

# Geography and Politics in A World Divided

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**Abstract**— *This study attempts to examine the main theories and theorists of geopolitical imagination, arguing for an intrinsic relationship between traditional geopolitics and the development of international relations, both in theory and in practice. Not only have political geographers been made aware of civil rights unrest and other social conflicts, but they have become interested in public policy issues through their work in urban geography. The fast-paced suburb and the associated need to locate new highways, bridges, and desirable facilities such as schools, supermarkets, and hospitals on the one hand, and harmful facilities such as landfills and polluting industries on the other, have brought to the fore on location conflicts and issues of social and racial justice.*

**Keywords**— *Geopolitics, Critical Geopolitics, International Relations Theory, Realism.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is often a tendency towards disciplinary specialization, and few political scientists, geographers, or historians are therefore able to cross disciplinary boundaries and thus synthesize different phenomena. Landscape, nature and physical politics must find a broad audience among historians, geographers and students of political theory. Another problem is what should be listed under the heading "Political Geography": publications by experts, the work of professional associations, the content of courses, textbooks and popular reports, or the activities of practitioners in government institutions. A promising solution to understanding the politics of political geography is to focus on its core concepts such as power, territory, borders, size, and location. However, the difficulty remains in deciding which concepts are really central. However, there are several experts who stick to geopolitical explanations in their research on international relations. For example, focuses on the demand, supply and spatial properties of resources in order to explain conflicts between states. Robert Kaplan argues that we "need to examine the external environment that every state is faced with in determining its own strategy". Others focus on territorial strategies, arguing, for example, that China and India are likely to collide if the 'pearl rope' a series of commercial and military facilities built by the Chinese along the shores of the Indian Ocean - cuts the sea borders. communication in the Arabian Sea and in the Bay of Bengal, which are indispensable for India. In his criticism of geopolitics, Keller, (2017), suggests: 'Everyone agrees

that geography is important. However, pinpointing exactly how the chess board affects the game has proven temporary. It's puzzling why and many others along with him conclude that we need to stop thinking about how geographic conditions affect international relations. While we may find that geopolitics results have been unsatisfactory so far, the apparent importance of geographic conditions - recognized by those who criticize geopolitics from a realistic perspective should encourage us to refine geopolitical thinking. Unlike other publications in defense of geopolitics, this article does not examine whether the conclusions of scientists like Halford Mackinder and Nicholas Spykman were correct. Instead, this article shows that geopolitical thinking can go a long way. for our understanding of international relations, if it allows us to concentrate on decisive factors that are neglected by other approaches: naturally given and man-made material structures in geographical space. It also turns out that those who criticize geopolitics misunderstand the classical branch in particular in large numbers. However, critics like Springer, (2019), suggest some factual flaws in geopolitical thinking.

While Europe, North and Central America, and the Asia-Pacific Basin belong to the Maritime Kingdom, the Heartland region of Russia (including Eastern Europe and Mongolia) makes up the Continental Kingdom. Compared to Cohen's original theory, a new East Asian kingdom has now been introduced, sharing features of continentality and Maritimes. Interestingly, Cohen does not see this rise as a threat to the Maritime Kingdom. In fact, since it had

guaranteed the geostrategic balance between Washington and Moscow during the hot and cold nuclear difference, similarly the growing economic interdependence (or mutual economic vulnerability) can today guarantee the geostrategic balance between Washington and Beijing. Likewise, the idea of social construction reveals political geographic concepts, such as scale and regions, as intrinsically discursive and that they must be 'decomposed'. For example, (Burn, et al., 2019) clarified our understanding of the relationship between regional identities and boundaries, and (O'Loughlin, 2018) exposed scale as a process and introduced the term. 'scale' to indicate this dynamic character. Some works along this line have revealed the need to consider new forms of power, such as networks and new social movements and new ways to view power geographically. Others have uncovered different expressions and forms of identities and introduced concepts such as hybridization to transcend the simplistic dichotomies of us and them. The three pillars of the geopolitical version presented here are (Naylor, et al., 2018):

- Geographic circumstances should not be seen as an irreversible fate. They represent a series of opportunities and constraints, that is, an independent structure of the agency.
- General patterns and long-term processes can be well explained by geographic circumstances, but in order to understand the specific phenomena occurring in international relations, intermediate non-geographic factors must be considered.
- It is useful to detect processes and uncover causal mechanisms, focusing on the role of geography in them, to demonstrate that geographic conditions matter and how.

#### Research questions:

- Do geographical conditions influence the observed outcome?
- Do geographical conditions significantly affect the observed outcome?
- How, that is, in combination with what other factors, do the geographical conditions influence the observed result?

#### The Power of Geopolitics

The aim of geographical work according to this tradition is to support and justify the expansion of state power by demarcating specific geographical features or areas that are crucial for political control. The tradition could be stamped as a strategic, nationalist or power-oriented political territory and is generally defined as 'geopolitical'.

It considers that the international system is based on competition and conflict and seeks to secure the dominant position of the country in question. The intellectual origins of this powerful and power-oriented tradition are usually located in the late 20th century and are related to the prevailing imperial policy and its associated competition between states as well as the establishment of geography as a discipline. Some scholars even label Herodotus as a 'secret agent in the service of Athenian imperialism and emphasize that his work had not only a strategic but also ideological role: to justify victories (Dreher, et al., 2019). Islamic geographer Ibn Khaldun offered similar geographical aids to handicrafts and warfare. He linked the rise and fall of the empire to the interplay of nomadic nomads and permanent residents. He believed that the victors lost their ability to seize power and maintain power over their empire after settling among the more populous population and could predict the collapse of the Islamic State where he lived. The similarities and differences between these three traditions are also reflected visually. Maps are very important in political geography. Since the time of the pharaohs, they have been linked to central authorities. Maps should be considered purely political knowledge, as they allow us to control what exists by choosing what is represented and therefore officially recognized. The most important map contributions of political geography come from a power-based tradition. These geopolitical maps are generally associated with propaganda and are characterized by their powerful simplicity. The maps seem to 'speak' for themselves and the 'look from nowhere' hides their author (Correia, 2020). They represent large disputed areas or areas of tension throughout Europe that are not hampered by borders and even seas. They share the common view in this tradition that political boundaries are strong and insignificant in the face of far-reaching environmental impacts. The similarity of the maps shows that Herodotus belongs to a power-oriented tradition (Weissman, et al., 2018).

#### Past of Geopolitics

Geopolitical reasoning dates back to ancient Greece. Aristotle derived the respective political systems of the Greek city states and their neighboring empires and tribes from climatic conditions. Similar ideas were prominent in France during the Renaissance. Immanuel Kant also linked presumed characteristics of peoples to climatic factors. In modern social science this line of thinking received a boost when geopolitics became the predominant approach in research on international relations. It is argued that states derived their national power (Donovan, 2017), defined it as the science of states as life forms, based on demographic, economic, political, social and geographical

factors. They also advanced partisan models of geopolitical regionalization, suggesting that the German Reich possessed a natural sphere of influence that covered Africa and Europe. Germany was to be the industrial core of this sphere. Africa and the European periphery should play a subordinate role as providers of raw materials (Gravelle, 2018).

Figure 1 shows the scientific principles of classical geopolitics: location and physical geography affected by technology are circumstances that explain the results, such as national power, security threats, and directions. Misleading hints of geopolitics are omitted here (Ikporukpo, 2019).

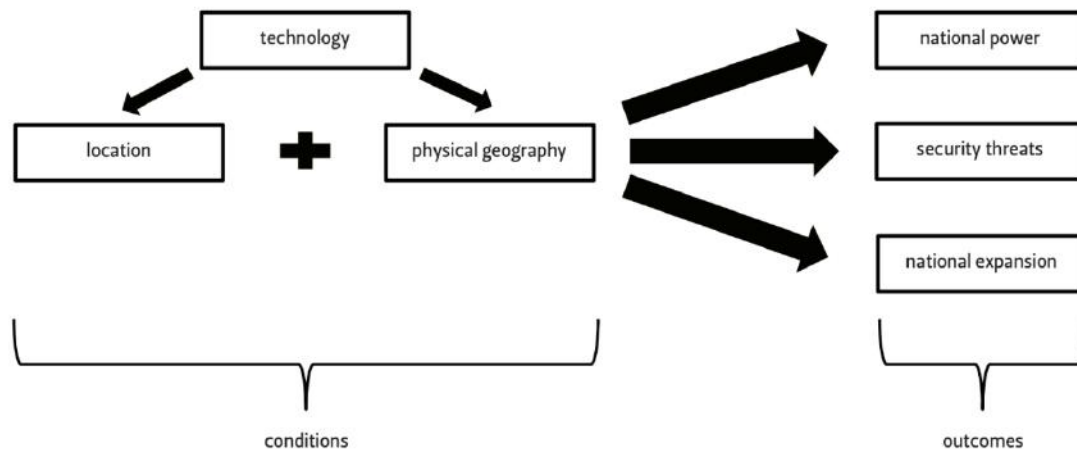


Fig.1: Scientific principles of classical geopolitics

**Future of Geopolitics**

Geographers who study international relations have turned to architecture. Today, political advisers, especially Robert Kaplan, are much closer to the classic branch of geopolitics. The purpose of Geography is to show that geographical conditions - understandable as well as physical reality matter and why. To think geographically means to acknowledge the 'most unfair, awkward, and definite truth: geography,' as he puts it (McCann, 2020). The idea that we need to focus on geographical conditions to explain the power of nations and their enlargement is also a key factor in the aforementioned resource wars, blood and oil and rising power, declining planet books. It is clearly stated that the power of the nation in the 21st century is determined by the enormous resources of a country and its ability to acquire other resources to buy resources, especially oil. The nature and frequency of future warfare will depend on three interrelated factors: the political environment in which decisions are made about resources, the demand and supply of those resources, including options for their replacement and their local characteristics. Presenting Kaplan and Clare too ignorant to understand that reality is more complex than their approach is a convincing critique. If (Vasegh, et al., 2017) had written their books to an academic audience, they would certainly have avoided the simplification criticized by (Naylor, 2017) and explained the details of

independent, dependent, and intermediate variables. The pillars of geopolitical research presented below can be read as a theoretical refinement of the work of Kaplan and Clare. Since the late 1980s, three scholars have made significant conceptual contributions to geopolitics: Colin Gray - a foreign policy adviser to the Reagan administration argues that states 'interactions with constraints and opportunities due to geography explain strategic cultures, i. e., policy patterns:' country political behavior reflects the history of that country; and the history of this country is largely the result of its geographical location. In addition to the fact that geopolitics should not seek to explain or predict the behavior of the state, Gray's quote suggests that proponents of geopolitics do not claim that geographical circumstances determine foreign policy. The geographic set is a scene - but not a scenario - that suggests a plot and influences the characters in the play. Heneghan & Hall, (2020), emphasizes that the objective reality of each state is dynamic; the same applies to geopolitical practices, which he describes as geostrategy. Scholvin & Wigell, (2018), acknowledged that non-geographical factors - such as ideological motives - interfere with a state's foreign policy. The ability of government to understand the effects of geographical conditions also varies. However, Gupta, et al., (2020), explained that only geopolitical practices that are consistent with the objective reality faced by the state make sense. It explains the impact of sensible and

irrational geopolitical practices on the rise and fall of medieval Venice. The Italian city-state has been able to play a key role as an intermediary between silk and spice suppliers in the Middle East and the Far East, on the one hand, and their European customers, on the other. Kitchens carrying goods from Egypt and the Levant across the Mediterranean favored navigating the Adriatic Sea, which allowed sailors to maintain visual contact with the land and thus navigate safely. The scattered coves and islands off the coast of Dalmatia provided protection from storms and refueling stops. Venice itself had easy access to the Italian domestic market and trans-Alpine transport routes. The city's main island, Rialto, is separated from the Italian mainland by shallow waters, which acts as a natural shelter from ground invasions, while sand bars protect Venice from amphibians (Ferreira & Vale, 2020). Venice fell when the discovery of a new world and the shipping lane around Africa transformed the Mediterranean into an Atlantic Ocean with little chance of future economic development. The Venetians could do nothing in the face of this great geopolitical change, but they also made the considered decision to expand into mainland Italy. This enlargement proved to be very costly and united other powers against Venice. The third big supporter of

geopolitics is Saul Cohen. According to his research, geopolitics is not just about international conflicts, which refutes (Kelemen & Pavone, 2018) claim that 'where there is no. Conflicts, tradition has little to say' Cohen comes from the legacy of academic geography as a study of geographical differentiation. It separates the ecumenical, the effective region, and the empty regions of a region or state. Antonsich, (2018), includes centers of population and economic activity: in the case of California, Florida, the Great Lakes region, the states of New England, and Texas in the United States. An efficient region may be part of an ecumenism because of its favorable location or natural resources - but it has not yet achieved this status. Empty areas have no significant development potential. However, they may play a role in national defense or because of resources, as Alaska shows. The analysis of actual area, and voids exceeds location conditions and physiographic (Brass, et al., 2020).

Figure 2 brings together the basic ideas of contemporary geopolitics. Its proponents emphasize the importance of geographical conditions and intervention variables much more clearly than their ancestors of the classical branch (Zebracki & Luger, 2019).

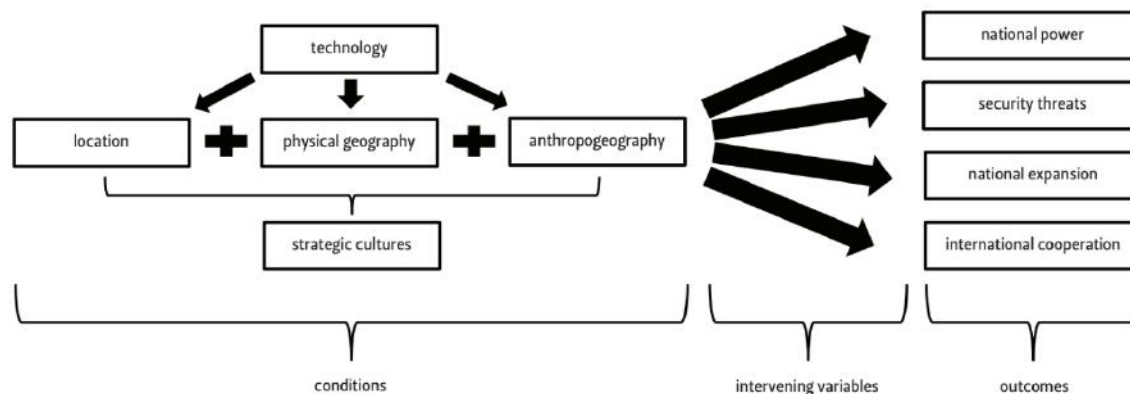


Fig.2: Scientific principles of contemporary geopolitics.

### Geopolitics Pillars

By combining classical geopolitics and modern geopolitics, ignoring misleading traces of discipline and reflecting on criticism, it leads to three pillars of a geopolitical approach to international relations an approach focused on the physical reality that states face. In this sense, geographical conditions are understood as location, physical geography and man-made structures in a geographical space (Menga, 2017). The latter relates largely to what Cohen describes as ecumenism, effective territory, and empty territories. The first pillar of a revitalized geopolitics policy is to recognize that

geographical conditions should not be seen as an irreversible fate. Kaplan's aforementioned statement that geographical conditions are deterministic truths is a key word for a non-academic public. Geographical conditions are rather a set of obstacles and opportunities, which means an agency-independent structure. According to Kelemen & Pavone, (2018), sound performance is based on consideration of geographical conditions. These conditions do not dictate what we do, but they do determine what is reasonable. Although it is not the intention for people to act rationally, an examination of the geographical context will nevertheless lead to solid results,



as geographical conditions often constitute a necessity for social processes. Understanding geographical conditions thus enables us to explain various social phenomena. Second, geographical conditions are the basis for appropriate explanations of general patterns and long-term processes. They are much less useful when it comes to case-specific functions and future development. This principle is best exemplified by what (Antonsich, 2018) wrote about incoming and outward-looking ministers on the one hand and undisturbed mountain ranges on the other: incoming and outgoing ministers cause small, short-term fluctuations in patterns, generally defined by mountain ranges. Cohen goes a step further and argues that 'geopolitical analysis does not predict the time of events. That force a radical change in the geopolitical map'. It focuses on 'conditions that are likely to cause geopolitical change'. Therefore, (Stokke, 2018), argument that 'few research programs have failed to predict events as spectacular as geopolitics' is meaningless. Geopolitics is not about predicting events. Third, to show that geographical conditions are important, and in what way, it is useful to track processes and establish causal mechanisms, focusing on the role of geographical conditions in them. Non-geographical intermediate factors must be recognized. Technology seems to be the most important middle factor. Pigué, et al., (2018), pointed out that large rivers usually form a significant barrier to the expansion of states. However, advances in navigation can turn a river into a carrier that prescribes the direction of national expansion. From this perspective, it is not surprising that the most formidable geopolitical concept Mackinder's core theory - attaches dynamism in international relations to technological progress: how it was noticed that the construction of ships crossing the oceans caused the rise of maritime powers. in Colombian times; rail transport was expected to lead to the rise of continental powers in the post-Columbian era. Another important intermediate factor is politics. The resource-driven conflicts that clearly predict do not only affect the ability of resource-scarce countries to replace the resources they lack, which means through technological progress. The resource struggle, including the likelihood of violent resource conflicts, also depends on the political environment in which there are resource decisions. This is clear in US energy policy. At the beginning of this century, the United States became involved in the pursuit of oil resources in sub-Saharan Africa and sought to reduce its dependence on politically unreliable Middle Eastern oil exporters, particularly Saudi Arabia, the home of 15 of the 19 terrorists who carried out the 11th attacks. September. Due to the fracking boom in North America, which is based solely on geographic conditions, this policy has

recently been revised. Barnes & Sheppard, (2020) claimed that geography is largely a landscape, almost unrelated to the major problems of major strategy.

### **Critical Geopolitics**

Making a distinction between formal and practical geopolitics has been important in recent geographic science. Until recently, most people associated the word geopolitics almost entirely with the former. It is the invention of geopolitical models based on the geographical orientation of different states and their relative global location. One well-known example is Keller, (2017) model of the global "core region" recently revived by writers such as Springer, (2019) and Burn, et al., (2019) regarding contemporary China. Classification as a marine or terrestrial power is considered particularly important for the promotion of international relations. However, the term geopolitics can be redefined to refer to the study of the practical geopolitical reasoning of states and other actors in world politics. The term "critical geopolitics" has been applied to the attempts to see how geopolitical premises act in the ways in which political elites and populations see their place in the world. A powerful premise of many contemporary practical geopolitics, for example, is the way in which rigid boundaries are drawn between what is 'inside' and what is 'outside' a particular country, and how this cartography appears in the structuring of political identities and the definition of material. interests. Beyond these boundaries, places are seen as engaging in world patterns of security interests and commitments, and as they in turn flow "national interests and identities. Critical geopolitics involves exposing the techniques of concealment and spatial restoration associated with the dual geopolitical discipline and intellectual naturalization of the world political map (O'Loughlin, 2018).

### **Sustaining the Power of Geopolitics**

At its most fundamental level, this tradition views the state as given. Its main goal is to maintain the status quo and collect all the facts necessary for the survival of a particular state or the maintenance of a balanced international system. The approach would be neutral and objective. The state is described and analyzed, but not questioned. The focus is on. It privileges the internal structure of states and relations between state and society, rather than relations between one state and another (Naylor, et al., 2018). It's obvious utility for effective state management means that the tradition is and will always be influential at the application level. However, its public visibility and academic role has changed quite a bit over the course of its history Regionalism represents an

alternative approach to the geographical experience of geocentricism (Dreher, et al., 2019). The main influence came from a French school, especially (Correia, 2020). Weissman, et al., (2018), support the notion of different lifestyles that represent the lifestyles that human communities have long developed in the midst of certain places (Donovan, 2017). Vidalia's territoriality was not merely a reaction to the weight given to the environment in work, but was fueled by specific social and political circumstances. When Vidal laid the foundation for his new French geography, France still had to fight for defeat at the hands of the Germans and the loss of Alsace-Lorraine. In addition, industrialization and urbanization are disrupting traditional French lifestyles. National education, and geographic education in particular, was seen as a way to unite the people because 'we only like what we know' (Gravelle, 2018). Vidal's work was also related to today's debate on more efficient administrative practice in France (Ikporukpo, 2019). Eastern France (McCann, 2020) is an eloquent example of the confluence of politics, national education, and regional identity. The political geography was synonymous with regional geography and government (Vasegh, et al., 2017).

### The Power of Politics

This tradition is in many ways more complex and diverse than the other two. It influences several philosophies, including Marxism, poststructuralism, anarchism, humanism, and postmodernism. However, these different threads come together in a common suspicion of the real intentions of states or their governments and the belief that power comes from various groups and structures on the same geographical scale (Naylor, 2017). There are no predecessors of classical Greece, China or anywhere else that fall into this tradition. Early geographers usually served the ruling class and thus had considerable difficulty in questioning the legitimacy of their regular visitors. On the other hand, we know from the work of feminists and other critical scholars that the story silences women, indigenous peoples, or critical voices because the story is written by powerful people; it is his 'story' Although undoubtedly texts existed elsewhere, an example of the work of the Marxist geographer Karl Heneghan & Hall, (2020) during the turmoil in Germany, they were condemned to isolated calls in the desert unless they had resonated deeply from a social and intellectual context. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, a real change of context and those that eventually established a more receptive place for left-wing politics in the university. The civil rights movement in the United States and student protests in most Western countries have put social equality issues on the agenda. Although the social sciences as a

whole are politically and politically focused on local issues such as poverty and racism, as well as international issues such as unequal development, for a critical tradition in political geography, this context initially meant more attention on issues below the state scale (Scholvin & Wigell, 2018).

## II. CONCLUSION

Based on these pillars, geopolitical case studies should aim to answer three questions: Do geographical conditions influence the observed outcome? If so, do geographical conditions significantly affect the observed outcome? If so, how, that is, in combination with what other factors, do the geographical conditions influence the observed result? The realization of this research program will enable us to provide geopolitical information on phenomena of interest to specialists in international relations. It also means testing the relevance of geographical conditions and acknowledging that it does not cause anything alone, only in interaction with non-geographical factors. In Gray's words: 'fixed geopolitics is not geographically deterministic, nor is it linked to the absurd idea that the specific characteristics of physical geography have an inherent and unchanging meaning. However, geopolitics insists that spatial factors.

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