

HAUSHOFER AND THE SCIENCE OF GEOPOLITICS



- Karl Haushofer (1869 – 1946) was a German soldier and then an academic, a honorary professor of geography at the University of Munich
- A year after he was appointed, he founded the Institute of Geopolitics in Munich, which became the intellectual centre for promoting the ideas of German expansionism in the run up to World War II

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STATE EXPANSIONISM



- After establishing his Journal of Geopolitics in 1924, Haushofer had an outlet to promote his ideas and influence the Nazi party members
- "Geopolitik is one of the most powerful weapons in the struggle for a more just distribution of vital spaces of the earth, a distribution based on the capacity to work and the cultural achievements of peoples rather than on settlements imposed by force"
- "A great nation has to break out from a singularly narrow space, crowded with people, without fresh air, a vital space narrowed and mutilated for the past thousand years..."

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GERMAN - SOVIET ALLIANCE

- "Haushofer, while advocating a political separation of Europe and Russia, has been a staunch supporter of the idea of **"economic collaboration"** between Germany and the great open spaces of the Soviet Union. In his early writings, during the years immediately after the First World War, he insisted that German and Russian interests, both political and economic, were identical"
- "In the November, 1939 (...) Haushofer expressed his views of the Russo-German alliance. In his mind, this alliance was in reality an attempt to solve the problems of Germany by **projecting them into the great spaces of Eurasia**. There, according to Haushofer, possibilities were unlimited, both politically and economically, and the **resources of the Soviet Union would enable Germany to be independent and self-sufficient.**"

• Geographical Review, Oct., 1942, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Oct., 1942), pp. 632-645

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HAUSHOFER'S IMPACT



- Haushofer is considered one of the most important intellectual influences on Hitler's Germany
- Rudolf Hess, Hitler's secretary and deputy leader of the Nazi party, was Haushofer's friend and student
- After the outbreak of WWII, Haushofer and his institute became the subject of interest in America, with one author writing: "The work of Major General Professor Dr Karl Haushofer and his Geopolitical Institute in Munich, with its 1000 scientists, technicians and spies [is causing great alarm] ... These men are unknown to the public, even in the Reich. But their ideas, their charts, maps, statistics, information and plans have dictated Hitler's moves from the very beginning."
- Because of this, geopolitics became taboo after WWII

Cited in Klaus Dodds,
Geopolitics: A Very
Short Introduction