

## **The Role of Haushofer's Theory in Nazi Germany (Its Impact on Iran's National Security)**

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### **Abstract**

The Middle East and North Africa have always been of great interest to global thought and power due to their strategic location and huge fuel resources. One instance was Nazi Germany, which had specific geographical considerations for the region. This study seeks to answer the question: "How did the change in the role of German geopolitics from Haushofer's Ideas to Hitler's affect the fate of Iran during Reza Shah's reign?"; We will explain what happened, and why it happened. This research is descriptive-analysis in terms of its nature and method. In this article, an attempt was made to use graphical models to better understand concepts. The results indicate that Nazi Germany's ideas for conquering the world under Adolf Hitler and Rudolf Hess were very different from those of Haushofer. In World War II, Haushofer's theory was replaced by Hitler's viewpoints. This change had a direct impact on Iran's strategy; Reza Shah adopted a neutral strategy during this period, which eventually led to defeat and military occupation of Iran. Thus, when Nazi Germany's strategy shifted from Haushofer's to Hitler's, Reza Shah should have changed his approach too.

**Keywords:** Haushofer, Nazi Germany, Iran, Middle East, Second World War.

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## **1. Introduction**

Ever since geopolitics emerged as a scientific field, it has been mainly concerned with the study of competition for power and gaining control over land and its (Ahmadi et al,2017:55). This competition has led to some of the biggest wars in history and has been a major threat to the security of countries. One of the most devastating competitions in history was World War II. Ever since this bloody competition broke out, researchers have been concerned with the reasons behind this war (Lee and Lee,1991:12). Since national security is defined as "The ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory" (Brown,1983), the events which led to World War II were considered as a threat to national security in all countries and governments. Despite the non-interference policy which was adopted and declared during this war between the European nations, the Middle East, like the First World War, turned to a battleground for European nations. To understand most social issues, we have to analyze the situations in which two or more rival parties are involved with different goals, and the action of each competitor depends on the action of the other party (Darvishi and Ramezani,2010:72). Therefore, it seems necessary to examine the roots of World War II from this point of view. Several reasons could be mentioned, including the wrong policies of countries, personal considerations in politics, the enmity of countries with each other, and so on (Jackson, 2018). One of the most important reasons is the influence of leaders' geopolitical ideas on the future of countries. We date the second World war from 3 September 1939, the day when Great Britain and France declared war on Germany (not, incidentally, from 1 September, the day when Germany attacked Poland) (Taylor,1996:5). The National Socialist assumption of power in January 1933 did not alter the foundations of German Middle East policy established during the Weimar period. Although the domestic and foreign policy objectives of the new regime changed radically, it maintained the same approach to the Middle East for the rest of the decade (Gossman, 2013:237). The region (Middle East) was quiet for the first few months of the war until Fascist Italy declared war against France and Britain on June 10, 1940 (Baldoli and Knapp,2012:6). The Allies initially believed that the Middle East (Southwest Asia) could become a major operational theatre because they thought that the Germans might invade the area. The Germans also had plans for the Middle East and North Africa. The

faculty of foreign sciences of the University of Berlin with the only Institute for Political Geography that existed in all Germany to draw up a new map of the Middle East (Toal et al,1998:40). The Nazi Auswärtiges Amt, or Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in July 1940, a new plan for German action in the Middle East-suitably revised in light of the defeat of France, the Italian alliance, and the still unbroken non-aggression pact with Russia, to concentrate on Syria and British India (Gossman,2013:260). There was one element of the system in Hitler's foreign policy, though it was not new. he was not even interested in the Middle East hence his blindness to the great opportunity in 1940 after the defeat of France. One could attribute this outlook to Hitler's Austrian origin, far from the ocean: or believe that he learned it from some geopolitician in Munich. But essentially it reflected the circumstances of the time (Taylor,1996:69-70). The focal point of Geopolitics is national power and control of a geographical territory. In every historical era in the world system, the dominant countries have been those which are proved most powerful in demonstrating their capacities over extended geographical areas. Therefore, Geopolitics acknowledge the existence of international interests and rivalries and suggest strategic planning in various sectors (Vidakis et al,2017:43). Karl Haushofer (a German professor of geopolitics in Munich) (Wolkersdorfer,1990:145). Argued that the study of Geopolitik demonstrated the dependence of all political events on the enduring conditions of the physical environment". In a 1931 radio address, he remarked: geopolitics takes the place of political passion and development dictated by natural law reshapes the work of the arbitrary transgression of human will. The natural world, beaten back with sword or pitchfork, irrepressibly reasserts itself in the face of the earth. This is geopolitics! (Toal et al,1998:79). In the Third Reich, the party in power lacked any official organ receptive to or understanding the doctrines of geopolitics (Wolkersdorfer,1990:41). It is worth noting that there were important differences between the German geopolitics of Karl Haushofer and the Nazi geopolitics of Adolf Hitler (Toal et al,1998:23). For example, in November 1941, an exchange of views took place between Hitler and Hosseini, the Grand Mufti, who said that If Germany forced its way through Rostov to Iran and Iraq, it would also mark the beginning of the collapse of the British Empire. He (the leader) hoped that in the next few years Germany would have the opportunity to open the Caucasian gate to the

Middle East (Gossman,2013:365). This was while Haushofer called for an alliance with the Soviet Union, not a war against it. When Rommel gained more ground in Egypt on the British, Cairo buzzed with rumors: "Rommel is coming! Rommel is coming!" (Amanat,2012:45). Rommel came close to victory in 1942 with very limited resources, it seems certain that, had Hitler acted promptly and decisively in 1940-41, he could have overrun the Mediterranean - Middle East area (Lee and Lee,1991:390). Haushofer, meanwhile, called for German influence on the African continent, not in the Middle East. While Rommel's troops were advancing towards Egypt and then the Middle East. Then Haushofer's basic defense is that the "legitimacy" of German geopolitics was corrupted by the Nazis (Toal et al, 1998:24). In general, this group was critical of the policy of deferring to Italy in the Mediterranean and the Middle East and supported a more energetic policy focused on Germany's national interests. As Hentig noted in his autobiographical memoir (written after 1945), "Hitler had generously delivered the entire Near East into the hands of Mussolini's colonial policy" (Gossman,2013:259). Taylor noted in 1962, that the historiography of the origins of the Second World War, unlike that of other wars, had not yet gone through a revisionist phase, he questioned not only the received wisdom about the path to war in Europe but also the idea that Hitler shared direct personal responsibility for its outbreak (Lee and Lee,1991:13). In the meantime, Iran had pursued a special policy. The relationship between Germany and Iran intensified and transformed in the mid-1930s following the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist government (Jenkins,2016:733). The real driver of the German-Iranian relationship in the 1930s was economic and based on the mutual interaction of state economic initiatives (Jenkins,2016:727). In 1936, the Hitler Cabinet declared Iranians to be immune to the Nuremberg Laws, as they were considered to be "pure Aryans" (Lenczowski, 1949: 160). These political behaviors of Nazi Germany made the two countries feel close. With the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Iran's fate was sealed. Iran was jointly invaded by Great Britain and the Soviet Union in August 1941 and divided into spheres of influence eerily similar to those of an earlier time: The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 (Jenkins,2016:742). On September 9, 1943, Iran declared war on Germany. Shortly after, between November 28 and December 1, 1943, the leaders of the Big Three

met in Tehran (Freed and Dannatt,1993). During this time, they proceeded to take Iranian resources such as Oil and foodstuff for their war effort and use the Iranian channel for continuing to supply USSR in the war. This caused a mini famine in Iran. They also housed 100s of thousands of Polish refugees in Southern Iran. What has been said shows that there was a great difference between Hitler's geopolitical ideas and the ideas of Karl Haushofer, as well as Reza Shah's strategy.

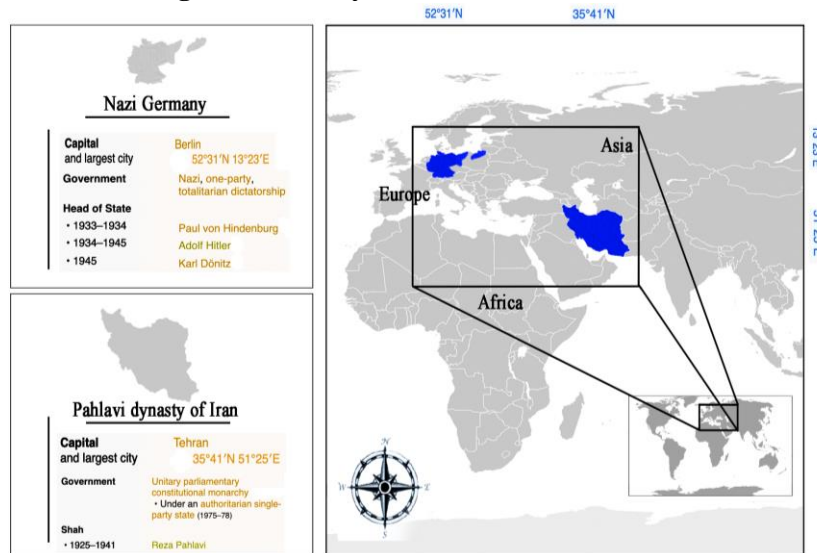
## 2. Research Method and Study Area

### 2-1. Research Method

This research is descriptive-analytical in nature and method. The data gathering procedure is based on library findings. After data collection and classification, the data analysis has been mainly carried out using descriptions based on logic and reasoning and then was analyzed qualitatively; Finally, they are shown with a graphical model.

### 2-2. Study Area and Environmental Perceptions

Figure (1): Study Area and Information

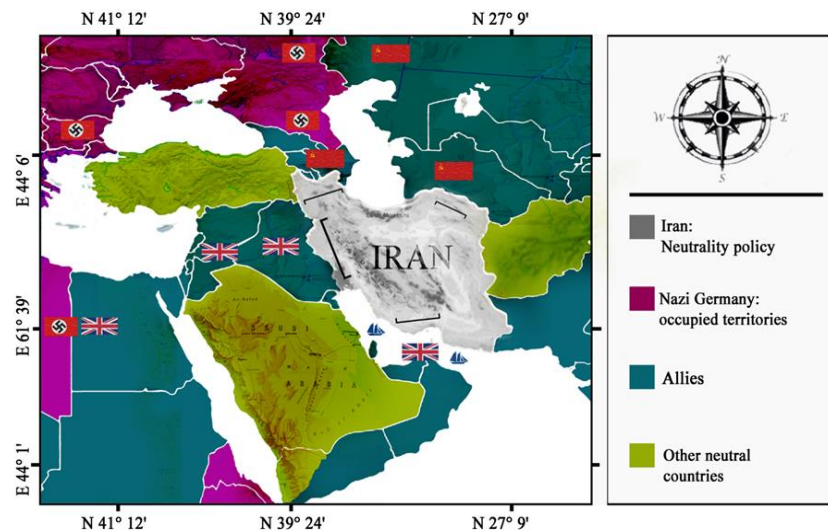


(Source: Research Findings)

The Mediterranean and the Middle East was a major theatre of operations during the Second World War. The vast size of the Mediterranean and Middle

East theatre saw interconnected naval, land, and air campaigns fought for control of the Mediterranean, North Africa, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and Southern Europe. The war ranged from the Soviet cold lands to the scorching desert of Africa; The German war machine needed fuel to fight, and the Middle East had a lot of oil. Fascist Italy aimed to carve out a new Roman Empire, while British forces aimed initially to retain the status quo. (Blair,1996: xiii).

**Figure (2): Environmental Perceptions**

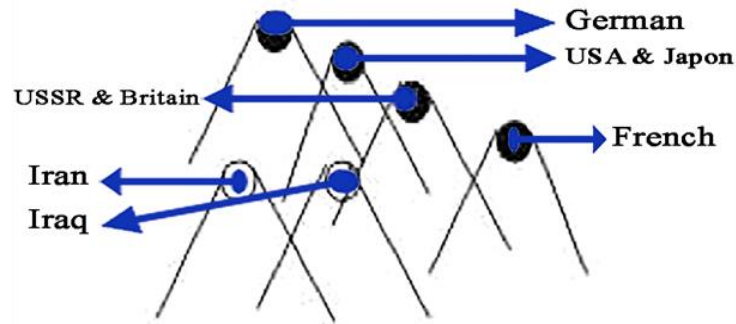


(Source: Research Findings)

One of the most important issues for Nazi Germany was access to oil, "wherever it is." This was while there was no oil pipeline. Oil had to be transported by tanker and since the British Navy controlled the seas, The Germans had no choice but to launch a ground attack. The Middle East lies on the bottom right of the map (Figure 1); As can be seen, there are many countries and also a sea between the Middle East and Germany So in order to invade the Middle East, Germany had to secure a route that included (Figure 2) a two-pronged attack on the Middle East from both the Soviet Union and North Africa. The remarkable thing was that in the Middle East, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia have adopted a unilateral policy of neutrality in order to prevent harm to their country, while these countries have not been uniform in terms of position and resources.

### **3. Theoretical Background**

The very controversial and critical book (Herwig, 2016) and the critical article of the same book (Pelizza,2018:141) were used during the writing of this article. Resources (Vidakis,2017), (Walton,2017), (Toal,1998), (Murphy, 2014), and (Leasor, 2001) have also been used to identify Haushofer. Authoritative books (Rees and Dicks,1948), (Schwarzwaller,1988) and (Huntington,2004) have been studied to identify Rudolf Hess's thoughts. There were many books for reading and understanding Hitler's thoughts and decisions. Books (Giblin,2002:4), (Shirer,2013), (Sutton,2010), (Haffner, 2019), and (Jackel,1981), which are popular scientific books on Adolf Hitler's thought, were presented. In the case of Reza Shah, we began to evaluate his character with an article (Keshavarzian, 2003). Then, using books (Inglese and Ippolito,2018), (Devos and Werner,2013), (Milani,2011) and (Afkhami,2009), we tried to estimate the mental image of Reza Shah during World War II. From reputable sites such as: ([www.biography.com](http://www.biography.com)) for Hitler's biography and (<http://www.parstimes.com>) for historiography and ([www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)) for Nazi purposes and ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)) has been used to check the authenticity of books and their validity. In this paper, national security is assessed with a definition of (Harold,1983), in other words, as long as the following theory is maintained, the national security of countries (and their international security) is preserved. "National security then is the ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to preserve its nature, institution, and governance from disruption from outside; and to control its borders." Therefore, on this basis, we consider the loss of Iran's national security during the reign of Reza Shah to be the occupation of Iran. According to the book Principles Concepts of Geopolitics (Hafeznia,2017), in global and regional scales, various power structures such as single-power, two-power, multi-power, multi-level balanced, multi-level imbalanced, etc. are imaginable. (Hafeznia,2017:97). At the beginning of the year 1939, the world was imbalanced in a few levels in favor of military power. And after Germany, (respectively) were the United States, Japan, Britain, the Soviet Union, France, Iran, and Iraq.

**Figure (3): Multi-level Imbalanced Countries in 1939**

(Source: Research Findings; using a book model of Hafeznia,2017)

#### 4. Historical Background

##### 4-1. Karl Haushofer's Theory

Karl Haushofer was a man of many parts: editor, geographer, journalist, militia volunteer, calligrapher, painter, poet, professor, radio host, soldier, teacher, and writer. His career spanned the most fateful period of modern German history. He served the Second Empire, the Weimar Republic, and the Third Reich (Herwig,2016: xi). It was at the end of the 19th century that this distinct scientific methodology (Geopolitics) was formed by the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kellen who was inspired by Fr. Ratzel's book *The History of Mankind*. After 1924, it was developed by Karl Haushofer, mainly in Germany (a great power with a lack of large metropolitan territory, colonies, and access to natural resources) (Vidakis et al,2017:43).

Ratzel's recommends the authorities to adopt a policy based on territorial expansion and to achieve broader spaces, which is necessary for the German reach of the superpower. Yet, from the 1920s until very near the end of the Second World War, Haushofer made a series of conscious choices that made him first a facilitator of Hitler's rise to power and thereafter a functionary and apologist for the thuggish regime that he had helped to create (Walton,2017: 184). Haushofer helped to legitimize Hitler's claim to power and his expansionist foreign policy (Herwig,2016:218). He never became a Nazi Party member, Haushofer promoted Nazi ideology, writing a book called *National Socialist Thought in World Politics* to mark the Nazi ascent to power, even denouncing Jews even though his wife was Jewish (Toal et al, 1998:23). It contains the concept of living space (Lebensraum) and suggests



the meridional ñ vertical division of the globe, mainly based on cultural characteristics. Haushofer's work received a strong response from the Nazi leadership and his ideas were used to justify the German expansionary policy during the domination of the National Socialist Party and the redistribution of the international natural resources (Vidakis et al,2017:43). Haushofer's human and scholarly endeavor was a complete failure. Indeed, his nationalist pride made him blind to the immoral nature of the Nazi regime and his 'abstract academic concepts' gave legitimacy to Hitler's aggressive foreign policy, leading Germany on the path of self-destruction (Pelizza,2018:141). Hitler's coming to power should have enhanced Haushofer's influence. But just the opposite was true. Hitler and Haushofer diverged in several critical areas: "a wide gulf separated the General" from the future führer in their approach to space, race, Lebensraum, expansion, and anti-Semitism. ... [They] differed above all in their views on Russia/the Soviet Union (Walton,2017: 185). He never was close to Hitler and, after quarreling with the Führer at a personal meeting in November of 1938, never met him again (Murphy,2014: 22). Haushofer ran the "Geopolitick" Institute with one assistant and a typist (Leasor,2001:41). Today the legacy of this controversial German scholar lives on, thanks to the frequent appearance of his geopolitical concepts in current international debates about economic integration, border areas, and strategic alliances (Pelizza,2018:141). He is widely considered to have been the father of German geopolitics, and the men whom he counseled famously included "Rudolf Hess" and "Adolf Hitler" (Herwig,2016: xi).

#### **4-2. Rudolf Hess's Thought**

He was born in Egypt and studied at the German school in Alexandria for six years. When he was twelve his parents sent him to board at the Evangelisches Paedagogium in Godebergam-Rhein. His father wanted to send him to Oxford, but the outbreak of the First World War prevented this (Leasor,2001: 3). He went to Munich to study under his old friend, Professor Karl Haushofer and attended lectures in 'geopolitik'. Hess had great faith in Haushofer, whom he considered possessed the gift of second sight (Rees and Dicks,1948:18). Hess was also present when the first serious attempt was made to break up a Hitler meeting in a Munich brewery in November 1921. Thereafter Hess was Hitler's adjutant and secretary until 1933; he wrote much of the propaganda during this time and enjoyed the complete confidence of his leader. In 1938, Hess became a member of the Secret Cabinet Council,

then engaged in "planning the aggression" that ended in war (Leasor,2001:36). Hess did not belong to the official party organization. He was a private secretary who belonged only to Hitler (Schwarzwäller,1988:78). Hess was probably the only Nazi who called Hitler by the intimate 'du' instead of the formal, more respectful 'sie', they had been friends for more than twenty years. When they had been imprisoned together in Landsberg fortress, in the early nineteen-twenties, for instance, Hitler typed out *Mein Kampf* slowly with two fingers on the prison governor's machine; Hess had added his views and corrected both the Führer's proofs and his spelling (Leasor,2001:3). He had wanted Hitler as his 'second father'. (Schwarzwäller,1988:48). This man, above all others, had stood closest to Hitler for more than twenty years; frequently he voiced his leader's secret thoughts, always he knew his master's mind (Leasor,2001:2). Haushofer, Hitler, and Hess had lengthy discussions. Hess also took down notes concerning these conversations (Schwarzwäller, 1988:73). For example, when Hitler wanted to attack Russia. Hess, Haushofer warned him of the deadly danger of fighting on two fronts - about which he had himself written in *Mein Kampf* (Leasor,2001:44). Rudolf Hess's letters are a testimony to Haushofer's increasing influence on the young student (Walton,2017:71). Haushofer had promised an academic career to the thirty-three-year-old Hess, with the prospect of a professorship later. Hess had already accepted Haushofer's offer. But he did not hesitate long. He wanted to be close to Hitler, as close as he had been in Landsberg (Schwarzwäller, 1988:76). Rudolf Hess made his unexpected flight to Scotland in May 1941 and today he seems to be less a historical figure and more a mirror in which people see their obsessions reflected at them. Depending on where they stand, Hess was either crazy, a cat's paw in the subtle and devious plots of the British secret services, evidence of a near-traitorous British "peace party," the personal emissary of Adolf Hitler himself, or a mysterious someone who was not Rudolf Hess at all (Huntington,2004). In short, Hess was a member of Hitler's inner. Details Hess' surprise flight to Scotland on May 10, 1941, in which he intended to discuss peace with the British, but instead was captured.

#### **4-3. Adolf Hitler's Ideas and Decisions**

He was born on April 20, 1889, in the small Austrian town of Braunau at the border between Austria and Germany (Giblin,2002:4). But at the time of Hitler's birth, eleven years before the end of the nineteenth century, Austria-Hungary was one of the most important empires in Europe. At eighteen,

Hitler received a shattering blow from which he never entirely recovered. He flunked the entrance examination at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. (Shirer,2013). After World War I, Hitler returned to Munich and continued to work for the German military. Hitler was arrested (After the failed coup) and tried for high treason and sentenced to nine months in prison. During Hitler's nine months in prison in 1924, he dictated most of the first volume of his autobiographical book and political manifesto, *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle"), to his deputy, Rudolf Hess. (<https://www.biography.com/dictator/adolfo-hitler>). In December 1929 a long study of the German National Socialist movement appeared in a monthly publication at Harvard University." (Sutton,2010:138). The graph of Hitler's successes presents a riddle similar to the graph of his life. This, as the reader will remember, revealed an unexplained but marked jump from total inactivity and obscurity during the first thirty years to public activity on the largest possible scale during the next twenty-six. His line of successes shows two such jumps. All Hitler's successes fall within a span of twelve years, 1930 to 1941. From 1930 until 1941 Hitler succeeded in practically everything he undertook, in domestic and foreign politics and eventually also in the military field, to the amazement of the world. (Haffner,2019). He showed in the face of mounting evidence that his miscalculation of England, in particular, was proving disastrous, these and many other features of his record remain inexplicable unless we recognize the mindset, jealously and consciously wedded to consistency, which lay behind them (Jäckel,1981:2). Hitler's disastrous failures from 1941 to 1945, following the preceding twelve years of successes, cannot be explained by a physical or mental decline (Haffner,2019). Hitler envisioned the idea of conquering the world, a geopolitical idea that left him no choice but going to war.

#### **4-4. Reza Shah's Ideas and Decisions**

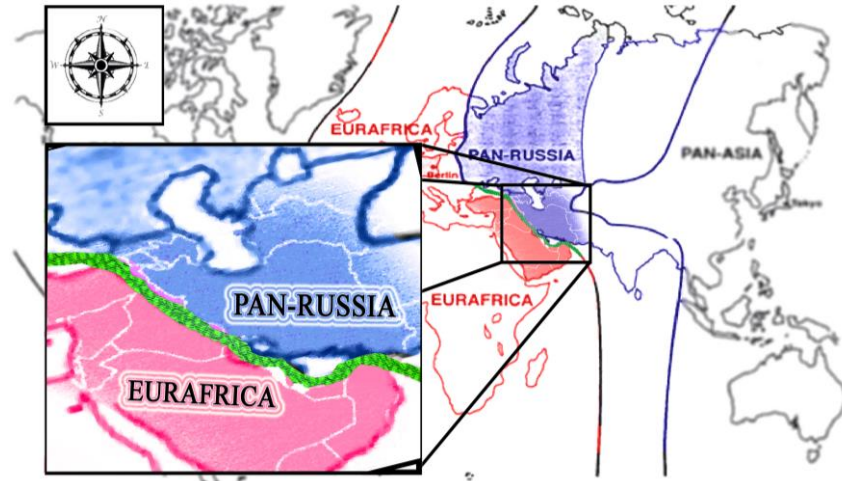
Reza Shah Pahlavi (15 March 1878 - 26 July 1944) was the King of Iran from 16 October 1925 until he was forced to abdicate by the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran on 16 September 1941. He founded the Pahlavi dynasty in 1926 in Iran (Inglese and Ippolito,2018:213). This period was characterized by the implementation of a comprehensive modernization program, which left its mark on a vast number of social and cultural aspects of Iranian life. Until now, the reign of Reza Shah has been viewed primarily through the lens of politics, international relations, and militarist or autocratic modernism (Devos

and Werner,2013:1). Historians and social scientists of modern Iran typically present stylized accounts of Reza Shah as a tyrannical modernizer and secularizer. In these accounts, the Shah "modernized" Iran with little reference to coalitions and interactions with other actors (Keshavarzian,2003: 82). The political awareness of the Iranian population during the years 1905-1947 was between 3 to 10 percent (Khandagh,2010:158), Therefore, people were not part of the Iranian policy and the decisions were made only by the Shah. Also, most experts in the field before the Second World War were imperialist and expansionist countries (Yazdani et al,2007:128). So, these countries decided on third world countries. For both the Nazis and the Allies, Iran held the key to wartime victory. Long before hostilities reached Iran, both camps launched a new charm offensive to endear themselves to Reza Shah. Germany began ingratiating itself with Reza Shah by offering him, amongst other things, the steel mill he obsessively coveted. In 1936, the Hitler cabinet decreed that "Iranians were exempted from the restrictions of the Nuremberg Racial laws as pure-blooded Aryans." (Milani,2011:67). To counterbalance British and Soviet influence, Reza Shah encouraged German commercial enterprises in Iran. On the eve of World War II, Germany was Iran's largest trading partner. On the eve of World War II, Germany was Iran's largest trading partner ([parstimes.com/history/historicalsetting.html](http://parstimes.com/history/historicalsetting.html)). In 1939, as war broke out in Europe, Russia was Iran's main worry. Communism, a mystery to most Iranians, was generally disliked because it was "Godless," clearly to be shunned and condemned. Its creed ran counter to Iranians' sense of authenticity. Reza Shah, who worried more than most others, made his ministers give him their assessment of how the war would proceed and ordered several of them to hand him their best judgment in writing (Afkhami, 2009:61). While Reza Shah was preoccupied with domestic developments, the European war inched closer to Iran every day. He made every effort to maintain an air of normalcy in the country, but try as he might, the European war was never as remote as he liked to pretend (Milani,2011:67). The war caught Iran in a bad time. Oil revenues had gone down, retarding industrial growth. Contrary to subsequent British and Russian propaganda, he disliked Hitler and, abhorred Mussolini, He believed Mussolini had ambitions in the East and would probably prevail on Hitler to help him invade the countries of the Middle East, including Iran (Afkhami,2009:62). Reza Shah took false comfort in the belief that Iran's often-declared neutrality would suffice to keep

him and the country safe from the engulfing flames of the coming war (Milani,2011:79). But he didn't trust Hitler either. After Hitler grasped the power and particularly after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was made, the shah became increasingly wary. The pact and its aftermath the fate of Poland, the Baltic States, and Finland convinced him he could not count on Hitler. On the other hand, the events in Europe, the rise of Hitlerism, the absorption of Czechoslovakia, the Munich Pact, and the swift move into Poland, warned him to beware of antagonizing Germany (Afkhami,2009:66). Reza Shah put himself on the Allies' side, expecting to help them as much as he could within the bounds of neutrality. This, however, was not enough for the Allies, though they never said so explicitly. The press on both sides predicted an inevitable clash between Iran and the Allies (Afkhami,2009:68).

### **5. The Research Findings**

Each of the research personalities, including Karl Haushofer, Rudolf Hess, Adolf Hitler, and Reza Shah, had their geopolitical theories. In this section, the theories of these people are explained. According to O'Loughlin and Van der Westen, a pan-region is a "large functional area linking core states to resource peripheries and cutting across latitudinally distributed environmental zones". The concept of the German pan region received inspiration from the Panideen (pan idea) ideology that pan regions were essential towards German autarky and the world's geopolitical system should be organized into units, each inspired by an ideological basis. These pan regions will merely be a geographical expression of pan ideas and to Haushofer, "no nation is a region unto itself" and the need for Germany to extend its influence through space was expedient if the quest for world domination and autarky was to be realized. Haushofer generated a map (Figure4) based on this vision with Eurafrica containing the revived Mitteleuropa and Mittelafrika under central command from Berlin. These territories providing unfettered access to raw materials, products, and human labor were necessary for German's quest for autarky in an era of growing global industrialization. The Eurafrica pan-region was simply Germany's best prospect in maintaining a thriving industrial economy to boost its military supremacy and stifle competition from global powers such as the Soviet Union and the United States of America (Cherrie,2014:9).

**Figure(4): Analysis of Haushofer's Theory**

(Source: Research Findings - Haushofer's Pan-regions; Vidakis, et al,43)

Fortunately for western civilization, Hitler did not accept Haushofer's opinion that Mackinder's Pivot paper was the greatest of all geographical world views." Hitler's intuition took him in a different direction. Overseas colonies were expensive to run and difficult to defend. Hitler wanted lebensraum (living space) in the east where Nordic communities could be established to exploit the grain fields of Ukraine, the ores of the Urals, and the forests of Siberia. As Hugill describes, here is the strategic problem that Mackinder referred to in 1919. Was Germany going to take territory in the east or become a maritime power in the west? Germany never resolved the strategic issue, fought World War I on two fronts, lost, and was going to do the same in World War II. However, the first phase of Nazi expansion fitted Haushofer's world view. In 1938 the absorption of Austria and the Sudetenland brought German-speaking areas into Germany. Haushofer's strategic model seemed to be attained on 23 August 1939, with the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact. Here was the understanding between Russia and Germany that Haushofer wanted and Mackinder feared (Blouet,2013:3). Haushofer's strategic situation of pan-regions within the core of Europe and most of Africa (Eurafrica) was essential for Germany's assumption of economic, political, and cultural hegemony over the world. Moreover, this

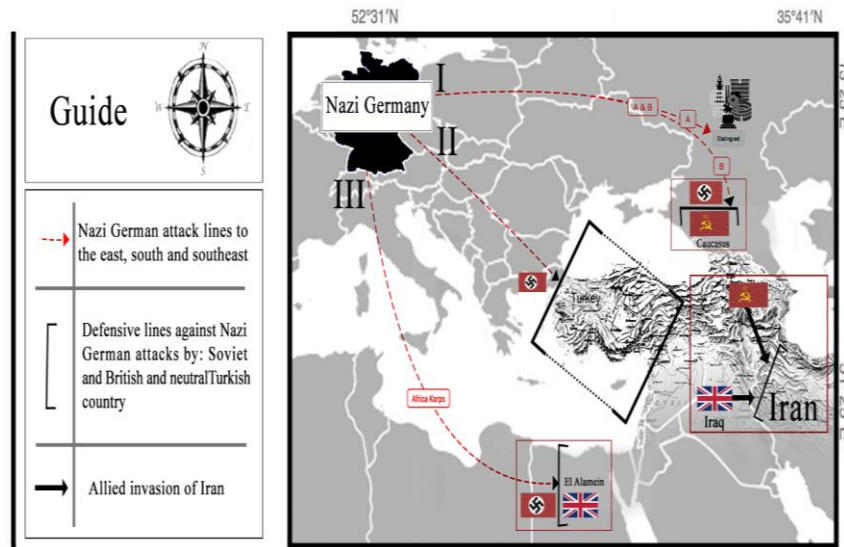
“reterritorialization” was essential towards keeping the United States and the Soviet Union neutral during the Second World War whilst Nazi Germany focused on defeating France and the United Kingdom. The defeat of these two major powers would mean Nazi Germany could acquire the vast territories and wealth of these imperial nations and incorporate them into Eurafica. This strategy was essential towards tilting the European balance of power previously centered within Britain and France in favor of Nazi Germany (Cherrie,2014:9). It is worth noting that there were important differences between the German geopolitics of Karl Haushofer and the Nazi geopolitics of Adolf Hitler. Haushofer nationalism was more conservative aristocratic than counterrevolutionary fascists. Haushofer considered the British Empire the ultimate enemy of Germany and urged an alliance with the Soviet Union, whereas Hitler admired the British Empire and ultimately wanted to conduct a crusade against the Soviet Union and Jewish Bolshevism. In Haushofer's Ratzelian schema, space not race is the ultimate determinate of national destiny, whereas for Hitler race is more important than space. Racists believe that destiny is internal and biological not external and environmental (Toal et al,1998:23). To be sure, there were significant differences of opinion between Haushofer and Hitler. First, and most obviously, there was the issue of racism. At the personal level, Haushofer could never quite trust the Nazis concerning what he termed the only great piece of the good fortune of my life." (Gray and Others,1999:235). Already by the late 1930s, many of Haushofer's ideas were considered suspect by the hardcore of the Nazi elite, and he was increasingly marginalized as the war progressed, ultimately witnessing the suppression of his *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* allegedly on grounds of national necessity for the commitment to total war in 1944 (Murphy,2014:20). Regardless of the opposing views from geographers on the subject, the underlying theme is that the German *Geopolitik* did influence charting the course of Nazi propaganda, foreign policy, and military strategy during the Second World War. It appears much of the debate is centered on the manner of influence and whether it is via Haushofer's direct associations with Hitler and the Reich leadership, Haushofer's indirect influence of Reich policy through Rudolf Hess, Haushofer's prison lectures on geopolitics with Hitler and Hess or via Haushofer's writings in his *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, the certainty is that the German *Geopolitik* played a role in charting the course of Nazi strategy

during the Second World War. It can well be argued that the Reich would not approach the Second World War the way they did without the influence of geopolitics. The adoption of Lebensraum justified the annexation of neighboring territories to expand Nazi Germany's space and resource potential so autarky could be realized. The concept of the heartland meant the Reich had to gain influence of the epicenter of human existence and resources to realize world domination whether this was by strategic alliance or annexation. In hindsight, it appears Hitler first opted for alliance then annexation to gain ultimate control of the heartland and attain world domination. Finally, the creation of strategic German pan-regions situated in Eurafrika was a revival of erstwhile German conceptions of attaining world domination via the creation of Mitteleuropa and Mittelfrika. This revival was essential towards maintaining economic, political, and military hegemony over central Europe and Africa leading the Reich a step closer to beginning their "thousand-year" global reign (Cherrie,2014:14). At the end of 1940, Hitler looked east again, ordering an attack - Barbarossa - on the Soviet Union, which started on the night of 21-22 June 1941. Hess, apparently to make a deal with Britain, flew to Scotland in May 1941. Nothing came of this initiative, and Hitler was furious with Hess, Haushofer's Nazi party patron. Haushofer's position was weakened by the departure of Hess and his strategic ideas were cast aside as Germany attacked the Soviet Union and abandoned the non-aggression pact. Haushofer spent part of the war in the Dachau concentration camp (Blouet,2013:3). The vision of a German invasion and occupation of Persia and Iraq from the north ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcD\\_0MNMfZ8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcD_0MNMfZ8)), from Asia Minor, and North Africa:

After the collapse of the Soviet Union assumed to be only a matter of time the northern invasion forces would link up with Rommel's Afrika Corps in a gigantic pincer movement and would drive relentlessly south to Abadan and Basra and beyond, across the Gulf to Bahrein and deep into the Arabian Peninsula, in Germany's relentless quest for oil. Germany's share of world oil production was only 1%; conquering the Middle East would increase this share to 17%.



**Figure (5): World Situation in 1942**



(Source: Research Findings)

Early twentieth-century Iran had been dominated by the competing influences of the two great imperial powers of the time - Russia and Britain - making it difficult for a third power to establish a foothold. But an emergent, highly industrialized, and assertive Germany in the 1930s became an attractive ally through which Iran could cut loose from domination by Britain and the Soviet Union, allowing it to seek modernity outside the constraints of old imperial interests. This led to the development of close commercial ties between Reza Shah's Persia and Hitler's Germany in the interwar period, an aspect of German foreign policy that is often overlooked (Khatib-Shahidi,2013). Reza Shah's admiration for Hitler and Germany's National Socialist attacks against communism furthered Germany's cause (Afkhami,2009:294). Hitler's invasion of Russia on 22 June 1941 drastically changed Iran's strategic position in the war. Everyone, including the shah, expected a quick German victory. The purpose of the attack, said Churchill, was to cut off Britain's lines of economic and military sustenance and to defeat her before the United States entered the war. England, he said, would fight to the end. Reza Shah thought Hitler's next target might be Iran; Hitler would get control of the oil in the Caucasus as well as the two countries of Iran and Iraq and would use Iran

and Afghanistan as a bridge to India (Afkhami,2009:67). When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, Britain and the Soviet Union emerged as allies against Nazi Germany (Motaghi, 2008: 9); and the Allies urgently needed to transport war matériel across Iran to the Soviet Union, an operation that would have violated Iranian neutrality (<http://www.parstimes.com/history/historicalsetting.html>). However, it is not hard to see why Reza Shah, who wanted to keep Iran free from foreign influence, felt that any involvement in Germany's War efforts could only result in harm for his country. On 6 September 1939, faced with a decision, he formally declared Iran's neutral standing with a view to the escalating conflict (Khatib-Shahidi, 1999,283). His policy was to accommodate the Allies while maintaining Iran's neutrality. But he had misread the Russians and particularly the British. His basic problem was himself. Being who he was, whatever he did, or could possibly do would not have satisfied the requirements of the Allies (Afkhami, 2009:70). The rapidly advancing Nazi forces inside the Soviet Union were moving toward the oil fields of Baku, and thus the Iranian border. The fact that eight Axis ships were also anchored off the Iranian port of Bandar Shapur made the Russo-British fears about a German threat more plausible (Milani, 2011:73). The strategic thinking of the allied powers was that a strong defense-wall, 'Orient-front1, should be erected from the east towards the west, which could combat Hitler's move into the region and the strategically attractive oilfields of Baku. (Afkhami,2009:296). As early as 1940, V. M. Molotov, chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars, had told Hitler that the Soviet Union aspired to dominate the "area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf" (Farrokh,2011:283). Not surprisingly, the Russians had been the first to bring up formally the question of invasion (Afkhami,2009:70). As a result, Britain and the Soviet Union simultaneously invaded Iran on August 26, 1941, the Soviets from the northwest and the British across the Iraqi frontier from the west and at the head of the Persian Gulf in the south (<http://www.parstimes.com/history/historicalsetting.html>). These events not only signaled an end to Reza Shah's period but also opened the doors to the allied powers who, in absence of real authority of the new Shah, now had in actuality taken control over Iran. As a result, all Iranian ties to Germany were broken off. The German embassy in Teheran was forced to close its gates in September 1941 and thereby break off all its diplomatic relations with Iran. The majority of

German citizens in Iran were asked to leave the country and a number were detained. The end of Reza Shah's period therefore also became the end of German involvement in Iran for years to come (Afkhami,2009:297). In summary, there was the North Africa Campaign in Libya and Egypt, the British capture of Syria from the Vichy French, the Nazi-inspired Iraqi rebellion, & the occupation of Iran by the UK and USSR in August-September 1941, after which Iran became a major route for supplies to the USSR; All findings are summarized in Table 1.

**Table (1): Countries and their Approach (Summary Table of Findings)**

Names of countries	Events
Iran	During WW II Iran declared neutrality. Iran did not see any reason why it should participate in a European conflict. During this time, operatives from Britain, USSR and Germany were active in Iran and following their own agenda.
NAZI Germany	Designed to weaken British and French control on the region. They played up on both anti-Semitism and anti-colonialism.
British, United States and Soviet Union	As it often happens in the jungle when there are world powers that have their eye on resources of weaker nations, they will make pretext for taking it by force. In 1941, the British and Russians in coordination invaded Iran. Their pretext was that Iran was flirting with Germans. British invaded from their bases in Iraq through Kermanshah in Western Iran. The Russians through the Caucasus and Caspian Sea. Iranian forces capitulated within the first 48 hours and Iran was occupied by the allies. US also joined the occupation and sent troops to occupy Iran.
The situation in the Middle East	The fall of France opened the Middle East to NAZI penetration. Lebanon and Syrian became Vichy colonies, putting the Iraqi oil fields in jeopardy.
The situation in the North Africa	A massive Italian Army invaded Egypt seeking to take the Suez Canal. A small British Desert Force not only stopped them, but drove them back into Libya. Eventually the Germans would have to rescue them with Rommel's Afrika Korps thus beginning the intense phase of the campaign in the Western Desert.

## 6. Conclusion

Karl Haushofer was a professor of geopolitics which offered his advice to the German Nazi government through Rudolf Hess. The geopolitical ideas of Haushofer and Rudolf Hess can be divided into two periods. In the time between the beginning of the first period in 1939 and the beginning of the second period in "June 22th, 1941", Haushofer's ideas had been gradually ignored and neglected by the Nazi elite. In the second period, the idea of an

alliance with the Soviet Union, and the flight of Rudolf Hess to England which angered the Nazis, led to the removal of the Haushofer's ideas from Nazi government policies. In fact, Hess, who was captured by the British, had been the link between Haushofer and Hitler; therefore, his flight to Britain jeopardized the position of Haushofer in Nazi rule. Haushofer created geopolitical ideas which were not directly related to war; it was Rudolf Hess, the war planner, who directed these ideas into militarism. Therefore, Hess was directly responsible for the geopolitical ideas of German militarism, and Hitler carried out these ideas in the form of war. Until 1941, Hitler's views were similar to those of Haushofer and Rudolf Hess. He first sought space in the East through alliance with the USSR, but in 1941 he changed his strategy and started to advance his plans in the East through war; so the third idea put forward by Hitler was very different from Haushofer's geopolitical thought. Hitler was not interested in the Middle East, but he needed oil and was worried about Britain's presence in the region. There were three ways for Hitler to enter the Middle East, expand the empire, and prevent British influence in the region:

1. By invading the Soviet Union, which in addition to removing the USSR from power and gaining vital space, could open the way for the Caucasus, oil, and the Middle East to infiltrate Iran and the Indian-Persian Gulf route.
2. The second route was through North Africa, which could have aided the Mussolini Italian army and drove Britain out of the area.
3. Attack through Turkey, which was a neutral country in the war. (The third route was rejected due to the warlike and nationalist power of the Turks, as well as the positive neutrality of Turkey toward the Germans). Therefore, he attacked the east with his strongest divisions, which carried out the Caucasus operation in the second phase, but due to the harsh winter and high mountains of the Caucasus, and also because of the defeat of the German 6th Division in Stalingrad, the operation failed. At last, the division faced an inevitable and unavoidable collapse in the Middle East. These events stabilized Britain in the Middle East and the Soviet Union. Hitler and Haushofer were so conflicted in their minds that Haushofer's son was involved in a conspiracy against Hitler and was eventually executed in 1944, and Haushofer himself was arrested. There were very diverse views among German geopolitics thinkers. At the same time, Iran's geopolitics was also pursued enthusiastically by one person: Reza Shah. Trying to react appropriately to the current events, he adopted a

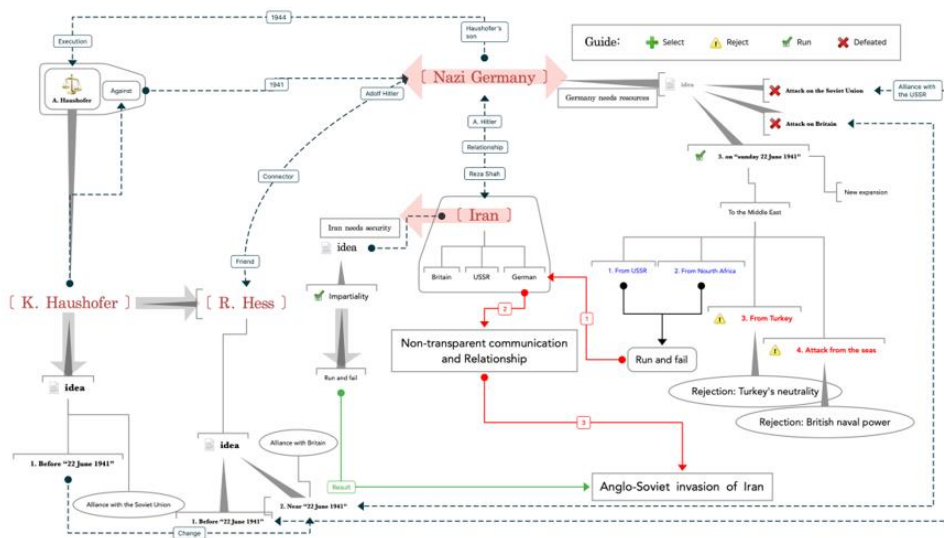
policy of neutrality. However, in practice, Reza Shah's political behavior was contradictory with his theoretical policy. He had been developing better relations with the Germans, and at times he clashed with the British and feared the Soviet Union. On the other hand, he sometimes complied with British demands and acted against the Germans (such as deporting German citizens). These political behaviors motivated the Allied forces to ignore Iran's neutrality. With the failure of Reza Shah's policy of preserving the country, Soviet and British troops invaded Iran, and due to the inability of Reza Shah's government to fight, the Iranian resistance quickly collapsed and Iran surrendered. With the Allied invasion of Iran, they were able to achieve three main goals:

1. to stop German from conquering the Iran. Iran with its abundant oil resources will be a major boost to German Armory which means they will be able to mount offenses in Russian front more aggressively.
2. to neutralize the Iran government at that time which was pro German and there was a chance that Iran might enter the war on axis side.
3. secure the person corridor which will later provide one of the major route way to lend and lease programming to Soviet Union. it was probably the moat safest of all corridors as compared to Article and Pacific routes.

Thus, it can be summed up that there were two main geopolitical ideas from 1939 to 1941 in Germany, but there was no geopolitical thought in the true sense of the word in Iran; there was only a neutral policy which was pursued by Reza Shah. Given Haushofer's plan, it is clear that Iran is not in the sphere of influence of Nazi Germany. Iran was located in the Russian region. But for Hitler, Iran needed to be dominated by Nazi Germany or Mussolini's fascist army because of oil, the Indian axis, and Britain's presence in Iraq. So, if Nazi Germany had paid attention to Haushofer's plan, they might have won World War II, because many of the forces that Germany lost in the Russian war to gain access to oil and the Middle East could be used in Africa. If Germany had adopted Haushofer's ideas, Britain and the Soviet Union could have not invaded Iran, because the Soviet Union no longer had an excuse to "connect Iran with Germany" to invade Iran, and the British had been involved in the war in Africa and could have not attacked Iran by itself. On the other hand, the African continent could have been easily occupied by the Germans. Thus, Haushofer's plan was very much in favor of Iran's national security and the maintenance of international security, while Hitler's plan was a direct factor

behind the collapse of Iran's independence and its occupation, as well as the instability of global security. Hitler's disregard for Haushofer's geopolitical ideas led to a catastrophe in international security, and this shows the importance of paying attention to geopolitical ideas and theories by politicians in countries.

**Figure (6): A diagram of “Developments Governing in two Countries”**



(Source: Research Findings)

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