

## Iran and the Aryan myth\*

David Motadel

Few terms in modern history have developed a similar vigour and significance as the word 'Aryan'. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the term became a strong political concept which had a notable impact on the construction of ethnic and national identities in both the European and the non-European world. This chapter presents an account of the origins, evolution and politicisation of the term 'Aryan' in modern Europe, concluding with a brief sketch of its significance in the non-European world, specifically in Iran, since the late nineteenth century. The purpose of the article is to rethink the often underestimated role that Iran played in the history of myths about the 'Aryan', both in European debates and in Iranian nationalist discourse.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the term 'Aryan' can be seen as a series of conceptualisations and re-conceptualisations. This chapter endeavours to draw attention to the actual change and variation in the meaning of the expression over time,<sup>2</sup> exploring the rediscovery of the ancient term by European scholars of the late eighteenth century, its introduction into historical literature and linguistics in the early nineteenth century, and the subsequent conceptualising of 'Aryans' as an Indo-European people (I); the re-conceptualising of 'Aryans' as an Indo-European race (II); the evolution and abstraction of the term 'Aryan' within European race theories, and its politicisation and popularisation in the late nineteenth century (III); and the political instrumentalisation, particularly discourses about the 'Aryan' in Nazi Germany (IV).

I conclude with an examination of the reception of European ideas about the 'Aryan' in the non-European world, specifically its reception by Iranian nationalists (V). The century-long terminological evolution of the term did result in a diversification of meaning. The following narrative should therefore not be read as a history of a linear development, or even of teleological progress, but as an accumulation of competing, though linked, meanings.

## I. Origins

Two thousand five hundred years before the term 'Aryan' became popular among racists and nationalists across Europe and Asia, the Persian king Darius I (522–486 BC) introduced himself in the rock inscription of Naqsh-i Rostam as follows:

I (am) Darius the great king, king of kings, king of countries possessing all kinds of people, king of this great earth far and wide, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, a Persian, the son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan lineage.<sup>3</sup>

The term 'Aryan', as used by Darius, was a self-designation that described belonging to a people, and conveyed an ethnical connotation. 'Aryan' and related expressions like 'Arya' also appeared in other ancient Persian and Indian inscriptions and texts, most importantly in the Zoroastrian *Avesta* and in Vedic texts.<sup>4</sup>

The modern history of the term 'Aryan' begins with two very different 'discoveries' during the Age of Enlightenment. The first was the rediscovery of the ancient term 'Aryan' by European scholars. In the eighteenth century, when European explorers developed a rising interest in Iran and ancient Persia, they soon found out that the ancient Persians had identified themselves as 'Aryans'. In 1768, before the inscription of Naqsh-i Rostam was decoded, the French Orientalist Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil du Perron concluded from the writings of Herodotus and Diodor that 'Aryan' was the ancient name for the ancient 'peoples of Iran'.<sup>5</sup> Once introduced by Perron, the expression spread rapidly among European scholars. In Germany, for instance, the term 'Aryan' appeared for the first time in Johann Friedrich Kleuker's translation of Perron's article from French into German in 1777.<sup>6</sup>

The second discovery was philological, and concerned the exploration of the Indo-European linguistic connection. As the expansion of the European empires proceeded, Europeans became attentive to the relationship between European, Persian and Indian words. In 1786, Sir William Jones, an English judge on the Supreme Court in Calcutta and one of the founders of comparative philology, pronounced in his address to the 'Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal' that there was a strong affinity between Sanskrit 'both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar', and Greek and Latin.<sup>7</sup> The similarities were too close to 'possibly have been produced by accident'; they must have 'sprung from some common source, which perhaps, no longer exists', he concluded. He also considered that Gothic, Celtic and Old Persian belonged 'to the family'; 30 years later, in 1816, the German linguist Franz Bopp provided scientific proof of the structural affinity between Greco-Latin, Sanskrit and Persian.<sup>8</sup>

The expression 'Aryan', which had so far been seen as a name for the ancient Persian people, underwent its first extension of meaning in the era of romantic and volkish thought. Early national thinkers, most prominently Germans like Johann Gottfried Herder and Johann Gottlieb Fichte, began to imagine the nation, a people, or in their words a Volk as an organic cultural community, rooted in its history and connected by shared folklore, myths, poetry, fairytales and, most importantly, by a common language.<sup>9</sup> Linguistic relationships were taken as natural proof of volkish or tribal relationships (still a mainly cultural notion) and the question about the ancestry and origins of a Volk became closely connected to speculations about the origins of its language.

In this context, the linguistic 'Indo-European' relationship was soon taken as proof of the tribal and volkish kinship of the people who spoke that language. As a consequence, European scholars began to see the ancient Persians as their ancestors. It was the German philosopher Friedrich Schlegel who performed the crucial step. Drawing from a linguistic to a tribal relationship, he suggested in 1808 that the ancestors of the Germans were the ancient Persian 'Aryans'. 'The name of the Aryans is related to another relationship, which concerns us much more intimately,' he proclaimed, adding that 'our Germanic ancestors, while they were still in Asia, were known foremost under the name "Aryans".' 'All of a sudden,' Schlegel triumphantly asserted, 'the old saga and opinion of the kinship of the Germans, or the Germanic and Gothic people with the Persians appear in a completely new light.'<sup>10</sup> The German thinker took the term 'Aryan', as reintroduced by Perron, to designate an ancient Indo-European 'primordial people' (*Urvolk*), which travelled in an ancient 'Aryan migration' from Asia to Europe.<sup>11</sup> By drawing from language to volkish origin, Europeans became 'Aryans', whose roots (*Urheimat*) lay in the East. This 'Aryan' migration theory, or 'Aryan myth', as Leon Poliakov put it, quickly became popular across Western Europe. Scholars began to see the ancient Persians as their ancestors. In October 1827, for instance, a certain L. C. Beaufort gave a paper to the Royal Irish Academy in which he suggested that many Irish customs were of Eastern, 'chiefly of Persian' origin.<sup>12</sup> 'Persia', he explained, was the country 'from which the Irish claim to derive in great measure their descent, their arts, and their religion'.<sup>13</sup>

Schlegel, and early proponents of the Aryan legend like Beaufort, referred to the cultural rather than biological conception of 'Aryans'. They defined a people still completely in accordance with Herder and other early national thinkers. Moreover, their conceptions of 'Aryans' and 'non-Aryans' were relatively neutral. Soon, however, scholars would define the relationship and the idea of an ancient 'Aryan' migration in biological and racial terms, and add specific character traits to the picture.

## II. Racial thought

Over the course of the nineteenth century, cultural definitions of a people, Volk or nation became increasingly biologically and racially charged.<sup>14</sup> Race theories, as had been developed since the eighteenth century, received a cultural extension, while cultural ideas of a nation or a Volk obtained a biological one. Accordingly, many scholars no longer saw a linguistic relationship as a characteristic of a purely historical-cultural relationship, but rather a biological-racial one; indeed, linguists began to employ their theories to prove racial relationships, with linguistic characteristics increasingly being used as markers of racial classification. In this context, ‘Aryans’, widely believed to be an ancient primordial people and ancestors to the Europeans, were increasingly described in terms of physical appearance and associated with ideas of ‘race’. As early as 1823, the German orientalist Julius Klaproth claimed that the ancient ‘Aryans’, or ‘Indo-Germanics’ as he named them, had been light-skinned, while in 1836, the French philologist Frédéric-Gustave Eichhoff declared that all Europeans once ‘came from the Orient’, as proven by the ‘evidence of both physiology and linguistics’.<sup>15</sup>

More importantly, concepts of the ‘Aryan’ were increasingly charged with specific character traits that were considered racially inherent and linked to the notion of racial superiority. Already in 1830, Schlegel’s student Christian Lassen, an Orientalist at the University of Bonn, remarked that the ‘Indians and the Old Persian people called themselves with the same name, specifically “Aryans”; the honorific meaning undoubtedly suits also the militant Germans’.<sup>16</sup> He further substantiated this judgment in his famous *Indische Altertumskunde*, in which he glorified the ‘Aryans’ as ‘the most gifted’ of all and ‘perfect in talent’, and praised their creativity, flawless spirit and harmony of soul.<sup>17</sup> Lassen contrasted his descriptions with those of the ‘Semites’, laying the roots for the fatal idea of a dichotomy between ‘Semites’ and ‘Aryans’. Referring to Jews and Arabs in particular, he wrote:

History teaches us that the Semites did not possess the harmonious balance of all those forces of the spirit [*Gleichmass aller Seelenkräfte*] which characterised the Indo-Germans [...] Their views and notions so absorb their intelligence that they are unable to rise with serenity to the contemplation of pure ideas [...] In his religion the Semite is egoistical and exclusive.<sup>18</sup>

Besides attaching to the ‘Aryan’ all kinds of superior features, Lassen extended the meaning of the word in a second direction when suggesting to call the common family of languages ‘Aryan’ (instead of ‘Indo-Germanic’, for instance) as well.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, both the biological extension of the term ‘Aryan’ and its implicit valuation as a superior race spread rapidly among race theorists. Friedrich Max

Müller, Ernest Renan, Adolphe Pictet and Arthur Comte de Gobineau are among the best-known thinkers who in the nineteenth century popularised the idea of an ancient 'Aryan' master race which immigrated to Europe.

Friedrich Max Müller, a lecturer at Oxford and the most notable propagandist of the Aryan legend in England, declared that linguistics, was the science to justify the existence and origins of an 'Aryan' race.<sup>20</sup> Through the discovery of relationship between languages, he proclaimed 'a complete revolution took place in the views commonly entertained of the ancient history of the world'.<sup>21</sup> The ancestors of the 'Aryan' race, 'whose thought still runs in our thoughts, as their blood may run in our veins', had come from Asia – they would be 'our true ancestors in spirit and in truth'.<sup>22</sup>

Müller's French counterpart Ernest Renan distinguished first and foremost 'Aryans' from 'Semites', with the latter identified primarily as 'Arabs' and, more importantly, 'Jews'.<sup>23</sup> In the tradition of Lassen's 'Aryan–Semitic' dichotomy, Renan portrayed 'Semites' as 'non-Aryans' *per se*: two powerful 'asymmetrical concepts', in the words of Reinhart Kosseleck, that soon became widely popular.<sup>24</sup> Only the 'Aryans', according to the French thinker, were the real master race and meant to influence the destiny of mankind. Similarly, the Geneva linguist Adolphe Pictet identified the 'Aryans' as the chosen race (*une race destinée par la Providence*), predetermined to dominate the world.<sup>25</sup> Influenced by Lassen and Renan, he also believed in an antagonism between 'Semites' and superior 'Aryans'. The ancient 'Aryans', which he located in Iran and called 'Ario-Persans', were identified as the direct ancestors of the Europeans.

Perhaps the most important and renowned proponent of a racial version of the Aryan myth was Arthur Comte de Gobineau, who was fascinated by Iran, and had actually visited the country as a diplomat in the 1850s. In his *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, he used the term 'Aryan' to refer to a 'primordial race' which had been, in his opinion, the elite of ancient India and Persia, as well as of contemporary nineteenth-century France.<sup>26</sup> Yet Gobineau detached the 'Aryan' from modern Asia. The last 'pure' 'Aryans', he believed, were the Germanics and included the French aristocracy and also himself. More generally, Gobineau saw the 'Aryans' and 'Semites' as part of a 'white race', which he distinguished from a 'yellow' and a 'black' one.

Scholars such as Müller, Gobineau, Pictet and Renan referred explicitly to the Indo-European linguistic family, an ancient 'Aryan' migration and a racial relationship to the East. But although their theories maintained considerable influence, in the late nineteenth century, the meaning of the term 'Aryan' began to change and diversify further, giving rise to a wide variety of concepts and meanings. More and more often, the term became detached from ideas of an Indo-European, Eastern and, indeed, Persian connection.

### III. Popularisation

By the turn of the century, the term 'Aryan' had become popular among the racial and racist vocabulary of scholars, publicists and political activists, while at the same time undergoing a considerable diversification of meaning. A very abstract conception of 'Aryan' as a synonym for 'master race' or 'highest race' with specific physiological characteristics was used in the terminology of scientific race theories. Moreover, anti-Semites used the term as a synonym for 'non-Jewish'. Eventually, the term became widely used as a synonym for 'Nordic' or 'Germanic race'.

In the academic sphere, particularly in the scientific tradition of race theory, most scholars soon began to use the term 'Aryan' as a synonym for 'highest' race, and to describe specific phrenological and craniological characteristics and colour, essentially those meeting the physical traits of Linné's *Homo Europaeus*. Concerned with modern science – biology, anatomy and genetics – the French race scholars Marcelin Berthelot and Georges Vacher de Lapouge, as well as their German colleagues Adolf Bastian and Alfred Ploetz, social Darwinists like Ernst Haeckel, and eugenicists like Francis Galton, showed little or no interest in relating their research to ancient migration theories or philology.<sup>27</sup>

At the same time, the expression became prominent as a synonym for 'non-Jewish'. It was Houston Stewart Chamberlain who employed the term 'Aryan' not only to describe his 'master race', but also, influenced by Renan, as a demarcation from the Jews. Chamberlain also had much to say about ancient Persian history, which he used as an example to warn against the dangers of tolerance towards the 'Semites' and racial degeneration. The 'noble Persian king Cyrus', he wrote, 'with the naivety of the little shrewd Indo-European', allowed the Jews of Babylon to return to Jerusalem and supported the rebuilding of their temple. This, according to Chamberlain, was the Persian's deadly mistake, as 'under the protection of Aryan tolerance' a source of 'Semitic intolerance' was erected, which 'should disperse like a poison over the earth' and became a 'curse' in the following millennia.<sup>28</sup>

Chamberlain enjoyed particular influence over the German Emperor Wilhelm II, who gave orders to introduce Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* as compulsory reading for school teachers in training.<sup>29</sup> In a letter to Chamberlain, the Kaiser affirmed his approval of Chamberlain's theories, testifying his own satisfaction at having descended from 'Aryan' origins.<sup>30</sup> As late as 1923, Wilhelm II, then exiled in the Netherlands, would declare that the ancient Persians were the true ancestors of the Germanic peoples.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, many of the Kaiser's subjects shared this belief. On the occasion of the visit of Muzaffar al-Din Shah to Germany in 1902, for instance, the national German daily *Die Post* reported that the 'Persian people, whose leader we are honouring, is like the German from the Aryan line'.<sup>32</sup> The extent of the politicisation and popularisation of the scholarly

discourse in *fin-de-siècle* Europe may be addressed by future research. It seems that in Germany, where romanticism and volkish ideology – the emphasis of language and culture in defining national identity – was of particular importance in the nation-building process, Aryan legends were most influential.

Finally, German historians, anthropologists, cultural theorists, and, more importantly, amateur scholars began to develop a particular German, or Nordic, version of the ‘Aryan’ migration myth. In 1868, Theodor Bensen thought about the roots of the ‘Aryans’ in Europe.<sup>33</sup> From there, he believed, some of them migrated to Asia and founded the ancient civilisations of the East. On the Asian fringes they degenerated through mixing with foreign races; only the ‘Nordic race’, the core race in central and northern Europe, remained purely ‘Aryan’. This ‘northern thesis’, which was still based on the idea of an Indo-European connection and based on linguistic arguments, soon became popular among German anthropologists and linguists like Lazarus Geiger,<sup>34</sup> Theodor Poesche,<sup>35</sup> Ludwig Wilser,<sup>36</sup> Karl Penka<sup>37</sup> and Gustaf Kossinna.<sup>38</sup> Variations in the theories of these scholars were marginal. While, for instance, Poesche detected the origins, or *Urheimat*, of his blond and blue-eyed ‘Aryans’ in the Rokitno swamps of Lithuania, Wilser and Penka believed they had found it in southern Scandinavia. The Aryan myth became a Germanic myth. The new theories further fuelled the trend to use the word ‘Aryan’ as a synonym for ‘Nordic’ or ‘Germanic’.

The ‘northern thesis’ became especially influential among a more romantic and esoteric tradition of racism in Germany. Race mysticists like Paul Anton Lagarde, Julius Langbehn and Guido von List regarded ‘Aryans’ as unspoiled Germanics (*Urgermanen*) who lived close to nature, and far removed from contemporary materialism and liberal modernity.<sup>39</sup> Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels constructed a mystic heathen Germanic theory, which he called ‘Aryanism’ (*Arianismus*); he had a significant influence on the young Adolf Hitler in Vienna.<sup>40</sup>

#### IV. Nazi conceptions

The prominence of the term ‘Aryan’ in National Socialist vocabulary would discredit it in Europe once and for all. The Nazi regime’s uses of the term ‘Aryan’ were ambiguous and inconsistent, reflecting the various developments it underwent since the nineteenth century. On the most general level, the Third Reich’s ideologues and propagandists used the term as a synonym for ‘Nordic’, ‘Germanic’, ‘German’ and ‘non-Jewish’.

With these meanings, the term was finally introduced into Germany’s legal code. Although student fraternities in late-nineteenth-century Austria and interwar Germany had adopted so-called ‘Aryan clauses’ (*Arierklauseln*) in their statutes to exclude Jews, the Third Reich became the first state to introduce the term ‘Aryan’ into national law.<sup>41</sup> On 7 April 1933, Berlin issued the notorious

'Aryan Paragraph' (*Arierparagraph*), paragraph 3 of the so-called 'Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service'. Expressions like 'Aryan Paragraph', 'Proof of Aryan Ancestry' (*Ariernachweis*) or 'Aryanisation' (*Arisierung*) became fixed components of the regime's legal vocabulary. Their primary target was Jews. Yet, employing the concepts 'Aryan' and 'non-Aryan' instead of 'Jewish' and 'non-Jewish', the laws soon discriminated against not only Jews, but a far wider group of people, including foreigners who initially were not intended as targets by the Nazi regime. Soon, foreign governments complained. To solve the problem, officials of the German Foreign Office, Interior Ministry, Propaganda Ministry, the Office of Race Politics of the Nazi party (NSDAP) and representatives of other agencies met on 15 November 1934.<sup>42</sup> Representatives of the Interior Ministry, a central authority in the field of racial legislation, suggested abolishing the expression 'Aryan' altogether and replacing it with 'non-Jewish'. Helmut Nicolai, a high-ranking official of the Interior Ministry, pleaded for a new racial law which would replace 'non-Aryan' with 'Jewish' and change the term 'Aryan' to 'non-Jewish', to affirm that the laws were directed solely against Jews. His colleague Hanns Seel discussed the term 'Aryan' in detail, concluding that it was indeed 'highly controversial and scientifically not clarified'. The line of the Interior Ministry was opposed by the head of the Race Office, Walter Gross, who represented Hitler's deputy Rudolf Hess, revealing the usual rivalry between party and state agencies.<sup>43</sup> In order to avoid diplomatic frictions, Berlin eventually decided to adopt a pragmatic policy of *ad hoc* exceptions in cases where non-Jewish foreigners were affected.<sup>44</sup> The Nuremberg Laws of 1935, also primarily directed against German Jews, did not refer to 'Aryans' and 'non-Aryans' any more, but to the (no less ambiguous) expressions 'German or kindred blood' and 'Jews and other non-kindred people'. 'Kindred', in the working language of the Third Reich, referred to all European peoples, and to 'those of their descendants in the non-European parts of the world who kept themselves racially pure'.<sup>45</sup> The legal experiment with the term 'Aryan' had failed.

In contrast, politicised academic research made extensive use of historical, linguistic and racial ideas about the 'Aryan'. After all, complex concepts of an 'Aryan' race and its history were part of the ideological repertoire of leading Nazi ideologists. In *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler used the term 'Aryan' as a synonym for 'master race', 'culture-bearing race' and, most importantly, 'non-Jewish'. Hitler's version of the ancient 'Aryan migration' followed a common pattern of historical development: since antiquity, the Nordic 'Aryan' race conquered foreign peoples and territories, founded great civilisations and finally perished because of a lack of racial hygiene.<sup>46</sup> In this narrative, the glories of all human civilisations were creations of the 'Aryan' master race. During the war, Hitler referred explicitly to the case of ancient Persia: 'Nations which did not rid themselves of Jews, perished. One of the most famous examples of this was the downfall of a people who were

once so proud – the Persians.<sup>47</sup> Hitler's self-proclaimed chief ideologue Alfred Rosenberg drew an even more detailed picture of an ancient migration of a 'Nordic race'.<sup>48</sup> In his famous *Mythus des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*, he described the old Persians as 'Aryans with northern blood', who had finally degenerated because of mixing with 'lower races':

Once, the Persian king gave order to cut into the rock face of Behistun the following words: 'I, Darius the Great King, King of Kings, an Aryan, having Aryan lineage [...]' Today the Persian muleteer pulls ahead soullessly by this wall: he represents thousands – culture and personality are born together with race and also die with it.<sup>49</sup>

For Rosenberg, Persian history served as a negative example of miscegenation (*Bastardierung*). Indeed, most National Socialist ideologues agreed with the idea that 'Aryans' – in their attempt to cultivate the Orient – perished as a result of infiltration (*Überfremdung*) by 'Semitic races'.

It was this ideological interpretation of the Aryan myth that influenced academic research on the 'Aryans' under the Nazi regime. A highly ideological and politicised discourse soon dominated many academic fields, including the works of experts in Iranian studies and Indologists, classicists, historians and linguists, all eager to benefit from the prominence and popularity of the term 'Aryan'. They formed an interdisciplinary research field, a pendant to the Nazi discipline of *Deutsche Judenforschung* (literally: German Research on Jews).<sup>50</sup> Working willingly towards the Führer's theories, German scholars used their linguistic, historical and racial research to underpin the idea of an 'Aryan' race that originated in Northern Europe, and in ancient times spread over the globe, founding ancient civilisations like the Persian Empire, but eventually intermingled and mixed with native races, degenerated and failed. The last pure 'Aryans' survived only in the North, in Germanic lands. The myth was perfectly compatible with the everyday use and meaning of the terms like 'superior race', 'non-Jewish', 'Nordic' or 'Germanic', a fact that was also accepted by scholars who were not committed anti-Semites.

Orientalists, like Heinrich Schaeder, Heinrich Lüders and Wilhelm Weber, eagerly adopted the racial thesis of a northern migration to Asia.<sup>51</sup> In fact, it was research about the 'Aryans' and their indo-Germanic links to Asia that kept the field of Oriental studies alive during the years of the Third Reich.<sup>52</sup> As early as autumn 1934, a public lecture series was organised in Berlin, dedicated to the contemporary uses of the subject.<sup>53</sup> Both lectures on the ancient Orient, given by Wilhelm Weber and by Heinrich Lüders, addressed the idea of an ancient 'Aryan' race. In the first lecture of the series, Weber proclaimed that Adolf Hitler had called 'to write the world history of Aryan mankind', before outlining the thesis of an ancient migration from the North to the East.<sup>54</sup> His ideas about the nature

of the ancient 'Aryans' reflected some rather crude ideological ideals – authority, warrior spirit, primacy of blood bonds, pride. Persia, he lectured, had been a 'world power' – 'an Aryan power'.<sup>55</sup> Only infiltration by primitive, 'non-Aryan' peoples had led to its decline. Similarly, Heinrich Lüders made the case for the 'Aryan' migration, focusing mostly on India.<sup>56</sup> The most prominent Orientalist to promote the Aryan legend though was Heinrich Schaeder, who believed that northern European 'Aryans' once colonised the Middle East and Inner Asia to defend their Nordic homeland against Asiatic hordes. Schaeder drew particular parallels between ancient Persians and Germans.<sup>57</sup> 'Just like the Iranians laid out the historical foundations in the Middle East, the Germans formed the structure of Europe in the Middle Ages,'<sup>58</sup> 'Aryan' world history became the link between East and West. Even the ancient wars between Greeks and Persians were relativised as 'quarrels among brother people'.<sup>59</sup> Some experts in Iranian studies finally even linked 'Aryan' history to Iran under Reza Shah. Walther Hinz, a professor for Oriental studies in Berlin, began his Iranian history with the conquest of the 'Aryans', in his eyes an 'event of world political significance', and concluded with a homage to the Shah, 'who today means for Iran the same as Adolf Hitler does for Germany', and his politics of national renewal.<sup>60</sup> Yet research on the 'Aryans' was mostly limited to ancient Iran.

It was historians and classicists, among them eminent scholars like Helmut Berve or Fritz Schachermeyr, who were most inclined to foster racial theories of an ancient 'Aryan' migration.<sup>61</sup> Berve, a committed Nazi and professor of classics at the University of Leipzig, bluntly stated that the 'Aryan' Middle East had to be studied 'especially today, where the question about the destinies and world historical relevance of the Aryans has strongly come to the fore'. At the same time, he questioned the need for research on Semitic peoples of the Orient altogether, since he believed that their racial peculiarities could not possibly be understood by 'Aryan' Germans.<sup>62</sup> Equally ideologically charged was Schachermeyr's 1933 article on *Die nordische Führerpersönlichkeit im Altertum*, in which he introduced Zarathustra, Cyrus and Darius as northern heroes.<sup>63</sup> The 'failure' of the Persians to cultivate the Orient, Schachermeyr later wrote, leads back to the impossibility of overcoming the 'profound race differences' of the Orient, with all its enemies: the 'Armenian mercantile types', the 'Syrian, Asia Minor and Phoenician merchants' and, most of all, the Jews, which were 'the parasitic elements'.<sup>64</sup> The list of classicists who introduced similar ideologically charged, racist references to their 'Aryan' histories is long, and includes scholars like Wilhelm Sieglin and Peter Julius Junge.<sup>65</sup> Their ideas about ancient Iran as an 'Aryan' nation would also enter German school books.<sup>66</sup>

Even some Nazi racial scientists referred to the idea of an ancient Indo-Germanic migration, despite the fact that most of their colleagues had widely used the term 'Aryan' detached from any linguistic connections and ideas of an ancient migration

since the late nineteenth century. The notorious German racial theorist Hans Friedrich Karl Günther, professor of social anthropology in Jena, argued that the early 'Aryans', coming from the North, conquered vast lands in Asia around 2000 BC. Projecting all kinds of racial ideals on to the ancient 'Aryan' race, he emphasised, for instance, the ancient Persian king's concern for the 'sustainment and increase of Aryan Persianism [*Persertum*]'.<sup>67</sup> In 1922, Günther had already identified the old Persian Empire as a 'North-racial creation' (*nordrassische Schöpfung*).<sup>68</sup> His colleague, Gerhard Heberer, an anthropologist and racial theorist at the SS Race and Settlement Office, even purported to have found scientific evidence for the origins of an Indo-Germanic 'Aryan' race in central Germany. 'It didn't come to us from the outside, not from the East!' he proudly proclaimed.<sup>69</sup>

The most powerful promoter of the Aryan legend in Nazi Germany was Walther Wüst, professor at the 'Seminar for Indo-Germanic Studies' (renamed the 'Seminar for Aryan Cultural and Linguistic Studies' in 1935) at the University of Munich and, during the war, rector of the university.<sup>70</sup> Wüst also used the term 'Aryan' as synonymous with 'Nordic race', which, he believed, spread from its northern *Urheimat* to Asia. The Germans, he claimed, were descended in a direct genetic line from the ancient 'Aryans'.<sup>71</sup> His thoughts about Iran were more complex. Although he followed the usual narrative and believed that 'racial mixing' had led to 'degeneration' (*Entartung*) and 'denordification' (*Entnordnung*), Wüst expressed the hope for a renewal under the leadership of Reza Shah.<sup>72</sup> Wüst was also involved with the SS *Abnenerbe*, which became the centre of classicist and anthropological research into 'Aryan prehistory'. A special office for the Near East even coordinated studies on the 'Aryan' impact on ancient Middle Eastern civilisations.<sup>73</sup> One of the most spectacular research trips of the *Abnenerbe* was the 1938–9 expedition to Tibet led by the zoologist Ernst Schäfer.<sup>74</sup> Patron of the mission was Heinrich Himmler, personally fascinated by Aryan myth and the 'North theory'. Wüst's planned *Abnenerbe* expedition to Iran to enquire into the ancient inscriptions of Behistun never materialised.<sup>75</sup>

The ideas about 'Aryans' as developed in the works of Wüst and other scholars differed considerably from the notion popularised by the ideological language of everyday life. This discrepancy impelled the linguist Hans Siegert to complain about the abstract and limited meaning of the term as a synonym for 'German or kindred blood', as its use ignored scholarly concepts on the 'Aryan' and obscured the Indo-European dimension.<sup>76</sup> Because of its abstract meaning in the official language of the regime, Siegert even suggested eschewing the term in scholarship altogether. He was an exception though. Most scholars happily benefited from the ideological prominence of the term.

Eventually, the term 'Aryan' was also employed in the diplomatic arena. Eager to develop strong economic, diplomatic and strategic relations with Middle Eastern countries, various diplomats and representatives of the Third Reich repeatedly

instrumentalised the Aryan myth, especially when dealing with Iran.<sup>77</sup> Reference to the 'Aryan' became a recurring topos in Germany's propaganda efforts directed towards the country. The earliest example of this instrumentalisation was the celebration of the 1,000th anniversary of Iranian poet Firdausi in 1934, with the official inauguration of the *Persische Straße* in Berlin. Mayor Heinrich Sahn did not miss the opportunity to point towards the 'surprising similarity with the German heroic sagas' and the common 'Aryan' ancestry before intoning a triple *Sieg Heil*.<sup>78</sup> The idea of the degeneration of the 'Aryan race' in the non-European world, as propagated by Hitler, Rosenberg and their academic following, and the prevalence of notions like 'Nordic' or 'Germanic' now commonly attached to the term in Germany, were cautiously ignored. Following the Allied invasion of Iran in the summer of 1941, the former German envoy to Tehran, Erwin Ettel, stressed the relevance of the 'Aryan' theme in his 'general guidelines for propaganda to Iran'.<sup>79</sup> Referring to the further need for anti-Semitic propaganda, he stated that 'Germany's battle against World Judaism' was also directed 'against the Jews in Iran, who want to force the Aryan Iranian people under their knout'. Indeed, German officials were convinced about the significant role an 'Aryan' consciousness played in Iran. Ettel's colleague, Hans Winkler, who had served in the cultural department at the German embassy in Tehran, declared that 'thanks to European scholarly enlightenment', Iranian upper classes were race-conscious – 'with the result that the Iranians feel themselves as Aryan'.<sup>80</sup>

## V. Iranian nationalism

Winkler was not entirely wrong. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the Aryan myth had spread across the world. Nationalists from non-European countries where an Indo-European language was dominant enthusiastically adopted European thoughts about language, history and race, and the idea that people who spoke an Indo-European language were (or had been) racially superior.<sup>81</sup> From India to Afghanistan to Iran, the concept of an 'Aryan master race' took hold, a development that was part of the much wider story of the globalisation of modern ideologies, such as nationalism and racial thought.

To Iran, modern ideas and concepts about the 'Aryan' were first transferred in the late Qajar era. They played, in fact, a significant role in the nationalisation of Iran. Reflecting on their glorious ancient past and the Persian language, some nationalists found the Aryan myth (naturally in its Eastern version), as propagated by their European counterparts, an attractive national narrative.<sup>82</sup> Already the work of the social critic Mirza Fathali Akhundzadah, one of the early nationalist thinkers of modern Iran, reflects Renan's ideas of a distinction between 'Aryans' and 'Semites', although Akhundzadah made no direct reference to European scholars.<sup>83</sup> In his 'Letters of Kamal al-Dawlah and Jalal

al-Dawlah', first published in 1868, Akhundzadah pondered on the greatness of the Iranian nation (*millat-i Iran*) under the ancient Persian kings, and on its decline that followed the Arab invasion and the conquest of Islam.<sup>84</sup> Pre-Islamic Iran, in his view unspoiled by Arab (or Semitic) influence, was portrayed as a grand Indo-European civilisation. Indeed, the Aryan myth served as a convenient explanation for the country's apparent backwardness. In contrast to Germany, where the 'Semitic Other' was the Jew, for Iranian nationalists it was the Arab (or Islam). Soon, other Iranian intellectuals became more precise. In his work *A'inah-yi sikandari*, published in 1891, Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani set out to write the history of the 'Aryan nation' (*millat-i Aryan*). Kirmani's use of the term 'Aryan' was notably influenced by European ideas of Indo-European language, culture and race.<sup>85</sup> He even developed a linguistic and cultural theory to prove the similarity between French and Persian words. In his work *Sih maktub*, an imitation of Akhundzadah's *Maktubat*, Kirmani praised ancient Iran as it was before it was overrun by the 'barbarous' Arab hordes, which brought about the country's decline. Again, it was the dichotomy between 'Semites' and 'Aryans' that served as the explanatory historical rationale. Arab influence was perceived as genuinely unauthentic and destructive to Iranian culture. At the same time, the narrative stressed common roots with the admired Europeans. These ideas spread among Iranian intellectuals. An important role in this process was played by nationalist newspapers and periodicals, most famously Hasan Taqizadah's journal *Kavah*, which was published in Berlin from 1916 to 1922.<sup>86</sup> The Aryan myth would become a central pillar of Iranian nationalist discourse of the twentieth century.

In Pahlavi Iran, when nationalism became state ideology, the Aryan myth was popularised more widely. Promoting national mythology and Iranian antiquity, intellectuals and propagandists sought to employ the idea of an ancient 'Aryan' heritage to strengthen both national identity and the ruling dynasty's legitimacy. Concepts about the 'Aryans' flourished especially in the 1930s, producing, in the words of Alessandro Bausani, a kind of 'Aryan and Neo-Achaemenid nationalism', which maintained its influence during the entire Pahlavi period.<sup>87</sup> Later, Reza Shah's son and successor, Mohammad Reza, would call himself by the newly created title 'King of the Kings, Light of the Aryans' (*Shahanshah Aryamehr*). In the 1970s, he even went so far as to suggest a 'renascent Aryan brotherhood of Iran, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan' to guarantee regional peace and cooperation, and to 'hold high again the torch of a glorious humanitarian, liberal and moralistic civilisation'.<sup>88</sup>

As in Germany, classicists and historians became key figures in the promotion of Aryan legends.<sup>89</sup> One of the most widely circulated history textbooks of the early Pahlavi era, *Iran-i Qadim*, written by the distinguished Persian statesman Hasan Pirniya (Mushir al-Dawlah), discussed not only ideas of an ancient 'Aryan' migration, but also the racial characteristics of Iran's early 'Aryan' population.<sup>90</sup>

Pirniya generally differentiated between white, yellow, red, black and mixed races, emphasising that the 'white-skinned race', which included Iranians, were the Indo-European peoples.<sup>91</sup> Published in 1928, *Iran-i Qadim* was the earliest official history textbook of the Pahlavi period and became a standard text for middle school students. The book was, in fact, an abridged version of Pirniya's monumental (though unfinished), three-volume opus *Iran-e Bastan*, perhaps the most important work on pre-Islamic history produced during the Reza Shah years. Pirniya's work set the tone. Another history textbook, published by the political scientist Husayn Farhudi in 1933, followed his model. Farhudi too not only defined 'Iran' in geographical terms, but also introduced his readers to a racial dimension of Iranianness and emphasised that the world 'Iran' was derived from the term 'Arya'.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, in his textbook used in the first year of Iranian high schools, the eminent nationalist historian Abbas Iqbal Ashtiyani began the section on the history of Iran with reference to the 'Aryans', who, he explained, had populated the territory that formed the Iranian nation.<sup>93</sup> They were, he taught, 'of the white race', which was distinguished from the yellow, black and red races.<sup>94</sup> While explaining that members of the white and yellow races possessed the highest intellectual capabilities, he identified the black race as the 'least talented people'.<sup>95</sup> Eventually, even the idea of the degeneration of the ancient Persian 'Aryans' was taken up. In 1930, the nationalist writer Abu al-Hasan Furughi claimed that the causes for Iran's decline lay in the mixing of the Iranians with other races.<sup>96</sup>

Following the European tradition of volkish and nationalist thought, Iranian nationalists regarded language as the central characteristic of national culture and race.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, an increasing number of Iranian linguists began to investigate the Indo-European roots of their language. In 1935, the language academy, *Farhangistan*, was created in Tehran with the goal to cleanse the Persian language of foreign, particularly Arabic and Turkish, loanwords in order to uncover the pure Indo-European, or 'Aryan' as Lassen had first called it, language – pure Persian (*Farsi-yi sarab*).

In the same year, Reza Shah ordered that the country should be called Iran instead of Persia in all international communications and correspondence from 22 March 1935 onwards. The name 'Iran' (or *Iranshahr*) is a cognate of 'Aryan' and refers to 'Land of the Aryans'. It had been used by Iranians since the era of the Sasanids, who had created the term in the third century AD in memory of the Achaemenid monarchy.<sup>98</sup> Influenced by ancient Greek writers, only Europeans usually spoke of 'Persia'. Tehran's attempt to promote the name 'Iran' internationally was another element of Reza Shah's nationalist campaign. The official explanation for the decision was that the name 'Persia' derived from the southern province 'Fars', and was consequently incorrect as a name for the entire country. Furthermore, the term 'Iran' had been used by Persians to speak about their country for centuries, whereas Persia was seen as a name used by

European colonial powers. Soon, moreover, rumours emerged suggesting that the Shah was influenced by the political significance that the 'Aryan' idea had attained in Germany.

Indeed, parts of the Pahlavi elite was much impressed by German, Italian and above all Kemalist politics of authoritarianism, and ideas of national renewal and purification. On the other hand, the common belief that Nazi Germany enjoyed an outstanding reputation in Iran and kept strong relations with the Pahlavi government is hardly accurate.<sup>99</sup> During the 1930s, Nazi Germany and Iran repeatedly found themselves on opposite sides of the international arena and their relations were characterised by constant frictions; after all, a number of powerful Iranian officials and ministers were pro-British or openly anti-German.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, documents stored in the Iranian National Archives in Tehran suggest that considerations about Germany did play a role in the process – though a subordinate one. A memorandum from the Foreign Ministry that was addressed to all Iranian embassies abroad acknowledged that the idea to popularise the name 'Iran' in international society had, in fact, initially come from the Persian legation in Berlin.<sup>101</sup> The name 'Persia', it was explained, was historically (*tarikhi*), geographically (*jughrafiyâ'i*) and racially (*nizhadi*) incorrect. The ministry gave four reasons which had convinced the imperial court to agree to the delegation's proposal. While the first two points stressed that Persia, as a province, was not identical to the wider country of Iran, the last point alluded to the idea that foreigners associated the word 'Persia' with prejudices and images of weakness, poverty, ignorance, chaos and shaky sovereignty under previous regimes. The third reason concerned 'racial considerations'. As Iran formed 'the racial origins of the Aryans', it was argued, it was only 'natural that we make use of this name' – especially as 'much noise' was 'made in great countries about the Aryan race' and as 'some countries pride themselves in being Aryan'. Tehran gave out a number of orders to use the word 'Iran' in international correspondence, to rename their embassies abroad from 'Persian embassy' to 'Iranian embassy', to make similar changes in letterheads and envelopes, to inform publishers of dictionaries and map makers across Europe, and to actively propagate the name 'Iran'.<sup>102</sup> The memorandum was sent out a day later, together with a letter written by the Iranian Foreign Secretary, Baqir Kazimi, on the issue.<sup>103</sup>

In Germany, the press reacted with enthusiasm. The party organ *Völkischer Beobachter* announced the renaming with an article about the ancient 'Aryan' history of Iran and its racial connections to German history, eventually praising Reza Shah's politics of national renewal.<sup>104</sup> Iran, it was explained, meant 'land of the Aryans' (*Arierland*) and the term 'Aryan' had once been used by the noble ancient Persians.

In its announcement to the German ambassador in Tehran, the Pahlavi regime referred to the official argument, pointing out in very general terms that the name

'Persia' was historically, ethnographically and geographically incorrect.<sup>105</sup> When the German envoy in Tehran, Wipert von Blücher, enquired into the motives, Tehran explained that Persia was geographically limited to the province 'Fars' and therefore an incorrect expression for the entire country. 'Aryan' fraternisations were avoided. Documents stored in the archives of the Foreign Ministry in Berlin show that the issue was only raised when Iranian diplomats felt that Iran's claim of being an 'Aryan' nation was not genuinely shared by the Germans.<sup>106</sup> Just after the renaming in 1935, the Shah's delegation in Berlin complained to the Foreign Office that Iranians would be discriminated against as 'non-Aryans' in Germany.<sup>107</sup> Stressing the 'Aryan' nature of Iranians, Persian diplomats emphasised that the renaming took place, among other reasons, in order to demonstrate that early Persia actually was 'the cradle of the Aryans [*Ariertum*]', and urged for a definite decision about the question. In an internal note, a German diplomat remarked 'that the question, considering the self-esteem of the Iranians, is very delicate and in case of a purely negative decision would lead to a regarding our political and economic relations to Iran unwanted reaction, especially of the Shah himself'.

Even more delicate, though, was the news spread in the following year by the French newspaper *Le Temps* that Berlin had decided not to categorise Iranians, along with Egyptians and Iraqis, as 'Aryan', whereas Turkey was considered to be an 'Aryan nation' and Turks exempt from the Nuremberg Laws.<sup>108</sup> The report was taken up by the foreign press and sparked international protest. It was a hoax. In fact, Berlin had classified Turks as a 'European people' (not as 'Aryans'), in contrast to the other Middle Eastern countries.<sup>109</sup> Yet this decision had no practical consequences. Foreign citizens (both from Europe and the non-European world) were not, as long as they were non-Jewish, targeted by the Nuremberg Laws.<sup>110</sup> Berlin had also never classified an entire nation as 'Aryan' or 'non-Aryan', and indeed was very cautious in using the term 'Aryan' in official texts at all after 1934. Before Germany could react, Tehran's ambassador to Turkey, Noury Esfandiary, confronted the German legation in Ankara with the report, threatening further diplomatic measures.<sup>111</sup> In Berlin, the Iranian ambassador complained at the Foreign Office, explaining that there was no doubt about the fact 'that the Iranian people are kindred' with the Germans.<sup>112</sup> In fact, the ambassador emphasised that Iranians were virtually the ancestors of the German people.<sup>113</sup> Meanwhile, in Tehran, where the news had also caused some consternation, Iranian officials underpinned their claim that the Persian people were kindred by referring to a recently deciphered ancient Xerxes inscription, which exposed their 'Aryan characteristics'.<sup>114</sup> Berlin reacted to the whole affair by dismissing the reports as 'unfounded and wrong'.<sup>115</sup> In a press memorandum, Wilhelmstrasse stated that the report was obviously false, given that the Nuremberg Laws do not refer to the term 'Aryan' at all.<sup>116</sup> Still, the Iranian

ambassador in Berlin requested a more explicit clarification of whether Iranians were considered as 'Aryans' by German law.

On 1 July 1936, the issue was discussed during a meeting at the Wilhelmstrasse.<sup>117</sup> Walter Gross made clear that any formal declaration was out of the question. 'The envoy can, on no account however, expect that the Iranians, lock, stock and barrel, be declared as Aryans,' he sneered, reminding that the 'term Aryan' (*Arierbegriff*) would be defined in each particular case. The head of the Race Office suggested settling the issue verbally in a personal conversation with Tehran's envoy and, indeed, met with the Iranian ambassador the following week.<sup>118</sup> Gross was unimpressed when the diplomat explained to him that Iranians were the 'ancestors of the Aryan race', and he evaded definitive statements. The Iranian ambassador, in the end, had to content himself with the affirmation that marriages between (non-Jewish) Iranians and Germans were not affected by the Nuremberg Laws.<sup>119</sup> Yet Iranians were never officially classed as 'Aryans' by the Nazi regime.<sup>120</sup> This did not seem to prevent the Germans from appealing for an 'Aryan' fraternity in their propaganda efforts towards Iran. The fall of the Third Reich marked the end of the popularity of the term 'Aryan' in Europe. In the non-European world, the 'Aryan' complex has remained a strong component of nationalist discourse and mythology to the present day.

### Notes

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1. Scholarship on the 'Aryan myth' has almost exclusively focused on the role of India in European concepts of the 'Aryan'; see the classic by Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth* (New York, 1974), and more recently Thomas R. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley, 1997), and Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism and the British Empire* (New York, 2002). Some references to Iran can be found in Klaus von See, 'Der Arier-Mythos', in Nikolaus Buschmann and Dieter Langewiesche (eds), *Der Krieg in den Gründungsmythen europäischer Nationen und der USA* (Frankfurt, 2003), 56–96; Stefan Arvidsson, *Aryan Idols: Indo-European Mythology as Ideology and Science* (Chicago, 2006); and Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Cambridge, 2009), 123–41, 292–321. A more prominent role has been ascribed to Iran by Josef Wiesehöfer, 'Zur Geschichte der Begriffe "Arier" und "arisch" in der deutschen Sprachwissenschaft und Althistorie des 19. und der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts', in Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg and Jan Willem Drijvers (eds), *The Roots of the European Tradition: Proceedings of the 1987 Groningen Achaemenid History Workshop* (Leiden, 1990), 149–67.

2. On the history of concepts, see the articles in Reinhart Koselleck (ed.), *Historische Semantik und Begriffsgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1979). The term 'Aryan' has no entry in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, ed. by Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, 8 vols (Stuttgart, 1972–97), although references to the term are made in the entries on anti-Semitism (Vol. 1, 129–53, 130–1) and racism (Vol. 5, 135–78, 158–61).
3. Quote in *Ancient Persian Lexicon and the Texts of the Achaemenidan Inscriptions Transliterated and Translated with Special References to their Recent Re-examination*, ed. by Herbert Cushing Tolman (New York *et al.*, 1908), 43.
4. The ancient meanings of the term are not part of this chapter; see, for instance, Thomas R. Trautmann, *The Aryan Debate* (New Delhi, 2005); and 'Aria' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica (EIr)*, ed. by Ehsan Yarshater, Vol. 2 (London and New York, 1987), 404–5; 'Arya' in *EI*r, Vol. 2 (London and New York, 1987), 681–3; 'Aryan' in *EI*r, Vol. 2 (London and New York, 1987), 684–7; for a critical assessment, see Mostafa Vaziri, *Iran as Imagined Nation: The Construction of National Identity* (New York, 1993), 75–81.
5. Anquetil du Perron, 'Recherches sur les anciennes langues de la Perse', in *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 31 (1768), 339–441.
6. J. F. Kleuker, *Zend-Avesta*, Theil 2 (Riga, 1777), 57; for other Germans, who took up the term as the name for ancient Persians, see Wiesehöfer, 'Zur Geschichte', 150.
7. William Jones, 'The third anniversary discourse: on the Hindus', in *Asiatick Researches* 1 (1788), 415–31, 422. On the contribution of native scholars to Jones' work, see Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, 'Orientalism's genesis amnesia', in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, 16(2) (1996), 1–14.
8. Franz Bopp, *Über das Conjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenem der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprache* (Frankfurt, 1816).
9. Isaiah Berlin would later speak about 'linguistic patriotism'; see Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (London, 1976), 151; see also Wolfgang Emmerich, *Zur Kritik der Volkstumsideologie* (Frankfurt, 1971); and the classics George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (London, 1978), 35–50, and idem, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York, 1964), 13–30; a comprehensive overview is given by Thomas Nipperdey, 'Auf der Suche nach Identität: Romantischer Nationalismus', in idem, *Nachdenken über die deutsche Geschichte* (Munich, 1986), 110–25. On the general fascination of German romantic thinkers with the 'Orient', see René Gérard, *L'Orient et la pensée romantique allemandes* (Paris, 1963).
10. Friedrich Schlegel, 'Ueber J.G. Rhode: Ueber den Anfang unserer Geschichte und die letzte Revolution der Erde, 1819', in idem, *Sämmtliche Werke*, Vol. 10 (Vienna, 1825), 265–365, quotes on 343–4 (first published in *Wiener Jahrbücher der Literatur*, 8 (1819), 413–68; republished in *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, ed. by Ernst Behler, Vol. 8 (Paderborn *et al.*, 1975), 474–528).
11. German philologists called this 'Indo-Germanic', combining the names of its easternmost and westernmost components. Philologists in France and Britain – since Jones – preferred the name 'Indo-European'.

12. L. C. Beaufort, 'An essay upon the state of architecture and antiquities, previous to the landing of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland', in *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, 15 (1828), 110–241, quote on 205; see also T. Ballantyne, *Orientalism*, 37–8; see also Ali M. Ansari, 'Persia in the Western imagination', in Vanessa Martin (ed.), *Anglo-Iranian Relations Since 1800* (Abingdon, 2005), 8–20, 16.
13. Beaufort, 'An essay', 210.
14. On this shift from 'culture' to 'race', see Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 35–62; Christine Morgenstern, *Rassismus: Konturen einer Ideologie* (Hamburg, 2002), 130–69. On language and race in the nineteenth century, see Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge MA, 1992); Ruth Römer, *Sprachwissenschaft und Rassenideologie in Deutschland* (Munich, 1985), especially 62–84. Key figures of cultural-biological race thought are discussed in Peter Emil Becker, *Sozialdarwinismus, Rassismus, Antisemitismus und Völkischer Gedanke: Wege ins Dritte Reich*, Vol. 2 (Stuttgart, 1990).
15. Frédéric-Gustave Eichhoff, *Parallèle des langues de l'Europe et de l'Inde* (Paris, 1836), 12–13.
16. Christian Lassen, 'Über Herrn Professor Bopps grammatisches System der Sanskrit-Sprache', in *Indische Bibliothek*, 3(1) (1830), 1–113, 71; Lassen used both expressions 'Rasse' and 'Volk'. On Lassen's role in the history of racism, see Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 196–7.
17. Christian Lassen, *Indische Altertumskunde*, Vol. I (Leipzig, 1847), 414.
18. *Ibid.*, 414–17, quotes on 414 and 415.
19. Lassen, 'Über Herrn Professor Bopps', 70–1.
20. F. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, Second Series* (London, 1864); Müller regularly also speaks of 'Aryan nations' and the 'Aryan race'.
21. *Ibid.*, 403–4.
22. F. Max Müller, *Three Lectures on the Science of Language* (Chicago, 1890), 70. Müller would later reject his racial Aryan theories; see F. Max Müller, *Über die Resultate der Sprachwissenschaft: Vorlesung, gehalten in der kaiserlichen Universität Straßburg am 23. Mai 1872* (Straßburg, 1872).
23. See, particularly, Ernest Renan, '*Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques*' (Paris, 1858 [1855]); idem, *Études d'histoire religieuse* (Paris, 1857); idem, *De l'origine du langage* (Paris, 1858); see also Shmuel Almog, 'The racial motif in Renan's attitude to Jews and Judaism', in Shmuel Almog (ed.), *Antisemitism Through the Ages* (Oxford, 1988), 255–78.
24. Reinhart Koselleck, 'The historical-political semantics of asymmetric counter-concepts', in idem, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York, 2004 [first published in German in 1975]), 155–91. Koselleck concentrates on the binary concepts 'Hellenes'/'Barbarians', 'Christians'/'Heathens' and 'Übermensch'/'Untermensch', but also briefly refers to 'Aryan'/'Non-Aryan' on 190–1.
25. Adolphe Pictet, *Les origines indo-européenne ou le Aryas primitifs: Essai de paléontologie linguistique*, Vol. 1 (Paris, 1859 [1850]), 1.
26. Le Comte de Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Paris, 1853/55).
27. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 58–62, 75–93; a classic (though often uncritical) overview of the history of anthropological race theory is Wilhelm E. Mühlmann, *Geschichte der Anthropologie* (Bonn, 1948), part V; see also reference 14.

28. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Vol. 1 (Munich, 1907 [1899]), 509.
29. Lamar Cecil, 'Wilhelm II. und die Juden', in Werner E. Mosse (ed.), *Juden im Wilhelminischen Deutschland, 1890–1914* (Tübingen, 1976), 313–47, 330–1; see also Volker Losemann, 'Rassenideologien und antisemitische Publizistik in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', in Thomas Klein, Volker Losemann and Günther Mai (eds), *Judentum und Antisemitismus von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Düsseldorf, 1984), 137–59, 146.
30. Wilhelm II to Chamberlain, 31 December 1901, Potsdam, printed in Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Briefe 1882–1924*, 2 vols (Munich, 1928), Vol. 2, 141–4.
31. The Kaiser's comments were published in *Welt Rundschau* on 7 July 1924, quoted in Raoul Patry, *La religion dans l'Allemagne d'aujourd'hui: Catholicisme, Protestantisme, Christianisme Païen et Racisme, Judaïsme* (Paris, 1926), 165.
32. 'Zur Ankunft des Schahs von Persien', in *Die Post* (28 May 1902).
33. Theodor Bensen, 'Vorwort', in F. C. August Fick, *Wörterbuch der indogermanischen Grundsprache in ihrem Bestande vor der Völkertrennung* (Göttingen, 1868), v–x.
34. Lazarus Geiger, *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschheit* (Stuttgart, 1871).
35. Theodor Poesche, *Die Arier: Ein Beitrag zur historischen Anthropologie* (Jena, 1878).
36. Ludwig Wilser, *Die Herkunft der Deutschen: Neue Forschungen über Urgeschichte, Abstammung und Verwandtschaftsverhältnisse unseres Volkes* (Karlsruhe, 1885).
37. Karl Penka, *Die Herkunft der Arier: Neue Beiträge zur historischen Anthropologie der europäischen Völker* (Vienna and Teschen, 1886).
38. Gustav Kossinna, *Die Deutsche Vorgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1912); see also idem, *Die Indogermanen, I. Teil: Das indogermanische Urvolk* (Leipzig, 1925).
39. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 94–112; idem, *The Crisis of German Ideology*; Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and their Influence on Nazi ideology* (London, 2003 [1985]); Stefan Breuer, *Die Völkischen in Deutschland. Kaiserreich und Weimarer Republik* (Darmstadt, 2008), 25–144; Uwe Puschner, *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich. Sprache – Rasse – Religion* (Darmstadt, 2001); see also articles in Uwe Puschner, Walter Schmitz and Justus H. Ulbricht (eds), *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung 1871–1918* (Munich, 1999).
40. Wilfried Daim, *Der Mann, der Hitler die Ideen gab: Von den religiösen Verirrungen eines Sektierers zum Rassenwahn des Diktators* (Munich, 1958).
41. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 162.
42. Minutes, Berlin, 15 November 1934, Archives of the German Foreign Office (*Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes*) (PA), R99182; see also the following documents in that file.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.; the decision was officially adopted and circulated by a directive on 18 April 1935; see Interior Ministry, Internal Note, Berlin, 18 April 1935, PA, R78307; see also Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office) to Interior Ministry (Copies to Race Office, Reich Chancellery, and Propaganda Ministry), Berlin, 28 February 1937, PA, R99182. A new attempt to revive the issue in 1937 by Bülow-Schwante could not get support from other agencies of the regime; see, for instance, Gross (NSDAP Race Office) to Foreign Office, Berlin, 28 April 1937, PA, R99182.

45. See, for instance, Hinrichs (Foreign Office) to all ministries and Reich Chancellery, 30 March 1936, PA, R99173; and other documents in R99173. Officials referred to the definition of Stuckart-Globke's *Kommentare zur deutschen Rassegesetzgebung*.
46. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Munich, 1942 [1925–6]), 317–31, especially 319.
47. Notes on a discussion between Hitler and Horthy, 17 April 1943, quote in Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy* (London, 1986), 556.
48. Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts: Eine Wertung der seelisch-geistigen Gestaltenkämpfe unserer Zeit* (Munich, 1936 [1930]), 21–34; for a general overview, see Robert Cecil, *The Myth of the Master Race: Alfred Rosenberg and Nazi Ideology* (London, 1972), 82–104.
49. Rosenberg, *Mythos*, 34.
50. On *Judenforschung*, see Dirk Rupnow, Vernichten und Erinnern: Spuren nationalsozialistischer Gedächtnispolitik (Göttingen, 2005), 137–231; idem, 'Judenforschung', in Michael Fahlbusch and Ingo Haar (eds), *Handbuch der völkischen Wissenschaften* (Munich, 2008), 312–22; Nicolas Berg and Dirk Rupnow (eds), *Judenforschung: Zwischen Wissenschaft und Ideologie*, issue of the Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook, 5 (2006), 257–598.
51. Ekkehard Ellinger, *Deutsche Orientalistik zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus, 1933–1945* (Neckarhausen, 2006), 300–15; a concise overview is given by Ludmilla Hanisch, 'Zur Geschichte der Semitistik und Islamwissenschaften während des "dritten Reichs"', in *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, 4 (1995), 221–3; Stefan R. Hauser, 'Deutsche Forschungen zum Alten Orient und ihre Beziehungen zu politischen und ökonomischen Interessen vom Kaiserreich bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg', in *Comparativ: Leipziger Beiträge zur Universalgeschichte und vergleichenden Gesellschaftsforschung*, 14(1) (2004), 46–65; Sheldon Pollock, 'Ex Oriente Nox: Indologie im nationalsozialistischen Staat', in Sebastian Conrad and Randeria Shalini (eds), *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt, 2002), 335–71.
52. Ibid.; Hauser, 'Deutsche Forschungen', 61.
53. The lecture series was titled 'Die deutsche Orientforschung, ihre Gegenwartsbedeutung und ihre Gegenwartsaufgaben', and the papers were printed in Hans Heinrich Schaeder (ed.), *Der Orient und wir: Sechs Vorträge* (Berlin, 1935).
54. Wilhelm Weber, 'Der Alte Orient', in Schaeder (ed.), *Der Orient und wir*, 1–30, quote on 4.
55. Ibid., 29–30.
56. Heinrich Lüders, 'Indien', in Schaeder (ed.), *Der Orient und wir*, 68–91.
57. Hans Heinrich Schaeder, 'Asien und die Ostgrenze der europäischen Kultur', in idem (ed.), *Der Orient in deutscher Forschung: Vorträge der Berliner Orientalistentagung Herbst 1942* (Leipzig, 1944), 6–17; for similar affinity to the 'Aryan Persians', see idem, 'Der neuere Orient', in idem (ed.), *Der Orient und wir*, 31–55, in idem, 'Das persische Weltreich', in *Die Weltreiche der Geschichte und die Großraumidee der Gegenwart: Vorträge der Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau*, ed. by University of Breslau and Universitätsbund Breslau (Breslau, 1942), 9–39; idem, 'Europa – Naher Osten – Asien', in *Der Nahe Osten*, 4 (1943), 1–10; idem, 'Firdosi und die Deutschen', in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 88 (1934), 118–29.

58. Hans Heinrich Schaeder, 'Iran und Deutschland', in *Orientnachrichten*, 4 (1938), 1–2, 2.
59. Schaeder, 'Asien und die Ostgrenze', 9.
60. Walther Hinz, *Iran: Politik und Kultur von Kyros bis Rezâ Schah* (Leipzig, 1938), 11 and 113; see also idem, *Irans Aufstieg zum Nationalstaat im fünfzehnten Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1936), 124. Hinz's colleague Herbert Melzig praised the 'Iranian Renaissance' under Reza Shah, however, without referring to the 'Aryans'; see Herbert Melzig, *Reza Schah: Der Aufstieg Irans und die Grossmächte* (Stuttgart, 1936), 137.
61. Josef Wiesehöfer, 'Das Bild der Achaimeniden in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus', in Amélie Kuhrt and Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds), *Achaemenid History III: Method and Theory* (Leiden, 1988), 1–14; see also Johannes Renger, 'Die Geschichte der Altorientalistik und der vorderasiatischen Archäologie in Berlin von 1875 bis 1945', in Willmuth Arenhövel and Christa Schreiber (eds), *Berlin und die Antike* (Berlin, 1979), 151–92; Volker Losemann, *Nationalsozialismus und Antike* (Hamburg, 1977); Beat Näf, *Von Perikles zu Hitler? Die athenische Demokratie und die deutsche Althistorie bis 1945* (Frankfurt et al., 1986).
62. Helmut Berve, 'Zur Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orients', in *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 25 (1935), 216–30; quote on 222; his thoughts on 'non-Aryan' races, 228–30. Berve had already praised the ancient Persians in his famous *Greek History* of 1931; see idem, *Griechische Geschichte I: Von den Anfängen bis Perikles* (Freiburg, 1931), 213.
63. Fritz Schachermeyr, 'Die nordische Führerpersönlichkeit im Altertum: Ein Baustein zur Weltanschauung des Nationalsozialismus', in *Humanistische Bildung im nationalsozialistischen Staate, Neue Wege zur Antike*, 1, 9 (Leipzig and Berlin, 1933), 36–43.
64. Idem, *Indogermanen und Orient: Ihre kulturelle und machtpolitische Auseinandersetzung im Altertum* (Stuttgart, 1944), 149.
65. Wilhelm Sieglin, *Die blonden Haare der indogermanischen Völker des Altertums: Eine Sammlg der antiken Zeugnisse als Beitrag zur Indogermanenfrage* (Munich, 1935); Peter Julius Junge, *Dareios I. König der Perser* (Leipzig, 1944).
66. Wiesehöfer, 'Das Bild der Achaimeniden', 10–11.
67. Hans Friedrich Karl Günther, *Die nordische Rasse bei den Indogermanen Asiens: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Urheimat und Rassenherkunft der Indogermanen* (Munich, 1934), 110; for an overview, see Günter Altner, *Weltanschauliche Hintergründe der Rassenlehre des Dritten Reiches: Zum Problem einer umfassenden Anthropologie* (Zürich, 1968).
68. Hans Friedrich Karl Günther, *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (Munich, 1922), 267; similar views also in idem, *Rassenkunde Europas* (Munich, 1929).
69. Gerhard Heberer, *Rassengeschichtliche Forschungen im indogermanischen Urheimatgebiet* (Jena, 1943), 70.
70. Walter Wüst, *Indogermanisches Bekenntnis: Sechs Reden* (Berlin, 1942); see also idem, *Indogermanisches Bekenntnis: Sieben Reden* (Berlin, 1943); on his career, see Maximilian Schreiber, *Walther Wüst: Dekan und Rektor der Universität München 1935–1945* (Munich, 2008); Wiesehöfer, 'Zur Geschichte', 153.
71. Wüst, *Indogermanisches Bekenntnis* (1942), 43.
72. *Ibid.*, 23–30, especially 28–9 (on decline) and 30 (on Reza Shah).

73. Michael H. Kater, *Das 'Ahnenerbe' der SS: 1935–1945: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturpolitik des Dritten Reiches* (Munich, 2006 [1974]), 111–12; and more generally Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner: Studien zum Machtkampf im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem* (Stuttgart, 1970).
74. Good overviews are given by Christopher Hale, *Himmler's Crusade: The Nazi Expedition to Find the Origins of the Aryan Race* (Hoboken NJ, 2003); Wolfgang Kaufmann, *Das Dritte Reich und Tibet: Die Heimat des 'östlichen Hakenkreuzes' im Blickfeld der Nationalsozialisten* (Ludwigsfelde, 2009); and Reinert Greve, 'Tibetforschung im NS-Ahnenerbe', in Thomas Hauschild (ed.), *Lebenslust und Fremdenfurcht: Ethnologie im Dritten Reich* (Frankfurt, 1995), 168–99.
75. Kater, *Das 'Ahnenerbe' der SS: 1935–1945*, 97.
76. Hans Siegert, 'Zur Geschichte der Begriffe "Arier" und "arisch"', in *Wörter und Sachen*, 4 (1941/42), 73–99, 99.
77. On German-Iranian relations, see S. Djalal Madani, *Iranische Politik und Drittes Reich* (Frankfurt, 1986); Yair P. Hirschfeld, *Deutschland und Iran im Spielfeld der Mächte: Internationale Beziehungen unter Reza Schach 1921–1941* (Düsseldorf, 1980), 135–308; idem, 'German policy towards Iran: continuity and change from Weimar to Hitler, 1919–39', in Jehuda L. Wallach (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East 1835–1939 [Beiheft des Jahrbuchs des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte Tel Aviv 1]* (Tel Aviv, 1975), 117–41, especially 125–41; Ahmad Mahrad, *Die Wirtschafts- und Handelsbeziehungen zwischen Iran und dem nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Reich* (Frankfurt and Bern, 1982).
78. 'Abschluß der deutschen Firdosi-Feiern', in *Hochschule und Ausland*, 13(1) (1935), 78–9; The *Persische Straße* was renamed *Iranische Straße* in 1935; see Heidrun Joop, *Berliner Straßen: Beispiel Wedding* (Berlin, 1987), 108. For German cultural propaganda in Iran in 1934–5, see Hirschfeld, *Deutschland und Iran*, 152–5.
79. Ettel, Report 'Richtlinien für die dt. Prop. nach dem Iran', 24 August 1942, Berlin, PA, R27329.
80. Winkler, Report 'Aufzeichnung des ehemaligen Kulturreferenten der Deutschen Gesandtschaft in Teheran: Erfahrungen aus der deutschen Propagandaarbeit in Iran vom November 1939 bis September 1941', 10 January 1942, Berlin, PA, R60690. The extent to which the Aryan myth was actually exploited by German propaganda is unknown. Very little documentation of the German propaganda towards Iran survived the war. The remaining propaganda broadcast transcripts (from the years 1940–1) provide no evidence of a massive propagandistic utilisation of the Aryan myth; see the transcripts in Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde (BA), R901/73039.
81. On the reception by Hindu nationalists, see, for instance, Ballantyne, *Orientalism*, 169–87; and Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths* (Oxford, 2001), especially 7–40, 204–6. On the Aryan legend and Afghan nationalism, see Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization 1880–1946* (Stanford, 1969), 345–7; Senzil K. Nawid, 'Tarzi and the emergence of Afghan nationalism: Afghan search for identity', in *The American Institute of Afghanistan Studies*, Online Publication (2009).
82. On early Aryan ideas in Qajar Iran by writers like Akhundzadah, Kirmani and Taqizadah, see Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, 'Cultures of Iranianness: the evolving

- polemic of Iranian nationalism', in Nikki Keddie and Rudi Matthee (eds), *Iran and the Surrounding World 1501–2001: Interactions in Culture and Cultural Politics* (Seattle, 2002), 162–81, esp. 165–6; and Afshin Marashi, *Nationalizing Iran: Culture, Power, and the State, 1870–1940* (Washington, 2008), 49–85, especially 66–75, 76–83. Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, 'Self-Orientalisation and Dislocation: The Uses and Abuses of the Aryan Discourse in Iran', in *Iranian Studies* 44(4) (2011), 445–72 provides a general account of ideas and debates about Aryanism among intellectuals in modern Iran.
83. On the impact on the 'Aryan myth' and Renan's influence on Akhundzadah, see Marashi, *Nationalizing Iran*, 73–5; Maryam B. Sanjabi, 'Rereading the enlightenment: Akhundzadah and his Voltaire', in *Iranian Studies*, 28(1/2) (1995), 39–60; Mehrdad Kia, 'Mirza Fath Ali Akhundzade and the call for modernization in the Islamic world', in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 31(3) (1995), 422–48, 427; on Akhundzadah in general, see Juan R. I. Cole, 'Marking boundaries, marking times: the Iranian past and the construction of the self by Qajar thinkers', *Iranian Studies*, 29(1/2) (1996), 35–56, 37–43; Iraj Parsinejad, *Mirza Fath' Ali Akhundzadeh and Literary Criticism* (Tokyo, 1988); Shaul Bakhash, *Iran: Monarchy, Bureaucracy and Reform under the Qajars: 1858–1896* (London, 1878), 1–75, especially 41–3; Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Historiography* (New York, 2001), 96–112; idem, 'Refashioning Iran: language and culture during the Constitutional Revolution', in *Iranian Studies*, 23(1/4) (1990), 77–101.
  84. Mirza Fathali Akhundzadah, *Maktubat*, ed. by M. Subhdam (Düsseldorf, 1364/1985 [1868]).
  85. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, *A'inah-yi sikandari* (Tehran, 1906); on Kirmani in general, see Iraj Parsinejad, 'Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani and literature', in *Iran Nameh*, 8(4) (1990), 541–66; Bakhash, *Iran*, 303–73, especially 345–6; and Ansari, 'Persia in the Western imagination', 16–17; Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran*, 96–112; idem, 'Refashioning Iran'; and idem, 'Crafting history and fashioning Iran: the reconstruction of Iranian identity in modernist historical narratives', in *Iran Nameh*, 12(4) (1994), 583–628.
  86. Taqizadah published several major articles in *Kavah*, summarising the ideas of European scholars of Iran and Aryan theories; see Marashi, *Nationalizing Iran*, 79–80.
  87. Alessandro Bausani, 'Muhammad or Darius? The elements and basis of Iranian culture', in Speros Vryonis Jr (ed.), *Islam and Cultural Changes in the Middle Ages* (Wiesbaden, 1975), 43–57, 46; see also 'Iranian identity' in *EIr*, Vol. 8 (New York, 2006), 501–30, 527.
  88. Rustom Khurshedji Karanjia, *The Mind of a Monarch* (London, 1977), 236.
  89. Kashani-Sabet, 'Cultures of Iranianness', 174–6; Marashi, *Nationalizing Iran*, 99–104.
  90. Hasan Pirniya, *Iran-i Qadim* (Tehran, 1307/1928).
  91. *Ibid.*, 8.
  92. Husayn Farhudi, *Dawrah-yi umumi-yi tarikh* (Tehran, 1312/1933).
  93. Abbas Iqbal Ashtiyani, *Dawrah-yi tarikh-i umumi* (Tehran, 1312/1933).
  94. *Ibid.*, 133.
  95. *Ibid.*, 17–18.

96. Abu al-Hasan Furughi, *Tahqiq dar haqiqat-i tajaddud va milliyat* (Tehran, 1309/1930), 34.
97. John R. Perry, 'Language reform in Turkey and Iran', in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 17 (1985), 295–311; Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, 'Language reform movement and its language: the case of Persian', in Björn H. Jernudd and Michael J. Shapiro (eds), *The Politics of Language Purism* (Berlin and New York, 1989), 81–104; Mehrdad Kia, 'Persian nationalism and the campaign for language purification', in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34 (1998), 9–36.
98. Bert G. Fragner, 'Historische Wurzeln neuzeitlicher iranischer Identität: Zur Geschichte des politischen Begriffs "Iran" im späten Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit', in Rudolpho Macuch (ed.), *Studia Semitica Necnon Iranica* (Wiesbaden, 1989), 79–100, 88–91; see also Gherardo Gnoli, *The Idea of Iran: An Essay on its Origin* (Rome, 1989).
99. For the common narrative, see, for instance, George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran* (Ithaca, 1949), 151–66; Ahmad Mahrad, *Iran unter der Herrschaft Reza Schahs* (Frankfurt, 1977), 30–1; Madani, *Iranische Politik*, x, 518–32.
100. A more complex picture is presented by Hirschfeld, who argues that Irano-German relations were shifting and ambiguous. In the end, German policy influence in Iran in the Weimar period had been stronger than during the Nazi period; see Hirschfeld, 'German policy towards Iran', especially 134–6, on the anti-German attitudes of Iranian officials. At least two Iranian ministers, Ahmed Matin-Daftari (Minister of Justice since 1935) and Mahmoud Bader (Minister of Finance, 1937–9), were known to have pro-German sympathies, whereas many others were pro-British, most notably Mahmud Jam (Prime Minister and later Minister of Court) and Davar (Minister of Finance), or openly anti-German, like General Nakhjevan (Head of the Iranian Air Force and later Minister of War), General Khosrovi (General Manager of the Iranian National Bank and since 1939 Minister of Finance) and Ali Mansur (Prime Minister during the invasion of Iran in 1941).
101. Memorandum for Iranian Consulates and Embassies Abroad, Foreign Office (Document No. 41749), 3/10/1313 [1935], Tehran, National Archives of Iran (*Sazman-i Asnad-i Milli-yi Iran*) (NAI), Film 22–240, 21/6/214 (Archive No. 297036473).
102. Ibid.; references to and copies of further letters regarding the renaming, including a letter of Imperial Bank of Persia, informing its customers about the new name 'Imperial Bank of Iran' and debates about the promotion of the new name in the USA can be found in Muhsin Rusta'i, 'Rayzani-yi Iran-i asr-i Riza Shah darbarah-yi yak vazhah-yi tarikhi (Iran baja-yi Pars)', in *Ganjinah-yi Asnad: Faslnamah-yi Tahqiqat-i Tarikhi*, 10(1 and 2) (Spring and Summer 1379/2000), 60–7.
103. Siad Baqir Kazimi to Iranian Embassies Abroad (Document No. 41797), 4/10/1313 [1935], Tehran, NAI, File 510006, Box 444 (Archive No. 297036473).
104. Klopp vom Hofe, 'Die Erneuerung Irans: Das Persien des Pahlavi-Zeitalters nennt sich wieder "Arierland"', in *Völkischer Beobachter* (22 March 1935); for a similar view, see 'Ein Staat wird umbenannt: Persien nennt sich jetzt: Iranien', in *Angriff*, 9 (11 January 1935); a collection of German press articles on the renaming and the politics of national renewal in Iran can be found in the *Reichslandbund Press Archive*, BA, R8034 II/8152; see also Karl Haushofer, 'Iran statt Persien!' in *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, 12(3) (1935), 158–60.

105. Wipert von Blücher, *Zeitenwende im Iran* (Birbach R., 1949), 323–4.
106. See, for instance, documents in file PA, R99173.
107. Internal Note (Foreign Office), 30 August 1935, Berlin, PA, R99182; see also Hirschfeld, ‘German policy towards Iran’, 125.
108. ‘*Les Turcs promus “aryens”*’, in *Le Temps* (14 June 1936); on the wave of protests it sparked, see files in R99173.
109. On the inclusion of Turkey on 30 April 1936, see the documents in file R99173; specifically Hinrichs (Foreign Office) to all ministries and Reich Chancellery, 30 March 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173; Gross (NSDAP Race Office) to Foreign Office, 28 April 1937, Berlin, PA, R99182.
110. *Ibid.*; see specifically in the case of Iran: Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office) to German Embassy Tehran, 18 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173.
111. Keller (German Embassy Turkey) to Foreign Office, 19 June 1936, Tarabya, PA, R99173. The Iranian ambassador had learned about the news through a local newspaper article: ‘*Une circulaire recue par l’Ambassade d’Allemagne*’, in *République* (15 June 1936).
112. Internal Note by Pilger (Foreign Office), 16 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173; Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office) to German Embassy Tehran, 18 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173; Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office) to various German Ministries, 20 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173.
113. Internal Note (Foreign Office), n.d. [August 1936], Berlin, PA, R104782.
114. Smend (German Embassy Tehran) to Foreign Office Berlin, 19 June 1936, Tehran, PA, R99173. About irritations in Tehran: Internal Note Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office), 22 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173. German accounts suggest that among Iranians in the 1930s there was widespread popular belief in an Aryan kinship between Germans and Iranians. According to German memoirs and travel accounts, some Iranians even claimed that Germans originated from the eastern Iranian province Kerman; see Edmund Jaroljmek, *Ich lebte in Nah-Ost: Bunties Morgenland zwischen einst und jetzt* (Vienna, 1942), 263; and Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 324.
115. About Berlin’s reaction, see Internal Report by Pilger (Foreign Office), 16 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173, and Internal Note Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office), 22 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173; about the German reaction in Turkey, see Von Keller (German Embassy Turkey) to Foreign Office, 19 June 1936, Tarabya, PA, R99173.
116. Note for the Press (Foreign Office), 16 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173; see also Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office) to German Embassies in Egypt, Iraq and Iran, 18 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99174. *Le Temps* reported about the German statement a few days later; see note in *Le Temps* (24 June 1936) and “*Aryens*” et non “*aryens*”, in *Le Temps* (28 June 1936).
117. Minutes by Hinrichs, Berlin, 2 July 1936, PA, R99174; see also Invitation by Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office), 26 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99174.
118. Hinrichs (Foreign Office) to Embassy Tehran, 11 July 1936, Berlin, PA, R99174.
119. *Ibid.*; see also Internal Note by Bülow-Schwante (Foreign Office), 22 June 1936, Berlin, PA, R99173. The Iranian ambassador’s dispatches also calmed sentiments in Tehran; see Smend (German Embassy Tehran) to Foreign Office Berlin, 18 July 1936, Tehran, PA, R99174.

120. For a definite statement, see Gross (NSDAP Race Office) to Foreign Office, 28 April 1937, Berlin, PA, R99182. The history of the debate between Germans and Iranians about the official racial categorisations of Iranians has often been written inaccurately or incorrectly; see, for instance, Matthias Küntzel, *Die Deutschen und der Iran: Geschichte und Gegenwart einer verhängnisvollen Freundschaft* (Berlin, 2009), 51; Madani, *Iranische Politik*, 25–32; Miron Rezun, *The Iranian Crisis of 1941: The Actors Britain, Germany and the Soviet Union* (Cologne, 1982), 28; Fred Halliday, *Iran: Dictatorship and Development* (London, 1979), 316; Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, 160.