

EVOLUTION OF GEOPOLITICAL SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

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Abstract. Late-Westphalian international environment faces the renaissance of geopolitics. More and more frequently the international system resembles “the great chessboard” defined by Zbigniew Brzezinski, and the cooperation between the states is replaced with rivalry for the extension of zones of influence and aiming at realization of particular, individual interests. The aim of this article is to present the evolution of geopolitical schools of thought which is conditioned by the changes occurring in the international system. Concepts will be divided into classical geopolitical concepts, geopolitical concepts resulting from the time of the Cold War and geopolitical concepts formed after the end of the bipolar rivalry.

Key words: geopolitics, geopolitical schools of thought, evolution, state, space

INTRODUCTION

“Geopolitics studies the relations between international politics and the geographical base (space), on which this politics is carried out”¹. Classical geopolitical concepts, while explaining the location of the key states and areas also analyzed the space in the context of geographical conditionings. Land or sea location and the amount of territory were the factors which decided the power nature of a state. Taking into consideration the fact that the state does not function in a vacuum but rather in a specific international system, later generations of geopolitical concepts began to take into account those changes taking place in the international environment. Evolution in the approach towards space took place as a result. Nowadays, not only geographical conditions decide geo-strategic significance, but also political, economic and cultural and civilization ones.

The subject of this article is the evolution of geopolitical schools of thought. In order to achieve this aim, geopolitical concepts will be specified and the author will identify the changes occurring in the international environment. The concepts will be divided into three time periods, classical geopolitical con-

¹ See: S.B. Cohen, *Geography and Politics in World Divided*, New York 1973.

cepts, geopolitical concepts formed in the time of the Cold War and geopolitical concepts formed after the end of the bipolar rivalry.

CLASSICAL GEOPOLITICAL CONCEPTS

Leopold von Ranke is the founding father of the first work of geopolitical character. In his work entitled *Die grossen Mächte* of 1833, he analyzed the relation of the great powers in the past and potential future². Swedish political scientist Rudolph Kjellen was the first to use the term “geopolitics” in 1898. Both he and German geographer Friedrich Ratzek were the proponents of “organic state”; they compared the state to a living organism that, in order to develop, must extend its space and constantly expand. They based their assumptions concerning the space on so-called Darwin’s philosophy of space³. In such a context, the term space undergoes considerable widening and shall be considered not only in political categories of the state borders but also a determinant of political power of the state.

The forerunners of geopolitics as well as the creators of the classical geopolitical concepts accepted that space, more specifically, vast territory, as one of the attributes of the state’s power. The statement by Raymond Aron best concludes the subject matter of their approach: “In the competition among the states, the possession of the space is the stake of the most primary character”⁴. In such an approach, the state is suspended in the space with other political organisms. In order to survive and develop states are forced to constantly compete for: the land, resources, seas, mountain passes, straits and population. That is why the subject matter of the politics of every sovereign state is the competition for strategically important areas.

In classical geopolitical concepts, space is analyzed with respect to: morphological features of the area or territory and geopolitical structure.

Taking into consideration physiological factors (geo-determinism) the forerunners of classical geopolitics attributed the biggest significance to the size of a territory, its geographical shape, access to the sea and important transportation routes, the island location, and the length and character of borders. At various times one of the above mentioned factors was considered as the dominating one.

At the same time, the geopolitical structure results from the fact that the state does not function in the vacuum, but is an element of a broader geopolitical system. This system has a complex nature. Specific subjects function within its realm. In classical geopolitical concepts, these are mainly states. States interact,

² L. Moczulski, *Geopolitics. Power in time and space*, Warsaw 2000, p. 8.

³ See: M. Korinman, *Quand l’Allemagne pensait le monde. Grandeur et décadence d’une géopolitique*, Fayard, Paris 1990, pp. 38–44.

⁴ See: R. Aron, *Peace and war among the states*, Warsaw 1995.

that is they enter into alliances, compete for the influence zones, aim at realization of particular interest, undergo the processes of integration and create a specific international order, etc.

Period of classical geopolitical concepts lasts from the beginning of the 20th century until the time of the World War II. This was a very “stormy” period, particularly in the history of Europe. Old empires collapsed (British Empire and Austria-Hungary) and were replaced with the new ones (Germany, The United States). The alliances were formed (for example Germany-the Soviet Union). States competed for world hegemony. As a result of this rivalry, two world wars broke out. The second war changed the world geopolitical system for decades.

In such conditions, the three concepts best-known geopolitical concepts appeared: land, sea and peninsula ones. They together lay the groundwork for geopolitics.

Concepts of continental power

Concepts of continental power assume the dominance of the land over the sea, that is, the dominant states will be those in the area of Eurasia.

Halford John Mackinder assumed that the contiguous and vast territory is a factor, which decides the power nature of the state. Mackinder believed the world is divided into two parts: the World Island which comprises the joint continent of Europe, Asia and Africa, surrounded by the World Ocean and islands-satellites consisting of both Americas, Australia, Japan, the Sunday Islands and Great Britain⁵.

Mackinder drew particular attention to the north-eastern part of World Island, the so-called pivot area also referred to as axis area or geopolitical bolt⁶, around which the history of great civilization takes place. With time, Mackinder decided to change the name of World Island to Heartland, defined as the central zone, the core country. The heartland covered the central and northern part of World Island, that is Russia, Kazakhstan, the Caucasus, part of Mongolia and north-western China⁷.

According to Mackinder, this area is surrounded by two zones: the continental zone of the inner crescent and the island outer crescent. The former consists of Europe, the Mediterranean, Middle East, India and China⁸. The latter consists of Great Britain, both Americas, Africa south of the Sahara Desert, Australia, Indonesia and Japan⁹.

⁵ See: *ibidem*, p. 13.

⁶ Translation proposed by Zbigniew Sala, see: Z. Brzeziński, *Great Chessboard, Main Aims of American Politics*, Warsaw 1998, p. 48.

⁷ P. Bartosiewicz, *Political Geography and Geopolitics*, Chełm 2008, p. 37.

⁸ L. Moczulski, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

Mackinder argues that it is from the Heartland that all great territorial expansions come. These next head for the zones out of which, due to advantageous conditions, develop the greatest civilizations, that is, to Europe, Middle East, India and China¹⁰. He claimed that so far none of these zones had been captured because of the low potential of Heartland, that is, the region is too poor or has too severe climate. Mackinder updated his concept at the end of World War II. He emphasized that while in previous periods the railway increased its ability of movement inside the continental power, now advances in aviation could also make such movement possible as well as being able “to hit the bridgeheads formed at the peripheries, without the fear of destruction of aviation bases by the sea powers”¹¹. Addressing, in a way, the slowly forming new world order, Mackinder re-drew the area of the Heartland to the East. Its western border went along the line: Leningrad-Moscow-Stalingrad¹². Mackinder admitted the geopolitical significance of the so-called Middle Ocean, that is, Northern Atlantic which was the contact point among the United States, Great Britain and Europe¹³.

Another representative of the continental power concept, **Karl Haushofer** divided the world model into four pan-regions, which were to go meridian ally, from the north to the south. In Haushofer’s opinion, these regions should be characterized by political, economic and cultural unity¹⁴. Pan-Europe included the Mediterranean, Africa, Middle East as far as the Persian Gulf. Pan-America consisted of both Americas. The remaining two regions were Pan-Russia, stretching to the south and including the territory of India, and Pan-Pacific consisting of China, Indonesia and Australia. It was to be led by Japan. Haushofer also selected the Mediterranean states which, within the confines of autonomy, were to function in Pan-Europe¹⁵.

Haushofer’s works referred to Friedrich Ratzel’s views and his concept of Lebensraum (life space) as an indispensable factor for state development. This concept became the main political doctrine of the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s.

The German geographer also agreed with Mackinder’s ideas on the fundamental importance of Central-Eastern Europe. However, he did not favor the independence of the countries situated in this area; rather, he was for the alliance between Germany and Russia, according to which Germany would gain control over the Central Europe¹⁶.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ C. Jean, *Geopolitics*, Wrocław 2003, p. 70.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 73.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ Mitteleuropa, the term of geographical importance (Central Europe) as well as political one – the doctrine in the foreign policy of Germany, encouraging the formation of the federation of the states of the Central, Eastern and Southern Europe under the leadership of Germany. The concept appeared in the beginning of 19th century. However, the true forerunner of the doctrine was

Concepts of sea power

Concepts of sea power are in opposition to the concepts arguing the dominance of the land states over the sea ones.

According to **Alfred Thayer Mahan**, the following factors are the indicators of the power of a state: the length of coastline, number and character of harbors, shape of coast, industrial facilities and control over significant waterways and strategic points¹⁷. He also attributed an important role to issues such as the size of the population, national character and the will and decisiveness of the government¹⁸. Mahan argued that: "The sea is above all, the means of transport which causes that the sea power is more important than the land one, and maritime trade constitutes the main source of the nation's wealth"¹⁹.

According to Mahan, the region of the world where the most significant decisions concerning international order are taken was the north semi-sphere, the borders of which are determined by Suez Canal and Panama Canal²⁰. The strip of Asia, between the 30th and 40th parallel was, on the other hand, characterized as the area generating the biggest conflicts. At the same time this area was to separate the Russian zone of influence from the Britishone²¹.

The concept of the sea power created by the British researcher of the sea war **J. Corbett**, significantly differs from Mahan's school of thought. Corbett argued that conflict cannot be settled exclusively by the use of sea forces. Martial strategy is a part of general strategy and it combines the role sea forces are to play with the crucial need of land forces²². Sea power, according to Corbett, guarantees the victory through forcing the continental opponent to disperse his forces in order to defend his coast. In such an instance, the state – sea power may move its military forces onto the land and weaken the opponent's ability to provide supplies for the army and residents²³.

C. Frantz, who in the course of pseudo-scientific arguments, argued for the necessity of formation of federation of the states in this part of Europe under the leadership of Prussia and Austria-Hungary. Before the World War I and during its course Frantz's doctrine, with some modifications introduced by F. Neumann in Mitteleuropa (1915) became the part of the imperial politics of the German Empire aiming at the integration of the Central Europe under the domination of Germany. Its main aim was to eliminate from those areas the peripheral influences of such powers as France, Russia, and Great Britain, <http://www.stosunki-miedzynarodowe.pl/pojecia/mitteleuropa.html>, 02.01.2011.

¹⁷ P. Bartosiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

¹⁸ L. Moczulski, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁹ Cit. after *ibidem*.

²⁰ C. Jean, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ *Ibidem*.

Concept of peninsula power

According to **Nicholas Spykeman**, island location is of key importance for the power and development of the state. In his book *The Geography of the Peace*, carried out the division of the world at the dawn of World War II. He based his assumption on the statement that it was not the Heartland, as suggested by Mackinder, but its Rimland, that generated the greatest number of conflicts. And it was there where the competition for the zones of influence among the states takes place²⁴.

Rimland was to consist of the peninsula and island strip, which surrounds the continent of Eurasia. It was to act as a buffer between the sea and continental powers. The main assumptions of this concept are well reflected in the following sentence: the one who controls the frontier areas is the one who rules in Eurasia; the one who rules Eurasia, controls the world's fate"²⁵.

Spykeman came up with ten indicators of the power nature of a state. He included military force, state's surface, size of population, monetary resources, amount of natural resources, level of economic and technological development, level of social integration, character of the nation, level of social stabilization and ethnic homogeneity²⁶.

GEOPOLITICAL CONCEPTS IN THE PERIOD OF THE COLD WAR

After the bi-polar world order was established, the confrontation between the western bloc and the Soviet Union started to have a global character. The main aim for both powers was to sustain the status quo established after the end of World War II, when the simultaneous acceptance of the influence zones was still operating.

The conflict between the two blocs accelerated, taking the form of the arms race, and suddenly it was obvious that even the slightest ignition could result in the total annihilation of the human race. As André Beaufre observed, the act of scaring away started to play a significant role, making confrontational actions by the opponent impossible owing to the very fact of possession of nuclear weapons and the threat of their use. In such conditions, the politics of the United States and the Soviet Union was dominated by the strategy.

While the Cold War international order centered around the military factor. M. Menkiszak points out to the fact there were also other significant factors

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 81.

²⁵ See: J. Barbag, *General Political Geography*, Warsaw 1987, p. 14.

²⁶ Cit. after P. Bartosiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

including political, ideological and, after the 1970s, economic ones. The cultural and civilization factor became important in the next decade²⁷.

There also existed something which was called the negative comprehension of safety, that is the safety “against something”²⁸.

International organizations and corporations started to exert influence on the world’s order, but the state-centric approach still prevailed.

In such conditions, geo-strategy²⁹ replaced geopolitics which was rejected by majority of scientists after World War II. Among other reasons, its connection with Nazism and geo-determinism was criticized. According to scientists from the Soviet Union, it was the discipline, which justified the aggressive politics of imperialistic states. Another accusation against classic geopolitical concepts was that “they constituted the example of the knowledge situated both socially and geographically in such a way as to create the images of the world that could encourage a specific foreign policy”³⁰.

Taking into consideration the conditions of the Cold War period, the following geopolitical concepts emerged.

Concept of air power

In **G. Renner’s**, the founding father of so-called air power, opinion, analysis of state power in the context of its access to the sea created, two centers or “hearts”, that is the Soviet Union and the USA. They had the possibility of confrontation through the Arctic Ocean, which thus became some sort of “bolt” of the world’s strategic balance³¹.

This concept was developed and propagated by **Alexander de Seversky**. He offered his own division of the world, dividing it into two so-called “industrial hearts”, that is USA and the Soviet Union. The United States was to govern the western hemisphere whereas the Soviet Union was to rule Eurasia. His concept based upon the close of location of the economic centers of the two powers³². What was vital, both states possessed the analogical level of power concentrated on the northern areas of America and Eurasia.

²⁷ M. Menkiszak, *Does Poland need the state strategy?* in: M. Pietraś (ed.), *International Political Relationships*, Lublin 2006, p. 323–348.

²⁸ See more: M. Pietraś, *International safety*, in: M. Pietraś (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 323–348.

²⁹ C. Flint, *Introduction to Geopolitics*, Warsaw 2008, p. 40.

³⁰ According to A. Beaufre, “the strategy is: firstly, the duel of the will, exercising force to solve the conflict, secondly, the art. Of using force to achieve political goals, thirdly, the method of reasoning which, on the basis of the analysis of internal situation (resources, instruments, etc.) and external one (circumstances) allows to choose the most efficient way of conduct”, A. Beaufre, *Introduction to strategy. Scaring away and strategy*, Warsaw 1968, p. 25–32.

³¹ C. Jean, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

³² Z. Rykiel, *The Basis of Political Geography*, Warsaw 2006, p. 32.

Concepts of geopolitical division of S. B. Cohen's world's model

S. B. Cohen introduced to the literature the terms "region" (geostrategic area) and "geopolitical". Cohen divided the world's space into areas and regions which create the rational system³³. Geostrategic region, in his opinion, is the expression of connections among all parts of the world in the categories of location, movement, directions of trade flow, cultural traits, ideology, etc. It is a homogenous area, in such a sense, that its goal is to embrace the territories where power is to be exercised and at the same time it is the area which is diversified as it comes to its composition. This area must be large enough to possess the power of global interaction. Its unity has to be assured by the control of strategic ways on the sea and land³⁴.

Cohen also carried out the internal division of the geostrategic region, dividing it into geopolitical regions. Geopolitical regions are relatively homogenous in terms of culture, economy and politics. Moreover, they may also be characterized by close location and complementarity. This encourages their integration. In addition, geopolitical regions are the basis of emergence of centers of power within geostrategic region³⁵.

Cohen distinguished the two geostrategic areas named: *Eurasian Continental World* and *the Trade Dependent Maritime World*. The first one covers the Soviet Union, the countries situated in Central and Eastern Europe and continental China. It is divided into the two geopolitical regions: the bloc of the Soviet Union and the bloc of China³⁶. The second geostrategic region consists of the five geopolitical regions: Anglo-America and the Caribbean plus Colombia, Venezuela and Guyana; South America; Maritime Europe and the Maghreb minus the eastern part of the Mediterranean, Africa south of the Sahara; and off shore Asia and Oceania with Japan, the Philippines and Australia³⁷.

Cohen also selected the three independent geopolitical regions: South Asia (Indian sub- continent), South-East Asia and Middle East. He termed the latter regions as shatter belts, because political tensions are their characteristic feature³⁸.

After the Cold War, Cohen updated the division of the world's model. He introduced to the literature a new term, *Gateway Regions*, that is the gateways comprising the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Caribbean³⁹. Those areas, in Cohen's opinion, act as communicators and thus they may stabilize international competition⁴⁰.

³³ See: S.B. Cohen, *Geography and Politics*, *op cit.*, p. 56–62.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ L. Moczulski, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

Cohen's model of the world created the grounds for deliberations, among others, concerning the integration of regional geopolitical poles.

Concepts of (geo-)political division of the world's model

Along with the increased role of economics in modern international relationships, the space and the location of a state began to be analyzed in terms of economic regions. In this context, the best-known division of the world was introduced by **Immanuel Wallerstein**. In his work, entitled *The Modern World System*, he carried out the historic analysis of the world capitalism system from the 16th century until the present, from the point of view of mechanisms, which function in the capitalist system.

Wallerstein divided the world into three fragments: the core, peripheries and semi-peripheries⁴¹. The core consists of the rich states which exploit the poor ones that constitute the peripheries. Semi-peripheries, on the other hand, are the states which are situated in the center of the international hierarchy. They may be exploited, but in favourable conditions, they may also exploit weaker state organisms. According to Wallerstein, the states forming the semi-peripheries may get promoted to the core or fall down to the peripheries⁴². In order to achieve this, they may apply three development strategies: the strategy of the use of opportunity, strategy through the invitation and strategy of own forces⁴³. He argued that those countries play the role of the system stabilizer. Their absence could result in the fast polarization of the system and eventually, in its disintegration.

Wallerstein emphasized that trade based on the rules of free market benefits exclusively the core states. At the same time for the countries of the peripheries, this means the increase in unemployment and the collapse of local businesses⁴⁴, because in the conditions of the free market, they are forced to exploit the products of lower development in the production processes and import more advanced products from better developed countries⁴⁵.

Wallerstein advised the states on the peripheries to implement protectionist measures. He thought that they should open their markets, when they reach a higher level of development. In his opinion the core states "force" the states on the peripheries to follow the rules of the free market with the help of such organizations as the World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund. Thanks

⁴¹ See: P. Śpiewak, A. Jelonek, *Immanuel Wallerstein and his paradigm*, in: I. Wallerstein, *The End of the World We Know*, transl. by M. Bilewicz, A. Jelonek, K. Tyszka, Warsaw 2004, p. 7–25.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ See: A. Aleksy, Theory of Immanuel Wallerstein's world model and its importance for the theory of international relationships, in: R. Kuźniar (ed.), *International Order at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, Warsaw 2005, p. 594–595.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 595.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

to them, core states gain access to their markets without bearing costs of customs barriers, etc.⁴⁶

By the end of 1960s, when the division of the world into capitalistic and socialistic states was already common, there appeared the term of the Third World. The term was used to describe the states situated in Africa, which at that time did not engage into political and ideological conflicts between the West and the East.

Alfred Sauvy was the first scientist to use the term the “Third World”, in 1952. He wanted to emphasize in this way that this area was ignored and exploited by the rest of the world. In this way he referred to the concept of the core and peripheries⁴⁷. At the same time, the term of weakly developed countries appeared. Its meaning was basically the same as that of the Third World, except that it was limited solely to the level of development and excluded issues connected with the causes, assessment and implications of underdevelopment. Very soon this term was used to refer to the countries situated in Asia, Latin America and Oceania⁴⁸. Due to political incorrectness, this received a lot of criticism. That is why it was replaced by the term developing countries. Very shortly, in the beginning of 1970s this term was replaced by the term the states of the Third World. As Z. Rykiel explains, the application of this term in the context of the states situated in Latin America, Asia and Oceania was in fact correctly used only in the context of economic and ideological categories⁴⁹.

The term the Third World was replaced in the next decade by the division of the world into poor South and rich North, which, significantly, included the states of Central and Eastern Europe⁵⁰.

The above divisions based on only one category, that is, development. They ignored other vital categories such as ideology and politics.

GEOPOLITICAL CONCEPTS OF THE POST COLD WAR PERIOD

Geopolitics became important again at the end of the Cold War, because when in the dynamically changing polyarchic international environment there began a fight for power over space and the influence zones. In this environment, referred to as the late-Westphalian international order, the following processes and phenomena take place. Firstly, the United States-Soviet Union dichotomy that had outlined the system of power balance ceased to exist. Secondly, new non-governmental actors came into possession of weapons of massive destruc-

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 596.

⁴⁷ Z. Rykiel, *op. cit.*, p. 226–227.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 227.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

tion. Their behavior often escaped rational evaluation and calculations. Thirdly, proliferation of low-intensity conflicts of complex and diverse causes occurred. Fourthly, new asymmetrical dangers appeared, creating new challenges for the safety of states. Fifthly, facing new threats and globalization processes, the state lost control over incidents taking place on its territory⁵¹. The protective function of the borders weakened and the borders themselves became more penetrable and guaranteed free flow of goods, services, ideas, values and technologies⁵². What's more, individual policies of the state became the parts of various international regimes.

In such conditions the following factors became particularly important in the new geopolitical global structure: economic, cultural and civilization, ecological and political ones. Less important, especially when compared to the period of the Cold War, was the military factor.

New, qualitative features of the international environment also changed the approach towards the space.

K. Szczerski draws attention to the fact that the world of new technologies creates the surface in non-existing space which does not require any real limitation of place. Thus the special relations shall be understood in the categories of "communicational and mental closeness and distance"⁵³.

A. Wolff-Powęska interprets space in a similar way. She emphasizes that globalization processes and increasing interdependence have led to considerable disappearance of the traditional function of the border which was, as she writes: "one of the main pillars of geopolitical categorization". Thus the countries competing for specific, strategically important areas, should assume relativization of the space and location⁵⁴. Because of growing integrative tendencies, numerous vivid social, economic and political problems are solved above states' borders. Thus the states lost control over many phenomena occurring on their territory. This fact affects the gradual change in awareness and political thinking concerning space. "Vast area" which was considered by the classic geopolitics to be the guarantee of the state's power, has lost its significance⁵⁵. According to Wolff-Powęska, the changes that took place on the territory of Europe and Asia after the end of the Cold War showed that space is the product of politics undergoing

⁵¹ See: M. Pietraś, *Hybryd character of late-Westphalian international order*, in: M. Pietraś, K. Marzęda (eds), *Late-Westphalian International Order*, Lublin 2008, p. 57–74; M. Madej, *Terrorism and other asymmetric dangers in the light of modern understanding of national and international safety- the attempt of theoretical conceptualization*, in: R. Kuźniar (ed), *International Order*, op. cit., p. 486–517.

⁵² See: M. Pietraś, *Faces of Globalization Processes*, Lublin 2002.

⁵³ K. Szczerski, *Neopolitical analysis*, in: K. Szczerski (ed.), *Geopolitical Subjectiveness. The Studies of the Polish Foreign Policy*, Warsaw 2009, p. 14.

⁵⁴ A. Wolff-Powęska, E. Schulz (eds), *The Space and Politics. From the History of German Political Thought*, Poznań 2000, p. 10–11.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

constant change. Everything which is connected with space is due to of history and human activity. Thus it cannot be perceived as a variable determining politics in general⁵⁶. That is why the states start to perceive space as a “tool” serving the realization of individual interests. According to the author such interests include, for example, winning new areas rich in energy resources and overcoming the divisions into the zones of wealth and poverty⁵⁷.

Taking all above mentioned conditions into account, it shall be assumed that geopolitics now conceptualizes space in material and non-material dimensions in order to analyze the international situation and select possibilities, goals and politics⁵⁸.

What is important, the state is not the main or the only subject of studies as it comes to geopolitics. It also concentrates on non-state participants of international relationships⁵⁹.

Part of the parameters of the world international order found its reflection in the modern geopolitical concepts.

Concept of geopolitical division of the world model according to Zbigniew Brzeziński

Brzeziński treated the earth's space as the field of game, that is the chess-board on which the fight for world hegemony and the expansion of influence zones takes place in the most strategically important regions of the world. Brzeziński came to the conclusion that the main actors on the world's chess-board are the United States as the hegemon; Russia, China, France, Germany and India as the global active players; Great Britain, Japan and significant but inactive players and Ukraine, Turkey, South Korea, Iran and Afghanistan as so called geopolitical bolts – the states important geopolitically with respect to their geographical location⁶⁰.

Independent of the above division, is Brzezinski's theory of so-called crisis arch the vast region stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. Brzeziński warns that this is the region, where conflicts may have a completely new face which starts to immerse between Middle and Central East and Pakistan and Afghanistan. In his opinion, lack of stability in this geographical arch may directly or indirectly affect the interests of the states in the area of Eurasia.

The areas important from the perspective of the interaction among the states were described by Brzeziński as geopolitical bolts. Geopolitical bolts, according to one American politician, are the states, whose importance results

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ C. Jean, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁵⁹ See: C. Flint, *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ See: Z. Brzeziński, *op. cit.*

from their key geographical location and their potential lack of stability⁶¹. According to Brzeziński, geopolitical bolts obtain particular roles, because they may enable or block geostrategic players in their the access to important territories, among other things⁶². In addition, in certain situations, they may become the protective shield for a state or even the whole region or imply for them serious political and cultural consequences⁶³.

Concept of geopolitical division of the world's model according to Leszek Moczulski

Similarly to Brzeziński, L. Moczulski assumed geopolitical bolts to be an important element of the modern geopolitical structure. In his terminology, they function as the regions, axis states or pivot area⁶⁴. In his view, the most important historic and political processes develop around it. Moczulski gave the example of the Mediterranean as the axis zone. Italy is the axis state for this area. He also drew attention to the fact that smaller areas may also become geopolitical bolts, such as, for example, the areas at the mouth of the Vistula, Rhine or Mosel rivers⁶⁵. Axis functions may also periodically be played by the states, such as for example, in the 19th century, Prussia⁶⁶. Moczulski also defined terms such as the core areas, geopolitical bolts and buffer zones. The core areas are the centers around which the processes of special integration focused. For Western Europe such an area was the strap along the Rhine and Mosel, prolonged to North Italy and the coasts of the North Sea⁶⁷. Geopolitical bolts connect spaces or divide various regions⁶⁸. Yet another role is played by buffer zones. As argued by Moczulski, these are situated between the zones of great geopolitical activity and thus prevent expansions from various directions. That is why, even if they have considerable potential, they are not able to expand further. Ukraine was assumed to be the buffer zone protecting Europe against Asia⁶⁹.

(Geo-)cultural and civilization concepts of division of the world's model

In deliberations about cultural and civilization factors it should be emphasized that the basic unit for geopolitics is the so-called great civilization described as the civilization circle, that is, the upper rung of hierarchical cultural

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p. 39.

⁶² *Ibidem*.

⁶³ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁴ L. Moczulski, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 430.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

system⁷⁰. In the literature on the subject there is no agreement concerning the division of civilizations, that is why there are numerous classifications.

L. Moczulski distinguished four great civilizations on the Euroasian continent: European, Islamic, Indian and Far East (Chinese) one⁷¹. Within them or on their margins, proper civilizations developed. The example of such a civilization is the Japanese one being a derivative of Chinese civilization. Moczulski carried out the more detailed specification of this division. Great European civilization was divided into two proper civilizations: eastern and western ones⁷². Further, within the Western civilization there are Latin and German ones. At the same time the Eastern civilization comprises the Byzantium one⁷³. This researcher of geopolitics emphasizes that non-complete civilizations formed in isolated areas. They are the defective sort of proper civilizations and mainly developed in Africa and continental Asia⁷⁴.

A.J. Toynbee distinguished 23 civilizations. The majority of these are already a thing of the past and only five of them remain: western (Christian), eastern (Byzantium-Orthodox), Islamic, Hindu and Chinese one⁷⁵.

According to **F. Koneczny**, on the other hand, there are seven civilizations: Latin, Byzantium, Arabic, Jewish, Turanian and Brahmin ones. He emphasizes that the interaction and penetration between civilizations most frequently take place in the touching zones⁷⁶.

One of the most widely-known cultural and civilization concepts was introduced by American historian and political scientist **S.P. Huntington**. He distinguished seven great civilizations: Western, Latin-American, Orthodox, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist and Chinese. He did not exclude that in the future an eighth one, African, would emerge. In Huntington's opinion, the conflicts between those civilizations will, in the future, evoke the differences in their culture, tradition and religion⁷⁷. In his most recognized work entitled *The Clash of Civilizations* he wrote: "there emerges the world's order based on civilizations: the countries with similar features cooperate, the attempts of transforming societies from one civilization to another fail, countries group around the states being the centers of their civilizations"⁷⁸. The concept, which was widely criticized in 1990s, came into a new meaning after the attack on the World Trade Center as of September 11th, 2001.

⁷⁰ S.P. Huntington, *Clash of Civilization and New Shape of the World's Order*, Warsaw 1997, p. 46.

⁷¹ L. Moczulski, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 272.

⁷³ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁵ See: A.J. Toynbee, *Studies of History*, Warsaw 2000.

⁷⁶ See: F. Koneczny, *On the Greatness of Civilizations*, Cracow 1996.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 14.

CONCLUSION

The state does not function in a vacuum but in a strictly defined, dynamically changing international environment. Evolution in the approach towards geographical space took place as a result of changes in the parameters of the world system.

Classical geopolitical concepts analyzed space predominantly in the context of geographical conditions. Vast territory, maritime, land or peninsula location determined the position and power of the state. The space was assumed to be the main determinant of its development.

The balance of power sanctioned by the division of the world into influence zones of the United States and the Soviet Union as well as arms race between these powers resulted in the increased importance of the military factor. Geopolitics was replaced by geo-strategy. The term of geostrategic region appeared at that time. Economic factors became more and more important. Applying the economic criterion to the division of the world, I. Wallerstein distinguished between the core, semi-peripheries and peripheries. Also political and ideological factors turned out to be vital in the analysis of the geopolitical structure.

The greatest evolution occurred after the end of the Cold War. Qualitative changes in the polyarchic international environment, globalization processes and international relationships, so-called asymmetric dangers, conflicts of low intensity, change of border function created a completely new character for space. It cannot be solely perceived as the variable determining politics but rather a tool serving the realization of particular interests. The cultural and civilization factor is as important (S.P. Huntington's concept forecasting "the clash" of various civilizations) as the political and economic one. The next change dealt with pluralism which replaced the state-centric approach. Non-state subjects exert greater and greater influence on the shape of the international order.

EWOLUCJA GEOPOLITYCZNYCH SZKÓŁ MYŚLENIA

Streszczenie. W późnowestfalskim systemie międzynarodowym doszło do „odrodzenia” geopolityki. Coraz częściej system międzynarodowy przypomina przywołaną przez Zbigniewa Brzezińskiego „wielką szachownicę”, a współpracę państw zastępuje rywalizacja o poszerzanie stref wpływów oraz dążenie do realizacji partykularnych interesów. W publikacji ukazano ewolucję geopolitycznych szkół myślenia, warunkowaną przez dynamiczne zmiany parametrów systemu międzynarodowego. Koncepcje podzielono według kryterium czasowego na: klasyczne koncepcje geopolityczne, koncepcje geopolityczne powstałe w czasie zimnej wojny oraz koncepcje geopolityczne uformowane po zakończeniu dwubiegunowej rywalizacji. Analiza geopolitycznych szkół myślenia pozwoli wskazać istotne zmiany w podejściu do przestrzeni, a także roli, pozycji oraz interesów państwa w systemie międzynarodowym.

Słowa kluczowe: geopolityka, geopolityczne szkoły myślenia, ewolucja, państwo, przestrzeń