

# GENDER, MEMORY, AND INTERCULTURALITY IN CAROLINE DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ'S HISTORICAL NOVEL *DIE VERTRIEBENEN*

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[ABSTRACT]

Caroline de la Motte Fouqué was one of the most productive women writers of the romantic and early Restoration period in Germany. This author of numerous novels and shorter prose has been re-valued by gender-orientated scholarly research as a writer who 'transgressed a number of gender and class boundaries'.<sup>1</sup> As an observer of the *Zeitgeist* and as a political writer, Fouqué was concerned with women's role in society and their contribution to the formation of a possible German nation. These political issues are not only discussed in her so-called *Zeitromane*, but are also central in her historical fiction, where also national and cultural boundaries are constantly crossed. Focussing on Fouqué's historical novel *Die Vertriebenen* (1823) [The displaced], the article combines perspectives on gender and intercultural issues to examine the function of narratives of foreign history in Fouqué's historiographical writing.

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Uns ist unser Vaterland fremd geworden; die Entwicklung der Zeit hat so viel daran verschoben, gerührt, beschnitten und hinzugethan, daß aus dem, was man National-Charakter nennt, ein Ding entstanden ist, von dem man nicht weiß, ob man darüber weinen oder lachen soll. Es thut uns daher Noth, das Eigenthümliche deutscher Natur aufzusuchen. Das aber können wir nur historisch-philosophisch ... Wir sollen dem zu folge die Geschichte unsrer großen Stammväter prüfend beachten, das was war, mit dem vergleichen, was ist.

[Our fatherland has become alien to us; it has been so much shifted, stirred, cut off and been added to by the development of the times that what we used to call 'national character' is now a thing, which one does not know whether to cry or laugh about. Therefore, it is necessary that we look for what is the characteristic of German nature. We can only do so, however, from an historical-philosophical perspective. ... We should thus critically regard the history of our great ancestors and compare what used to be with what is now.]<sup>2</sup>

In this passage from her pamphlet *Ruf an die deutschen Frauen* [A call to German women], published in 1813, the author Caroline de la Motte Fouqué outlines a concept of national identity that is based on awareness and knowledge of history. The pamphlet has a distinctive patriotic tone reflecting the militant patriotism that characterized the discourse in the German states fighting against Napoleon.<sup>3</sup> Fouqué tries to remind her female compatriots of their duty to contribute to the development of the German *National-Charakter*, a national identity, Fouqué argues, that can only truly be formed if foreign, meaning especially French, influences are kept at bay.<sup>4</sup>

Fouqué's attitude towards nationalism, however, changes and appears to be moderated in the following years. However, questions of nation building, women's role in society and their contribution to the formation of a possible German nation remained central to Fouqué's literary and journalistic writings. These political issues are not only discussed in her novels set during the Revolution era or in her so-called *Zeitromane*, but they are also central to her historical fiction. These historical novels written in the 1820s are not set in Germany, but, in England, France, and Poland, thereby crossing national and cultural boundaries.

Every attempt to define the historical novel refers to the genre's unique combination of history and fiction.<sup>5</sup> A mimetic understanding of the genre that primarily asks whether or not the novel mirrors historical events has, however, been replaced by a changed concept of the relationship between fiction and fact. Based on the insight that neither literature nor historiography reproduces past realities, but instead both of these produce narrative constructs; the historical novel is now seen as constructing models of history rather than referring to some kind of 'original'.<sup>6</sup> From this perspective the question is less whether or not a historical epoch is represented authentically, but rather which themes and events are selected for the narration and which narrative strategies are used. To emphasize this productive and constructive potential of the historical novel Nünning suggests replacing the term *mimesis* with that of *poesis*:

Mit dem Terminus 'Poesis' soll somit schlagwortartig hervorgehoben werden, daß historische Romane nicht ein ihnen zeitlich oder sachlich vorausliegendes Geschehen abbildend darstellen, sondern eigenständige Manifestationsformen gesellschaftlichen Geschichtsbewußtseins darstellen und mit ihren erzählerischen Gestaltungsmitteln selbst neue mentale Modelle oder Vorstellungen von Geschichte erzeugen können.

[The term *poesis* highlights the fact that historical novels do not reproduce temporarily or factually preceding events, but that they are independent manifestations of social historical awareness and that they themselves produce through their narrative strategies new mental models or concepts of history.]<sup>7</sup>

This understanding of the genre is also the basis for a gender-orientated perspective on the historical novel. The gendered aspects evident in the formation process of the historical novel as a genre have repeatedly been pointed out: Women authors not only played a significant role in the development and success of the genre, the genre has also been shown to offer models for gendered memory construction and historiography.<sup>8</sup> Although the complex relation between memory and gender has not been systematically theorized so far, an increasing number of literary studies combine a gender perspective with concepts developed by memory studies based on the insight that gender relations and practices of cultural remembering and forgetting are reciprocally intertwined and influence each other. Gender as a category is, on the one hand, not only relevant for what or who is remembered or forgotten, but also for the way in which men and women remember. On the other hand, cultural memory functions to legitimize or de-legitimize gender relations, to stabilize or subvert power hierarchies and social structures.<sup>9</sup> As a *memory genre*, i.e. a genre that focuses on processes of remembering, the historical novel seems to be an obvious example to analyse with regard to the triad of gender, genre, and memory.<sup>10</sup> With the Scottean model providing a very narrow norm for the genre, historical novels by women writers have long been ignored by research. However, studies on individual novels by female authors have shown that these texts not only focus on marginalized, female history but also develop alternative gender specific narrative strategies in order to narrate the past, thereby contributing to the innovation of the genre.<sup>11</sup> The historical novel is, however, not only a *gendered genre*. Comparative and intercultural literary studies, for example on Anglo-German literary relations, have shown that the historical novel is also a *traveling genre*, developed through intersections between writers and reading audiences across national, cultural, and linguistic borders.<sup>12</sup>

Focussing on Fouqué's historical fiction, this paper therefore combines perspectives on gender and intercultural aspects.<sup>13</sup> We may begin by taking one example of Fouqué's historical fiction, the 1823 novel *Die Vertriebenen*, set in England at the time of Elizabeth I. This paper will hence try to explore the following questions: What does the genre of the historical novel offer as a platform for literary cultural transfer? What is the function of narratives of foreign or European history in Fouqué's historical novel in relation to her discussion of nationalism and women's contribution to the state? And finally, how is intercultural contact portrayed in the novel?

In order to do this, first, I want to introduce two concepts in Fouqué's work, on which she bases her idea of national identity: sociability and history. Secondly, with regard to the novel *Die Vertriebenen* I want to explore aspects of cultural transfer with a focus on the reception: what happens when the genre model is translated into German and then, as it happened, back into English? In a close reading of the text this paper will eventually address concepts of cultural exchange or intercultural memory as developed in the text.

## **Sociability and History as Gendered Aesthetic and Political Concepts between Openness and Isolation**

Caroline de la Motte Fouqué is one of the most productive women writers of the romantic and early Restoration period in Germany.<sup>14</sup> Although being rather successful and widely read at the time, Fouqué seemed to be forgotten soon after her death in 1831. Moreover, she disappeared from literary history, where she was, if at all, often only mentioned as the wife of the more famous Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué. In addition to a major study by Jean Wilde in the 1950s, Fouqué has, however, since the 1980/1990s been rediscovered and re-valued by gender-orientated scholarly research as a writer who, as Karin Baumgartner states, ‘transgressed a number of gender and class boundaries’.<sup>15</sup> As a transition figure between romanticism and realism, or between the revolutionary period and the Restoration, Fouqué is analysed as an observer and chronicler of the *Zeitgeist*, who from a distinctive female perspective discusses gender roles and social models, and comments on her present as a time of upheaval and changes.<sup>16</sup> Also, the political dimension of her work as ‘a woman and a politicized member of the aristocracy’ has been studied, clearly placing Fouqué in the public political discourse.<sup>17</sup>

As Baumgartner and I have argued, at the centre of Fouqué’s attempt to define a (German) national identity is her concept of sociability. Society, argues Fouqué, arises out of the natural human need to communicate and to complement each other. Sociability is thus a necessity, centre and origin of society. It is for Fouqué on the one hand the expression of a cultivated, aristocratic lifestyle (hence her focus on the *große Welt* [high society]),<sup>18</sup> but on the other hand it functions as an aesthetic principle with conversation considered a form of art. This understanding of sociability is obviously informed by romantic social concepts. Since her marriage with Friedrich, Caroline Fouqué herself was part of the romantic circles she met and exchanged letters with fellow authors, and was involved in joint literary projects. Though Fouqué may not have been central to the Salons in Berlin, her lifestyle seemed to have been characterized both by aristocratic influences and the culture of the Salon. As Baumgartner has pointed out, Fouqué’s definition of the Salon and her concept of sociability differs from that of theorists such as Schleiermacher as Fouqué ‘insists on the political nature of sociability’.<sup>19</sup> Women are of central importance in this concept: ‘Frauen bedingen stets den Geist der Gesellschaft’ [women always determine the spirit of the society].<sup>20</sup>

This political aspect is central to Fouqué’s reply to Germaine de Staël’s *De l’Allemagne*, which is titled *Ueber deutsche Geselligkeit* (1814) [About German sociability], in which she sketches a concept of sociability that keeps a balance between openness and separation. While Fouqué, who by her contemporaries was sometimes compared to de Staël, considers *De l’Allemagne* an important work, she criticizes her French colleague for not having understood and therefore misrepresented Germany and the Germans.<sup>21</sup> Fouqué agrees however, to some of de Staël’s

observations concerning ‘die Mangelhaftigkeit und verschobene Natur unsrer geselligen Bildung’ [the weaknesses and shifted nature of our social culture].<sup>22</sup> The solution, for Fouqué, however, is not the imitation of the French language of conversation as this would not correspond to the German mind, which aims for ‘Mittheilung’ [communication], rather than virtuosity: ‘Wir sollen nicht länger zwischen eigenthümlicher und fremder Bildung schwanken, es steht uns wohl an Deutsch zu seyn’ [We should no longer sway between our own and foreign culture, we would do well to be German].<sup>23</sup> But on the other hand, she also argues against ‘chinesische Abgeschlossenheit’ [Chinese seclusion], as Germany could not isolate itself from European developments.<sup>24</sup> As ‘Heerd und Brennpunkt Europäischer Bildung’ [hearth and focus of European culture] it should rather seek to profit from foreign influences.<sup>25</sup>

This rejection of chauvinism marks, as Baumgartner notes, a significant departure from the patriotic argument Fouqué made in her *Ruf an die deutschen Frauen* just one year earlier. And a couple of years later, in 1821, in her *Briefe über Berlin* [Letters about Berlin], Fouqué makes a similar point, this time she uses the Middle Ages as an example for a time of free cultural exchange in Europe, and as an ideal that should be aspired to. Like her concept of sociability, history provides a model for an identity that is not based on exclusion and separation but on openness and exchange.<sup>26</sup>

Nichts nähert uns wieder der schönern Zeit des blühenden Mittelalters so sehr, als freies Verbinden mit dem Auslande, absichtliches Verschlingen geselliger, künstlerischer und wissenschaftlicher Beziehungen. ... Der Verkehr mit allen Nationen, die Richtung nach allen Himmelsgegenden dünkte ihm [dem Deutschen] nothwendig. Er befürchtete nie, sich gegen Andere zu vergeben: denn er besaß sich selbst in festen und bescheidenen Grenzen seines unerschütterlichen Selbst ... In diesem wechselseitigem Anerkennen unserer Nachbarvölker glaube ich ganz besonders das Fortschreiten allgemeiner Bildung zu entdecken ...

[Nothing brings us closer to the wonderful era of the prospering Middle Ages than the free connection with other countries, the conscious entanglement of social, artistic, and scientific relations. ... Then, [the German] thought it necessary to communicate with all nations, in all directions. He was never afraid that he might have something to lose because he was assured of himself within the fixed and modest boundaries of his unshakable self ... I believe that the progress of general culture lies in this mutual appreciation of our neighbouring nations.]<sup>27</sup>

Fouqué’s focus on the past is significant here: The reference to the Middle Ages is not only an echo of the romantic idealization of medieval life, but, more importantly, is used as an ideal for an identity both based on cultural exchange and open to female agency. In her essay on Greek mythology, which is addressed to a female reading public, Fouqué had already outlined a concept of gendered memory: While women were excluded from an academic study of history, they, Fouqué

argues, are central to forming a collective memory, as even modern women are still connected and to the 'Allmutter', an ancient female divine principle, thus linking past and present. So after 1815 and the decline of the Salon as a female-centred cultural space, Fouqué turns to history to find models that show 'how women were able to insert themselves in the political framework of their days'.<sup>28</sup> Silke Arnold-de Simine reads Fouqué's treatment of the past in analogy to the contemporary development of the museum as an institution 'instrumental in establishing a sense of national history [and] identity'.<sup>29</sup> As such '... her practice of establishing tradition through the processes of musealisation – ... was highly contemporary'.<sup>30</sup> Fouqué's concept of history thus corresponds to her concept of sociability: Both can be used to promote female political agency and both are characterized by the idea of cultural exchange. Both aspects appear to be closely linked in Fouqué's historical writing.

*Die Vertriebenen*, the novel under discussion here, is part of a small group of historical novels in Fouqué's work, written in the 1820s, which portray aristocratic women. For Fouqué, the historical novel seems to be an appropriate vehicle to promote women's participation in politics, especially their contribution to questions of nation building.

### **Die Vertriebenen – Lost in Translation?**

I will return to the gender aspect later, but first, I want to look briefly at the historical novel as *traveling genre* and analyse aspects of cultural exchange in *Die Vertriebenen* from the genre perspective. In the case of *Die Vertriebenen*, this perspective could be explored using a very broad meaning of the term *translation*.<sup>31</sup> First, the novel translates foreign, i.e. English history for a German reading public. Second, it can not only be read in the context of the German reception of Scott and the model he provided for the genre, but, as it was translated into English and commented upon by English critics, it is also part of multi-layered discourse about cultural transfer in literature.

*Die Vertriebenen* are set in England and cover a time of about 20 years, from the death of King Edward VI to the reign of Elizabeth I. It is a time of conflict with religious wars being fought across Europe. However, the political key figures are not at the centre of the novel, but an aristocratic family only indirectly involved in the power politics, yet deeply affected by the events. The protagonist of the novel is the historical figure of Catherine, widowed Duchess of Suffolk, who, by her first marriage, is related to Jane Grey. Originally Catholic, Catherine turns to the new faith and marries a fervent Protestant, Sir Richard Bertie. When Mary Tudor becomes queen and after the execution of Jane Grey, Catherine first arranges for her husband to flee to the Continent, where she, although pregnant, follows him, escaping just in time. She takes with her a mysterious baby girl, which she finds on the journey adopting her under the name Rosamund. Later, it is alluded that the girl is Jane Grey's daughter secretly born in the Tower. The second volume tells the story of the family's flight through Europe. They first find

a temporary refuge in Wesel, where Catherine's son Peregrin is born, then they have to flee to Heidelberg, before finding shelter at the court of King Sigismund in Poland. In the third volume, the family has returned to England where Elizabeth now rules. Peregrin is a young, melancholic man, mourning for Rosamund, who, he had been told, died of the plague. Sir Bertie and Peregrin leave again to fight for William of Orange in the Netherlands, Sir Bertie dies in battle, Peregrin discovers that Rosa is not dead after all, but in order to protect her from her family's ambition to topple Elizabeth, had been married to the Count of Toulouse. When the Count dies, Peregrin and Rosa can finally marry.

After its publication, *Die Vertriebenen* was met with rather mixed reactions as German reviewers took issue with Fouqué's choice of topic and genre.<sup>32</sup> Fouqué should have stayed with her domestic novels and romances critics claimed: The 'reviewers privileged the models developed by Scott and criticized Fouqué's novel as a feeble attempt at imitating the great'.<sup>33</sup> Gender and class are central issues in this criticism, as critics 'found fault with Fouqué's use of the historical novel as a female writer and an aristocrat'.<sup>34</sup> The reviewers focused on Fouqué's supposed inability to successfully appropriate a 'male' (and middle-class) genre like the historical novel; indirectly, however, the question of cultural transfer is also addressed here. Yet the verdict of the German critic is clear: Due to the limitations of her sex, Fouqué fails to live up to the standard provided by Scott. However, the novel was translated into English as *The Outcasts* in 1824. It is the paratexts that are of interest here, as they illustrate or rather cast a process of cultural translation: In his preface, the translator, George Soane states that the novel 'is decidedly a copy of Scotch Romances'.<sup>35</sup> This is not necessarily a bad thing, on the contrary, 'it would be well for the Northern literature if the imitation of these excellent models were to become more general, they might infuse into it a portion of health which it certainly wants at present'.<sup>36</sup> In Fouqué, Soane finds some of the weaknesses and 'unpleasant characteristics of German writers', but considers the novel still 'far above the generality of German Romances, and, upon the whole, ... a singular appearance in Northern literature'.<sup>37</sup>

Germanness is obviously an issue here, his main criticism, however, concerns Fouqué's choice of topic. But in contrast to the German reviewers, Soane is not blaming gender (or class), but cultural difference. According to him, the weaknesses of the novel are not caused by the limitations of the author's sex, nor by her aristocratic lifestyle, but are a result of the border crossing the novel undertakes: Why, he wonders, has Fouqué 'adventured on English grounds' when her unfamiliarity with English customs leads her to factual errors and 'brings her more immediate into comparison with an author [Scott], whose genius goes far beyond this century'?<sup>38</sup> It would have been better, he suggests, if she had 'adapted the style and manners of Kenilworth to [her] own national subjects' [i.e. German history].<sup>39</sup> Here, Soane explicitly refers to the connection between the historical novel and the question of national identity. This connection, it seems, makes the cultural transfer Fouqué attempts with her version of English history a risky business and, eventually, has to fail. It is interesting to see how the translator

deals with the problem of 're-translating' Fouqué's all too German text into the English context. In order to 'render [a work like this] generally acceptable' to the English reader, Soane opts for a free translation, as he explains.<sup>40</sup> Also, he adds a number 'notes and illustrations'. Fouqué was, Soane makes clear, not only unfamiliar with the English language, she also wrongly transferred German customs to England. In his notes, Soane provides explanations and corrections to these errors, he also goes to great lengths to guarantee the historical authenticity of the tale, delivering additional information on characters and events as evidence for the historical facts behind the narrative.

Not only the argument in the translator's preface or the information in the notes are of significance here, the fact, that Soane felt the need to make these additions in the first place is also revealing: In the historical novel à la Scott, prefaces, footnotes, and annotations are integral parts of the novel's structure and their characteristic balance between fact and fiction.<sup>41</sup> In the German original, Fouqué had omitted any such additional information, not supplying her readers with explanations, and evidence of historical authenticity – in contrast to some of her earlier historical novels, namely the *Heldentöchter aus der Vendee* (published 1816, thus one year before *Waverley* is translated into German), where Fouqué not only laid open her sources, but in the preface reflects on the relation between (historical) fact and fiction and between present and the past. But in *Die Vertriebenen*, Fouqué apparently sees no need for either authentication or the bridging of cultural differences between her English story and her German audience. Fouqué's translator, however, considers his added endnotes 'very necessary to the book' in an effort, one might assume, to bring Fouqué's novel closer to the model supplied by Scott, thereby in his translation 'Scotticizing' the text and emphasizing the process of cultural transfer at work here.<sup>42</sup>

Judging from the rather damning verdict of the reviewer in the *Westminster Review*, Soane's efforts to render the novel more acceptable to his reading audience were, it seems, not very successful: the critic writing for the *Westminster Review* advises against reading this 'dullest work of its kind' and considers Fouqué's 'half-true, half-fictitious narrative, [of] certain passages of English history'<sup>43</sup> an utter failure taking issue with an – in his opinion – unconvincing balance between fact and fiction. Both the reviewer and the translator seem to base their judgement on a mimetic understanding of the historical novel, an understanding that has for a long time dominated the definition of the genre. In this view, the exactness of the historical reconstruction and a high density of facts are important criteria.<sup>44</sup> Read against this model, Fouqué's text had to be misunderstood as a failed translation of both an English genre and an English plot – *Die Vertriebenen* seems to be lost in translation. Fouqué's adaptation of the Scottean model for her purposes obviously caused irritation. This can be read, as Baumgartner suggests, in the context of her being increasingly interested in showing examples of female political agency which 'violated gender sensibilities greatly' and rendered the Scottean model of the historical novel more and more unworkable for her.<sup>45</sup> But from the intercultural perspective, Fouqué's take on the historical novel can

also be read in relation to the question of a (national) identity based on openness and exchange with regard to the aspects of interculturality and gender, and the connection between them. In the following my reading of the novel will focus on these two aspects.

### **The Function of Intercultural Memory: 'Herstory' and 'Entangled' History**

If *Die Vertriebenen* does not work and is not intended to work as a transfer of a genre model from one national literature to another, the question remains: How does the novel (or in fact does it all) reflect cultural transfer and processes of cultural exchange? Or more precisely, how does the text deal with a concept of national identity balancing between openness and separation?

As Baumgartner correctly points out, 'England was not a randomly chosen fictitious location'.<sup>46</sup> The foreign setting could on the one hand serve to offer protection against the censors. Also, Baumgartner notes, England 'stood for a politically desirable society that successfully balanced tradition and modernity'.<sup>47</sup> I agree that the novel should also be read in the context of the German anglophilia of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. England also had a tradition as a country of women's emancipation. As such it was also of particular interest to women writers since the first German so-called *Frauenroman* Sophie von La Roche's *Geschichte des Fräulein von Sternheim* (1771). German Women writers before and after Fouqué were also fascinated by the fact that England provided examples of female rulers.

'[D]reier Frauen Recht liegt in der Wage' [The rights of three women are in the scales],<sup>48</sup> one of the novel's characters says, summing up the power struggle that provides the context for the story. In fact, male figures only play marginal roles: With three queens (four, if you include Mary Stuart) competing for the English crown, Fouqué finds plenty material to illustrate women's political agency. This does not necessarily mean that these women are presented as ideal rulers, on the contrary: Jane is a positive figure, but as a young and innocent woman she is only a pawn in the big power play, and finally falls victim to her family's ambitions. Mary Tudor is bitter and revengeful and knows no limits in her religious fundamentalism, whereas Elizabeth may be the 'Abgott des beruhigten Englands' ['idol of England'],<sup>49</sup> but as a private person she is temperamental, vain and insincere, 'sie hat kein Herz' ['she has no heart'].<sup>50</sup> It is Catherine who is the positive role model: brave, kind, and intelligent she manages to protect her family and keep them safe, carefully acting on the political stage. Compared to her, Sir Bertie (and even Peregrin who represents the new generation) seem surprisingly weak and pale – a fact critically noted by the novel's contemporary reviewers. In a reversal of conventional gender roles, it is women who are in charge<sup>51</sup> and who are strong, as illustrated in a letter from Catherine to her husband, in which she urges him to flee the country, while she stays behind to protect him: 'Ich möchte dich auf

meinen Armen in den Nachen tragen ... [‘I would fain carry you in my arms to the boat ...’]<sup>52</sup>

The cliché of women’s weakness is repeatedly shown to be a myth. This is even spelled out in the text: When one of Peregrin’s friends, the young Lord Essex, makes a stereotypical misogynistic comment on Elizabeth:

Wahrhaftig, sie ist eine Frau wie alle Andere, wenn sie auch zehnmal das Zepter statt den Fächer in Händen hält. ... Frauen reiten, wie sie Geschäfte führen, hitzig und nach dem Ziele drängend, ohne zu beachten, was zwischen diesem und dem Augenblick auf ihrem Weg liegt’.

[She is a woman like all other women, though she carried ten sceptres in her hand instead of a fan. ... Women ride as they conduct business, wildly, and pressing on to their object without considering what lies in the way betwixt them and the moment.]<sup>53</sup>

Peregrin, Catherine’s son, knows better:

‘Du hast ja ... den Catechismus der Weiberschwäche auswendig gelernt, als solltest Du darüber Rechenschaft geben. Nimm dich gleichwohl in acht. Du könntest trotz solchen Wegweiseres dennoch fehl gehen’.

[You ... learnt by heart the catechism of female follies, as if you were to account for them. But look to yourself; you may blunder notwithstanding such a guide.]<sup>54</sup>

With Mary Tudor, Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I, English history offered Fouqué rich, attractive material for her narration of female political agency. However neither are these women role models, nor is England described as a model nation. Quite on the contrary: Torn apart by dynastic and religious conflict, England is a divided nation, a ‘krankes Vaterland’ [sick country].<sup>55</sup> When Catherine has to cross the channel to escape Mary’s persecution, she, too, knows that in spite of storms ‘das grundlose Meer bietet ... mehr Sicherheit als die festeste Burg Englands’ [the bottomless ocean offers ... more safety just now than the strongest castle in all England].<sup>56</sup>

The novel’s title is programmatic: this is a story about exile, flight and disorientation rather than about the fatherland or even *Heimat*. The theme of exile, displacement and *Heimatlosigkeit* is often repeated throughout the novel, alienation and loneliness are leitmotifs in the narration. There is a sense of instability and restlessness in the novel, the characters are often on the move, travelling or fleeing. The castle of the Suffolks may be a refuge the family longs for, but much of the novel’s action seems to happen *on the road* with inns as frequent settings.

This atmosphere is most obvious in the second volume, which recounts the family’s flight through Europe. Fleeing from England, Sir Bertie feels like ‘eine Pflanze ihrem heimatlichen Boden entrissen’ [a plant, that, torn from its native soil, droops under a foreign sky] and struggles to combat ‘die Schmerzen

heimathloser Verlassenheit' [the pains of exile].<sup>57</sup> This feeling of homelessness culminates in the scene when Catherine has to give birth under the open sky, on the steps of the church in Wesel as the family finds no shelter. They call their son Peregrin 'denn er ist ein Fremdling' [for he is a stranger].<sup>58</sup> But even after their return to England, the family struggles to settle in. This affects most of all Peregrin, whose melancholy is explained by 'Hin- und Herziehen und das unstäte Leben seiner Familie' [the continual driving to and fro and the unsettled life of [his] family], and who remains 'ein Fremdling in der Heimath' [a stranger in [his] native land] and 'fand nirgends Platz' [has found a place nowhere].<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, Peregrin states: 'Ich passe überall nicht' [I am not calculated at all for the relations of life], 'Ich bin ein Fremdling in dieser unverständlichen Welt' [I am a stranger ... in this unintelligible world] – at several instances, expressing a sense of displacement symptomatic of his times.<sup>60</sup>

In these dynastic wars even blood relations or lineage do not necessarily offer stability: The power struggle between the four queens is based on the question of who is the legitimate heir. This struggle is fought (quite literally) over the women's bodies and bears enormous risks as legitimacy is always doubtful: Jane Grey is executed because her family wants to use her lineage to gain power, Mary Tudor attempts to rehabilitate her mother (by annulling the divorce from Henry VIII) and to hurl Elizabeth back 'in die Nacht dunklen, unkeuschen Ursprunges' [into the night of bastardy].<sup>61</sup> Elizabeth herself can only secure her power by avoiding marriage. In this state of affairs, even blood bounds become irrelevant: 'Ich bin in diesem Land der Treulosigkeit und des Wankelmutes ... mit niemanden verwandt' [I am akin to no one ... in this land of faithlessness and inconstancy], states one of the novel's characters. Catherine and her immediate family are a close, loving community, but this family, too, is constantly under threat and more often separated than together.<sup>62</sup>

As it has been pointed out, in the nineteenth century, the historical novel as a *memory genre* has played a significant role in shaping cultural memory and so 'helped to form concepts of national identity'.<sup>63</sup> So if the function of the historical novel should engage in the project 'to construct a German national past' and to offer models of national unity, *Die Vertriebenen* fails – or perhaps it refuses to do so.<sup>64</sup> This might also explain why the novel's love plot remains underdeveloped and is rather unconvincing. In the historical novel, the story of the loving couple is usually used to symbolize – on the private level – the harmonious solution of the conflict and the resolution of political contrasts.<sup>65</sup> The story of Peregrin and Rosa, however, is only marginal to the narration: it is mentioned, but it does not happen and remains really vague (we do not even get a glimpse of the grown-up Rosa, in fact, it is only a rumour that the woman Peregrin marries is in fact Rosa).

What the novel does offer, however, is a sense of a shared European history: This is illustrated in the conflict between the old and the new faith: The religious differences do not run along national lines, on the contrary, religious and national identity seem mixed, entangled: The conflict between the two confessions creates borders within the English nation, dividing couples, families, and friends,

and making compatriots turn against each other. On the other hand, religion creates connections and loyalties across national borders, which is why Catherine and her family can find refuge in Europe. With her mother being of Spanish origin, Catherine herself embodies such entanglement.

Her son Peregrin seems to realize this more than the other characters in the novel. He is depicted as the representative of a new generation, 'ein Kind der Zeit' ['a child of the time'].<sup>66</sup> Peregrin may be melancholic and struggling to fit in, but he embodies a chance for reconciliation between the conflicting parties. Although being a Protestant, he is interested in learning about the 'old faith' and is finding common ground between the two confessions. In spite of the risk of being considered a traitor, Peregrin insists on the necessity of religious tolerance: '[i]ch bin Protestant, und werde es bleiben, doch ruhig kann ich den Katholik an meiner Seite dulden' [I am Protestant and will remain one, but I can quietly endure the Catholic by my side].<sup>67</sup> In this respect he resembles Jane Grey, who, as Catherine thinks, could have been the 'Vermittlerin beider Lehren' [mediator between the two faiths].<sup>68</sup> What Peregrin claims in religious matters, i.e. tolerance and openness, can be applied to the question of national identity that the text discusses. Catherine's maid Sarah, who represents the 'voice of the common people', realizes this. She tells her mistress that Peregrin is not unpatriotic, but 'er hat viel von Euren Spanischen Anverwandten, und ist doch ein so guter Engländer als irgend Einer' [he has much in him of your Spanish relations, and yet is as good an Englishman as any one].<sup>69</sup> With Sarah's reply the novel's plea for tolerance is repeated. It also sums up what the novel suggests as a concept of national identity: not 'chinesische Abgeschlossenheit' [Chinese seclusion], but exchange and openness offer a solution. Whether a realization of this concept will succeed remains open in the novel, even though in Peregrin's and Rosa's son the grandmother Catherine is said to have 'bloomed again'.<sup>70</sup> Judging from Fouqué's later work, one can assume that the author remains rather sceptical.

## Conclusion

Hugo Aust distinguishes between two types of historical novel: the reconstructive type, that aims for an authentic reconstruction of the past and the parabolic type that uses history as a mirror to the present.<sup>71</sup> *Die Vertriebenen* can be counted to latter type: the trauma of the English Reformation is used as a reflection of the traumatic present in the post-Napoleonic era. The text even says so: after all, not only England, Germany, too, is divided. Fouqué's readers would have been able to relate this not only to the Reformation period, but also to their own times.

There are several passages in which the novel's narrator (who for most of the time steps back behind the characters) explicitly comments on the function of the past: In times of trouble such as Catherine and her family (and we can assume, Fouqué's readers, too) experience them, the narrator says, people tend to look to the past as it offers distraction from present worries:

Die Gegenwart dient nur als Brücke verschollener Zeiten, und nicht selten verliert man sich von diesen aus in das Gebiet des Räthselhaften und Abentheuerlichen. Englands Gegenwart war zu dem so düster und schwühl, daß sich der Blick gewissermaßen vor ihr flüchtend gern vergaß, wie schnell und unbequem sie in Anspruch nehmen konnte.

[The present serves only as a bridge to the past, and even from this the imagination not unfrequently wanders into the realm of the mysterious and superstitious. The present too with England was, at this time, so full of awe and gloom, that all were glad to close their eyes upon it, and willingly forgot how soon, and fearfully, it might call upon them.]<sup>72</sup>

This escapist function of history is understandable, but it is also obvious that with such an understanding of the past, any claim of authenticity must be treated with caution. Instead, the narrator suggests a concept of history, which stresses the element of construction: 'Man hat zudem von der Vergangenheit mehr oder weniger dennoch nur schwankende Bilder, die leicht durch das stehende Colorit der Gegenwart verdrängt, wenn nicht verwischt werden ...'. [The images too of the past, always more or less faint, are easily dimmed, if not put out, by the stronger colours of the present.]<sup>73</sup> Such instances point to the *poietical* character of the historical novel as a genre.<sup>74</sup> The focus then is less on the question whether or not the novel delivers an authentic image of the past, but rather how models of the past are constructed and interpreted.

*Die Vertriebenen* can be seen as part of a project by Fouqué to develop a literary program for a national identity that does – as we have seen – include women and the possibility of female agency. A couple of years later, in 1829/1830, Fouqué undertakes a similar task, but this time not choosing the genre of the historical novel, but the history of fashion. In her *Geschichte der Moden* [History of fashion], Fouqué 'projects an alternative path, a multiperspective everyday history which highlights communicative and cultural memory'.<sup>75</sup> The cultural transfer Fouqué undertakes in *Die Vertriebenen* functions in a similar way, as it allows her to develop an alternative model of the past: There is no isolated 'German' national past, but history in *Die Vertriebenen* is European history, where borders are constantly crossed.

## Notes

- 1 Karin Baumgartner, *Public Voices: Political Discourse in the Writings of Caroline de La Motte Fouqué* (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 11.
- 2 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, 'Ruf an die deutschen Frauen. Die Einnahmen zum patriotischen Zwecke', in *Schriften II: Literatur und Gesellschaft*, ed. Thomas Neumann (1813; repr. Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2008), 31–2. In the following, all translations are by the author unless otherwise stated.
- 3 Silke Arnold-de Simine, 'Napoleon, the Museum, and Memory Politics in Caroline de La Motte Fouqué's *Geschichte der Moden (1829-30)*', in *Women Against Napoleon: Historical and Fictional Responses to His Rise and Legacy*, ed. Waltraud Maierhofer, Gertrud M. Roesch, and Caroline Bland (Frankfurt: Campus, 2007), 205.
- 4 See Karin Baumgartner, 'Defining National Identity: Caroline de La Motte Fouqué Responds to Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*', *Colloquia Germanica: Internationale Zeitschrift für Germanistik* 35, no. 1 (2002): 62.
- 5 Geppert describes the interplay of fiction and history as a multidimensional spiral, 'in deren Dynamik der fiktionale Diskurs den historischen bedingt, [...], ein virtuell unendliches Sichumkreisen von narrativen Bedeutungsprozessen'. [in which the dynamics of the fictional discourse and the historical discourse are mutually dependent [...] a virtually infinite circling around of processes of meaning] Hans Wilmar Geppert, *Der Historische Roman: Geschichte umerzählt von Walter Scott bis zur Gegenwart* (Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag, 2009), 157.
- 6 See Ansgar Nünning, *Von historischer Fiktion zu historiographischer Metafiktion: Theorie, Typologie und Poetik des historischen Romans* (Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1995), 56.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 57.
- 8 On women authors' role in the development and success of the genre, see, for example, Kurt Habitzel and Günter Mühlberger, 'Gewinner und Verlierer. Der historische Roman und sein Beitrag zum Literatursystem der Restaurationszeit (1815–1848/49)', *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur*, 21 (1996) 1: 91–123.
- 9 See Astrid Erll and Klaudia Seibel. 'Gattungen, Formtraditionen und kulturelles Gedächtnis', *Erzähltextanalyse und Gender Studies*, ed. Vera Nünning and Ansgar Nünning (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler 2004), 184–85.
- 10 On concepts of gender, genre and memory cf. Erll and Seibel.
- 11 On German historical novels by women see, for example, Marianne Henn, Irmela von der Lühe and Anita Runge, eds., *Geschichte(n) – Erzählen. Konstruktionen von Vergangenheit in literarischen Werken deutschsprachiger Autorinnen seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen Wallstein, 2005) and Ansgar Nünning, 'Herstory als History: Bausteine für eine (noch zu schreibende) Geschichte des historischen Frauenromans', *Gender – Culture – Poetics. Zur Geschlechterforschung in der Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft. Festschrift für Natascha Würzbach* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1999), 278.
- 12 On the historical novel in an Anglo-German context see, for example, Frauke Reitemeier, *Deutsch-englische Literaturbeziehungen: Der historische Roman Sir Walter Scotts und seine deutschen Vorläufer* (Schöningh: Paderborn et al., 2001). On the term *traveling genre* cf. Margaret Cohen: 'Traveling Genres', *New Literary History* 34, no. 3 (2003): 481–99. Cohen notes that while the novel is generally 'a constitutively international genre' (p. 481), genres that successfully travel 'must be

- able to address social and /or literary questions that are transportable, that can speak to divergent publics or a public defined in its diversity, dispersion, and heterogeneity' (p. 482). Cf. also Geppert, *Der Historische Roman*, 4.
- 13 On the term *intercultural literature*, see Norbert Mecklenburg, *Das Mädchen aus der Fremde: Germanistik als interkulturelle Literaturwissenschaft* (München: Iudicium, 2009).
- 14 Fouqué published 20 novels, several collections of stories, a series of essays and books on (female) education and women's role in society, a study on the history of fashion, she was involved as editor in her husband's publishing projects and wrote reviews and other journalistic texts for magazines. Biographical dates here and in the following, according to Wilde.
- 15 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 11.
- 16 On research about Fouqué, see for example, Julia Bertschik, *Mode und Moderne*:1 (Köln: Böhlau Köln, 2005); Silke Arnold de-Simine, *Leichen im Keller: Zu Fragen des Gender in Angstinzenierungen der Schauer- und Kriminalliteratur* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2000); Todd Curtis Kontje, *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation 1771-1871: Domestic Fiction in the Fatherland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Elisa Müller-Adams, "... bedenke, daß die Frau zur Frau redete": *Das Werk der Caroline de la Motte Fouqué als Beispiel für weibliche Literaturproduktion der frühen Restaurationszeit* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2003); Mechthilde Vahsen, *Die Politisierung des weiblichen Subjekts: Deutsche Romanautorinnen und die Französische Revolution 1790-1820* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2000); Jean T. Wilde, *The Romantic Realist: Caroline de La Motte Fouqué* (New York, NY, 1955); Birgit Wägenbaur, *Die Pathologie der Liebe: Literarische Weiblichkeitsentwürfe um 1800* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co, 1996).
- 17 Karin Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 172.
- 18 As in the title in one of her educational books: *Die Frauen in der großen Welt. Bildungsbuch bei'm Eintritt in das gesellige Leben* [Women in the world of high society. An educational book for the entry into social life].
- 19 Karin Baumgartner, 'Defining National Identity', 61.
- 20 Fouqué, Caroline de la Motte. *Die Frauen in der großen Welt. Bildungsbuch bei'm Eintritt in das gesellige Leben* (Wien: B. Ph. Bauer, 1827), 130.
- 21 Karl August Varnhagen, for example, refers to this when writing in his portrait of Fouqué that she could have become a 'deutsche Staël' [German Staël]. See Karl August Varnhagen *Biographische Porträts* (Leipzig: Brockhaus 1871), 126.
- 22 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué *Ueber deutsche Geselligkeit in Antwort auf das Urtheil der Frau von Staël* (Berlin: Wittich, 1814), 25.
- 23 *Ibid.* 33, 30.
- 24 *Ibid.* 26.
- 25 *Ibid.* Also, cf. Baumgartner: 'Defining National Identity', 62.
- 26 The *Letters on Berlin* were written at a time when significant changes had taken place leading Fouqué to re-formulate her concept of sociability: 'By the 1820s, public mention of German nationalism was subject to severe censorship, and sociability had to be uncoupled from earlier nationalistic goals. In addition, men began to leave mixed circles like the salon for male-only spheres such as pubs and coffeehouses, and women were left behind in the domestic sphere of all-female interaction'. Baumgartner: 'Defining National Identity', 70.
- 27 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, *Briefe über Berlin* (Berlin: Schlesingersche Buch- und Musikhandlung, 1821), 15.

- 28 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 172.
- 29 Arnold-de Simine, Napoleon, the Museum, and Memory Politics, 210.
- 30 Ibid., 208.
- 31 For the term *translation* cf. Doris Bachmann-Medick, *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften* (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), 238–283.
- 32 For the German reception of *Die Vertriebenen*, cf. Wilde, Jean T. *The Romantic Realist: Caroline de La Motte Fouqué* (New York, NY: Bookman Associates, 1955), 324–343.
- 33 Baumgartner: *Public Voices*, 192.
- 34 Ibid., 191.
- 35 George Soane, preface to *The Outcasts. A Romance in Two Novels*, by Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, trans. George Soane (London 1824: Whittaker), 1:v.
- 36 Ibid., 1:v.
- 37 Ibid., 1:x–xi; *ibid.*, 1:xi–xii.
- 38 Ibid., 1:x.; *Ibid.*, 1:x.
- 39 Ibid., 1:x.
- 40 Ibid., xii.
- 41 Cf. Hugo Aust, *Der historische Roman* (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1994), 29–31.
- 42 Ibid., 1:xii. In his rather lengthy explanation, Soane mentions several arguments to justify the added annotations. Among other things, they would ‘give [the] volume a comely appearance, which, without them would be lean as a mummy’ (Soane, Preface, 1:xiii). Furthermore, he refers to the necessity to balance out the novel’s fictionality, as most modern books are like kites in their nature ... that paper machine, which Johnson learnedly defines to be “A fictitious bird made of paper”; ... so the said modern volumes must have a tail of notes to keep them *in equilibrio* ...’ (*ibid.*).
- 43 ‘The Outcasts; a Romance, from the German’, *Westminster Review*, Jan. 1824–Jan. 1836, no. 2 (1824): 556.
- 44 Cf. Ansgar Nünning, *Literarische Geschichtsdarstellung*, 49–59.
- 45 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 170–201; *Ibid.*, 192; *ibid.*, 196.
- 46 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 193.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen. Eine Novelle aus der Zeit der Königin Elisabeth von England*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Hartmann, 1823), 1:11. In the following, quotations from *Die Vertriebenen*, in Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, *The Outcasts. A Romance. Translated from the German by George Soane*, 2 vols., (London: Whittaker, 1824), 1:10.
- 49 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:131; Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 2:199.
- 50 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:114; Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 2:182.
- 51 Cf. also Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 194.
- 52 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:12; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:158.
- 53 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:17–18; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:94.
- 54 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:18; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:95.
- 55 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1: 119; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:112.
- 56 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:100; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:235.
- 57 Respectively, Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:123 (Fouqué, , *The Outcasts*, 2:17); and Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:64 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1: 204).

- 58 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:140; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:32.
- 59 Respectively, Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:6 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:83–4); Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:5 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts* 2:82); and Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:3 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts* 2:81).
- 60 Respectively, Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen* (3:43; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:118); and Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:114 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:183).
- 61 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:23; Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 1:168.
- 62 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1: 146–147; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:137.
- 63 Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, 'Where Literature and Memory Meet. Towards A Systematic Approach to the Concepts Used in Literary Studies', *Literature, Literary History, and Cultural Memory*, ed. Herbert Grabes, *REAL. Yearbook of Research in American and English Literature*, 21 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2005), 276.
- 64 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 163.
- 65 See Barbara Potthast: *Die Ganzheit der Geschichte: historische Romane im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen:Wallstein Verlag, 2007), 53.
- 66 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:121; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:189.
- 67 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:119; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:187.
- 68 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1:54; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:50.
- 69 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:147; Fouqué, *The Outcasts* 2:213.
- 70 Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 2:267.
- 71 Cf. Aust , 33.
- 72 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1:118–119; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:111–112.
- 73 Fouqué: *Die Vertriebenen*, 1:73; Fouqué. *The Outcasts*, 1:68–9.
- 74 Ansgar Nünning, 'Literarische Geschichtsdarstellung: Theoretische Grundlagen, Fiktionale Privilegien, Gattungstypologie und Funktionen', *Erinnern und Erzählen. Der Spanische Bürgerkrieg in der deutschen und spanischen Literatur und in den Bildmedien*, ed. Bettina Bannasch and Christiane Holm (Tübingen: Narr, 2005), 44–5.
- 75 Arnold-de Simine, 'Napoleon, the Museum, and Memory Politics', 217.