Berlin: Ebering, 1941), pp. 101–02.
  11. See Karl S. Guthke, *Englische Vorromantik und deutscher Sturm und Drang: M. G. Lewis' Stellung in der Geschichte der deutsch-englischen Literaturbeziehungen*, Palaestra, 223 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958), Chapter Eleven.
  12. See Frauke Reitemeier, *Deutsch-englische Literaturbeziehungen: Der historische Roman Sir Walter Scotts und seine deutschen Vorläufer*, Beiträge zur englischen und amerikanischen Literatur im Auftrage der Görres-Gesellschaft, 18 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2001).
  13. See Fischer, 'Literarische Transformation'; Blackwell, 'Fractured Fairy Tales', pp. 165–66.
  14. See Runge, pp. 175–84.
  15. Schreinert, p. 124.
  16. Robert Ignatius Le Tellier, *Kindred Spirits: Interrelations and Affinities between the Romantic Novels of England and Germany (1790–1820), with Special Reference to the Work of Carl [sic] Grosse (1768–1847)*, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, 33:3 (Salzburg: Salzburg University Press, 1982), p. 65.
  17. See Christine E. Cullens, "'Female Difficulties": Novels by English and German Women, 1755–1814' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1989).
  18. Arnold-de Simone, p. 254.
  19. 'Innerhalb dieser Arbeit können erste Anregungen zur weiteren Beschäftigung mit dieser wechselseitigen "weiblichen" Rezeption im Kontext des regen Austausches zwischen der deutschen und englischen Literatur um 1800 gegeben werden'. Arnold-de Simone, p. 24.