NOBLE CONTINENT?

*German-Speaking Nobles as Theorists of European
Identity in the Interwar Period*

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Speaking in the aftermath of the Second World War at Zurich University, Winston Churchill characterized the preceding decades as a time of 'frightful nationalistic quarrels, originated by the Teutonic nations'. Europe, this 'noble continent, comprising on the whole the fairest and the most cultivated regions of the earth, enjoying a temperate and equable climate, is the home of all the great parent races of the western world'. It is to 'protect' its heritage for the world, Churchill argued, using the example of the 'ancient States and Principalities of the Germany of former days', to which, in his words, 'western civilization' owed much, that Europe had to unite politically.[1] Churchill's statement deserves attention not only for its rhetoric, characterized by a deliberate attempt to claim from Hitler his own account of Europe's racial superiority. It is a curious document also due to its peculiar genealogy of European heritage, one that contains a positive reference to the principalities of 'former' Germany, along with a negative evaluation of the 'Teutonic nations'. The contrast between the 'Teutonic nations' and the 'states and principalities of the Germany of former days' is so starkly drawn, in fact, that it appears as if centuries were separating these two phenomena, or, as if they constituted two entirely unrelated branches in its genealogical tree.[2] But most German principalities only lost their political autonomy in 1918, together with Prussia – in Churchill's eyes at least, one of the most 'Teutonic' of all the German nations. Moreover, German princes have historically been instrumental in shaping the identity not just of the 'Teutonic nations', but also those of the British: the monarch to whom Churchill himself was subject was of German origin, even though the Saxe-Coburg-Gothas had changed their name to the more patriotic

'Windsor' during the first of the 'nationalistic quarrels', in 1917, to avoid confusion with their 'Teutonic' enemies. Was Churchill's rhetorically powerful, yet obfuscating confusion, just an attempt to negate the effects those very Teutonic 'quarrels' had on the construction of a workable political ideology of European identity?

As I will show, the crisis of the nobility as a sociopolitical configuration in Germany and Europe after 1918 meant that 'nobility', German-ness, and the idea of Europe, became deeply intertwined political identities. The concept of a 'European' politics was shaped by specific perspectives, or, as Reinhart Koselleck calls them, 'horizons of experience' and 'expectation'.[3] Churchill's own idea of Europe, like that of other British conservatives such as Leo Amery or Christopher Dawson, reflected the profound influence of German intellectuals of noble descent who became the chief spokesmen for European unification in the interwar period.[4] Count Richard Nicolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi, the founder of the Paneuropa movement and the most prominent noble Europeanist of the interwar period, had spent the last years of the war in exile, a 'Bohemian citizen of the world turned visiting professor of history at New York University', as *Time* magazine described his activities in wartime New York.[5] Other noble theorists of European identity who were based either in Germany or Austria after the First World War included Count Hermann Keyserling, a vitalist philosopher of culture who attained much wider fame both in German-speaking and in international circles, and Prince Karl Anton Rohan. A young follower of Keyserling, Rohan became the editor of the influential literary and political journal *Europäische Revue*. Prince Hubertus zu Löwenstein, Count Ferdinand Czernin, Baron von Waldburg-Zeil, Baron von Rheinbaben, and Otto von Habsburg, claimant to the Habsburg throne, were among the other prominent theorists of 'high' noble descent. Members of the 'lower' nobility – that is, descendants of ennobled subjects of the former German or Austro-Hungarian empires – who engaged in constructions of European identity in their publications included the poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal and the maecenas, diplomat, and dandy, Count Harry Kessler. The idea of a European crisis of values connected with a social crisis permeated the work of noble Europeanists of Christian conservative, liberal and social democratic dispositions. On the Christian conservative side, Friedrich August von der Heydte advocated the need for recreating a Holy Roman Empire for those reasons.[6] All these thinkers had advocated some idea of Europeanist politics in the interwar period, but in the course of the rise of Nazism and the Second World War, their paths split. In Germany and Austria after 1918, nobles saw themselves compelled actively to reclaim a new form of authority as intellectuals. Authors such as Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, Hermann Keyserling, and Karl-Anton Rohan, who have been described as 'elitist' by contemporaries and by more recent critics, the chapter argues, can also be understood as (self-reflexive) 'aristocratic radicals'.[7] The aim of this study is to reconstruct their perspective on European identity prior to this parting of ways in the later 1930s.

Different political communities and social groups, from families to residents of cities, to religious or ethnic groups, are affected by political upheavals in divergent

ways. As Michael Müller rightly remarks, the idea of Europe has frequently been shaped by the geographically peripheral, or otherwise 'marginal' elites.[8] As theorists of Europe, noble writers gave their own biographies a new political significance. Each of their theoretical conceptions of Europe had the image of the new European as its central conceptual feature. Europe for them was not a way of 'conceptualising a continent', as Anthony Pagden has put it, but rather a way of 'conceptualising' themselves in a new socio-political landscape.[9] The diffuse meaning of what is 'European' today thus carries the baggage of these diverse experiences. To understand these different meanings, we need to disentangle how their specific perspectives shaped the way theorists envisioned future politics.

These writers and political thinkers have been remembered individually for different things and in different contexts, which turned some of them into historically exceptional, almost unlikely, cosmopolitans, expiated others of any complicity with ideologies such as fascism, and obscured the very obvious commonality between them: the experience of a crisis of social status in a period of 'democratization', which coincided with constructions of European identity. This shared experience is not only an ideal-typical and retrospective inference of commonality, but was rooted in their networks of sociability, which also substantially overlapped with their networks of publishing houses and journals in which they voiced their theories.

Not all these men – and the theorists of European identity in the interwar period were almost exclusively male – were still being remembered by scholars of European identity in the period after the Second World War. Some of them, like Count Harry Kessler, who died in exile from Nazi Germany in 1937, or Count Hermann Keyserling, who died in 1946, only had a very limited impact on European politics after the Second World War. Others, like the poet and playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal, are primarily known for other intellectual contributions. Some, such as the Prussian Baron Rheinbaben, became advocates of Nazi visions of Europe and were thus omitted from the history books on European identity. In the remaining group of émigrés from Nazi Europe during the 1940s, Coudenhove-Kalergi, Otto von Habsburg and Prince Löwenstein are probably the best known, yet here again it was only Coudenhove who was, for a time, celebrated as a direct ancestor, or even founding father, of the European Union. Habsburg's restorationist rhetoric made him an unlikely candidate for this role. As the *New York Times* had put it in 1940: 'Few among all these hundreds of thousands of young men who have in these past 500 years crossed the Atlantic seeking to amend their shattered fortunes have seemed engaged on such a forlorn hope as Otto von Habsburg.'[10] Upon his return to Europe after the war, Habsburg's alliance with Franco's Spain through the 'Centre Européen d'Information et Documentation', a stronghold of European conservatism, made him an unsuitable candidate for the political construction of democratic Europe, whose educational institutions also shaped the historiographical analysis of Europe's political and intellectual identity.[11] The most lasting influence of noble perspectives on Europeanist ideology after the Second World War was that of the predominantly Christian *and* non-Fascist

constructions of Europe, expounded by thinkers such as Fürst Löwenstein, and the oecumenical-technocratic conception of Paneuropa-man Coudenhove-Kalergi, whose earlier flirtations with Mussolini's fascism, however, had been conveniently forgotten by the 1990s.

Starting from the transformation of these former units of political organization in the German Empire, to the abolition of all forms of nobility in both Germany and Austria, the significance of the abolition of the old nobility in Germany and Austria on the political imagination of this period has been underestimated. The year 1918 was a turning point that started a new controversy in German political and intellectual circles concerning the status of the historical nobility.[12] In this discourse, German-speaking nobles as theorists of Europe understood the period not only as a Spenglerian 'decline of the West', but particularly as a decline of the status and values of the old nobility which they saw as the agent of Europe's cultural production in former days. With the idea of Europe, they reinvented the feudal cosmopolitanism of the historical nobility by endorsing a new and positive concept of Europe. The more existential experience of the crisis of the nobility for nobles gave them specific discursive weapons that allowed them to turn part of the debate concerning the nobility into a debate about the future of Europe.

The views of European history and politics displayed by nobles in interwar public discourses had three points in common. First, the idea that states and their governments were secondary in international politics to private networks; second, the idea that the nation could only be accepted as a temporary political paradigm, and that a form of supranational identity was needed in Europe; finally, the acknowledgement that the social foundations of European cultural excellence, which rested on the contribution of aristocratic societies, needed to be reinterpreted, because the old elites failed to respond to the pressing problems of their times. In their accounts, 1918 appeared as a historic caesura. Nobles utilized the emerging structures of liberal internationalism, represented in the League of Nations, but did so with the aim of a post-national European community; they insisted on government by social likeness rather than party politics. They attributed to a new nobility the role not just of a privileged elite, but of one whose very task is to link family history with public history, to be the guardians of European heritage. Nobles became 'idea-mongers' linking very different traditions of imagining Europe together. To explain their political views, we need to understand better the social change that occurred in Germany and Austria and affected circles of intellectuals in particular ways.

Nobles and the Crisis of 1918

'German Princes and Nobility Rush Funds to Neutral Lands', the Geneva correspondent for the *New York Times* cited a Swiss banker in October 1918. 'A large proportion of the depositors' bringing their money from Germany and

Austria', the journalist remarked, 'belong to the princely families, posing under assumed names.'[13] Between 1917 and 1920, not just Germany and Austria, but most of Eastern and Central Europe witnessed an extraordinary number of sociopolitical changes involving political demands to abolish the nobility. These not only enforced the abdication of the Habsburg, Romanov, and Hohenzollern emperors in the wake of the First World War, but also brought about the abolition of noble titles and the expropriation of other noble families. The process did not leave many 'neutral lands' for nobles.

The geopolitical and social transformations in Europe after the First World War had a particular impact on nobles associated with German culture; that is, members of families who had historically been loyal to the Hohenzollern or the Habsburg family. 'German' nobles in this sense occupied elite positions in the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires. In 1919, the new republican parliaments of Germany and Austria decreed the abolition of the nobility.[14] The new government of Austria passed a law concerning the 'abolition [*Aufhebung*] of the nobility, its external privileges and titles awarded as a sign of distinction associated with civil service, profession, or a scientific or artistic capacity'. After 1919, nobles were to become 'German Austrian citizens', equal before the law in all respects.[15] The German Constitutional Assembly ratified the abolition of the nobility as §181 and §109 of the Weimar Constitution, giving this event primary political importance.[16] Those nobles who had organized themselves in noble corporations such as the Deutsche Adelsgenossenschaft (DAG) in the late German Empire, were now explicitly discouraged from party political participation. Following a first law of June 1920 'concerning the abolition of the privileges of the nobility and the dissolution of their estates' passed by the German government, in 1929 German President Gustav Stresemann demanded that membership in the DAG was unacceptable for members of the Reichstag, the cabinet as well as the army, spurring a flood of protests in noble circles.[17] Many members of the DAG, already a conservative organization with clear anti-Semitic influences prior to 1933, moved further to the right and found themselves in the ranks of the Nazi Party a decade later.[18]

Outside Germany, the crisis of the nobility in the period from 1919 until the occupation by Nazi Germany affected nobles of a German cultural background beyond the boundaries of what in 1918 became the German and the Austrian republics. German noble families of old lineage such as the Teutonic knights that had served a number of changing polities from the Swedish and Lithuanian kingdoms to the German and Russian empires, and branches of other European noble families that historically had been loyal to the Austrian Habsburgs, formed the core of the political elite in regions formerly belonging to the Russian, Austro-Hungarian and German empires, which had now formed new nation-states. This was especially pronounced in the Baltic region, where the Keyserlings formed part of the feudal elite, and in Bohemia, where Coudenhove-Kalergi was based. After 1918–20, in the new Baltic nation-states and in Czechoslovakia, such families no longer epitomized a functional political elite. The high proportion of nobles from

these regions among the aristocratic writers whose subject was the idea of Europe was deeply entangled with this geopolitical and social transformation.

In the new nation-states of Eastern and Central Europe, other varieties of abolishing the nobility 'in the name of the nation' emerged in the early 1920s. There, nobles were considered to be 'foreign' elements who were also historical enemies of nations in the making. Thus in Czechoslovakia, the new governments required the confiscation of property on the grounds of nobles' foreign background, and only in the second place as a betrayal of other social groups or the nation. Politicians like the representative of the Czech National Democratic Party, Bohumil Němec, argued that 'nationally foreign … and rapacious noble families' had been causing harm to the Czech nation throughout history.[19] His, ironically, Slavic surname, which means 'German', in fact gives some linguistic evidence to the case that the arguments for a policy of ethnic purity in this region were deeply flawed given the historically mixed populations in these areas. What mattered with regard to nobles was that they were both foreign and formed part of the Habsburg imperial elite. In Czechoslovakia, the imperial nobility backed by the ancient power of the Habsburgs in the region, became but an ethnic German minority, which the new governments viewed on a par with other Germans like the Sudeten Germans.[20] Following this line of argument, large noble estates were partially nationalized. In Estonia and the other new Baltic nation-states, a similar process occurred. In both cases, German nobles obtained the citizenship of the new states, but were effectively barred from any political participation, or from exercising their traditional feudal privileges like holding courts (as in the case of the Baltic knights).

The abolition of the nobility in these postimperial peripheries was therefore entangled with a reconceptualization of notions of nobility and aristocracy, ethnicity and social status, and minority and majority in political debates. Nobles like the elder brother of the Europeanist Karl Anton Rohan, Prince Alain Rohan, not only became 'lords' by profession, as new documents attested, but also now belonged to a German minority in a Czechoslovakian nation-state. In such regions, this was above all a crisis of the German nobility, not because noble families like the Keyserlings or the Coudenhoves were German (they were only partially of German descent), but because they were now 'perceived' as German. In response, while many high noble families from Bohemia sought to restore their authority through identification with forms of German nationalism, allying with the Sudeten Germans and seeking unity between Germany and Austria, there were also many nobles who, especially in the early 1920s, sought direct protection from the League of Nations under its 'ethnic minorities' act. Only when the league showed its incapacity to enact its vision did these groups move closer to the German nationalists.

Consecutive governments in Germany, Austria, and other Central European states after 1918 gave different answers to the question 'What is noble?' at different points in the interwar period. In this light, it seems fairly difficult to give a tight description of the nature of the 'crisis of the nobility' in the period from 1918 to 1920. To use Max Weber's analysis, depending on the region and the family, some nobles still constituted a feudal estate whose power rested as much on their

material superiority as on other forms of authority. For example, Alain Rohan, the head of the Rohan family of exiles from revolutionary France who had lived under Habsburg protection in Bohemia since the nineteenth century, retained his estate at Sychrov, Czechoslovakia, after 1919. Here, as diaries and archives of other noblemen like Friedrich Thun attest, nobles maintained their old lifestyle of the high nobility of the Habsburg Empire, continuing at least into the late 1930s. By contrast, in Germany, princes such as Grand Duke Ernst Herzog of Hesse-Darmstadt, lost their power as feudal sovereigns in 1919, or their income from feudal estates. Such was also the case for the Baltic nobility whose estates were expropriated by the new national governments of Estonia and Lithuania. Yet in other cases, nobles, who in economic respects were members of the upper bourgeois class, did not suffer financial losses in 1918, but rather, were hit by the international economic crisis of 1929.

As far as the perception of noble identity and values in Nazi ideology was concerned, nobility played an ambivalent role. The Nazi government partially reinstated some noble privileges after 1935, and indeed managed to create attractive positions in power for nobles such as Gottfried von Bismarck or the von Hessen family, while also maintaining its image as a revolutionary and socialist party.[21] Thus, in keeping with republican legislation, under the Nazis, noble titles continued to be seen as part of the family name. Nobles were mere 'members of families with a noble name', although the regime itself opened up more exclusive opportunities for nobles than the Weimar Republic.[22] Nobles were 'recruited' for active collaboration with the regime in connection with the conquest of Eastern Europe. Following the Hitler–Stalin pact of 1939, Hitler's 'chief ideologue' for Eastern colonization, Alfred Rosenberg, invited nobles from the Baltic region to lead the colonization of parts of Poland and Ukraine and to employ their knowledge of agricultural organization since 'feudal' times for a new economic exploitation of the region, using forced Polish labour. For this purpose, the Nazis even briefly reinstated the Teutonic order, the medieval knighthood which established the legal stronghold of German aristocrats in the Baltic region, which were abolished by the nationalist governments of Estonia and Lithuania.

Ideologically, the Nazi vision of Europe drew much from the symbolic historical imagination of the European nobility. The Nazi foreign propaganda journal *Signal*, for instance, edited by former co-editor of the *Europäische Revue*, Max Clauss, in 1944 supplied a 'genealogical tree' of the generic Aryan family with its journal.

The map shows to what extent the ideological exploitation of noble identity by the Nazis parted ways from its original. Like genealogical trees of noble families, this tree contains elements of heraldry along with the image of a tree, yet it remains abstract in its attempt to link the 'geographical', European, identity of the Nazi regime to the non-concrete, 'universal' family on the top of the tree, while differentiating the 'evil' branches of the tree in negative heraldic and geographically detached form. By contrast, traditional genealogies of noble families that emerged in the early modern period but became particularly fashionable in the historicist nineteenth century, emphasized the concretes of one particular family whose story
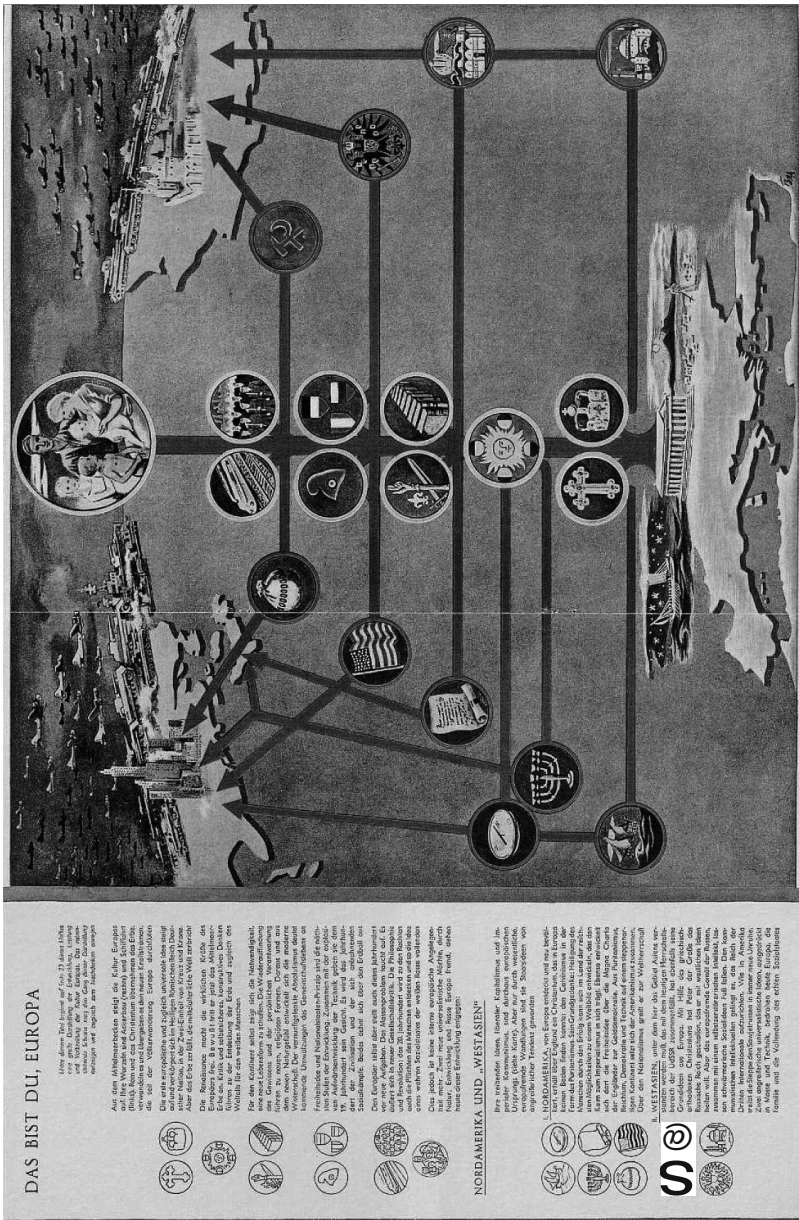
Figure 5.1 Europe's cultural and historical development. Source: M. Clauss (ed.) *Signal*, Nr. 11, 1944. In: B. Jussen (ed.) *Signal* (Göttingen, 2004), 21–22

was being told, and reserved heraldic images to that family only. To the extent that the coat of arms was a symbol, it was a symbol of a family, rather than an entire ethnic group, as for the Nazis. Conversely, in terms of political practice, the initial promise by Rosenberg to the old Baltic nobles that in colonizing the East, they would also restore the ancient knighthoods, was soon being broken. As early as 1941, these knighthoods were again abolished and replaced by the Nazis' own neo-medieval Gau structures, while German nobles were not returned to their original territories in the Baltic but were forced to colonize Southern Poland instead.[23] Thus, by 1942, while nobles continued occupying some high ranks in the army and administration of Nazi Germany, there was also an increasing propensity to resist Hitler among noble-dominated social networks such as the Kreisau and the Stauffenberg circle. This rising proportion of nobles in resistance circles towards the end of the Nazi empire, by contrast to the early resisters of mostly working-class background, has led to the postwar image of 'the nobility' at large being resistant to Nazism, one that has only recently been qualified.

The events of 1917–20 were not only a socioeconomic crisis of the nobility, but also an intellectual one: the very idea of the removal of the nobility as de-aristocratization and democratization surfaced simultaneously in different successor states to the Habsburg, Hohenzollern and Romanov empires that disintegrated during the First World War. The discourse concerning the future of the nobility continued in these states throughout the interwar period. It is in this respect that the abolition of the nobility contributed to the discourse of Europeanism in a particular way. By analysing the meaning of 'Europe' for nobles, the chapter proposes in some sense a narrower focus than previous studies of interwar Europeanism; but in another sense, it hopes to open up new comparative perspectives on interwar political thought and social history by referring to the abolition of the nobility as a pivotal moment in the history of Europeanist discourses.

Nobles and Interwar Ideas of Europe

Nobles found themselves in opposition to the neo-Jacobin politics of nation building that dominated the politics of the early Weimar and Austrian republics, which entailed a search for a national community defined by ethnic and social homogeneity. Recent scholars have identified the circles that formed the archipelagic landscape of intellectual life in Germany and Austria by looking at groups of authors that published in similar journals or shared similar circles of sociability.[24] When we look at some of the more prominent authors publishing works on the idea of Europe during the interwar years in Germany and Austria, the high number of nobles in this group catches the eye. For members of the nobility, after 1918 the idea of Europe provided above all the chance to contribute to a restructuring of the political landscape in which they could maintain their social status. In order to do so, many resorted to radically utopian ideas and entirely new paradigms of thought. Historical imagination was a constitutive part of noble self-understanding. Today,

in fact, its specific memory remains one of the main identifying criteria for noble identity, as anthropological comparisons between noble and 'bourgeois' interviewees have shown. Nobles tend to remember several generations more than other social groups.[25] What is important for nobles as political thinkers in this regard is the fact that nobles often tend to consider themselves in some sense personally connected with the diplomatic and territorial history of several states. By contrast, after 1918, nobles in Central and Eastern Europe had to choose new forms of political identity. This historical imagination placed personal claims on what often was the history of the entire European continent, which nobles traditionally represented with the paradigm of family lineage.[26]

The abolition of the nobility affected nobles' political imagination in ways that contradicted the politics of *tabula rasa* of the new republican governments of Germany and Austria. By far the greatest number of nobles identified with conservative, particularly with Christian, positions. Parties such as the Catholic 'Zentrum' in Germany, or the Austrian People's Party, journals such as *Abendland* and *Hochland*, owned by the Waldburg-Zeil family, provided points of identification for many nobles who looked either to a restoration of noble privilege, or the formation of a neo-medieval corporatist society in which the nobility would obtain its own place.[27] The Catholic church with its 'transnational matrix of power based on formal rationality and hierarchical leadership' was one point of orientation for these nobles disenchanted with modern democratization; the other was the model of the Holy Roman Empire as a heterogeneous state in which the nobility proved to be a guarantor of the legal and economic organization of a large territory with conflicting confessions.[28]

Precisely given the importance of Catholic identity for South West German and for Austrian nobles, monarchism was not the most natural response to the crisis of 1918. Among Protestant nobles, monarchism – in Austria, particularly salient – or its replacement with cult-leader figures in Germany, such as Hindenburg, who obtained much support from nobles in 1925, was a more prominent response. Nobles from the peripheries of the former empires in particular, such as the prominent Ledebur, Schwarzenberg or Thun families in Bohemia, tended to advocate the unity of Germany and Austria following the model of the failed 1848 project, but with a restoration of the nobility, rather than the nation-state principle, in force. However, despite these shifts in noble circles towards conservative, corporatist or Caesarist visions of future politics, some, though not all, of which blended well into the emerging Nazi ideology, there was also a small yet significant number of nobles who became interested in the alternative projects of European unification. Among these, the social democratic, the liberal and the fascist are the most significant.

Many Baltic and Bohemian German nobles who had lost their estates and became journalists published 'geopolitical' commentaries and books reflecting on the past and future of Europe. Some of them became 'nostalgic' political 'agnostics', while others turned the nostalgic reminiscence of a past age itself into a form of political criticism of the present.[29] For instance, the Bohemian Count Ferdinand

Czernin, the son of the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Britain during the First World War, became a journalist and wrote histories and critiques of the problems of the old Empire, as well as critical commentaries on ongoing political affairs regarding Central Europe.[30] Others decided to pursue an academic career that they had previously undertaken as a freelance pastime. For instance, the philosopher of biology, Jakob von Uexküll, embarked on an academic career after 1918.[31] The Baltic German novelist Otto von Taube published books reflecting on the political and biographical crisis of 1918.[32]

Intellectuals of noble status espoused the role of the politically engaged intellectual with more zeal after the First World War. Before the 'upheavals' around the year 1918, nobles were more directly related to the 'political' dimension of society, be it in virtue of holding some 'feudal powers' or simply in virtue of the public visibility of the noble name in political culture and history. After 1918, aristocratic writers turned into more explicit political theorists because this background had changed. Nobles themselves explained why authors like the Austrian Europeanist Prince Karl Anton Rohan chose to publish their works in Berlin rather than in Vienna, by pointing out that in Vienna 'there is no Prince Rohan any more, only Karl Anton Rohan'.[33]

As Coudenhove-Kalergi put it, in the interwar period, 'the only [true] Europeans were the writers', mentioning authors like Heinrich Mann or Maximilian Harden.[34] Such authors published in multiple journals, their texts appeared in different forms and translations in a diversity of journals discussing geographical and cultural identity. Nobles who redefined their very nobility through being writers but in doing so also communicated their noble heritage to larger publics were prominent among the Europeanists.[35] Each of these circles had overlapping 'members', even though some of the main editors of these journals were openly critical of each other, as in the case of Coudenhove and Rohan.[36]

One of the unifying features of the group of nobles under consideration here was to seek out a future community in which their social status could be recreated.[37] In this socio-literary sphere, nobles of varying degrees of nobility occupied a distinctive niche in theorizing Europe. The fact that such authors continued to be perceived as 'former' nobles created a special position within the circles of German and Austrian elites to which they belonged, comprised of intellectuals of different social backgrounds. After 1918, journals and publishing houses became important meeting grounds for like-minded intellectuals. In these contexts, theorists of formerly noble status had a distinctive voice.

The Case of Hermann Keyserling: European Renewal and the Aristocratic Sage

In his lifetime, Count Hermann Keyserling (1880–1946) enjoyed the status of a 'social celebrity', philosopher and public sage. Keyserling descended from the Teutonic knights (*Ritteradel*) which had settled in the Baltic region in the twelfth

century, and from Russian nobility. As the author of a number of works on European identity, he was also an influential theorist of the idea of Europe. His works combined critiques of contemporary Europe with the prophecy of a future supranational European state: first in the orientalist *Travel Diary of a Philosopher* (1918), then in his book *Europe* (*Das Spektrum Europas*) (1928); and finally, in his *South American Meditations* (1932).[38] As an intellectual, his biggest source of fame was his much acclaimed *Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, which introduced travel as an existential experience and a form of cultural criticism to a European readership in the aftermath of the First World War.[39] Keyserling undertook a comparative analysis of the links between high society and cultural excellence with regard to Chinese, Latin American and European cultures, indicating the need for a future aristocracy.

Following his return from his first trip around the world, Keyserling's life had taken a sharp turn. 'Between 1918 and 1920, centuries have passed', Keyserling later summed up the changes of this period.[40] After the peace of Brest Litovsk of 1918, when the Republic of Estonia (Eesti) was founded, part of Keyserling's province of Livonia was incorporated into it, and Keyserling changed his citizenship from being a Russian subject to becoming an Estonian citizen.[41] With the Estonian government's Land Reform Act of 10 October 1919, land ownership by the Baltic German families, who had owed up to 58 per cent of Estonian land, was abolished.[42] This radical change in his personal circumstances opened up a new career for Keyserling: he became a public intellectual and turned this into a profession of its own, making some of his living from royalties, while marrying into the Bismarck family. In this capacity, Keyserling founded the School of Wisdom, an academy whose goal was to train future leaders who were culturally rooted, yet also had an identity as Europeans open for dialogue with other, non-European, cultures. What was crucial about aristocracy in general, he thought, was not blood, but the public belief in the fact that it was a superior caste. Whilst criticizing European culture for its petty nationalism and lack of men of large stature, he sought to infuse those he educated at the school with the knowledge of other cultures in which a hierarchical order existed. His work constitutes the most poignant synthesis of noble perspectives on Europe's future, seen both from within and from without European history itself.

As another noble Europeanist based in Germany, Count Harry Kessler, recalled in 1918, Keyserling's political programme demanded 'a rapprochement from above between the nations as a parallel activity to the International of the proletariat'. As Keyserling told Kessler, 'in questions of foreign policy we cannot be left-wing enough' and have to become the 'model socialist state: then with our population of 70 million we would necessarily acquire a leading position in Europe'. In terms of the question of nationalities, Keyserling argued, we should follow 'the Otto Bauerian principle', an idea Keyserling communicated to the Foreign Ministry, implying that politicians should reconcile themselves to the fact that the national idea was at present a progressive unifying force, but that it should be abandoned as soon as the times were ripe for more progressive forms of political identity.[43]

Keyserling wrote along similar lines in publications on Germany's future in 1919.[44] He strongly believed that great culture and politics were only attainable for a society with a strong aristocratic principle. Conservatives dubbed him the 'red Count', while liberals and socialists called him a conservative aristocrat.[45]

Some of his own students had reservations about his project of European renewal for precisely this reason. One of them, Rom Landau, later recalled that 'the old but powerless aristocracy', whose representatives were among his students, 'disapproved of Keyserling's advanced ideas, and called him a 'Socialist'.

> What kept them attracted to the *School* was that Keyserling seemed to be creating a new aristocracy: a new caste in which their own ancient traditions would be invigorated by his spiritual reform. For the old nobility there must have been something very satisfactory in the promise of a new aristocratic order, essentially German, which was likely to carry its influence far beyond the frontiers of a diminished fatherland.[46]

The importance of the aristocratic sages in the creation of a supranational Europe made up the second important characteristic of his political thought. At Keyserling's Darmstadt School conferences, the notion of the leader was discussed in many facets, including an understanding of the leader as a hero,[47] an aristocrat and a cleric of the Islamic kind, following very much the Carlylean history of hero worship.[48]

Keyserling's belief in the decline of the European order was founded on his social and political critique of various aspects of contemporary European politics. His cultural critique of Europe viewed in juxtaposition with oriental and South American culture informed his vision of Europe's future in similar ways. Ever since his *Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, Keyserling wrote about European identity 'from without', epitomizing an eccentrist view of the Occident which was often compared with Spengler's cultural criticism. 'Spengler and Keyserling have turned toward the Orient for destruction and salvation of the Occident', one reviewer remarked in 1928.[49] In China and India, Keyserling was received by intellectuals who, like him, theorized on 'continental identities' and cultural morphologies.[50]

Among the most important influences on his work was the Academy at Santiniketan (today known as Visva-Bharati University), founded in 1921 by the Bengali writer and poet Rabindranath Tagore on the location of his father's *ashram*. Keyserling first met Tagore, twelve years his senior, during the Indian part of his world tour, in 1912, when he stayed at Tagore's house in Calcutta, then again in London in 1913, and soon after the foundation of the Darmstadt School, in 1921, he invited Tagore on a lecture tour of Germany. Both men had taken up similar roles, even though Tagore's fame surpassed that of Keyserling by far after the former won a Nobel Prize in 1913. Both were of noble origin but also critical of the ossification of nobility; both were in some sense nationalists but at the same time considered their mission to be reaching humanity at large, and therefore travelled the world to give public lectures and, not least, receive financial backing

for their educational institutions; both also took some inspiration from another Count, Leo Tolstoy, whose revolutionary peasant communities in Russia also inspired movements in South Africa. Moreover, like Keyserling, Tagore had been impressed by Victoria Ocampo's cosmopolitan cultural patronage in Argentina, where he too stayed as an honorary guest.[51]

Inspired by Tagore, Keyserling positioned himself as bridging East and West. His intention was to turn the position of Europe between the two into an advantage, and criticize the old aristocratic system without rejecting it entirely.[52] Even though he shared some premises with other elitist educational programmes of the period, Keyserling's orientalist school differed markedly from the neo-classical background of other contemporaries. For instance, the classicist Werner Jaeger decried in 1925 that while 'in Beijing Rabindranath Tagore proclaims the reawakening of Asia's soul to the gathered crowd of yellow-skinned students, we, tired from the World War and the crisis of culture, are staring at the fashionable theory of the decline of the West'.[53] Keyserling's school proposed an entirely different use of the comparative shift in cultural criticism by bringing Tagore to a gathering of the Darmstadt crowds and selected participants of his school at the princely palace.

The political goals of Keyserling's school were threefold: to assess the present situation of European politics as a decline into anarchy and mass culture, a period of radical and socialist ideas which had to be accepted; to emphasize the importance of aristocratic and intellectual leadership in overcoming this process of decline; and to learn from other cultures in preparing for a future transformation at the hands of aristocratic sages. In this sense, the school constituted a sharp break from its humanist foundations, which rested on the superiority of Western civilization's Greek roots. It was not just a break from humanism, but above all a radically different project from that of bourgeois intellectuals. After the over-democratized state it was in now, Keyserling concluded, the future belonged to a 'supranational European idea', which would overcome the extreme democracy of America, and Russian Bolshevism.[54] His Baltic experience showed him that the princely attitude of being rooted to a region and simultaneously standing 'above nations', pointed to the future of European regeneration.[55]

Rom Landau, recalling Tagore's visit in 1921, hosted by the former Grand Duke of Hesse Ernst Ludwig, gave a sense of the appeal of the poet:

> After tea we went into the neighbouring fields, and grouped ourselves on the slope of a hill, on the top of which stood Keyserling and Tagore … The Indian poet was wearing long silk robes, and the wind played with his white hair and his long beard. He began to recite some of his poems in English. Though the majority of the listeners hardly understood more than a few words – it was only a few years after the war, and the knowledge of English was still very limited – the flush on their cheeks showed that the presence of the poet from the East represented to them the climax of the whole week. There was music in Tagore's voice, and it was a pleasure to listen to the Eastern melody in the words. The hill and the fields, the poet, the Grand Duke and the many royal and imperial princes, Keyserling and all the philosophers and philistines were bathed in the glow of the evening sun.[56]

Keyserling's own intentions of learning from Tagore for the purpose of a European renewal had hit a nerve among his postwar audiences.[57] Keyserling was particularly interested in proving that different cultures have always been associated with aristocracies. In his book reviews of 'oriental' cultural critics, therefore, he reserved critical positions, such as the views of Tagore himself, to footnotes, in which he commented on Tagore's remark that Indian culture had been shaped by the Kshattryas, not the Brahmins, merely as 'interesting'.[58] With regard to the more radical movement of Mahatma Gandhi, he expressly described him as a 'reactionary', because in 'sympathising with the false progressivism of modernisation he denied Indian culture'.[59]

Another interest of Keyserling's in comparing his contemporary 'postwar' Europe with other cultures, was his desire to relativize the impression cultivated by many Germans that Germany had been mistreated the most by the postwar political settlements. Other countries, Keyserling argued, had suffered an even more catastrophic decline, drawing attention to Turkey. Nonetheless, as he put it, it was due to this imperial decline that countries like Turkey or Germany would be able to recreate a new European order, as the Turkish intellectual Halidé Edib wrote in a book which she sent to Keyserling with a dedication.[60]

Keyserling espoused a form of neo-aristocratic internationalism that was attractive to a number of nobles in his position. He argued that a new aristocracy would be necessary in order to give shape and cohesion to a new political structure of the future, which would no doubt be 'supranational'. Only a reformed aristocracy could offer such a structure.[61] In this new state of the future, the 'idea of quality' would be absolutely central, for even now, alongside processes of internationalization, 'an aristocratic order' was in the making. Yet the path of socialist transformation, which, according to Keyserling, was necessary before this stage was reached, was rejected by many of his readers. Keyserling, like Coudenhove, not only had a distinctly non-racialist view of the ideal nobleman, but also accepted certain features of modern civilization, such as fascism and socialism, with a degree of fatalism, as transitory stages towards a different order. Keyserling believed that the European 'knight' of the future would return as a 'sage'. Nietzsche was a central source of inspiration for this idea.[62] There was thus in his eyes no contradiction between espousing socialist radicalism, succumbing in a fatalist sense to the Nazi revolt, and being a neo-aristocratic theorist of Europe.

As Prince Karl Anton Rohan wrote in his book *Europe*, first published in 1923, the old 'nobility' now had 'to transform the old values in a conservative way, according to its tradition, using the new impulses of the revolution'. Unlike the class struggle that motivates the Bolshevik conception of the revolution, he thought, the goal of this one was the creation of a 'unified Europe' instead of an 'ideological brotherhood of mankind'.[63] Count Keyserling, in his correspondence with Rohan, engaged in theorizing the new status of the nobility further. He described to him that he was also, 'under conditions of utmost secrecy', working on a 'vision for all the peoples of Europe'.[64] Keyserling had already sent Rohan a letter 'concerning the nobility' for Rohan's private circle of 'friends' studying the

'problem of nobility' under his 'guidance', and he was supposed to contribute a chapter on 'Germany's Task in the World' to a forthcoming publication on *Germany and France* to be edited by the Prince.[65] In the proposal for an edited book on *Germany and France*, Rohan lined up not only well-known historians and legal theorists like the German nationalist historian Hermann Oncken and the constitutional theorist Carl Schmitt, but also now forgotten German and French authors who fall into the suggested category of 'aristocratic writers'. They included names such as Wladimir d'Ormesson, Alfred Fabre-Luce, Henry de Montherlant and Knight Heinrich von Srbik. Keyserling, in turn, also used Rohan's network of relatives and acquaintances among the German-speaking Habsburg nobles in Bohemia to promote his own work. In this connection, he approached Rohan's elder brother Prince Alain, as well as members of the oldest Austro-Bohemian noble families like Count Erwein Nostitz, Count Karl Waldstein, Count Feri Kinsky, Countess Ida Schwarzenberg, Count Coudenhove, Senator Count Eugen Ledebur and other, exclusively noble, families that he wanted to win over as 'donors' for his own project of a 'School of Wisdom' for the creation of future European leaders.[66]

Keyserling's work shows particularly poignantly the extent to which those belonging to the historical nobility combined the consciousness of belonging to an 'aristocracy' with the emphasis of generational, patrilineal descent from a family that claimed as its property a particular territory, and to which other social groups owed a specific form of 'fidelity'.[67] Instead of reconciling themselves with the new state forms, or seeking to resist them entirely, some nobles envisioned a new European order to replace the old regime, and treated the politics of the present as a political intermezzo – what Nietzsche called '*entr'acte* politics' (*Zwischenaktspolitik*).[68] While, broadly speaking, this was a shared perception of the present as a caesura before a new future European politics among intellectuals of different social backgrounds, for nobles, the crisis of noble status as a symbol of the decline of 'old Europe' gave the crisis conundrum of 'World War I' a particular connotation.[69]

Noble Perspectives on Europe: Crisis, the Need for Aristocracy, and the Critique of Bourgeois Values

The reinterpretation of a strong politics of the future in conjunction with a revision of what constituted the nobility was an expression of noble authors' belonging to a generation of Nietzscheans. The theoretical impulses all three thinkers – Keyserling, Rohan and Coudenhove – derived from Nietzsche as a critical 'historian' of the nobility, as a philologist of the meaning of 'what is noble' and, as his Danish contemporary Georg Brandes put it, as an 'aristocratic radical' demanding that culture be agonistic, provided the most important intellectual foundations for twentieth-century German nobles as political theorists. If Nietzsche had only invented his status of a Polish nobleman for himself, there

were 'actual', albeit now 'former', nobles who thought of themselves as particularly suitable to lead the process of an intellectual 'revaluation of values'. Nietzsche's project of a genealogy of morality as a preparation for a revaluation of values proved highly attractive to noble intellectuals, who saw the philosopher's work as a foundation for their own reinvention of their status.[70]

Noble Europeanists interpreted Nietzsche's notorious 'good Europeanism' as a politics of the future whose continuity with the past would be provided by a new form of 'aristocratic society'.[71] Importantly, in their reception of Nietzsche, noble Europeanists differed markedly from the later Nazi readings of his thought.[72] For, unlike Nazi attempts at radically equating nobility and racial purity, they believed that future 'good Europeans' would continue to have an 'aristocratic' 'pathos of distance' within the new society. Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil* distinguished between two forms of 'unification' process of Europe. One, which he evaluated negatively, was the 'democratic movement' that caused the process of 'assimilation of the Europeans'. The outcome was a 'supranational', 'nomadic' kind of human being, whose main skill was 'adaptation'.[73] One could describe the interpretations of Nietzsche adopted by the three German-speaking aristocratic writers as a demand for a new European order with an aristocratic hegemony.

In their capacity as intellectuals, noble writers offered a particular interpretation of the European crisis as a crisis of noble values, and their pessimism about Europe's future combined scepticism about liberal democracies with a particular concern for the loss of social hierarchy. In keeping with this, the supranationalism that informed their political views was the perspective of an elite that could coexist comfortably with lower social strata holding nationalist or other kinds of political beliefs. Finally, nobles engaged in critiques of bourgeois values from a radically different perspective than Marxists, of course, yet they drew a remarkable amount from Marxist literature.

Historians so far have viewed interwar Europeanism as an 'elitist' or 'neo-aristocratic' discourse associated both with 'noble' and with 'bourgeois' thinkers.[74] Europeanism has also been discussed as one of several interwar conceptualizations of the 'new human type'.[75] Scholars have rightly associated this 'elitist' discourse about politics with the 'noble-bourgeois' segment of German and Austrian society. But in order to understand the specific character of interwar Europeanism more fully, the biographical experience of its authors needs to be reconstructed not only in terms of individual authors, but also in terms of their belonging to groups with particular 'horizons' of experience, as is the case with nobles. Authors like Coudenhove, Rohan and Keyserling were not only part of a general transformation of the intellectual sphere after the First World War, but they occupied a particular position in this sphere.[76] Historians of political concepts such as the 'nation' have frequently explained their changing meanings by referring to key historical events in which these terms were negotiated afresh. In the case of the modern concepts of the 'nation' or 'democracy', such a key event is obviously the French Revolution.[77] For nobles, the twentieth-century déjà-vu Jacobinism of most governments in Central and Eastern Europe was a phenomenon of comparative

impact on their political imagination: thereafter, Europeanism was a response to this Neo-Jacobinism not only in terms of being a supranational discourse, but also in terms of being the language of an old elite whose status was under threat.

Disclosing their views on Europe's future in political journals and even in works of fiction offered intellectuals of noble origin a stage on which to reinvent themselves not only in the eyes of other nobles, but also among the German and Austrian intellectual elite at large. Their in many ways forward-looking ideas of European identity, the cosmopolitan comparative analysis of other cultures which they undertook in this context, and in some cases, even the willingness expressed by nobles such as Harry Kessler to welcome liberal democratic and socialist forms of European political power, should not obscure the fact that interwar Europeanism was also shrouded in a defensive attempt at preserving the cultural community of a lost imperial world.

Notes

1. W. Churchill. *Europe Unite: Speeches 1947 and 1948* (London, 1950), esp. 'A Speech at Zurich University', 19 Sept. 1946, 197–202, and at the Albert Hall on 14 May 1947, 194–97. On Churchill's connections with Coudenhove-Kalergi, see Leo Amery papers, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.
2. On the construction of the British view of the 'two Germanies' in which Prussia represents the reactionary and militaristic one, see C. Clark, *Iron Kingdom. The Rise and Downfall of Prussia 1600–1947* (London, 2007), 670ff. Conversely, the revised view of Prussia emerges here with a pointer towards the European Union.
3. Here, Reinhart Koselleck introduced a helpful distinction when the 'space of experience' forces to change one's 'horizon of expectations', in R. Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, (Frankfurt/Main, 1988), 349–76. However, the problem with these categories is that they abstract from the fact that societies are structured into different fragmented groups of perception whose 'horizons' on one and the same thing can be radically different.
4. W. Churchill, 'United States of Europe', *Saturday Evening Post*, 16 Feb. 1930; C. Dawson, *The Modem Dilemma: The Problem of European Unity* (London, 1932).
5. NN, 'One Europe', *Time Magazine*, 26 Mar. 1945.
6. M. Gehler, W. Kaiser, H. Wohnout (eds), *Christdemokratie in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar, 2001). W. Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge, 2007).
7. B. Detwiler, *Nietzsche and the Politics of Aristocratic Radicalism* (Chicago, 1990).
8. See M. Müller, 'In cerca dell'Europa: realtà e rappresentazioni di un continente', *Contemporanea* 1 (1999), 81–87.
9. On this characterization of the political idea of Europe, see A. Pagden, 'Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent', in Pagden (ed.), *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Cambridge, 2002), 33–54.
10. P.J. Philip, 'A Habsburg Seeks His Fortune Here. Followers of Archduke Otto Seek to Re-establish Old System in Europe', *New York Times*, 3 Mar. 1940.
11. H. Brugmans, *Europe: Dream, Adventure, Reality* (Brussels, 1987).
12. H. von Kalm, *Das Preussische Heroldsamt, 1855–1920: Adelsbehörde und Adelsrecht in der Preussischen Verfassungsentwicklung* (Berlin, 1994); L. Cecil, 'The Creation of Nobles in Prussia, 1871–1918', *American Historical Review* 3 (1970), 757–95.

13. NN, 'German Princes and Nobility Rush Funds to Neutral Lands', *The New York Times*, 22 Oct. 1918.

14. For Austria, see H. Stekl, *Adel und Bürgertum in der Habsburgermonarchie, 18. bis 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna and Munich, 2004), 104–6; for Germany, see E. Conze, *Von deutschem Adel. Die Grafen von Bernstorff im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2000), 242–44.

15. As the Austrian constitution stated: 'der Adel, seine äußeren Ehrenvorzüge, sowie bloß zur Auszeichnung verliehene, mit einer amtlichen Stellung, dem Beruf oder einer wissenschaftlichen oder künstlerischen Befähigung nicht im Zusammenhange stehenden Titel und Würden und die damit verbundenen Ehrenvorzüge deutschösterreichischer Staatsbürger' aufgehoben. Der Gebrauch von Adelsbezeichnungen, Titeln und Würden wurde unter Strafe gestellt (Adelsaufhebungsgesetz StGBl. Nr. 211, Vollzugsanweisung am 18. Apr. 1919, StGBl. 237). The Austrian constitution of 1920 noted in Article 7: 'Alle Bundesbürger sind vor dem Gesetz gleich. Vorrechte der Geburt, des Geschlechtes, des Standes, der Klasse und des Bekenntnisses sind ausgeschlossen.' In Czechoslovakia and Poland, similar legislation was passed in 1918 and 1921 respectively. In Russia, the nobility was abolished in November 1917.

16. On the abolition of titles in the Weimar Republic, see B. Raschauer, *Namensrecht. Eine systematische Darstellung des geltenden österreichischen und des geltenden deutschen Rechts* (Vienna and New York, 1978).

17. On the Nazi reevaluation of nobility, see Bundesarchiv, R R 43 II 1554–55. 'Adel (1925–38)', as above. Letter of 18 September 1929, E. Piper, *Alfred Rosenberg. Hitlers Chefideologe* (Munich, 2007).

18. S. Malinowski, *Vom Adel zum Führer: Sozialer Niedergang und politische Radikalisierung im deutschen Adel zwischen Kaiserreich und NS-Staat* (Berlin, 2003).

19. E. Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists. The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (London and Cambridge, Mass., 2005), 65.

20. By contrast to later historians, contemporaries were very interested in investigating the impact of the abolition of the nobility on Central and East European politics and society. For a sample of this, see V. Alton Moody, 'Reform Before Post-War European Constituent Assemblies', *Agricultural History* 7 (1933), 81–95; L.E. Textor, *Land Reform in Czechoslovakiania* (London, 1923).

21. BA, 'Adel' 1925–38.

22. BA, R 43 II 1554–55, p. 80. Berlin, 14 July 1933. Justice Minister Gürtner to Hitler, 2.

23. On the ideology of German expansion to the East, see Piper, *Rosenberg*; E. Mühle (ed.), *Germany and the European East in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 2003).

24. For a good example of the intellectual history of social circles, see R. Faber and C. Holste (eds), *Kreise – Gruppen – Bünde. Zur Soziologie moderner Intellektuellenassoziation* (Würzburg, 2000). This method has been particularly developed by historians of the political right. See, for instance, M. Grunewald, U. Puschner and H.M. Bock, *Le milieu intellectuel conservateur en Allemagne, sa presse et ses réseaux (1890–1960)* (Bern, 2003).

25. B. Le Wita, *Mémoire familiale et mémoire généalogique dans quelques familles de la bourgeoisie parisienne* (Paris, 1983); see also S. Chuikina, *Dvoryanskaja pamyat': "byvšie" v sovetskom gorode (Leningrad, 1920 – 30-e gody) / Aristocratic Memory: The "Former People" in a Soviet Town* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdat. Evropejskogo Univ.), 185. It should be added, however, that firstly, in modern society, nobles form part of the bourgeoisie, which Le Wita does not indicate. Secondly, there are also other sub-groups within the 'bourgeoisie' whose historical family memory extends much further. Jews are the most obvious example in this regard.

26. On the paradigm of the genealogical tree, see K. Heck, 'Das Fundament der Machtbehauptung. Die Ahnentafel als genealogische Grundstruktur der Neuzeit', in S. Weigel (ed.), *Genealogie und Genetik* (Berlin, 2002).

27. V. Conze, *Das Europa der Deutschen. Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung (1920–1970)* (Munich, 2005).

28. J.W. Boyer, 'Catholics, Christians and the Challenges of Democracy: The Heritage of the Nineteenth Century', in W. Kaiser and H. Wohnout (eds), *Christdemokratie in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert Political Catholicism* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar, 2001), 22.

29. L. Höbelt, 'Nostalgic Agnostics: Austrian Aristocrats and Politics, 1918–1938', in K. Urbach (ed.), *European Aristocracies and the Radical Right 1918–1939* (Oxford, 2008).

30. F. Czernin, 'A Common United Nations Policy-Now!', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 228 (1943), 11–15.

31. J. von Uexküll, *Umwelt und Innenwelt der Tiere* (Berlin, 1921); J. von Uexküll and D. L. Mackinnon, *Theoretical Biology* (New York, 1926).

32. O. von Taube, *Baltischer Adel. Drei Novellen* (Oldenburg, 1932), 3. See also O. von Taube, 'Der baltische Adel', *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* (thematic issue 'Deutscher Adel'), xxiii: v (Munich, 1926), 396–402.

33. K.A. Rohan, *Umbruch der Zeit, 1923–1930* (Berlin, 1930), introduction by Freiherr Rochus von Rheinbaben, 9.

34. R.N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Ein Leben für Europa. Meine Lebenserinnerungen* (Berlin and Cologne, 1966), 121.

35. Keyserling to Rohan, 18 July 1924. 'Mein lieber Rohan, Obgleich es meinen Grundsätzen u. Gepflogenheiten widerspricht, autorisiere ich Sie, in Rücksicht auf Ihr Verständnis für meine Ziele, meinen Namen schon jetzt auf die Mitarbeiterliste der europäischen Revue zu setzen.' In Hermann Keyserling Archive, Darmstadt, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Handschriften- und Musikabteilung, Hermann-Keyserling-Nachlass (HKN), R-3 172.0. Coudenhove-Kalergi's *Paneuropa* was launched in 1924, Keyserling's two journals, *Der Leuchter and Der Weg zur Vollendung*, earlier, in 1920 and 1919 respectively, and *Die Deutsche Nation*, co-edited by Kessler with members of the November Club, an association of diplomats who had been critics of the politics of the late Wilhelmine Empire in 1919. Keyserling also backed the foundation of Prince Karl Anton Rohan's *Europäische Revue*, which was first published in 1925 (Vienna and Berlin, 1925–1943).

36. On the international spectrum, Coudenhove's *Paneuropa*, Kessler's *Die Deutsche Nation* (co-edited jointly with five other editors), Keyserling's *Der Leuchter* and Rohan's *Europäische Revue* can be compared with José Ortega y Gasset's *Revista del Occidente*, Victoria Ocampo's *Sur*, Romain Rolland's *Europe Nouvelle* or the British journal *New Republic*. *Paneuropa*, the *Europäische Revue*, and *Der Leuchter* were associated with a network of intellectuals and industrialists who were involved either in Coudenhove's Paneuropa movement, or in Rohan's 'Coopération intellectuelle internationale', an association organizing international conferences which emerged in the shadow of the League of Nations. See also K. Brockhausen, *Europa 1914 und 1924. Bild und Gegenbild* (Vienna, 1924); P. Drieu de la Rochelle, *L'Europe contre les patries* (Paris, 1931); and F. Delaisi, *Les Deux Europes* (Paris, 1929). In his 1929 book *Les Deux Europes*, Delaisi described the division of Europe in two halves, 'Europe A' and 'Europe B'. The former consisted of the wealthy and industrialized countries in Western Europe, the latter of the newly founded states of Eastern Europe with a mainly agricultural economy. See also F. Théry, *Construire l'Europe dans les Années Vingt: L'Action de l'Union Paneuropéenne sur la Scène Franco-Allemande, 1924–1932* (Geneva, 1998).

37. G. Müller, '"Europa" als Konzept adlig-bürgerlicher Elitendiskurse', in H. Reif (ed.) *Adel und Bürgertum in Deutschland II. Entwicklungslinien und Wendepunkte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2001), 235–69.

38. H. Keyserling, *Das Spektrum Europas* (Heidelberg, 1928); idem, *Südamerikanische Meditationen* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1932); idem, *Das Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen* (Darmstadt, 1930), 2 vols.

39. On Keyserling as an orientalist, see V. Ganeshan, *Das Indienbild deutscher Dichter um 1900: Dauthendey, Bonsels, Mauthner, Gjellerup, Hermann Keyserling und Stefan Zweig: ein Kapitel deutsch-indischer Geistesbeziehungen im frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (Bonn, 1975); S. Marchand, 'German Orientalism and the Decline of the West', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 145 (2001), 465–73.

40. Keyserling, *Spektrum*, 369–70. On the opinions of Baltic nobles on the first revolution of 1905, see Frhr.v. Sass, 'Die Sozialdemokratie und der baltische Adel', *Deutsches Adelsblatt* xxiv (1906), 113; and H. v. Wedel, 'Die Zerstörung der Schlösser und Gutshöfe des deutschen Adels in den russischen Ostseeprovinzen', in *Deutsches Adelsblatt* xxiv (1906), 160–61.

41. Estonia was only accepted de iure by Russia and the Entente powers between 1920 and 1922, i.e. it was not yet recognized as a fully fledged state at the Paris peace conference of 1919. See J. Hiden and M. Housden, *Neighbours or Enemies? Germans, the Baltic and Beyond* (Amsterdam, 2008); J. Hiden and P. Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1994); C. Mothander, *Barone, Bauern und Bolschewiken in Estland* (Weißenhorn, 2005).

42. On the history of the Baltic–German relations, see F. Anton and L. Luks (eds), *Deutschland, Russland und das Baltikum. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte wechselvoller Beziehungen. Festschrift zum 85. Geburtstag von Peter Krupnikow* (Vienna, Weimar and Cologne, 2005); A. Bues, *Zones of Fracture in Modern Europe: The Baltic Countries, the Balkans, and Northern Italy* (Wiesbaden, 2005); W. Kaschuba and T. Darieva (eds) *Representations on the Margins of Europe: Politics and Identities in the Baltic and South Caucasian States* (Frankfurt/Main, 2007); H.–E. Volkmann, *Die deutsche Baltikumspolitik zwischen Brest-Litovsk und Compiègne: ein Beitrag zur 'Kriegszieldiskussion'* (Cologne, 1970); H.N. von Pistolekors, *Livlands Kampf um Deutschtum und Kultur: Eine Übersicht aller bedeutungsvollen Ereignisse aus der Geschichte des alten Ordensgebietes Livland* (Berlin, 1918).

43. R. Kamzelak and U. Ott (eds), *Harry Graf Kessler. Das Tagebuch 1880–1937* (Stuttgart, 2004). Hermann Graf Keyserling, *Deutschlands wahre politische Mission* (Darmstadt, 1919).

44. H. Keyserling, *Was uns not tut; was ich will* (Darmstadt, 1919); S. Marchand, 'German Orientalism and the Decline of the West', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 145 (2001), 465–73.

45. On Keyserling's elitism, see 'Rainbow Folk', in *Time*, 23 Jan. 1928, reports on Keyserling's lecture for members of the Lion's Club, the New York Rotarians. On Keyserling as an irrationalist, see G. Lukács, *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft* (Berlin, 1984), 367. See also R. Kuehnemund, 'German Prophets of Doom and Hope', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (1942), 443–57. For the perception of Keyserling as a 'Red Count', see R. Landau, *God is My Adventure: A Book on Modern Mystics, Masters and Teachers* (London, 1935).

46. Landau, *God*, 33.

47. W. Deubel, 3 July 1921, 'Tagung der Gesellschaft für freie Philosophie', *Frankfurter Nachrichten und Intelligenz Blatt*, 11 Oct. 1922, HKN.

48. R. Landau, *God*, 25.

49. See NN, Review of Paul Morand, *The Living Buddha* (New York, 1928), 'East is East', in *Time*, 14 May 1928.

50. Review of Keyserling in 'Wedlock', in *Time*, 29 Nov. 1926. For Keyserling's book reviews of other authors, see A. Keyserling (ed.), *Das Erbe der Schule der Weisheit. Unveröffentlichte Essays und Buchbesprechungen 1920–1946. Aus dem Mitteilungsblatt der Schule der Weisheit "Der Weg zur Vollendung"* (Vienna, 1981). See also H. Keyserling, 'Spengler und Wir' (1923).

51. However, Tagore was far more critical of the Indian caste system than Keyserling was of the European aristocracy.

52. Neither Spengler nor the leader of the anthroposophic movement, Rudolf Steiner, nor Stefan George, Landau argued, had 'gained such a spectacular success as Count Hermann Keyserling'. 'Keyserling's fame spread over the spiritual horizon of Germany overnight, and this fame was due to his origins and to his looks at least as much as to his uncommon philosophical attitude. People compared his narrow eyes and high cheekbones with those of Ghenghis Khan, and they talked of him as though he were an Eastern autocrat' (Landau, *God*, 25).

53. W. Jaeger, *Humanistische Reden* (Berlin, 1960), 104.

54. Keyserling, *Spektrum*, 194.

55. On marriage between the Balts and non-German princes, see also O. von Taube, 'Russische und litauische Fürsten an der Düna zur Zeit der deutschen Eroberung Livlands' (12. und 13. Jahrhundert), *Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slawen*, (1935), 3–4.

56. Landau, *God*, pp. 36–37.

57. H. Keyserling, *Politik, Wirtschaft, Weisheit* (Darmstadt, 1922). Review of Hu-ming Ku, *Vox clamantis* (Leipzig, 1921), 24, in *Der Weg zur Vollendung* (1921), 2.

58. Review of Tagore's 'Vision of Indian History', in *The Visva-Bharati Quarterly* (Calcutta, 210 Cornwallis Street), review in *Der Weg zur Vollendung* (1923), 6.

59. Keyserling, Book Review section of *Der Weg zur Vollendung* (1921), 2.

60. Keyserling's review of Halidé Edib, *Turkey faces West* (New Haven and London, 1930), in *Der Weg zur Vollendung* (1931), 19.

61. Keyserling, 'Eine Vision der kommenden Weltordnung', 5 Jan. 1925, p. 5, HKN, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (1 Jan. 1925).

62. H. Keyserling, 'Der Sozialismus als allgemeine Lebensbasis', *Neue Europäische Zeitung für Staat, Kultur, Wirtschaft*, 26 Nov. 1918.

63. Cited from Müller, '"Europa" als Konzept adlig-bürgerlicher Elitendiskurse', 251.

64. Keyserling to Karl Anton Rohan, 14 July 1927, in Darmstadt, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Handschriften- und Musikabteilung, Hermann-Keyserling-Nachlass (HKN), Correspondence, R-3 172.01.

65. As it transpires from the letter sent by Rohan to Keyserling on 9 Dec. 1926, in HKN, Correspondence, R-3 172.01. Rohan wrote: 'Ihren beiligenden Brief in Sachen des Adels darf ich Sie bitten, so gütig sein zu wollen und mir umgehend korrigiert hierher zurückzuschicken, da ich ihn einem Rundschreiben von mir an meine Freunde beilegen möchte, die seit etwa 1 1/2 Jahren unter meiner Führung das Adelsproblem studieren.' Rohan to Keyserling, 16 Aug. 1927, in HKN, Correspondence, R-3 172.01. When, in the end, Rohan failed to carry through this edition, he apologized to Keyserling for not writing sooner. He was in fact out of reach due to 'a small tour of the Bohemian castles, visiting acquaintances and relatives'. Rohan to Keyserling, 1 Mar. 1923.

66. See Keyserling to Rohan, 1 Mar. 1923, in HKN, Correspondence, R-3 172.01. See Appendix 4b.

67. Nobles' commonality of 'consciousness' insofar as it can be reconstructed from personal and published sources was not the idea of belonging to the same 'class', but rather the nature of their status whose privileges not only consisted in various forms of 'capital', to speak with Pierre Bourdieu, but also in a particular historical imagination. On a reading of 'visibility' as a form of 'symbolic capital' in Bourdieu's sense, see M. de Saint Martin, *Anciennes et nouvelles aristocraties, de 1880 à nos jours* (Paris, 2007), esp. Postface by P. Bourdieu, 'La noblesse: capital social et capital symbolique', 385–99.

68. F. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil. Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, Rolf-Peter Horstmann and Judith Norman (eds), (Cambridge, 2002), section 256, p. 148.

69. H. von Kalm, *Das Preussische Heroldsamt, 1855–1920: Adelsbehörde und Adelsrecht in der Preussischen Verfassungsentwicklung* (Berlin, 1994); L. Cecil, 'The Creation of Nobles in Prussia, 1871–1918', *American Historical Review* 3 (1970), 757–95.

70. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 9, 'What is noble?', 151–53.

71. Ibid., 151.

72. See Alfred Baeumler's introduction, in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse. Zur Genealogie der Moral* (Stuttgart, 1940).

73. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 242, pp. 133–35.

74. For these paradigms, see, respectively, W. Struve, *Elites Against Democracy. Leadership Ideals in Bourgeois Political Thought in Germany, 1890–1933* (Princeton, 1973); G. Müller, '"Europa" als Konzept adlig-bürgerlicher Elitendiskurse'; and, most recently, A. Gerstner, *Neuer Adel: Aristokratische Elitekonzeptionen zwischen Jahrhundertwende und Nationalsozialismus* (Darmstadt, 2008).

75. See A. Gerstner, B. Könczöl and J. Nentwig (eds), *Der neue Mensch. Utopien, Leitbilder und Reformkonzepte zwischen den Weltkriegen* (Frankfurt/Main, 2006); G. Müller, '"Europa" als Konzept adlig-bürgerlicher Elitendiskurse'; A. Gerstner, *Neuer Adel*.

76. On this view, see H. von Nostitz, *Aus dem alten Europa* (Leipzig, 1924). F. Czernin von und zu Chudenitz, *Europe, Going Going Gone: A Sketch Book Trying to Give a Rough Explanation of Europe,*

Its Politics, and Its State of Mind, for the Benefit Mainly of Anglo-Saxons, Politicians, and Other Folk with Uncomplicated Minds (London, 1939), published with drawings by Bohemian nobleman Count Eugen Ledebur.

77. On the status of this historical narrative in political ideologies, see F. Fehér, *The Frozen Revolution: An Essay on Jacobinism* (Cambridge and Paris, 1987).