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# FEMINIST GEOPOLITICS AS A DIMENSION OF CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS

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## ABSTRACT

Traditional geopolitics from the theories of Frederich Ratzel, Haushofer, Mackinder and Mahan and Spykman to the theories of Cohen and Lacoste, and finally to critical and postmodern geopolitics have their own interpretations and goals based on world views and opinions. Feminism as a critical discourse of geopolitics has a continuing series of privileged relationships with progressive political movements that emerged in the 1960s. Feminist geopolitics while constructing on critical geopolitics, it reconstructs political opportunities by identifying gaps in dominant geopolitical texts. It should be highlighted that it provides new ways to theorize and apply the connections between space and politics. It is to reform the ways in which knowledge is produced and the epistemological methods derived from cognition. By use of descriptive-analytical approach and library-internet resources, the study focuses on the emergence of critical geopolitics. After that the definition of geopolitics, and then feminism will be discussed and analyzed in the place of feminist geopolitics in critical geopolitics.

**Keywords:** Geopolitics, Critical Geopolitics, Feminism, Feminist Geopolitics

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# ELEŞTİREL JEOPOLİTİĞİN BİR BOYUTU OLARAK FEMİNİZM JEOPOLİTİK

## ÖZET

Frederich Ratzel, Haushofer, Mackinder ve Mahan ve Spykman'ın teorilerinden Cohen ve Lacoste teorilerine ve nihayet eleştirel ve postmodern jeopolitikaya kadar geleneksel jeopolitik, dünya görüş ve düşüncelerine dayalı olarak kendi yorumlarına ve amaçlarına sahiptir. Eleştirel bir söylem olarak feminist jeopolitik; feminizmle birlikte 1960'larda ortaya çıkan, ilerici siyasi hareketlerle süregelen bir dizi ayrıcalıklı ilişkiye sahiptir. Feminizm, jeopolitiği eleştirel jeopolitik üzerine inşa ederken, baskın jeopolitik metinlerdeki boşlukları belirleyerek siyasi fırsatları yeniden inşa eder. Mekân ve siyaset arasındaki bağlantıları kuramlaştırmak ve uygulamak için yeni yollar sunduğu vurgulanmalıdır. Bu yollardan biri de bilginin üretilme biçimlerini ve bilişten türetilen epistemolojik yöntemleri, yeniden biçimlendirmeyi amaçlar. Bu makale; tanımlayıcı-analitik yaklaşım ve kütüphane-internet kaynakları kullanarak önce jeopolitiğin tanımıyla eleştirel jeopolitiğin ortaya çıkması değerlendirilecek ve ardından feminist jeopolitiğin yerini, eleştirel jeopolitikte tartışmaya açıp analiz edilecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Jeopolitik, Eleştirel Jeopolitik, Feminizm, Feminist Jeopolitik

## INTRODUCTION

Along with the human science, the efficient and necessary tools of geopolitics have been theorized. It can be mentioned that social and environmental events in geopolitical and political geography are explained with theories. Within the framework of one or combination of some theories makes it easier to predict and explain these events. Hence, the nature and methodology of theories are the most fundamental issues that a geopolitical researcher should be familiar with. Since the field of geopolitical studies is a multifaceted and expanding field, there are several approaches to it. Some of these approaches tend to determine empirical accuracy and quantity, and others emphasize qualitative and normative subjects (Pishghahi Fard and Kiani, 2012, p. 10).

Geopolitics, which is one of the sub-branches of human geography, has undergone changes in different periods with the effect of global problems as well as geography and philosophical schools. These developments have been particularly multifaceted since the 1990s under the influence of fundamental global political, economic and social changes as well as various perspectives and schools of

thought in the geopolitical field. Geopolitical scientists also present their views on geopolitics while responding to these ideas emerging outside the field. In this context, while geopolitical research was developed based on pre-existing perspectives (such as spatial and behavioral), some thinkers investigated different geopolitical perceptions resulting in important ***critical geopolitical*** literature (Mirahmdariadi and Zaki, 2016, p. 96).

Feminist research is emerging from the same post-positivist intellectual ferment giving a try to extend the concept of agency in critical geopolitics beyond a narrow aspect of research. In these studies, feminist geopolitics argues that focusing on the political elites implies an untenable conceptual split between the public sphere of international relations and the private sphere of daily life (Kuus, 2017, p. 19).

## THEORETICAL CONCEPT

### Geopolitics

The geopolitics of the classical period dates from the late 19th century to the end of World War II. In fact, since the 1870s, two rival groups have emerged. Britain and France, with the secret support of the United States, led the first group favoring a free economy and colonialism. The second group which was led by Germany wanted to reconsider and compete with British economic influence and domination. The rivalry between the two warring groups, which began in the 1870s, culminated in 1914.

The founders of geopolitics were Friedrich Ratzel, Halfrod J. Mackinder, Isaiah Bowman, and Alfred Mahan, whose writings reflected the era of extreme nationalism, state expansionism, and the creation of an overseas empire. Major theorists in this field have been influenced by Social Darwinism. In the meantime, the starting point of their discussion was organic theory or living space, which was proposed by Ratzel and continued with the Eurasian-centered view of Mahan and evolved with organic state (Mohseni, et al, 2019, p.151). During this period, Mackinder outlined his geographical model through taking into account the British Empire, and Ratzel presented his point of view by emphasizing the role of the location and size of the land in its survival (Rahimi, Hafeznia, Ezzati, and Agnew, 2019, p.5).

It should be emphasized that not only Friedrich Ratzel but also Rudolf Kjellen and Karl Ritter were part of such a paradigm built in German political geography, that creates a living link between human societies and the environment in

which they live. The consecration of the new route shortly after the end of World War I was almost entirely attributed to the German geopolitical school. This perception was due to intense concerns and the many studies of intellectual writers and researchers in the German world devoted to issues in this field (Costachie, 2011, p.265).

Accordingly, geopolitics as a ***"science"*** puts forward ***"laws"*** about international politics that are based on the ***"facts"*** of global physical geography (the order of continents and oceans, the division of states and empires into sea and land powers). On the other hand, Dodds introduces scientific geopolitics to the academic and government-oriented worlds of the 1890s and 1900s in response to what he perceives as an overly legalistic approach to states and their conflicts with each other (Dodds, 2007, p.25). Looking at the historical background, Western thought after World War II; on the eve of the war, discarded the concept of geopolitics because of the negative perception associated with geopolitical understanding in Nazi thought. The idea of commencing World War II by Nazis was framed on the philosophical basis and the framework in which war crimes were committed against humanity (Tovy, 2015, p. 3). Geopolitics was something that only happened in Germany, or something its critics implied. It was a result of German intellectual life served to national ideology rather than universal science (Kearns, 2009, p.18).

Until about 1970, shortly after the end of the war, geopolitics was not the subject of serious academic work. The word persisted in the journalistic sense, and political geographers such as Saul Cohen continued to work on it, but it does not mean that geopolitical thought has ended up. In fact, the beginning of the Cold War brought global geopolitical thinking to the fore in a way that had never been seen before. It seems like two global superpowers trapped in a conflict and made the conditions understandable to the leaders and citizens of the great powers all over the world (Dittmer and Bos, 2019, p.8).

In the early 1970s, geopolitics began to be used particularly in the Middle East and Southeast Asia to highlight great power rivalries in the associated regional dimensions. Henry Kissinger is renowned for making geopolitics respected in U.S. policy-making and academia (Dodds, Kuus and Sharp, 2013, p.6). Nazi Germany's transformation into historical memory and the need to understand geographical factors in international cultural, economic, political and strategic development have contributed to the emergence of geopolitics in scientific anal-

ysis in the 1980s by Henry Kissinger's geopolitics (Chapman, 2011, p. 9; Leylanoğlu and Seyedi Asl, 2021, p.109).

Historically the importance of geopolitics has been highlighted, however talking about geopolitics still means talking about geographic realities. For example, security discussions are based on assumptions about ***natural*** boundaries whether they are physical or cultural. The rhetorical power of security claims significantly stems from their connection with so-called natural geographical realities (Kuus, 2007, p.5).

Geopolitics is the analysis of the competition for power over land. In many cases, many lands objectively lack economic and strategic utility, and this symbolic concept provides the fundamental incentives for the parties to conflict over treasured lands. To understand these rivalries, one must look at the representations that the main actors present the situation. The credit given to representations in geopolitical analysis, in turn, expands the field of geography (Ahmadi, 2017, p.58).

Nowadays, the term geopolitics has long been used to refer to the study of geographical representations, rhetoric, and practices that form the basis of world politics. In recent years, the term has actually experienced a kind of revival. The word is now freely used to refer to phenomena such as international border disputes, the nature of global finance, and the geographical patterns of election results. The expropriation of the term gives it a more specific meaning. In fact, the examination of geographical assumptions, assignments, and understandings are involved in the making of world politics (Agnew, 1998, p. 5). It has created a platform for their work on environmental opportunities and solutions (Kelly, 2019, p.44). Therefore, it is closely related to strategic geography, which is related to the control or access to spatial areas that have an impact on the security and well-being of nations (Owens, 1999, p.60).

**Critical Geopolitics**

Critical geopolitics emerged in the late stage of the Cold War to challenge the strategic theories of the time and the ideologies that legitimized them. For more than 40 years, the regional structure of geopolitical thought, has fueled interest in the power of space with geography and the social sciences. This critique was part of a revision of power that accelerated and gradually took on the label of ***critical geopolitics*** (Dodds Kuus and Sharp, 2013, p.6). The works of Thual (and others, most notably Simon Dalby and John Agnew) have had a significant impact on the development of critical geopolitics and it has had great influence in

the discipline of political geography ever since. The main function of critical geopolitics is to examine the geographical assumptions and tasks that have emerged in the formation of world politics. Political actors have globalized international politics portraying it as a ***world*** with specific types of places in addition to trying to clarify and explain their actions. This branch of analysis approaches geopolitics as a profoundly ideological and politicized form of analysis but not as an objective assessment of previously given ***geographical*** facts (Kuus, 2017, p.1).

Critical geography is influenced by the theory of critical destruction, the natural environment of life and human suffering resulting from modern capitalism, and the rotation of leverage capital and multiple powers. A perspective on the critical geography of the nature exploitation has provided the context for human exploitation (Mirheidar and Hamidinia, 2005, p.27). Critical geography wants to show people how their society works. Moreover, it allows them to act as they want to see the changes and transformations of their society in order to know their future world better (Yazdani, Toiserkani, and Moradi, 2007, p.130).

Likewise, Murphy, Bassin, Newman, Reuber, and Agnew's (2004) thoughts on critical geopolitics is recognized for examining how geographic space is represented and expressed by political agents as part of a larger power project, acquisition, management, and enlargement. In the new perspective, the spatial geography, objective, and reality have largely renounced the status of an existing entity and is now understood as a "complex of cultural practices and representations" in a very different sense (Murphy et al., 2004, p.620). Effectively, the field becomes a discursive subject. Whatever the meaning or significance it has, it is not intrinsic or a priory. Rather, it is reflected on it by political or geopolitical discourses (Murphy et al., 2004). Critical geopolitics sees the formation of geopolitical visions as a collection of three pillars. The authors of this school distinguish between three types of geopolitical practice: formal geopolitics (that of academics and think tanks), practical geopolitics (practices of governments and civil society groups), and popular geopolitics (ideas about geopolitical situations expressed through various popular media and always influenced by two other forms of geopolitical activity) (Warf, 2006, p.186).

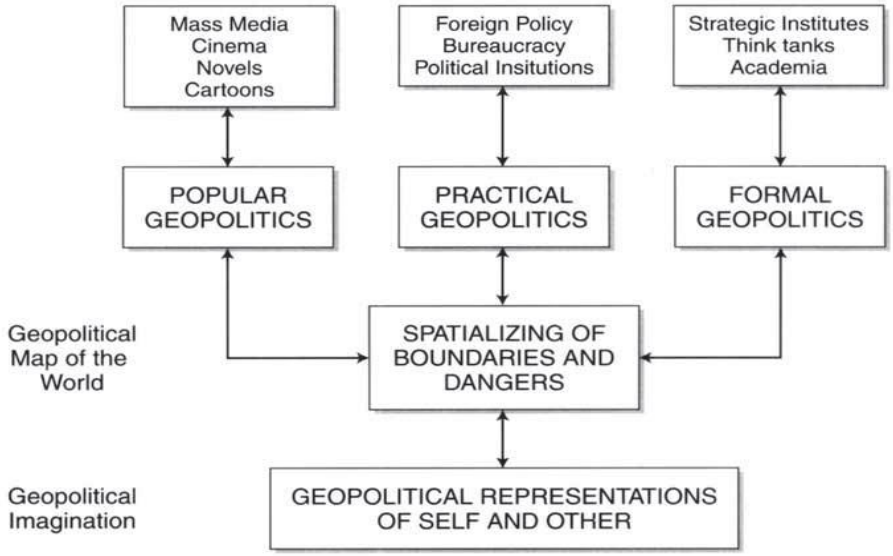


**Figure 1:** A critical geopolitical theory (Ó Tuathail and Dalby, 1998, p.5).

Gearóid Ó Tuathail divides critical geopolitics into three dimensions: the deconstruction of geopolitical traditions, the deconstruction of contemporary discourses, the study of the meaning of spatial concepts such as ***place*** and ***politics*** (Mamadouh, 1998, p.244). Ó Tuathail and Dalby claim that instead of accepting geopolitics as a neutral and objective application of global spatial research, we should start with the fact that geopolitics is a contextuality of geography and a form of politics, that power and political economy are involved in its ongoing social production (Squire, 2015, p.143).

The starting point for critical geopolitics is to argue that traditional perspectives on geopolitics and international politics are primarily ignore the assumptions that underpin these positions. Critical thinking asks questions such as how existing situations arise or how power works to sustain particular contexts. Unlike realistic observers, critical geopolitical writers argue that the assumption of an impartial researcher who records the observable realities of international politics is wrong (Dodds, 2004, p.30). By emphasizing the systematic analysis of texts as discourse, Foster, Megoran, and Dunn (2017, p.180) argue that their first concern was to critically review the main classical geopolitical resources and use this analysis to criticize the reworking of classical geopolitical reasoning in the Cold War and the post-Cold War world.

Critical geopolitics can investigate how the categorizations and cultural creations that we begin to understand and shape our political existence. The focus of such a critical geopolitics should be “to uncover the power games of great geopolitical plans and in turn challenge the classifications of power discourses” (Ó

Tuathail, 1996, p.48). Critical geopolitics for Simon Dalby is a series of studies of the use of geographic realities in the service of state power. This is often a force related to war and violence. As long as large nuclear arsenals remain intact, they potentially make all of humanity unsafe. Moreover, it is an analysis of the social and political consequences of the global militarization operation, the preparation, and the actual use of military power. Given the great resources still devoted to military activity, emancipatory politics, as understood, is linked to the problems of war, violence, and peace in many important ways (Dalby, 1996, p.656). Reynolds advocates that critical geopolitics should include "a kind of emancipation that forces and returns to the agenda of class, gender, race issues" (Reynolds, 1993, p.398).

From this point of view, critical geopolitics which is leftist in ideological orientation aims to challenge traditional geopolitical interpretations. It criticizes everything it sees as a state-centered approach to international relations. Reynolds takes an opposing approach to what is claimed to be ethnocentric, deterministic, and exceptional references to classical geopolitical writings and rejects the traditional balance of power and impact analysis of international issues. While dealing with the geographical aspects of the U.S. and other Western interventions in the developing world, it tries to ***deconstruct*** this literature and emphasizes the rhetorical aspects of geopolitical analysis (Chapman, 2011, p.3). Feminist approaches to the issue of national security, and especially the geographies of social movements in relation to newly radicalized and participatory democracy, that are seen as the center of (Critical) geopolitical research (Cohen, 2015, p.32). Critical geopolitics questions how and why we started to think of the world (or part of it) in a particular way. This is a very useful intellectual movement as it calls into question all kinds of received wisdom including what we are currently producing (Dittmer and Bos, 2019, p.11). Three dimensions can be proposed for critical geopolitics. The first dimension is synonymous with reconstructing geopolitical thought traditions, or in other words, re-evaluating the foundations of methods regularly presented throughout history. Aiming to integrate with the practical experience of running the country, the second dimension involves politicians' efforts to explore how they spatialize international politics. The third dimension challenges certain concepts of geographical factors in world politics and questions the real and current meaning of place and politics by displacing them (Ahmadipour and Badiei, 2002, p.6). In this approach, geopolitics is not a description of the world as it is, but a scenario that the world's leaders want to

see. Therefore, geopolitical works are textual maps of the established perspectives, prejudices, and concerns of geopoliticians (Dahlman, 2009, p.91). There is therefore a huge gap between classical and critical geopoliticians. The first is mainly engaged in a practical initiative—giving policy-makers and other men and women business advice—. The second is engaged in a theoretical project which its logic and used language are very specific (Walton, 2007, p.18).

**Feminism**

As the final years of the Cold War approach, we have witnessed an increase in interdependence resulting from the process of globalization, which has resulted in serious problems in the field of international relations and its basic theoretical structure. Their international relations not only revolve around realism such as war and security, but also expand to include traditional views of liberalism such as international political economy, economic development, human rights, non-state actors, and civil society. Feminist theory brings new perspectives to the field of international relations as well as the two main theories of realism and liberalism (Ruiz, 2003).

The theory of feminism criticizes theories such as realism, which is the mainstream of international relations, and reveals the existence of gender stereotypes in the basic concepts of international relations. Based on this school of thought, our understanding of reality is in fact an intersubjective perception of a complex social and political world. Knowledge is deeply influenced by power, and reality is made up of concepts created in this way. The rise of feminist theories in international relations dates back to the 1980s. However, the traditional theory of international relations was re-evaluated in the 1990s in the post-Cold War decade, that necessitated a study of international gender relations (Vaiphei, 2015, p.3-4). The most basic hypothesis of feminism is the alienation and exclusion of women from domestic and foreign political life through state borders, which has made the mainstream of international relations a male-dominated field. This has made men more dominant over women in this masculine context (Vaiphei, 2015, p.5). At the same time, as a category of analysis, this theory states that although a being does not see gender as a biological term, the set of material and ideological relations that existed between men and women in the historical process were constructed (Saloom, 2006, p.160).

Historically, feminism has been a part of women's political tools, both in practical and academic dimensions, and has undergone two important changes in the last two decades of the 20th century. First, it has been criticized by marginalized

women of feminist theory for offering a unified definition of women by ignoring the identities of different women. The definition given by traditional feminism is mostly built on white, middle-class and Western women. Second, at the same time, this emphasis on the difference between women coincided with the growing popularity of engaging in post-structural thinking among feminist scholars (Moss, 2002, p.21).

For feminism, last decades of the 19th century can be divided into four distinct historical stages beginning with the transition to what is known as modern feminism. Modern feminism, which includes political gender movements in developed countries, began in the 1960s and ended in the 1970s and 1980s. Finally, since the 1990s, there appears third-wave of feminism, which stemmed from criticism within the feminist movement, and opposed to middle-class and white feminism prevailing during the second wave (Jaramillo, 2018, p.12).

Feminists in the first wave wanted to be equal with men to gain all the privileges and opportunities of men. This wave was practically inspired by the positivist sciences because it sought to give more objectivity to these patriarchal realities by pairing it with men since it sees the reality of the world as masculine. The second wave of feminism, which emerged in the last years of the 20th century, criticized the actions of the first wave feminists by arguing that their activities were aimed at consolidating male domination as much as possible. The epistemological and methodological basis of feminists belonging second wave are the teachings of the schools of constructivism and postmodernism. Therefore, they criticized the existence of patriarchal structures in the society (Afzali and Amiri, 2011, p.45). Feminist movements emerging from second wave, who considered a revolt against positivism, are leftist civil rights movements that generally emerged in North America, Europe, and Australia in the 1960s. Between 1970 and 1978, the women's movement raised demands such as equal rights, equal education and employment opportunities, financial and legal independence, free birth control and abortion, women's right to define their gender, and freedom from violence and sexual oppression (Bowlby and Tivers, 2009, p.59).

The theory in question has been subdivided and categorized historically in terms of content as well as referring to different periods. For liberal feminists, who assert individual autonomy, eliminating inequality as opposed to the complete abolition of the system, focus on reform and believe that the system itself can and must change. However, they do not completely reject the system. Unlike liberal feminism, radical feminists strongly argue that systemic reform is inef-

fective because they believe men dominate women. Radical feminism focuses on women as a social entity but not as individuals. The imbalance of power between men and women is at the center of radical feminist thought (Saloom, 2006, p.161).

Postmodern feminists reject the notion of fixed or fundamental gender identity. Moreover, by criticizing the concept of homogenous feminism, postmodern feminists welcome many different feminist ideas, although they do not seek a grand theory or a single truth (Saloom, 2006, p.162). Finally, critical feminist theorists often argue that Western feminism is oppressive. These feminists recognize the importance of other variables, especially race and class in feminist analysis. They use gender identity only as a starting point for political movements and changes (Saloom, 2006, p.163).

In general, gender studies and feminist approaches are related to male and female identities (Hoffman, 2001, p.32). However, there are three basic dynamic concepts in the epistemology of feminism. Gender bias in international relations is a gender dichotomy with the new aspects that feminists attach to international relations with putting an emphasis on the women (Jaramillo, 2018, p.15).

The first epistemology gave modern science a valuable route for understanding the activities of women around the world. It, therefore, begins with the assumption that feminists are potentially a useful tool for reclaiming and evaluating their contribution to civilization. The feminist empiricist approach appears to be more influential than the evolution of modern scientific perspectives. The same can be said of the politics of liberal feminism, which is closely linked to empirical epistemology. Liberal feminism seeks equal rights for women in all areas of work without any discrimination of rights. Women should also enjoy the political benefits of citizenship through legal control over individuals' property and, at the same time, having the opportunity to enter the men's market in high-wage international organizations with high-wage positions (Lascuarín and Villafuerte, 2016, p.54). Traditional epistemologies in international relations eliminate the possibility of women to become scientists or representatives of knowledge. In this sense, feminists argue that realism uses a completely masculine way of getting to know the world (True, 2005, p.215).

The second epistemology deals with radical politics of culture. In the epistemology of feminist perspectives, this approach informs women as representatives of knowledge and theory. Therefore, the experience of women can form a basis for critical and global theory of international relations (True, 2005, p. 216). Radical-

cultural feminist sees the nationality of women as universal, which takes different forms at different times. They also claim that the patriarchal system is responsible for the oppression of women (Lascuarín and Villafuerte, 2016, p.55).
Finally, the third epistemology is about socialist feminism and post-modern feminism. The first argues that the position of women in society is determined by the production structures in the economy and the reproductive structures at home. Socialist feminism therefore seeks to understand the position of women in various roles in order to find a position to explain their situation (Tickner, 1992, p.14). On the other hand, Postmodern feminism criticizes the claim that unified representation of women along class, racial, and cultural lines is impossible. Postmodernism believes that many women's voices must be heard so that feminism does not become another hierarchical system in the construction of knowledge (Tickner, 1992, p.16).

**Feminist Geopolitics**

Gender and geography have always been linked. Feminist geographers looked at a wide range of areas and scales to understand how gendered relationships (intersection of gender communication and interpersonal relationships) arise in specific places, and by shaping these places they created gendered architectures and landscapes that reflect power relations between people. The history of feminist geography and its interest in gender reflect the wider feminist movement in many ways. Feminist geography begins with feminist social movements in the 1960s and the 1970s to include women in equal ways. It is sufficient to enumerate only a few of these in society, politics, workforce and education (Gallaher, 2009, p.87).
The first critical geopolitical wave of the 1990s focused almost empirically on male-dominated intellectuals in the centers of state power. The reason for this focus was partly on the issue that involved the Cold War superpower politics and, in a way, provided an indirect geopolitical groundwork for men as an area of action and analysis. Feminist research has attempted to extend the concept of agency in critical geopolitics beyond such a limited area of research. Despite the critical stance on power structures, critical geopolitics reproduces the central view that criticizes this view to some extent (Kuus, 2017, p.19). Feminist geopolitics were originally born out of critical geopolitical researches. However, it has developed as a separate branch and a critique of critical geopolitical sciences. One of the major reasons for the rise of feminist geopolitics has been the call for women's empowerment in the social, cultural, and political spheres by the

inclusion of those previously marginalized. The slogan ***the personal is political*** facilitated the rise of women's engagement with geopolitics as the second wave of feminism approach. Feminist geographers such as Lise Nelson, Joni Seager, and Jennifer Hyndman sought to draw upon the ideas that women's personal experiences were based on masculine politics. The rise of feminist geopolitics begins to challenge the male-centered and state-centered nature of modern discourse that constantly ignores and excludes women (Kim, 2019, p.12). Feminist researchers develop a feminist geopolitics that challenges critical geopolitics and other frameworks, including the world systems approach in three ways. First, the content of critical geopolitics has been criticized for its state-centricity, and its focus is still on the ***old white men*** speaking for the government. Second, geography is reconceptualized from hierarchies and clearly defined spaces to an approach that sees multiple spaces intertwined in complex ways. Third, critical geopolitical practice is seen as standing in academic criticism rather than doing things, which means the normative geopolitical agenda is not encouraged (Flint and Taylor, 2018, p.80).

Gillian Rose criticizes the discipline of geography for its inherent masculinity, phallocentric language, and masculine perspective. This masculine identity, which stems from the representation methods of the subject of geography, epistemology and the principles of ontology, alienates women from the discipline (Rose, 1993, p.30). Likewise, the methods of producing knowledge in political geography are a form of producing knowledge that claims to be universal, or at least comprehensive and impartial. However, feminist political geographers challenge political geography by reproducing its basic concepts and ways of creating masculine knowledge. Concepts are difficult to reformulate and include basic constitutional ideas such as citizenship and differences. In doing so, feminists often use geographies or places that are not traditional focal points for politics. Meanwhile, the political geography of feminism has challenged the knowledge production processes in this field and tries to democratize knowledge production by recognizing the importance of existing knowledge (Staeheli and Kofman, 2005, p.5).

Lorraine Dowler and Joanne Sharp (2001) refer to the improbability of feminist geopolitics resulting from an ontological and epistemological stalemate between the two sub-disciplines. A study of Lorraine Dowler and Joanne Sharp argue that the boundary between the two sub-disciplines is actively maintained on both sides through practical academia. Although the two sub-disciplines cannot come

into play, Lorraine Dowler and Joanne Sharp encourage practitioners of both political and feminist geography to build a body of research, which can be used to challenge systems of inequality around the world. Within the discipline, they argue that it is important to note that although there are identity politics problems, no sub-discipline is concerned only with issues of power and inequality (Dowler and Sharp, 2001, p.166).

Critical geopolitics is a theory which investigates the intersection of space and politics rather than separating normalized categories and narrating from geopolitics. Rather than writing about world geography and politics, it is about questioning universally accepted hypotheses and examining institutional ways of producing such a world. This sub-branch of political geography deals with the suspension of modernist assumptions from the centers where politics and knowledge are made and meaning is imposed. This approach analyzes the methods of discourse that researchers identify international politics in a single world characterized by specific groups of people, places, and stories (Hyndman, 2005, p.568). Like critical geopolitical scientists, feminist geographers (and geopoliticians) show that global perspectives and macro-geopolitical theorization mean the disappearance of everyday politics (Hyndman, 2007, p.42).

Considering the usefulness of geopolitical analysis in critical feminist geopolitics, it should be highlighted that deconstructive impulses are necessary to change or prevent violence, but they are not enough. Critical geopolitics decentralizes the nation-state and reveals investments embodied by our dominant geopolitical narratives. It does not bring all factors together, and in practice there is no clear path (Hyndman, 2001, p.213).

Contrary to the simple models and simple explanations of classical geopolitics, feminist geopolitics have revealed the need for a ***multi-population*** geopolitics that defines the complexity of the world and the peculiar situation of people everywhere (Flint, 2006, p.1). That is an expression of dissatisfaction with research methods that exclude or alienate people who accept male, white, heterosexual, middle class and middle-age as a norm and therefore do not belong to this group. This critique of geography is the recognition of gender as a fundamental social category and the belief in the inclusion of women in both users and knowledge producers (Ekinsmyth, 2002, p.53).

The nature of feminist geography has changed dramatically over time, reflecting changes in feminist theory and politics as well as changes in geography. In this context, the 1970s witnessed criticisms of passivity and prejudice and later on in

early 1980s until 1990, put an emphasis on women's different experiences, and concern with differences, representations and identities (Johnson, 2009, p.46). Feminist geographers (geopoliticians), who believe that gender is constructed by space and spatially, actually go beyond this to show that gender and space are mutually constructed. In fact, it shows that gender and space are shaped by each other in two ways. Gender are created on and through certain sites and at the same time, these sites improve our ideas about gender (Ekinsmyth, 2002, p.58). Feminist geopolitics try to fill this gap by engaging closely with actors and places outside the official sphere of the state. This fundamental principle requires feminist work to be a political person rather than a geopolitical person. This approach tries to understand how political life is conducted through the multiplicity of alternative and gendered political spaces by approaching individuals as ordinary political subjects. Underlining the geopolitical practices of individuals other than the upper echelons of government, she points out that the abstract distinction between political and non-political areas or between geopolitics and domestic politics is constructed as an institutional structure (Kuus, 2017, p.20). Geographer Eleonore Kofman (1996, p.218) defines a feminist geopolitics that will incorporate feminist analysis and gender into a range of existing geopolitical practices.

While gender remains the main concern of feminist politics and thought, its priority over other social, political and economic situations is not always and everywhere fixed. Feminist geopolitics try to develop security policies at various scales, including civil society. State security prefers a common geopolitical issue and competes with the militarization of governments and societies from a global system perspective (Hyndman, 2001, p.214-215). Feminist approaches to geopolitical analysis apply an intersectional framework that clearly tracks how different socially produced and embodied forms and discourses are shaped and formed by the geopolitical processes (Williams and Massaro, 2013, p.754). For example, the geopolitics of feminism in the context of violent conflict narratives portrays civilians as political subjects and creates a space for them to tell their stories. In doing so, its aim is to destabilize the dominant geopolitical discourse (Hyndman, 2007, p.42).

Feminist geopolitics tries to fill this gap by engaging closely with actors and places outside the official sphere of the state. This fundamental principle requires a feminist to be a political person rather than a geopolitical person. This approach tries to figure out how political life is conducted through the multiplic-

ity of alternative and gendered political spaces by approaching individuals as ordinary political subjects. Underlining the geopolitical practices of individuals other than the upper echelons of government, he points out that the abstract distinctions between political and non-political areas or between geopolitics and domestic politics are constructed as an institutional structure (Kuus, 2017, p.20). Eleanor Koffman, as a geographer, explains feminist geopolitics in a way that incorporates feminist analysis and gender into a range of existing geopolitical practices:

> *The greatest achievement of feminist ideas and gender positions in geopolitics is to transform geopolitics in the direction of democratization into geopolitics in a way that no longer involves government personnel at the most repressive levels of government* (Kofman, 1996, p.218).

Real groups then emerge in the landscape and maps of the global economy and power relations. Geopolitics encompasses a broader context, which we can call global political geography, including comparative and local analysis as defined. Hyndman explains:

> *Feminist Geopolitics is a powerful manifesto of how thinking in feminist materialism can inform current research in feminist geopolitics, which often takes the more subject-centered concept of the body as its object* (Hyndman, 2019, p.9).

Naylor (2017, p.17) believes that feminist geopolitics sheds more light on the material aspects of how geopolitical processes are shaped by the experiences of everyday life of individuals and societies. Most significantly, a feminist geopolitics is a way forward that helps to highlight places, practices, and people that create a set of different forward-looking paths.

The most exciting aspect of Dixon and Marston recent feminist approaches to geopolitics is their theoretical and methodological attention to the materials of everyday life that form the fundamental foundations of the ever-evolving geopolitical tensions and conflicts (bodies, subjectivities, practices, and discourses). The materials that feminists work with are instinctive, emotional, and (for some) fascinating. It is not surprising to find that this kind of analysis is very much concerned with actual and emerging real-world events (Dixon and Marston, 2011, p.446). Critical feminists and theorists are interested in discussing the empowerment or displacement of marginal groups in the power networks that regulate life. They also emphasize the differences that most of the theories in modern social science in the West are ignored in the assumption of globalization and

abstraction. The simplest and most intuitive way to do this is to take a classification approach and classify groups by gender, race, ability, etc. (Staeheli and Kofman, 2005, p.7-8). Feminist geopolitics reveal the indigenous as a geopolitical field. By targeting everyday life, states generate distrust for marginalized populations and communities with enduring conflict and restructuring interest in maintaining proximity, kinship and home. However, the domestic space is sharply differentiated by the racialized lands of domestic colonialism (Vasudevan and Smith, 2020, p.1165).

A significant part of the geopolitics of feminism goes back to political feminists who made fundamental criticisms of international relations theory. Feminist criticisms of security, for instance, challenge the basic implicit presumptions of governments by asking whether states actually make their populations look safe. However, most of these analyzes could not go beyond neorealism narratives of international relations (Hyndman, 2005, p.568). A feminist geopolitics is open to conflicting geopolitical views, strategies, and practices, which can take various forms and locations, considering that some may call it anti-geopolitical, involving resistance and opposition. Differences in individual's and collective actors' power and location are reflected in their ability to influence geopolitical outcomes, but those who design anti-domination geopolitical practices are also involved in geopolitics. In short, it goes beyond the traditional deconstruction of geopolitics to democratization, which takes it from elite institutions and power elements, and enables one to examine in depth the classified dimension of gender, race, and especially practices and strategies. As the geopolitics of feminism has argued, critical geopolitics must simultaneously dispel existing perceptions and practices. Providing that it should propose other choices based on active, social, and political movements on the facts embodied in various places (Gilmartin and Kofman, 2005, p.124).

## CONCLUSION

Geopolitics is a discourse that defines, explains and encourages certain ways of seeing how regional powers are formed and experienced. The geopolitical issue is an important factor in the formation of global political and economic relations. Along with other institutions, races, ethnicities, and classes are recognized as key elements of geopolitical structures. Geopolitical commentators have acknowledged that relations between countries could be built and common interests between groups of government could be developed through international

institutions. Although these international groups consisted of independent countries, they were thought to provide basic geographic contexts such as class, ethnicity, or race. Critical geopolitics is another way of exploring political geography influenced by structuralism. Critical geopolitics rejects the traditional understanding of geopolitics as a neutral and objective way of studying on the world and intends to radicalize geopolitics. Critical geopolitics, additionally, argues that all claims are political truth. These claims are often made by individual political interests pursuing politico-economic necessities. Thus, critical geopolitics reflects the classical poststructuralist concern for emphasizing the political nature of knowledge production.

Feminist geopolitics as a dimension of critical geopolitics not only rewrites women in its geopolitical history, but also provides a perspective to explain the daily experiences of all non-mainstream people. Feminist theorists seek to focus on knowledge in order to be the voice of those who have been ignored by traditional views by both the mainstream and feminist thinkers themselves. Feminist geopolitics focuses more on the security of individuals rather than on the security of states, as it is the trend of international relations theory. It points out that gender is not taken into consideration at the intersection of critical international relations theory and geopolitics, and has been brought to the agenda by feminists emphasizing ***security for whom?*** and repeats the question as ***who is security for?***. Actually, by asking ***who is security for?***, a feminist geopolitical analysis identifies possible geographical and historical actions that enhance people's security and restructure the geopolitics as we know it. Feminist geopolitics does not reveal a new geopolitical theory. It creates neither a new spatial arrangement nor support another practical global standard. Instead, it adopts an approach that advocates a more accurate security measure accountable to people as individuals and groups, and analyzes areas of violence that accepts public and private distinctions.

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