

2014/1/2 Abstract: Society, space and power Tasks, deficits and news of Critical Geopolitics (part 1)

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This essay is supposed to fight against the zeitgeist superficial use of the term „geopolitics/geopolitical“ once more, and will therefore demonstrate both the achievements and the weaknesses of Critical Geopolitics. On the one hand, classic, i.e. deterministic geopolitics is still alive and even enjoys revival in several European think tanks, as has been criticized vigorously by the philosopher of history Hauke Ritz (2013) recently. On the other hand, he throws the baby out with the bathwater: Geopolitics is a discipline always pursued by the military, thus representing a form of the art of war.“ At best, this can be accepted as far as times and spaces are concerned, when and where political power is exercised by the military. In democratically constituted states, the primacy of politics and subjection to directives of the military are effective. The “art of war” leads the way for the art of state. There is, however, one characteristic the semantics of these dubious circles of political dreamers and their critics have in common – they stick to thought patterns which have become obsolete for a long time. They completely ignore both the existence and the “disclosing position” of Critical Geopolitics. From the author’s point of view, the ÖMZ is the right place to carry this approach out beyond the narrow technical understanding, and to encourage discussions. On the other hand, much has happened with German political geography in the course of the last four years. For this reason, the latest developments of this field are introduced. Further on, the essay deals with the concerns and methods of Critical Geopolitics, which are some of its main research fields. Goals and work procedures are fixed to different – both old and topical – “geopolitical role models”. As post-modern Political Geography devotes itself to the constructivist perspective, the deconstruction of geopolitical role models is also put into focus. In the following passage, the latest developments and publications in Critical Geopolitics both in the German-speaking area and in the trend-setting Anglo-American research environment are analyzed. The essay ends with some critical remarks on theoretically weak spots of this approach as well as on possible courses of future development:

