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# New Developments in Geopolitics: A Reassessment of Theories after 2023

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**Abstract:** The scope of this article is to make a synthesis of the theory of geopolitics with new trends and characteristics of the new global environment. Traditional geopolitical theories are established on the basis of sovereign states. The starting point of many theories is for sovereign states to compete for world hegemony, or to gain an advantage in competition with their opponents. Geopolitical research also mostly starts from the interests of the country. However, as global environmental changes, transnational crimes, terrorism, information security, and other non-traditional security threats have become common threats to human society, their impact also crosses borders and has global characteristics, which also means solving geopolitical issues. Thinking needs to change from a national perspective to a global perspective. On the other hand, as the international community pays more and more attention to human rights, the challenge of human rights to sovereignty has become an unavoidable reality in current international politics. With the progress of the times, the protection and respect of civil rights has become the basic consensus of the international community. Nowadays, the issue of virtual rights such as carbon emission rights have also been included in the geopolitics theory, creating a strong shift of paradigm towards a renewed theory.

**Keywords:** new developments; geopolitics; political realism



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## 1. Introduction

Geopolitics emerged as a science to determine the critical role of geography in shaping world politics (Cohen 2014). Certain territories' water areas, and the space (Dolman 2005) have acted as a significant geographical factor, and the struggle for possession of such areas has been a prominent feature of international relations. Consequently, geopolitics has been a source of political realism in the theory of international relations (Tuathail 1999; Paul 2018).

During the ages, the natural and human environment has undergone significant changes due to scientific, technological, social, and economic progress. The advancement of information technology has had a profound impact on the spatial structure and spatial relationships. These changes have altered the driving forces of the geopolitical pattern since the 1990s, with significant consequences. These changes have affected the traditional concepts and practices of geopolitics. For example, new communication and transportation technologies have transformed the connection between territories and water areas, enabling states to project power and influence over greater distances (Agnew 2001). Additionally, the importance of non-state actors, such as multinational corporations and international organizations, has challenged traditional state-centric views of geopolitics (Flint 2021).

Therefore, the study of geopolitics must take into account the dynamic and complex relationship between the geographical factor and other social, economic, and technological

factors. It must incorporate a multidisciplinary approach, including political science, geography, history, and economics, to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the role of geography in world politics and the evolving nature of the geopolitical pattern in the contemporary world.

In the wake of 2023, the geopolitical landscape has undergone pivotal shifts, rendering traditional theories increasingly inadequate. This article seeks to address the urgent need for a reassessment of these theories in light of contemporary global challenges. From shifting power dynamics and technological breakthroughs to pressing environmental crises, a fresh perspective on geopolitics is essential. It is through this lens that we aim to explore the interconnectedness of geopolitics with other disciplines, underscoring its significance in shaping effective responses to today's most pressing international issues.

## 2. Political Realism and Geopolitics

Political realism emerged as a dominant theory in international relations during the post-war period, particularly in the United States. This period was characterized by a bipolar world order shaped by the Cold War. Political realism underscored the critical role of coercion and the threat of force in interstate relations. This was especially relevant in an era marked by nuclear deterrence, where the threat of force played a pivotal role alongside actual military power. In this context, national interest was posited as the primary goal of political action. This approach challenged previous schools of thought in international relations that did not prioritize the concept of power (Griffiths 2021; Troy 2021).

The ascendancy of political realism, spearheaded by figures like G. Morgenthau in the late 1940s, marked a shift away from earlier dominant trends in international relations research. These trends, often labeled as "idealistic" by realists, lacked a central focus on power as a driving force in international politics. However, from the 1950s through the 1970s, political realism faced challenges from emerging modernist perspectives. These modernists critiqued realists as traditionalists, paralleling the earlier realist critique of idealists. They argued that realists, like the idealists before them, were not adequately incorporating contemporary scientific advancements into their analyses. This critique signaled a dynamic evolution in the field, reflecting the continuous interplay and tension between different schools of thought (Spasova 2019).

Recent scholarship has further expanded on these debates, introducing new analytical perspectives that reflect the evolving nature of international relations and the complexities of modern global politics. For instance, contemporary analyses often integrate insights from technology, global economics, and cultural studies, offering a more nuanced understanding of power dynamics in the international arena. Since the end of the Cold War, the natural and human environment has undergone significant changes due to progress in science, technology, and social and economic development. The spatial structure and relationships have undergone extensive and profound changes, particularly due to the advancement of information technology, resulting in significant alterations in the driving forces of the geopolitical pattern since the 1990s.

During this period, modernism arose as a concept, having two meanings: as an indefinite cultural phenomenon and as a strictly defined paradigm of the theory of international relations, which, however, largely intersect. In the first sense, modernism is defined, rather, to oppose postmodernism than having an independent meaning, the designation of trends in the cultural self-consciousness of the West. These trends originate in rationalism, primarily in the rationalism of the New Age and in the philosophy of the Enlightenment. The main features of such rationalism are the belief in social progress based on the development of scientific knowledge, as well as rationalistic ontology and epistemology, which proclaim that reality is unambiguous in its existence and perception, that it lends itself to knowledge, theoretical understanding, and systematization. Cognition of reality makes it possible to transform it, transfer it from an unreasonable state to a reasonable one.

In the second sense, modernism is a paradigm of the theory of international relations, the main features of which are reliance on neopositivism in its technocratic expression, the

desire to introduce the results and methods of natural and technical sciences into the theory of international relations, the rejection of analysis techniques that do not give access to the possibility of using exact results. Often, these features are accompanied by confidence in the ability of the theory of international relations, if it approaches an exact science, to solve a number of social problems, which makes international relations modernism related to general cultural modernism.

It is this humanistic goal of modernism, in both senses of the term, that has inspired geopolitics. It became known as political geography in order to contrast the traditional goals of geopolitics, which are the search for territories as zones suitable for expansion or maintaining hegemony, with a new goal: the solution of social problems by methods close to the methods of the positive sciences.

### 2.1. *The Early Stages of Geopolitics*

The evolution of the terms “political geography” and “geopolitics” reflects a complex history of thought in international relations. Friedrich Ratzel, noted for coining the term “political geography” (Ratzel 1897), was a key figure in early geopolitical thought, often associated with an expansionist and political realist perspective. Between the World Wars, the term “geopolitics” was commonly used to denote a state’s long-term foreign policy, while “political geography” was more focused on general trends in global foreign policy development. This distinction set the stage for theorists like Halford Mackinder, whose Heartland theory dramatically influenced geopolitical thinking (Sloan 1999). Mackinder’s theory, positing control over the Eurasian Heartland as pivotal to global dominance, underscored the significance of geographical factors in global power dynamics. His insights from the early 20th century continue to be relevant, shaping modern geopolitical strategies and understanding of global power structures.

The element of “national interest” was not at the center of the system of political geography, and the world order was identified with a harmonious, cosmic order. Subsequently, in the humanist tradition (which did not consider expansion a necessity), the term “political geography” replaced the term “geopolitics” only because the latter was compromised by Nazi ideology. In France, political geography developed as a response to Ratzel’s “political geography”. P. Vidal de la Blache stood at the origins of this tradition. And although he, too, was more likely a geopolitician than a political geographer, and differed from Ratzel in that he introduced an indeterministic attitude into his system; the idea of free will made it possible to introduce humanistic stream into geopolitical problems. The French version of geopolitics turned out to be imbued with a Vidalian spirit.

Traditional geopolitical research is mainly based on phenomenon description, qualitative analysis, and induction, and focuses on qualitative analysis and empirical research in terms of methods. With the transformation of the humanities and social sciences to modeling and quantification, the research methods of geopolitics have also made new progress. Geopolitics provide powerful means, and also provide means for the development and progress of disciplines.

Later advances in geopolitics were characterized by a refusal to cooperate with the state, taking on the role of a liberal critic of the state rather than a developer of recommendations for it. Theoretical problems have shifted from the search for areas convenient for the start of expansion to poverty, disproportionate development, environmental protection, the struggle for ecology, and rational resource management.

The working models within the modernist paradigm were the behavioral ones. Their a priori attitude was individualism, the desire to wrest the individual from the determining power of society following the Vidalian concept of free will. The strengthening of this trend, which opposed itself to structuralism, without breaking with it, took place within the framework of the postmodernist paradigm.

Postmodernism, unlike modernism, is not in the exact sense of the word a paradigm of the theory of international relations. Rather, it is a general cultural phenomenon, to the spirit of which the latter has “adapted”. Postmodernism is a set of philosophical

and methodological principles used in the analysis of cultural reality. By its postmodern nature, this set cannot be a system or a school. However, in the theory of international relations, there is some semblance of a postmodern school, whose supporters are grouped around R. Ashley, Connolly, and R. Walker. Most essential for geopolitics in the arsenal of postmodern scientific methods is the denial of material reality and the postulation of the greater importance of symbolic reality. Certain territories, state borders, military bases, material resources also begin to acquire, mainly, a symbolic meaning, which is a strategic resource.

M. Merle adapted the theories of symbolic production of P. Bourdieu and B. Badie to geopolitical problems. R. Debre laid down the tradition of refusing to interpret geopolitical problems separately from distinctive concepts and rhetorical strategies. The founder of the study of politics within the framework of a distinctive methodology is P. Bourdieu with his classic works for this area, *Distinction*, *Social Criticism of Judgment* (Bourdieu 1984), and *Practical Reason, on the Theory of Action* (Bourdieu 1998).

Distinctive concepts involve giving priority to epistemological issues; problems of language, perception, and communication; consideration of the objects of political analysis (classes, interest groups, states, unions of states) not as data, but in their formation as products of ideological manipulations. Such objects are considered in their subjectivity as getting out of the control of the manipulator who created them and having a reverse effect on them, just as the reader transforms the text they read. Such a linguistic approach to the communication theory of politics contributed to the “dematerialization” of political reality, the elimination of the material factor from it.

Within the framework of geopolitical analysis, such an approach assumes that territories that are key to establishing advantage owe their key status to the symbolic meaning that they have. For example, the object of the struggle between France and Germany during the late XIX and most of the XX century. Alsace–Lorraine was important not because of its natural, geographical advantages, but because it symbolized the right to hegemony in Europe.

## 2.2. *Reasons for the Evolution of Geopolitics to Modernism and Postmodernism*

The evolution of geopolitics from political realism to modernism owes its existence to state-centric and egalitarian tendencies, which are easily explained within the framework of the general progress of humankind. It is very difficult to explain the refusal of geopolitics from the geographical factor within the framework of postmodernism. The reason lies in social reality, in which the problem of dictate of the material factor is gradually being removed.

The concept of excluding violence in favor of symbolic power in international relations, particularly in the Western world, aligns with broader discussions on the nature and exercise of power. This perspective is enriched by studies such as Nye’s exploration of soft power (Nye 2004), which discusses the importance of non-kinetic forms of influence like culture, political values, and foreign policies. Additionally, Castells’ analysis of network society (Castells 2011) offers insights into the power dynamics of the internet era, including the concept of “network wars.” These works contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of power in the modern geopolitical landscape, where symbolic and informational strategies play crucial roles.

This heavily describes the elimination of the material security of the monetary unit and filling it with security exclusively with the authority of the issuer when the Bretton Woods monetary system is established and especially when it collapses. The emergence of cryptocurrencies reflects society’s need for a fiat currency that has the potential to transform the global economy.

## 3. Recent Developments on Geopolitics

There have been four major changes resulting from these changes concerning the global society and technological advances. Firstly, high-speed transportation and long-range

precision strike weapons have reduced the impact of spatial distance, changing traditional geospatial relationships and regional connections. Secondly, information technology and the internet have given rise to new spatial forms, such as information space and the internet, which have become the primary driving factors affecting the evolution of the geopolitical pattern. Thirdly, individuals and non-governmental organizations have gained importance with the help of information space and the internet, becoming relatively weak geopolitical players. Fourthly, relatively virtual rights, such as carbon emission rights, freedom and democracy, and human rights, have become new geopolitical contention objects or means and tools of geopolitical contention.

The expansion of traditional geopolitics to include “low political” issues such as society, culture, gender, and emotion marks a significant shift, merging geopolitics with geoeconomics and geoculture. This integrative approach suggests new avenues for research, focusing on the evolving nature of geopolitical patterns influenced by technological and social changes, as well as the increasing influence of non-state actors and virtual rights in international relations. This paradigm aligns with the principles of critical geopolitics, which critically assess the power dynamics in geopolitical discourse (Tuathail 1999; Agnew 2004). Future studies could explore these dynamics in depth, furthering our understanding of contemporary international relations (Dalby 1990).

The geopolitical aspect of border control warrants greater emphasis due to its significant inter- and intra-societal dimensions. This is especially pertinent in the context of the European Union, where the interplay between multilateral and bilateral politics in migration and border control presents complex challenges. A key reference in this area is King, Desmond et al.’s work (King et al. 2017), which offers valuable insights into these dynamics.

The rise of economic globalization has increased the importance of economic interests in a country’s overall interests. In this context, economic and market means have replaced political and military means in traditional geopolitics, and the logic of conflict is being replaced by the logic of competition.

Geoeconomics, often considered as an extension of neoliberal principles in international relations, reflects the growing emphasis on economic factors in global strategies post-Cold War. Edward Luttwak, a prominent figure in this field, argued that competition among countries has increasingly shifted from military to economic arenas (Luttwak 1990). In this context, geoeconomics does not represent a new theory of international relations but rather a development within the existing neoliberal framework, emphasizing the role of economic power and market dynamics as tools of geopolitical influence.

Joseph S Nye Jr. views and interprets geoeconomics as a set of geopolitical means and tools, arguing that economic sanctions and market embargoes have become new geopolitical tools. Since the 1990s, the development and evolution of geoeconomics has led to the formation of three main schools of thought in the United States, Russia, and Italy.

In domestic geoeconomics research, the focus is largely on China’s neighboring countries and major regions, each of which has distinct regional characteristics. For instance, universities and research institutions in Northeast China have researched the development of geoeconomics disciplines, and there has been investigation into regional geoeconomic cooperation in northeast Asia.

The rise of geoeconomic theory has led to suggestions that it may eventually replace geopolitics, although currently, the two remain intertwined. Previously, geopolitical competition pursued economic interests to some extent, with territorial control, strategic location, resource origin, and market access all pursued with the ultimate goal of translating into economic benefits. However, China’s “One Belt, One Road” strategy reflects the growing importance of geoeconomic cooperation and competition as the primary axis of global power.

The rise of information and internet technology has created an additional new type of space known as information space, which goes beyond traditional geographic borders. This development has fundamentally changed the nature of geopolitics and power structures.



Information technology has blurred the boundaries between states, leading to the decentralization of power and changing the competitive landscape. The internet has created a new public space that surpasses traditional geographic space and affects geopolitics in traditional geographic space. This new information space changes the spatial relationship of geopolitics, challenging previous thinking around defending a country's borders and skies.

As a result, national sovereignty now includes "information frontiers", and "network sovereignty" has become a critical component of national security. Information space also changes the balance of power among geopolitical bodies, making various international political forces more equal in status, with individuals becoming more prominent in international politics. As technology continues to advance, it is likely that the concept of space will continue to evolve beyond traditional geographic borders, with information space becoming an increasingly significant factor in the shaping of geopolitics and power dynamics.

Information technology has not only created new geopolitical tools and means but also new forms of warfare such as information warfare and cyber warfare, which are now widely used in the military and political fields. Developed countries are leveraging their advantages in information technology to gain "one-way transparency" over developing countries, and network politics has become an important political tool and means. Social media platforms have been used to aid political opposition groups in launching "color revolutions" in various countries, while terrorist organizations are exploiting it to spread extremist ideas and recruit members. In this new geopolitical field, real network wars, such as public opinion and cultural and ideological wars, have begun to take place on the internet.

Concerning climate change, this has emerged as a crucial topic in international relations due to its impact on natural disasters, environmental degradation, and ecological refugees, leading to intensified competition for resources, cross-border migration, and inter-state conflicts. It is shaping the new pattern of future geopolitics with unprecedented force, and factors such as competition for carbon emission space, energy technology and market competition, and carbon tariffs and low-carbon trade barriers are significantly affecting the current geopolitical landscape. The U.S. Department of Defense has even studied the impact of sudden climate change scenarios on national security.

The impact of climate change has led to a significant expansion of geopolitical scramble fields and regions, resulting in the development of new scramble tools. This expansion has given traditional contention tools, such as politics, economy, military affairs, and diplomacy, new connotations, while also creating new tools and means for competition.

One of the most notable changes resulting from climate change is the emergence of carbon emission space as a new field of contention and a geopolitical tool. In the past, geopolitics has mainly focused on the possession and control of physical resources, such as land, mineral resources, oil and gas resources, and transportation channels, with military means being the primary tool. However, the competition for greenhouse gas emission space has become the primary focus, with different international carbon emission reduction schemes leading to different space allocations and benefit distributions. This competition has become increasingly fierce, particularly between developed and developing countries, with the latter requiring more emissions space for economic development and poverty eradication.

Moreover, the use of carbon tariffs and low-carbon trade barriers has emerged as a new geopolitical tool, further intensifying the competition over carbon emission space. Developed countries are utilizing their advantage in new energy and low-carbon technologies to improve their product competitiveness by imposing carbon tariffs and low-carbon trade barriers, which puts the cost of carbon dioxide emissions on developing countries, particularly those with large exports. In recent years, the European Union, the United States, and Japan have all proposed carbon tariffs on imported products with high carbon content.

Developing countries have diverse interests, leading to internal differentiation and reorganization. While developed countries prioritize quantifying emission reduction

responsibilities, for most developing countries, the focus is on ensuring the right to development. However, for small island countries, the priority is the very survival of their nation. The developing country camp includes various sub-groups, such as the “Basic Four Countries” (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China), “OPEC countries”, “Alliance of Small Island States”, “Alliance of Least Developed Countries”, and “Alliance of Tropical Rainforest Countries”. Although the developing countries remain united in confronting developed countries and adhering to the “principle of common but differentiated responsibilities”, their appeals are not always consistent, and there are internal divisions and hints of reorganization. To address these differences and balance conflicts of interest within developing countries, a developing country alliance led by the “Basic Four” will be necessary to represent the demands of developing countries at different levels and jointly safeguard their interests.

Last, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in international climate governance has been growing over time. In fact, they have played a critical role in shaping international climate change negotiations, and their influence has become increasingly apparent. NGOs like The Climate Group, Greenpeace, WWF, Climate Action Network, and the Global Wind Energy Council have all been instrumental in addressing climate change, creating climate negotiation frameworks, and helping underprivileged communities adapt to climate change.

NGOs have exerted their influence on the process of climate change negotiations in a variety of ways. They have participated in or cooperated with government negotiations, used their research and scientific data to produce assessment reports to influence decision-making, and proposed their own climate negotiation issues and governance structures. Additionally, NGOs have worked to increase public awareness of environmental issues, mobilized the public to resist the actions of large multinational corporations that destroy the environment, and lobbied national decisionmakers. They have also conducted investigations into the implementation of international agreements by various countries and provided oversight.

Although NGOs do not yet have the power to dominate the process of international climate change negotiations, their influence is undoubtedly on the rise. They have become an important force in shaping the global response to climate change and are likely to continue playing a significant role in international climate governance in the future.

Furthermore, it is imperative to expand our understanding of civil society’s role in geopolitics beyond the scope of NGOs. Unions, associations, and cooperatives play a critical role, especially in migration and border control discussions. For instance, [Marino et al. \(2017, pp. 66–89\)](#) demonstrate the geopolitical significance of trade unions. Additionally, the evolving capabilities of cities in networking and developing their diplomacy, transcending simplistic forms of cooperation and playing a strategic role in geopolitical dynamics, are crucial. This aspect is eloquently discussed in [Le Galès and Vitale \(2013\)](#), emphasizing the need for a more nuanced understanding of civil society’s diverse contributions to geopolitics.

Energy has a strategic value that makes the world’s energy production center a target for various political and military forces ([Blondeel et al. 2021](#)). Energy geopolitics has always been a critical area of research in geopolitics, with issues such as energy security and oil and gas pipelines attracting significant attention. Every shift in the world’s energy structure and energy center location has resulted in corresponding changes in the world’s geopolitical structure. At this critical stage of energy structure transformation, countries that quickly adapt and transform their energy structure will rise rapidly, while those that fail to respond in a timely manner will decline.

Resources are the logical starting point for the deduction of traditional geopolitics and its control theory, and energy is the most important resource. Therefore, in history, the dispute for energy has always been one of the important causes of international conflicts and wars. The transformation of the core energy consumption structure is an important factor affecting the status of a great power.

The discovery, development, and utilization of new energy; technological change; and the change of the innovation system are the foundation of whether a country can make the most effective use of energy, and they are also the source of strength for the rise of a great power. The dominance of energy in history is related to the transfer of power and the change of hegemony. Countries that gain dominance in new energy innovations are usually leaders in technological innovation and institutional change. In the competition for the dominance of the future international system, therefore, the new energy competition among countries, especially in the fields of fusion and hydrogen energy, is not only related to the transfer of energy power, but also related to the transformation of the international system and the rise and fall of geopolitical influence (Lebrouhi et al. 2022).

Furthermore, this reassessment critically necessitates a comparison with macro-sociology, especially Wallerstein's in-depth analysis of the political economy of territories and Joseph Turner's dynamic, multivariable mediation theory. Such perspectives are instrumental in understanding the intricacies of geopolitical dynamics. This approach aligns with Turner and Roberts (2023), who emphasize a more unified and explanatory social science framework in analyzing geopolitical processes, underscoring the importance of integrating these comprehensive theories into our geopolitical analysis.

#### 4. Visual Rights and the Information Society

With the increasing level of science and technology, information technology has increasingly become the core element of geopolitics and plays an important role in the balance of geopolitical forces and the evolution of the global geopolitical pattern. Against the new background, the evolution of the geopolitical pattern and the law of geopolitical development will also undergo new changes. With the emergence of new platforms for internet geopolitics (Deibert 2008) and the emergence of new means such as controlling information rights, the complexity of relations between countries in the information age will further increase. Therefore, paying attention to these new means and platforms will become an important part of geopolitics research in the information age.

Current discourse in geopolitics suggests not so much a transition from hard power to soft power, but rather a strategic integration of both. In this nuanced view, hard power encompassing sea, land, and air capabilities remains fundamental. Yet, the role of soft power and virtual resources, crucial in garnering the moral high ground, is increasingly recognized as part of a comprehensive geopolitical strategy. This integrated approach reflects a more realistic understanding of the complex dynamics of contemporary geopolitical competition. From the perspective of the goal of geopolitical competition, in recent years, research has generally focused on the impact of soft power, information technology, and climate change on geopolitical patterns, and these relatively "virtual" elements have been incorporated into geopolitical research and are receiving increasing attention (Lobastova 2020; Miao 2021).

With the progress of new energy technology and the reduction of cost, the status and role of new energy are becoming more and more significant (Blondeel et al. 2021). The status and role of wind energy, solar energy, and biomass energy are increasingly apparent. The influence and role of emerging new energy powers are increasing significantly, especially in the international climate change negotiations, where their right to speak has increased and their leading role in the negotiations has increased. Judging from the recent development trend, technological breakthroughs in renewable energy have also brought new major changes to the geopolitical pattern of energy (Su et al. 2021). Unconventional energy dominated by shale gas, oil sands, and combustible ice has the potential to have enormous geopolitical implications. Energy security, climate change, food security, and geopolitical issues are intertwined, which is a prominent feature in current geopolitical research (Xiang et al. 2021).

As the climate warms, the melting of the Arctic ice cap accelerates, and the development of Arctic resources and the commercial operation of waterways gradually become a reality, making this cold region rapidly become a hotspot. At present, geopolitical compe-



tion surrounding maritime rights and interests such as demarcation of sea boundaries, resource exploitation, and opening of waterways in the Arctic region is intensifying. It can be predicted that the Arctic will have a wide and far-reaching impact on the future international political and economic order. Arctic countries and Arctic stakeholders will compete fiercely for territory, natural resources, and air routes, and the Arctic is likely to become a new hot spot for competition (Østhagen 2019; Dodds and Woon 2019).

## 5. Future Research

In recent years, theoretical frameworks and conceptual models have been widely used in geopolitical research to reveal the driving mechanism of geopolitical pattern evolution and the interaction of various geopolitical elements (Zhou et al. 2020). The introduction and application of conceptual analysis frameworks and models provide new means and perspectives for geopolitical analysis and research (Alami et al. 2022). In addition to continuing to propose some new conceptual frameworks and models, future research should also focus on the integration of frameworks to propose more normative frameworks and conceptual models.

In recent years, scholars have begun to use methods such as national competitiveness, political influence, and comprehensive national power evaluation to construct an evaluation index system for geopolitical power or influence and select typical countries for systematic evaluation and comparative analysis (Flint and Zhu 2019). The study of geopolitics draws on the theories and research methods of other disciplines and integrates econometric models, artificial intelligence schools and energy terrain simulations, Euclidean distances, scale analysis, etc.

## 6. Conclusions

This article's exploration of geopolitical theories post-2023 reveals a landscape significantly altered by technological and political changes. The findings, derived from a comprehensive analysis of recent global events and trends, underscore the limitations of traditional geopolitical frameworks in explaining contemporary global dynamics. This reassessment, firmly rooted in empirical evidence presented throughout, highlights the need for multidisciplinary approaches in understanding and predicting geopolitical patterns. Future research should further investigate these emergent theories, particularly in the context of rapid technological advancements and shifting international power structures.

Traditional geopolitics mainly focuses on the relationship between countries and is mainly limited to the evolution of territory and space, geopolitical conditions, and world political maps. However, international financial flows, non-governmental organizations, internet politics and other major issues that have a huge impact on the international political structure, are not included in the analysis of geopolitics in their traditional approach.

On the basis of examining and criticizing traditional geopolitics, critical geopolitics expands the research field in combination with the characteristics of the information society (Rosenbach and Mansted 2019) and the era of economic globalization (Blouet 2001). With the continuous acceleration of economic globalization and the popularization of information technology, the state-centered international political and economic order has undergone structural changes. Correspondingly, the emergence of some new trends of thought and concepts in international politics and international relations provides an ideological basis and background for people's reflection and criticism of traditional geopolitics. In the evolving landscape of international relations, Geopolitics has expanded its scope beyond traditional "high political" issues like military affairs and security. It now encompasses "low political" issues, including economics, culture, race, gender, and emotion, reflecting a broader understanding of global interactions. This expansion illustrates the distinction between geopolitics and international relations, with the former increasingly integrating elements of geoeconomy and geoculture. This trend highlights the multifaceted nature of global power dynamics and the diverse factors that influence them.

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