

# NOTAS HISTÓRICAS Y GEOGRÁFICAS

## **Artículos**

## **GEOGRAPHICAL DETERMINISM: HISTORY AND PRESENT**

### **DETERMINISMO GEOGRÁFICO: HISTORIA Y PRESENTE**

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## Abstract

The article examines the emergence and development of the theory of geographical determinism, as well as the essence of the main concepts of geographical determinism of the classical and post-classical periods. The theoretical foundations of geopolitics and the views of its main representatives are analyzed. It is noted that geographical determinism as a conceptual methodological approach does not become obsolete with the development of society, but is modernized and modified. The features of modern geographical determinism (neodeterminism) are defined and some of its directions are considered: the concept of sustainable development, the concept of green energy, geographical ethics.

**Keywords:** geographical determinism, geopolitics, geographical neodeterminism, concept of sustainable development, concept of green energy, geographical ethics.

## Resumen

El artículo examina el surgimiento y desarrollo de la teoría del determinismo geográfico, así como la esencia de los principales conceptos del determinismo geográfico de los períodos clásico y posclásico. Se analizan los fundamentos teóricos de la geopolítica y las visiones de sus principales representantes. Se advierte que el determinismo geográfico como enfoque metodológico conceptual no se vuelve obsoleto con el desarrollo de la sociedad, sino que se moderniza y modifica. Se definen las características del determinismo geográfico moderno (neodeterminismo) y se consideran algunas de sus direcciones: el concepto de desarrollo sostenible, el concepto de energía verde, la ética geográfica.

**Palabras clave:** determinismo geográfico, geopolítica, neodeterminismo geográfico, concepto de desarrollo sostenible, concepto de energía verde, ética geográfica.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modern humanity, despite all its technological power, is unable to exist and develop outside the natural environment, the impact of which on the historical development of a particular people is ambiguous. This impact manifested itself, for example, in the formation of the lifestyle, the development of specific crafts, the level of development of agriculture, etc. In other words, the formation of different ethnic groups and countries was largely determined by the natural and climatic zone (steppe, forest-steppe, coastal) in which they existed.

The degree of influence of the geographical environment and climate on the development of society and human dependence on them were so significant that the awareness of this became the basis for the emergence of a separate direction in science - geographical determinism. As it is known, geographical determinism has had a complicated history in its development, which requires to be studied and scientifically analysed. After all, any science that strives for the creative development of its content cannot be indifferent to its past, to the history of its ideas, discoveries, and conclusions. This thesis is fully applicable to the philosophy of history.

Understanding the patterns and specifics of the influence of the geographical factor on social life is of great importance for philosophical thought, as it is a necessary condition for the interpretation of those complex processes taking place in society. It can be assumed that without studying the stages of development of geographical determinism and their content, it is impossible to understand why there are certain directions in modern geographical neo-determinism, and therefore to understand their features and development trends.

It is important that ideas and approaches related to geographical determinism in modern scientific discourse remain quite relevant. This is explained by the fact that recently environmental problems have sharply worsened, which has threatened the existence of humanity. At the same time, it should be noted that the terminology that describes the impact of natural factors on various aspects of social life has undergone significant changes in recent decades. Modern researchers actively use the terms “ecological determinism”, “environmental paradigm”, “ecological problems”, etc.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF RESENT RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

During the preparation of this article, in the theoretical and methodological context, the ideas contained in the scientific works of many authors were applied to carry out a critical analysis of geographical determinism. They, in turn, consider the theory of geographical determinism in different ways.

For example, Petrenko O.M. in his article describes the genesis of ideas about the influence of the geographical environment on society from a historical and philosophical standpoint. Its description is divided into four parts, which belong to different stages of formation of the doctrine<sup>1</sup>.

The work of Nekhamkin V.A. emphasizes the importance of geographical determinism in the formation of the philosophy of history of the 18<sup>th</sup>- 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The thesis is substantiated, according to which the specified direction had as a starting point the inclusion of social history in the natural environment, their co-evolutionary development in contrast to the previously dominant

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<sup>1</sup> Petrenko, A. «The concept of geographical determinism and the contribution of L.I. Mechnikov in its formation», *Vestnik Tomskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Istoriya* 1 (2015): 87-92.

anthropocentric historiography. Within the limits of geographical determinism, the author singles out climate-centric and aqua-centric models<sup>2</sup>.

The history of the formation of the geographical (ecological) determinism theory and its modern modifications is studied in the works by Briney A.<sup>3</sup>, Vialykh V.V. and Lazarev S.A.<sup>4</sup>, Kolotukhin D.V.<sup>5</sup>, Chistanov M.M.<sup>6</sup>, Zavhorodko L.V.<sup>7</sup>

Kozynets O. and Ignatenko S. analyze the problem of influence of geographical factors on forms of state administration<sup>8</sup>. In their opinion, the ideas of geographical determinism, its influence on the forms of government of states gave rise to such a science as geopolitics. And the researcher Gruntovskiy D.A. focuses on geopolitical paradigms in political science<sup>9</sup>.

Modern concepts of geographic determinism (the concept of “sustainable development”, the concept of “green economy”, geographical ethics, etc.) are analyzed by Gladkyi Yu.M., Lopatnikov D.L.<sup>10</sup>, Tishkov A.O.<sup>11</sup>, Davydova M.L., Akhverdiev E.A.<sup>12</sup>.

A number of scientists, for example Delia O.V., emphasize the need to study the historical prerequisites and the essence of the process of genesis of the “environment” paradigm within the philosophical concept of geographical determinism<sup>13</sup>.

International and national aspects of environmental protection in the conditions of the latest globalization processes, which have covered all spheres of political, social, geographical and cultural life, are explored in his works by Getman A.P.<sup>14</sup>, Kazak R.<sup>15</sup>, Anisimova G., Smolyarchuk M., Goretzka K. and others<sup>16</sup>.

A separate block of scientific studies substantiates the use of the methodological potential of the theory of geographical determinism to solve scientific problems in the field of geopolitics (Balogh, P.<sup>17</sup>), urban planning (De Falko, S.<sup>18</sup>), research on the consequences of the global and geographical perspective in writing history (Jimenez, F.J.N.<sup>19</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> Nekhamkin, V. «Geographical determinism as a direction in the philosophy of history of the XVIII–XIX centuries: possibilities and limitations», *Socium i vlast* 3 (2018): 119–128.

<sup>3</sup> Briney, A. «What Is Environmental Determinism? A Topic Later Replaced by Environmental Possibilism» (2020).

<sup>4</sup> Vialykh, V., Lazarev, S. «The political aspect of the concept of geographical determinism», *Diskussiya. Zhurnal nauchnykh publikacij* 2 (2015): 20–24.

<sup>5</sup> Kolotukhin, D. «Specificity of geographical determinism in modern socio-economic conditions», *Medicina. Sociologiya. Filosofiya. Prikladnye issledovaniya* (2020).

<sup>6</sup> Chistanov, M. «The brilliance and poverty of geographical determinism (reflections on ethno-cultural identity in the context of the problem of the historical subject)», *Humanitarian vector* 13(4) (2018): 28–33.

<sup>7</sup> Zavgorodko, L. «Geographical determinism and its modern modifications», *Hileia* 70 (2013): 330–336.

<sup>8</sup> Kozynets, O., Ignatenko, S. «The influence of geographical factors on the form of government: theoretical rationale», *Teoriia derzhavy i prava* 5 (2019): 200–203.

<sup>9</sup> Gruntovskiy, D. Geopolitical paradigms in political science (2019).

<sup>10</sup> Gladkyi, Yu., Lopatnikov, D. «Geographical neodeterminism of post-industrial time», *Obshestvo. Sreda. Razvitie* 4 (2021): 68–78.

<sup>11</sup> Tishkov, A. «Geographic ethics in the age of globalization», *Vek globalizacii* 3 (2021): 3–18.

<sup>12</sup> Davydova, M., Akhverdiev, E. «Climatic determinism and possibilism in the philosophy of law and state: history of development and modern perspectives», *Politika i Obshestvo* 7 (2017): 1–8.

<sup>13</sup> Delia, O. «Formation of the environmental paradigm», *Visnyk NADU pry Prezydentovi Ukrainy (Serii «Derzhavne upravlinnia»)* 2 (2017): 13–18.

<sup>14</sup> Getman, A. «Human life and health as an object of environmental law in the globalised world», *Journal of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine* 27 (2020): 189–200.

<sup>15</sup> Kazak, R. «Periodization of nature protection in Ukraine in the latter half of the 20th century: Legal aspect. [Periodización de la protección de la naturaleza en Ucrania en la última mitad del siglo XX: Aspecto legal]», *Espacios* 39 (2018): 19

<sup>16</sup> Anisimova, H., Smoliarchuk, M., Horetzka, K., & Butynska, R. «Environmental offences and environmental protection: theoretical and applied aspects», *International Journal of Agricultural Extension* 9 (2) (2021): 1–10.

<sup>17</sup> Balogh, P. «The concept of the Carpathian Basin: its evolution, counter narratives, and geopolitical implications», *Journal of historical geography* 71 (2021): 51–62

Therefore, the analysis of the scientific literature on this issue, the identification of insufficiently researched aspects of the issue of geographical determinism is the basis of the formulation of the research goal.

The purpose of the article is to consider the process of emergence and development of the theory of geographical determinism, to determine the essence of the main concepts of geographical determinism of the classical and post-classical periods.

### 3. PRESENTATION OF MAIN MATERIAL

The issue of the influence of the geographical environment on the historical process, as part of the general issue of the determinants of social development, has always been an arena for the clash of different views and positions. This is explained by the fact that in the history of philosophy, two opposing views on the nature of the relationship between nature and man have always competed. These are indeterminism and determinism, and they are presented in philosophy and science until now. According to the first view, there is no influence of the geographical environment on society, according to the second - the geographical environment and the spatial-climatic factor are the main ones of socio-political and economic changes. They are also the main factor of the historical, social and cultural process.

The concept of this study involves the analysis, first of all, of deterministic views on the relationship between nature and society, therefore it is appropriate to define “geographical determinism” itself and consider the main stages of its emergence and development. It is known that the philosophical concept of “determinism” (from the Latin “determinare” - to determine) is widespread in the natural sciences and humanities and means a logical relationship, interdependence and causal conditioning of various phenomena<sup>20</sup>. As for geographical determinism itself, the modern geographical encyclopedia gives its definition as follows: “geographical determinism is a worldview concept that explains the socio-economic development of peoples as determined by geographical factors, climate, water, soil, plant and mineral resources”<sup>21</sup>. Most experts who study various aspects of the theory of geographical determinism define its essence in approximately the same way.

It is commonly known, that the ideas of geographical determinism originated in the times of ancient Greece, Rome, and China. Ideas relating the degree of development of states and civilizations to the features of their geographical location, climate and soils can be found in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Democritus, Epicurus, Hippocrates, Thucydides and other thinkers. For example, the idea of the dependence of the formation of society on the type of climate was expressed by Aristotle in his work “Politics”. He noted that “ Those who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they retain comparative freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery”<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> De Falco, S. «Geographic determinism vs urban resilience: an Italian scenario analysis», *Journal of land use mobility and environment* 11 (2018): 65-88

<sup>19</sup> Jimenez, F. «Global History or the Geographies of the Past: Implications of a Global and Geographical Perspective in the Writing of History», *Historiografías-Revista de historia y teoría* 14 (2017): 91-107

<sup>20</sup> Modern dictionary of social sciences / Ed. Danilyan, O., Panov, M. (Kharkov: Prapor, 2006), 93

<sup>21</sup> Geography. Modern Illustrated Encyclopedia / Ed. by prof. Gorkin, A. (2022).

<sup>22</sup> Aristotle. Works: in 4 volumes, Vol.4 ( Moskva: Mysl, 1983), 601

There were similar ideas in the writings of Eastern scholars. Thus, in the ancient Chinese philosophical treatise “Kuan-tzu” the opinion is clearly formulated that the way of life of the population, its economic life and culture are determined by “geographical and... climatic conditions”<sup>23</sup>.

#### 4. CLASSICAL CONCEPTS OF GEORAPHICAL DETERMINIZM

It is worth noting that the completed geographical and deterministic concepts of the development of society were formulated much later, in the 17th - 19th centuries, in the works of J. Bodin, S. Montesquieu, A. Turgot, H. Buckle, L. Mechnikov, E. Reclus and others. In their works, the geographical environment was considered as the most important factor in the formation and development of individuals, societies, civilizations, states, etc. However, it is worth noting that the majority of determinists did not consider the features of geographical space as an absolute, recognizing the influence of other factors on society, which were interpreted as derived from it or secondary. The most famous among the theories of geographical determinism are the scientific concepts of H. Buckle and L. Mechnikov.

For example, H. Buckle, researching the history of mankind, drew attention to the stable relationship between nature and man, which, in his opinion, is mutual. Analyzing the natural environment of man in the work “History of Civilization in England” (1861), he argued that its most important elements are climate, landscape, soil and food, the quality and quantity of which directly affect human development.

The landscape, in his opinion, affects the features of a person’s physical development, his or her thinking, and indirectly the level of development of the human community. The greatness of nature oppresses a person, makes him or her passive and helpless before the elements, while people living in a temperate zone are forced to be active and fight for existence, which makes them creative and contributes to the accumulation of mental “capital”. All other elements - climate, soil, food cause social differentiation and determine the features of political and social relations<sup>24</sup>.

A certain harshness of the climate and the poverty of the soil in Europe, argued H. Buckle, leads to limited food supplies, the increase of which is possible only with the rational use of agro-climatic resources. In countries with favourable climates and soils, such as Egypt and India, there is an excess of food supplies, which does not stimulate the activity and capacity of people for creative activity and hard physical work. A surplus of food causes a high birth rate and excess of “working hands”. Therefore, in such countries, the social stratification of society is much greater than in Europe, and the political regime is despotic. It follows from this concept that the development of states and their active relationships are determined by a complex of natural elements that predetermine the level of their social development, social structure, activity and purposefulness of social groups and states.

The original theoretical concept in the field of social geography research was suggested by the well-known sociologist L. Mechnikov, who presented his main views on the development of society in the fundamental work “Civilization and Great Historical Rivers. Geographical theory of development”. In his opinion, the development of society was determined by the constant struggle for existence, which forced people to unite in large communities with the differentiation of the

<sup>23</sup> Guanzi: political, economic, and philosophical essays from early China: a study and translation. Vol. II (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 106

<sup>24</sup> Buckle, G. T. The history of civilization in England / In the popul. present. By Notovich, O. (SPb. 1876).

functions of its members. Unlike the biological world, where there is a struggle for individual survival, in the human world there is a struggle for cooperative survival. The state, in his concept, is a form of human cooperation, that is, a form of combining efforts directed at survival in an unfavourable environment. In the development of civilizations, physical and geographical factors are decisive, and among them, the hydrological features of the territories occupied by specific civilizations have a special place<sup>25</sup>. In other words, water space in L. Mechnikov's concept plays a consolidating role in society. As a result, we can see that the larger the bodies of water were taken over by humanity, the more human solidarity manifested itself in the forms of the emergence of great states and the coverage of geographically large areas by multifaceted relations.

It should be noted that classical geographical determinism as a scientific theory has nothing to do with geographical fatalism, as it interprets the environment as a stage on which human associations actively operate, forced to take into account the features of the geographic environment, because their objective activity does not take place in some abstract space, but in the real geographical one.

In the 19th century a number of new directions and scientific schools appeared in geography, most of which stood on deterministic positions. The most striking of them is anthropogeography, which originates in the works of K. Ritter, H. Spencer, and F. Ratzel. American environmentalism later developed from anthropogeography. According to it, the development and location of the economy depend on natural conditions and resources.

Over time, as scientific knowledge developed and deepened, the position of geographical fatalism began to weaken. Even at the end of the 19th century in the French school of human geography (P. de la Blache, E. Martonne, A. Demangeon), possibilism was born, which denied the extreme forms of geographical fatalism and was based on the fact that the natural environment really creates opportunities, prerequisites for the formation of cultural landscapes as a certain result of human activities and their use depends primarily on the person himself<sup>26</sup>.

Some theorists of the post-industrial and information society come to the other extreme, who often ignore the influence of geographical and natural factors on the development of social processes. Among the criterion elements of such a society given by them are economic, social, informational, spiritual, cultural, but the state of the natural environment, the role of the worsening ecological problem are actually ignored. Such a position, of course, reduces the value of the theoretical searches of the analysts of the "new society" by D. Bell, M. Castells, A. Toffler, A. Touraine and others<sup>27,28</sup>.

## 5. THE CONCEPT OF GEOPOLITICS

At the beginning of the 20th century, scientists who studied the influence of geographic factors on the development of a person, the state, and forms of government began to consider the influence of geographical determinism on the foreign policy of states. This approach led to the emergence of a new science - geopolitics. In modern scientific literature, geopolitics is understood

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<sup>25</sup> Mechnikov, L.I. Civilization and great historical rivers (Moskva: Pangeya, 1995), 333-334.

<sup>26</sup> Gladkyi, Yu., Lopatnikov, D. «Geographical neodeterminism of post-industrial time», *Obshestvo. Sreda. Razvitie* 4 (2021): 71.

<sup>27</sup> Gladkyi, Yu., Sukhorukov, V. «On the natural nihilism of post-industrial society analysts», *Izvestiya RAN. Seriya geograficheskaya* 5 (2019): 121–130.



as the science of distribution and redistribution of spheres of influence (centers of power) of various states and interstate associations in the multidimensional global communication space<sup>29</sup>.

For the first time, the theoretical foundations of geopolitics were substantiated in the works of famous scientists L. Gumplowicz and F. Ratzel, who, unlike the representatives of classical determinism, linked the influence of features of the geographical environment not with the development of human society in general, but with the sphere of state politics.

The Polish-Austrian sociologist and lawyer L. Gumplowicz believed that the history of mankind is a constant and merciless struggle between social groups (communities), as each of them tries to subjugate others and dominate them. In this regard, the main function of the state is to protect the material and spiritual foundations of the community's existence, to subjugate other communities and absorb them or force them to submit to personal interests. In view of this in mind, relations between states are carried out in accordance with the system of laws formulated by them, based on the imperative of possession of geographical space. The main or primary law of relations between states is their constant struggle for the location of the border line, both in the context of its transfer (that is, the expansion of one's own territory), and the freedom of action through it<sup>30</sup>.

The founder of classical geopolitics is considered to be the German scientist F. Ratzel, although he did not use this concept, but the term "political geography". In his writings, he formulated the concept of the determining influence of the geographical environment on the foreign policy of states. F. Ratzel preached the idea of a direct connection between the evolution of peoples and the geographical environment in which they exist, and, accordingly, states - with the territory they own. A mandatory condition for the existence of a people is a living space where it can satisfy its needs, and for a state - the presence of a territory over which its power can extend. In his opinion, geographical space is an objective reality that determines the historical destinies of peoples.

He defined states as biological organisms, the essential feature of which is "living space", for which they fight with their own kind. The most important parameters of the state are the combination of territory and population, and its activity is determined by the relationship between the living space and the vital energy of the people. Each state must have its own sense of geographic space, and if the political elite loses it, it indicates the beginning of regression and decline. State borders reflect the internal state of states at the present time, because, like living things, they are born, grow, grow old and die. Accordingly, the reduction or increase of the territory of the state is a natural process associated with internal social cycles<sup>31</sup>.

Later, the ideas of F. Ratzel were developed by the Swedish geographer and lawyer of the beginning of the 20th century, R. Kjellén, who introduced the concept of "geopolitics" into scientific use. He tried to determine the main characteristics of the optimal management system for the formation of a "strong state". R. Kjellén's desire to single out geopolitics as one of the leading elements of politics as a multi-level, directed multi-aspect process was an innovation. The scientist believed that the state is guided by the instinct of self-preservation, growth, the desire for power, and fights for possession of the living space at all stages of its existence: birth, maturity, decline and death. In his opinion, the main features of a state's power are the size and compactness of its territory, as well as the convenience of communications. Wars between superpowers are a form of

<sup>29</sup> Gerasina, L. Geopolitics. Political encyclopedic dictionary (Kharkiv: Pravo, 2015), 137.

<sup>30</sup> Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza. Wybór tekstów. (Wybór, opracowanie i wprowadzenie Jan Surman i Gerald Mozetič. Warszawa, 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Ratzel, F. Ethnology (Anthropogeography). Klassika geopolitiki XIX vek. (Москва, 2003).

struggle for existence and power in the world, which is more than they and subject to the eternal laws of nature<sup>32</sup>.

The German general K. Haushofer, the head of the Institute of Geopolitics (Munich), continued the tradition of interpreting the content of geopolitics. In his studies, he developed and emphasized the expansionist aspects of geopolitics, formulated an inherently aggressive hypothesis about the potentially necessary “living space of the German nation”<sup>33</sup>. This kind of geopolitical theories, adopted by the leaders of the Third Reich, discredited the academic developments of the German geopolitical school for many years.

The theoretical foundations of geopolitics were also developed by such scientists as A. Mehen, H. Mackinder, and N. Spykman, who not only expanded the scientific ideas started by their predecessors, but also shifted the emphasis on researching them by world politics.

After the Second World War, geopolitical research was mainly applied in nature, and certain theoretical ideas are associated with the works of American scientists W. McNeill and K. Boulding. Later, in the second half of the 20th century, works in the field of geopolitical research were published by G. Modelski, K. Thompson, P. Kennedy, Z. Brzeziński, M. van Creveld and others.

The differences between modern interpretations of geopolitics and its “classical versions” are due to the fact that the decisive significance of those material, social and moral resources of the state (or its “geopolitical potential”) is postulated, not only the active use of which, but also the presence of which is sufficient for successful implementation of certain foreign policy priorities.

We can agree with the statement that, despite the frequent characterization of geopolitics only as a successful interdisciplinary term of social disciplines, its status as a special political and sociological approach to the study of correlations between the geographical position of the state and its foreign policy is hardly beyond doubt<sup>34</sup>.

## 6. MODERN CONCEPTS OF GEOGRAPHICAL DETERMINISM

As scientific and technological progress accelerates and mankind moves into the post-industrial stage of development, the interest in geographical determinism as a conceptual methodological approach to the problems of the relationship between nature and society does not weaken and is not cancelled. On the contrary, with the expansion of global problems of the modern age, caused by the uneven ecological, demographic, economic, political, scientific-technical and cultural development of various countries of the world, the alarmist “greening” of mass public consciousness is increasing, and geographical determinism is being modernized. Some researchers (Gladkyi Yu.N., Lopatnikov D.L., etc.) even speak of its renaissance and declare the emergence of a new era of geographical determinism (or neo-determinism)<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Kozynets, O., Ignatenko, S. «The influence of geographical factors on the form of government: theoretical rationale», *Teoriia derzhavy i prava* 5 (2019): 203.

<sup>33</sup> Gritsanov, A. *Geopolitics. Novejshij filosofskij slovar. 2-e izd.* (Minsk: Interpressservice; Knizhnyi dom, 2001), 237.

<sup>34</sup> Gritsanov, A. *Geopolitics. Novejshij filosofskij slovar. 2-e izd.* (Minsk: Interpressservice; Knizhnyi dom, 2001), 237.

<sup>35</sup> Gladkyi, Yu., Lopatnikov, D. «Geographical neodeterminism of post-industrial time», *Obshestvo. Sreda. Razvitie* 4 (2021): 72.

What exactly is the essence of the “new version of the interpretation of the phenomenon of geographical determinism” according to its authors, especially since the importance of the natural environment for people’s lives, roughly speaking, cannot increase or decrease?

Firstly, it is about a sharp turn in the content of the ideas of geographical determinism towards ecological determinism or environmentalism, which is often associated with social ecology. The emphasis shifts from the analysis of changes in the life-supporting resources of the geospheric shells to the study of the regeneration mechanism of the biosphere, dangerous climate fluctuations, the role of the green economy, etc.

Secondly, the new version of geographical determinism involves a deeper understanding of the inextricable interdependence of nature and society, taking into account the fact that the needs of society continue to grow in direct proportion to the growth in the level of its technical, economic and technological development. Accordingly, there is an assessment and reassessment of the negative impact of human society on nature, which was not characteristic of “classical” geographical determinism.

Thirdly, the new understanding of geographical determinism is associated with the necessary consideration of global energy flows and biogeochemical cycles.

Fourthly, the specific function of geographical neodeterminism as a field of scientific knowledge is its active participation in the transformation of the ecological problem into a dominant worldview, in the formation of a new type of being – the ecological one.

Among the vivid manifestations of geographical neo-determinism of the modern era, one should include, first of all, the concepts of “sustainable development”, “green economy”, and even geographical ethics.

***The concept of “sustainable development”.*** The concept of sustainable development (the concept of ecologically sustainable development) is a model of the development of civilization, which is based on the need to maintain a balance between solving social and economic problems and preserving the environment. Development of the concept of sustainable development is due to the threat of an ecological disaster caused by the negative consequences of scientific and technological progress. It is known that the term “sustainable development” was used for the first time in 1987 in the report “Our Common Future” of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development <sup>36</sup>. And the obligations of states to achieve sustainable development were formulated in the declaration “Agenda for the XXI century”, adopted at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (June 1992, Rio de Janeiro)<sup>37</sup>. In December 1992, the UN established a special Commission on Sustainable Development. In 1995, the Commission adopted the Program of work on indicators of sustainable development, intended for use at the national level by countries in the course of strategic decision-making. Indicators of sustainable development are divided into 4 groups:

1) indicators of social aspects (fighting poverty; dynamics of demographic processes and sustainability of development; development of education, literacy, training programs; protection and improvement of people’s health; ensuring the sustainable development of places of mass residence of people);

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<sup>36</sup> Ponomareva, I. «Geopolitical factors of foreign policy: modern vision», *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* 1 (1990): 35-48.

<sup>37</sup> Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development «Our Common Future». Note by the Secretary General of the United Nations; Getman, Danilyan, Dzeban, Kalynovskyi, Crespo. «International legal environmental protection: historical aspect», *Revista Notas Históricas y Geográficas* 27 (2021): 389-413.

2) indicators of economic aspects (international cooperation on strengthening sustainable development and relevant domestic policies; changing consumption patterns; financial resources and mechanisms for their rational use; transfer of environmentally friendly technologies, cooperation and capacity development);

3) indicators of ecological aspects (protection of the quality of water resources and provision of drinking water; protection of oceans, all types of seas and coastal areas; integrated approach to planning and management of land resources; management of fragile ecosystems: deserts and arid zones, mountain areas; ensuring sustainable development of the economy and rural areas, protection of the atmosphere, processing of solid waste and sewage issues, toxic chemicals, hazardous waste, processing and disposal of radioactive waste, combating devastation;

4) indicators of institutional aspects (integration of environmental interests and development principles in the decision-making process; science and sustainable development; international legislative instruments and mechanisms; provision and exchange of information for strategic decision-making; strengthening the main population groups)<sup>38</sup>.

Later, in the declaration adopted in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, it was also pointed out 5 main contradictions of sustainable development, which are proposed to be solved using various approaches:

1) the contradiction between real life and life in harmony with nature: the focus should be on people who have the right to a healthy and fruitful life in harmony with nature;

2) contradiction between real development and the environment: the environmental component must become an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered separately from it;

3) contradiction of the interests of present and future generations: satisfaction of human needs and preservation of the environment should be a priority interest for each generation;

4) the contradiction between rich and poor countries and people: it is necessary to reduce the gap in the standard of living between countries and people, to eradicate hunger and the poor;

5) intra-economic contradictions: sustainable development involves the exclusion or reduction of production and consumption models that do not contribute to its implementation<sup>39</sup>.

The concept of “sustainable development”, which has become, in fact, the doctrine of global development in recent decades, has an explicitly deterministic character, as it connects socio-economic development and anthropogenic human impact on nature. Never before in history have the theoretical questions of the relationship between nature and society been so closely connected with the practice of social life. This is a huge positive shift in understanding the future of humanity and the weight of the factors that will determine that future. And among them, the natural factor again takes the first place.

**Concept of green economy.** The concept of “green economy” is a trend in economic science and philosophy formed at the end of the 20th century, which emphasizes the need to reduce the negative impact of human economic activity on the environment and which is based not on economic growth at any cost, but on sustainable development with minimal risks for the environment. Its foundations and basic principles were defined in the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), which was established in 1972. Despite the vagueness of the definition of the “green economy” contained in the mentioned UN Program, as an economy that leads to an increase

<sup>38</sup> The Rio Earth Summit: Summary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

<sup>39</sup> Sustainable development: concept, principles, goals. <https://csrjournal.com/ustojchivoe-razvitie-koncepciya-principy-celi> (accessed: 18.12.2022).

in people's well-being, greater social justice, reduction of environmental risks, overcoming the lack of environmental benefits, etc., the declared principles of creating a "green economy" are absolutely logical. They focus attention on such a qualitative reduction of the resource intensity and ecological intensity of the economy, in which the achievement of an economic result must be accompanied by a reduction of environmental costs<sup>40</sup>.

Proponents of this trend believe that the economy is a dependent component of the natural environment within which it exists and is a part. The concept of green economy is closely related to such areas of economic science as ecological economics and environmental economics.

The concept of green economy is based on three axioms: it is impossible to infinitely expand the sphere of influence in a limited space; it is impossible to demand the satisfaction of endlessly growing needs in conditions of limited resources; everything on Earth is interdependent.

Proponents of the green economy criticize the neoclassical school because, within its framework, natural and social factors are usually considered external; they are considered fixed and are analyzed in gradual dynamics. Green economists consider the pursuit of economic growth unacceptable in modern realities, as it contradicts the first axiom, that is, the planet's natural resources are at their peak of use and further economic growth can lead to the environmental disaster.

Among the main objects of study and economic modeling of the green economy, the following can be distinguished: relationships between economic management and the ecological environment of the planet; ways of managing such economic systems, which include environmental as well as social factors and which would contribute to the minimization of environmental damage from economic activity in the long term; principles that should be based on the development of new technologies in the field of production and management in general, which will also be aimed at minimizing damage to the environment<sup>41</sup>.

Thus, the most important principles on which green economists are based when choosing methods of scientific knowledge and building a strategy are: the primacy of environmental factors in solving the problem of people's existence in conditions of limited resources; division of levels of implementation of the green economy, which is carried out at the conceptual, ideological, political and economic level; justification of the introduction of certain technologies.

In the process of developing various methods of "greening" the economic system and new technologies, the green economy must adhere to a number of principles necessary for the expediency and effectiveness of these developments: when identifying the permissible limits of environmental damage, it is necessary to pay special attention to the justification of the established limits, the formation of a complete picture of the consequences of their violation; mathematical rigor of calculations, interdisciplinary nature of analysis and development, etc.<sup>42</sup>

Abstracting from the political involvement of "green" parties in the EU countries, which are trying to increase their "electoral capital", "green economy" as a scientific direction reflects the progressive orientation of society. It is an integral and dependent component of the natural environment and is designed to maintain the well-being of society indefinitely.

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<sup>40</sup> United Nations Environment Program. UNEP; Agenda for the 21st century. Adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, June 3-14, 1992.

<sup>41</sup> Green economy. United Nations. Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

<sup>42</sup> Kennet M. What Green Economics? An age of global transformation. An Age of Green Economics. <https://www.greeneconomics.org.uk> (accessed: 17.12.2022); Green Economics Institute. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20140520020258> (accessed: 25.12.2022).

**Geographical ethics.** Modern geography in the process of forming answers to global challenges – demographic, geopolitical, ecological, climatic, communication, informational – inevitably faces the need to observe the norms of geographical ethics, moral choice during the analysis and synthesis of geographic data, mapping, modeling and forecasting. These circumstances determined the emergence of such a concept of modern geographical determinism as geographical ethics, which arose at the end of the 20th century.

Among the main topical directions of geographical ethics, we can highlight: compliance with moral norms of scientific representation and synthesis of data about the surrounding world and during the interpretation of statistical data; refusal to perceive work, creative activity of man on the planet as a negative factor for nature; rejection of objectivism and alarmism in presenting the results of geographical research and expertise; de-ideologization of the context during the geographical comparison of continents, regions, territories (for example, Europe and Asia, Europe and Russia, countries of the North and South, etc.); the fight against the inclusion of fictional boundaries, borders, labels, phobias, “images of the enemy”, stereotypes of thinking and extremes of geographical determinism in geographical analysis; “veto” on updating old maps, old state borders, names of states, regions, forms of statehood, etc. with “geographical” substantiation of modern geopolitical interests of countries and regions; compliance with the ethics of geographic forecasting and the researcher’s responsibility for the interpretation and extrapolation of paleogeographic reconstruction data and others<sup>43</sup>.

There is no doubt about the statement that in order to achieve the conditions of sustainable development, society needs a change in outlook, establishment of new moral principles and motivation to comply with ethical norms and rules regarding geographical objects under study. Experience shows that even with sufficient resources and optimal external conditions, the state is far from always able to develop sustainably, create an efficient spatial infrastructure of the economy, minimize damage to nature, solve cross-border tasks and conflicts, and make regions strategically attractive for investment.

Therefore, one of the main principles of geographical ethics is the mandatory transfer of strategic geographic knowledge to decision-makers and assistance in acquiring geographic thinking. Politicians, managers and businessmen should receive from geographers an idea of how to better and more efficiently organize the economy in a certain territory with minimal impact on nature, how to interact with other states and regions. Geographers should enlighten them and make them like-minded.

In addition to the goals, functions and tasks of geography as a science, it has a responsible mission - the preservation of the geographical diversity of the world, which, in addition to the diversity of landscapes, living and non-living nature objects, includes the diversity of peoples, languages, cultures, traditions, and forms of nature use. This is one of the principles of geographical ethics.

In addition, it also establishes an important principle of permanent nature conservation, during the implementation of which there cannot be “protected” and “unprotected” natural territories, plants, animals, there can only be different modes of preservation and use. From an ethical point of view (it is quite logical that they are anthropocentric), the landscape created and

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<sup>43</sup> Cutchin, M. «Ethics and Geography: Continuity and Emerging Syntheses», *Progress in Human Geography* 26 (5) (2002): 656–664.

transformed by man in the process of economic activity needs the same attention and preservation as the natural one.

It is essential in geographical ethics to counteract the use of geographical knowledge to the detriment of society: to hinder socio-cultural exchange and the rapprochement of peoples, to incite ethnic and territorial conflicts, to form a negative image of individual countries and peoples, to misrepresent the investment attractiveness of regions, to distort information on maps (if it does not meet the country's security requirements), hiding operational information about the danger of natural disasters, etc.<sup>44</sup>

These and many other principles of geographical ethics should be embedded in the ecological and geographical foundations of spatial development and sustainable nature management, fundamental and applied geographic research, geographic education and enlightenment.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the above, we can come to the disappointing conclusion that geographical determinism is a worldview that explains the socio-economic development of nations by geographical factors, climate, water, soil, plant and mineral resources. When considering the role of the geographical environment, both “geographic nihilism”, i.e. a complete denial of its influence on the functioning of society, and “geographic fatalism”, which sees an unambiguous and unidirectional dependence between the geographical environment and the processes of social life, when the development of society is completely determined by geographical factors, are unacceptable.

Geographical determinism became the theoretical basis of geopolitics, which is based on the idea of the determining influence of features of geographical space on the foreign policy of states. Despite some peremptory and somehow overestimation, geopolitics as a science is important because it examines geospace on a real plane, which significantly expands the possibilities of the theory of international relations. In the modern era, geographical determinism does not become old or abolished, but is modified into geographical neo-determinism, which is logical to be considered in the context of the synergistic paradigm of modern natural science and the synergistic potential of the humanities. It can be assumed that the new interpretation of geographical determinism will contribute to the transformation of the environmental problem of modernity into the dominant worldview idea of the greening of society.

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<sup>44</sup> Tishkov, A. «Geographic ethics in the age of globalization», *Vek globalizacii* 3 (2021): 3–18.

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