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## Zbigniew Brzezinski's perspective on the geostrategic and geopolitical importance of Ukraine

**Geostrategiczne i geopolityczne znaczenie Ukrainy – perspektywa Zbigniewa Brzezińskiego**

**Abstract:** The aim of this article was to portray the complexity of the crisis/war in Ukraine, an event that has shaken Europe more than any other since World War II. The complexity of the crisis could be located in the involvement of external powers (Russia, US, NATO, EU, Turkey, etc.). Zbigniew Brzezinski throws light on the geopolitical significance of Ukraine in the context of the tendency of great powers to secure dominance in Eurasia. Brzezinski assigned Ukraine as a “pivotal” figure on the “Eurasian chessboard” due to its vital geostrategic position, major resources, access to the Black Sea, and importance for Russian strategic interests. In terms of a realist perspective and geopolitical thoughts, Brzezinski's writings still represent a valuable asset in the analysis of the current crisis in Ukraine.

**Keywords:** Zbigniew Brzezinski, Ukraine, geopolitical pivot, great-powers rivalry, Russian imperialism, Finlandization, evolution of international order

**Streszczenie:** Celem eksplanacyjnym niniejszej analizy jest chęć ukazania konfliktu rosyjsko-ukraińskiego z punktu widzenia jego złożoności, wielowymiarowości i wieloaspektowości, przy uwzględnieniu percepcji i użyteczności sposobu postrzegania i interpretowania geopolitycznego i geostrategicznego znaczenia Ukrainy w stosunkach międzynarodowych przez Zbigniewa Brzezińskiego. Przyjęto założenie, że dla zrozumienia istoty procesów i zjawisk zachodzących w wymiarze globalnego ładu międzynarodowego konieczne jest uwzględnienie czynnika rywalizacji mocarstw – także na obszarze Ukrainy – oraz instrumentalizacji obecnego konfliktu Rosji i Ukrainy w strategiach poszczególnych państw i organizacji międzynarodowych. Z tej perspektywy badawczej i analitycznej, z punktu widzenia realistycznego sposobu postrzegania i wartościowania rzeczywistości międzynarodowej, przy równoczesnym uwzględnieniu warstwy myśli geopolitycznej, refleksje i rekomendacje Zbigniewa Brzezińskiego nieustannie stanowią wartościowy i użyteczny punkt odniesienia, obecny także w niniejszych deliberacjach.

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**Słowa kluczowe:** Zbigniew Brzeziński, Ukraina, sworzeń geopolityczny, rywalizacja mocarstw, imperializm Rosji, finlandyzacja, ewolucja ładu międzynarodowego

## Introduction

Zbigniew Brzezinski was a great friend of Ukraine and supported Ukraine on many issues in the international arena. Ukraine was permanently the object of his very deep and serious attention. Brzezinski has always been clear and consistent in his assessments about Ukraine. For Brzezinski, Ukraine is desirable for Europe and would also help in the transformation of Russia. This is why he viewed a close association with Ukraine not as an anti-Russian policy but rather as a policy which helps the consolidation of democracy in Russia *in spe*. Ukraine was a cornerstone of the Soviet Union, the arch-rival of the United States during the Cold War<sup>1</sup>. Behind only Russia, it was the second-most-populous and powerful of the fifteen Soviet republics, home to much of the union's agricultural production, defence industries, and military, including the Black Sea Fleet and some of the nuclear arsenal. Ukraine was so vital to the union that its decision to sever ties in 1991 proved to be a *coup de grace* for the ailing superpower. In its three decades of independence, Ukraine has sought to forge its own path as a sovereign state while looking to align more closely with Western institutions, including the EU and NATO. For these reasons (geostrategic and geopolitical) Ukraine also became a unique *case study* for Zbigniew Brzezinski.

## 1. Ukraine, a geopolitical pivot and the crucial state in the Eurasian and European Great Power Competition

Ukraine has long played an important, yet sometimes overlooked, role in the global political and security order. Today, the Ukrainian state is on the front line of a renewed geopolitical great-powers rivalry that many analysts say will dominate international relations in the decades

<sup>1</sup> Z. Brzeziński, S. Huntington, *Political power: U.S.A./U.S.S.R.*, New York 1964; Z. Brzezinski, *Game plan: A geostrategic framework for the conduct of the U.S.-Soviet contest*, Boston 1986; Z. Brzezinski, *The grand failure: The birth and death of communism in the twentieth century*, New York 1989.

ahead, in Europe and Asia. According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, independent since 1991, Ukraine is an “important space on the Eurasian chessboard”, the control of which is supposed to make domination over the world possible<sup>2</sup>. In a post-Cold War world under the United States geostrategic domination, Brzezinski identifies Ukraine – in Eurasia, alongside Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan – as the state “deserving America’s strongest geopolitical support”<sup>3</sup>.

Ukraine, a new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard, is a geopolitical pivot because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire. Russia without Ukraine can still strive for imperial status, but it would then become a predominantly Asian imperial state, more likely to be drawn into debilitating conflicts with aroused Central Asians, who would then be resentful of the loss of their recent independence and would be supported by their fellow Islamic states to the south. China would also be likely to oppose any restoration of Russian domination over Central Asia, given its increasing interest in the newly independent states there. However, if Moscow regains control over Ukraine, with its 52 million people and major resources as well as its access to the Black Sea, Russia automatically again regains the wherewithal to become a powerful imperial state, spanning Europe and Asia. Ukraine’s loss of independence would have immediate consequences for Central Europe, transforming Poland into the geopolitical pivot on the eastern frontier of a united Europe<sup>4</sup>. (...) The states deserving America’s strongest geopolitical support are Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and (outside this region) Ukraine, all three being geopolitically pivotal. Indeed, Kiev’s role reinforces the argument that Ukraine is the critical state, insofar as Russia’s own future evolution is concerned. At the same time, Kazakstan – given its size, economic potential, and geographically important location – is also deserving of prudent international backing and especially of sustained economic assistance. In time, economic growth in Kazakstan might help to bridge the ethnic split that makes this Central Asian “shield” so vulnerable to Russian pressure<sup>5</sup>.

2 Z. Brzezinski, *The Great Chessboard: American dominance and its geostrategic imperatives*, New York 1997, p. 48.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 46.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 148.

Zbigniew Brzezinski recognized Eurasia as the chief geopolitical prize for America, given that its global primacy is directly dependent on how long and how effectively its preponderance on the Eurasian continent is sustained. Therefore, Eurasia is placed at the centre of American geopolitical strategic interests, since Brzezinski believed that global affairs were always dominated by the relations within this particular region. Thus, he emphasized that the US's fundamental geopolitical interest is to prevent the emergence of any more influential or even dominant power in Eurasia. Brzezinski was particularly interested in the geopolitical significance of Ukraine that derives from its vital geostrategic point between Europe and Asia. He emphasized that Ukraine represents a substantial actor in ensuring the ascendancy within the Eurasian region. Furthermore, Brzezinski recognized the importance of Ukraine's role in the geopolitical game on the "Eurasian chessboard" since he argued that Russia without Ukraine ceases to be a "Eurasian empire" and would have become a predominantly Asian imperial state. In addition, Brzezinski stated that if Russia restores control over Ukraine, with its around 45 million people, major resources and access to the Black Sea, then Russia automatically regains the wherewithal to become a powerful imperial state, spanning Europe and Asia. Therefore, without Ukraine, Russia's strategic geopolitical objectives and a tendency for regional hegemony, based on the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) or the Eurasia platform, are not likely to be achieved. In terms of a geopolitical realm, Brzezinski, on the grounds of Mackinder's theory<sup>6</sup>, distinctly indicated the resounding importance of Ukraine for the clash of great powers interests in Eurasia, which was genuinely confirmed with their involvement and the intensity of the crisis. Hence, in order to understand the substance of this subject matter, it is important to determine and present the geopolitical incentives of external actors that had the most prominent impact on the Ukrainian crisis. On the other hand, particularly important in the analysis of the Ukrainian crisis are the impacts of external factors that are predominantly geopolitical in nature.

6 H.J. Mackinder, *The geographical pivot of history*, "The Geographical Journal" 1904, vol. 23, no. 4; *Democratic ideals and reality. A study in the politics of reconstruction*, National Defence University Press, 1996.

Thus, the Ukrainian strategic geographic position, energy resources, and significance as a transit country for energy, along with its importance for relations between Russia and the West, imply that the crisis contains a geopolitical logic that has to be thoroughly addressed<sup>7</sup>.

Ukraine is today's Eurasian and European geopolitical laboratory. Eastern Europe may well be considered the contemporary "pivot area". While Ukraine's independence affects the nature of Russia's state itself, it is for the US the critical state among key Eurasian and European geopolitical pivots<sup>8</sup>. Geopolitical pivots being defined as "states whose importance is derived not from their power and motivation but rather from their sensitive location and from the consequences of their potentially vulnerable condition for the behaviour of geostrategic players"<sup>9</sup>, such as Russia<sup>10</sup>.

Geopolitical pivots are the states whose importance is derived not from their power and motivation but rather from their sensitive location and from the consequences of their potentially vulnerable condition for the behaviour of geostrategic players. Most often, geopolitical pivots are determined by their geography, which in some cases gives them a special role either in defining access to important areas or in denying resources to a significant player. In some cases, a geopolitical pivot may act as a defensive shield for a vital state or even a region. Sometimes, the very existence of a geopolitical pivot can be said to have very significant political and cultural consequences for a more active neighbouring geostrategic player. The identification of the post-Cold War key Eurasian geopolitical pivots, and protecting them, is thus also a crucial aspect of America's global geostrategy<sup>11</sup>.

Having "the capacity and the national will to exercise power or influence beyond [its] borders in order to alter – to a degree that affects America's interests – the existing geopolitical state of affairs", Rus-

7 S. Orlandic, *Geopolitical perspective of the Russian Federation and Brzezinski's readings of Ukrainian crisis*, "Journal of Liberty and International Affairs" 2018, vol. 4, no. 3, p. 12.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

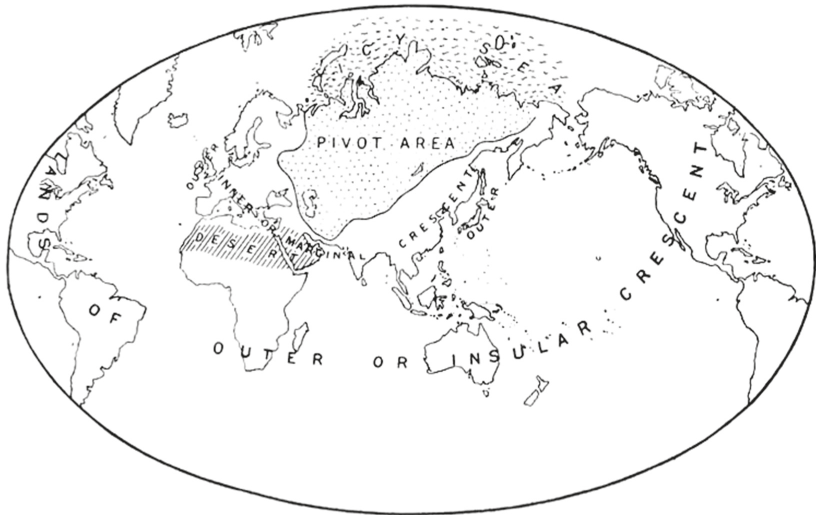
9 *Ibid.*

10 B. Didier, *The Ukraine crisis or the revival of the Grand Chessboard's geopolitics: Euro-Atlantic response to Russia's assault*, "Open Diplomacy" 2016, p. 2, <https://www.open-diplomacy.eu/blog/the-ukraine-crisis-or-the-revival-of-the-grand-chessboard-s-geopolitics> [24.07.2017].

11 Z. Brzezinski, *The Great Chessboard...*, p. 40.

sia looks for regional hegemony and the recognition of its power on the international stage, and its interests are susceptible to confrontation with those of the US. Thus, Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2014 could be explained by its will to regain its status as a Eurasian empire and thereby, the Ukraine conflict is mostly seen as a campaign for Eurasia<sup>12</sup>.

**Map 1. Historical geopolitics: the importance of Eurasia**



Source: J. Anderson, *The contemporary geopolitics series: Eurasia, politics and governance Russia and Central Asia*, 24 February 2015; <https://www.glimpsefromtheglobe.com/topics/politics-and-governance/contemporary-geopolitics-series-eurasia/> [24.02.2015].

Western analysts see Russia's 2022 invasion as the culmination of the renewed geopolitical great-powers rivalry in Europe, and the Kremlin's growing resentment toward NATO's post-Cold War expansion into the former Soviet "sphere of influence". Russian leaders, including V. Putin, have alleged that the United States and NATO repeatedly violated pledges they made in the early 1990s to not expand the alliance into the former Soviet bloc. They view NATO's enlargement during this tumultuous period for Russia as a humiliating imposi-

<sup>12</sup> J. Masters, *Ukraine: Conflict at the crossroads of Europe and Russia*, Council on Foreign Relations, 14 February 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/background/ukraine-conflict-crossroads-europe-and-russia> [14.02.2023].

tion about which they could do little but watch. While in the United States, political leaders talk about a Ukraine crisis, from the Russian standpoint this is a crisis in European security architecture. From the Russian perspective, the fundamental issue – they want to negotiate – is the revision of European security architecture as it now stands to something that is more favourable to Russian interests. Other experts have said that perhaps the most important motivating factor for Putin was his fear that Ukraine would continue to develop into a modern anti-Russian state, a Western-style democracy that would inevitably undermine his autocratic regime in Russia and dash his hopes of rebuilding a Russia-led sphere of influence in Eastern Europe<sup>13</sup>. In his speech made in Washington, DC at a dinner organized by the USACC (U.S.-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce) on 15 February 2000 to honour President Heydar Aliyev's visit to the U.S. – Brzezinski pointed out:

The present Russian leadership is clearly attempting to re-establish a Russian sphere of influence throughout most of the space of the former Soviet Union. Note that I emphasize a "sphere of influence" – not re-establishment of the old Soviet Union – but a "sphere of influence". Unfortunately, this priority of establishing a "sphere of influence" interprets the presence and access between the outside world and that region as a threat to its own interests. These goals have been explicitly stated by a number of contemporary Russian leaders<sup>14</sup>.

According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, the Russian Federation has been described as a revanchist power, keen to regain its former power and prestige<sup>15</sup>. It was always V. Putin's goal to restore Russia to the status of a great power in Europe and northern Eurasia. To Russian President Vladimir Putin, the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century. The end goal was not to re-create the Soviet Union but to make Russia great again. By seizing Crimea in 2014, Russia solidified its control of a strategic foothold on

13 Ibid.

14 Z. Brzezinski, *Geopolitically speaking Russia's "sphere of influence" – Chechnya and beyond*, "Azerbaijan International" 2000, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 24, [http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/81\\_folder/81\\_articles/81\\_brzezinski.html](http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/81_folder/81_articles/81_brzezinski.html) [23.09.2023].

15 Z. Brzezinski, *A geostrategy for Eurasia*, "Foreign Policy", September/October 1997, vol. 76, no. 5, p. 56.

**Map 2. Russia's sphere of influence****Political discontent in Russia's former Soviet territory****Belarus**

Violent repression of those opposed to the Lukashenko regime has continued since the August 2020 presidential election.

**Ukraine**

For much of 2021, Russian forces have massed near Ukraine's border, creating tension between the two countries.

**Kazakhstan**

Protests break out in this resource-rich country of 19 million over its political system and dramatic energy price hikes.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Source: I. Khurshudyan, *Putin dreams of a Russian sphere of influence. Kazakhstan's protesters are the latest to push back*, "The Washington Post", 8 January 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/01/08/russia-putin-kazakhstan/> [8.01.2022].

the Black Sea. With a larger and more sophisticated military presence there, Russia can project power deeper into the Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa, where it has traditionally had limited influence. Throughout that year, Russia amassed tens of thousands of troops along the border with Ukraine and later into allied Belarus under the auspices of military exercises. In February 2022, Putin ordered a full-scale invasion, crossing a force of some two hundred thousand troops into Ukrainian territory from the south (Crimea), east (Russia), and north (Belarus), in an attempt to seize major cities, including the capital Kyiv, and depose the government. Putin said the broad goals were to de-Nazify and de-militarize Ukraine<sup>16</sup>.

16 J. Masters, op. cit.



## 2. Ukraine is a major obstacle to Russian imperialism and the key state in the future evolution of international order

Zbigniew Brzezinski, in "Foreign Affairs" in early 1994, described a healthy and stable Ukraine as a critical counterweight to Russia and the lynchpin of what he advocated should be the new U.S. grand strategy after the Cold War. It cannot be stressed strongly enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine sub-orned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire, he wrote<sup>17</sup>. In the months after Brzezinski's article was published, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia pledged via the Budapest Referendum to respect Ukraine's independence and sovereignty in return for it becoming a non-nuclear state. Twenty years later, as Russian forces seized Crimea, restoring and strengthening Ukraine's sovereignty re-emerged as a top U.S. and EU foreign policy priority. Following the 2022 invasion, U.S. and NATO allies dramatically increased defensive, economic, and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine as well as ramped up their sanctions on Russia. However, Western leaders have been careful to avoid actions they believe will draw their countries into the war or otherwise escalate it, which could, in the extreme, pose a nuclear threat<sup>18</sup>. It should be emphasized that the current conflict in Ukraine shouldn't come as a surprise. Former US National Security Advisors Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brent Scowcroft, and Henry Kissinger, and even George Kennan, architect of Cold War *containment* strategy, warned that expanding NATO would result in a new Cold War, probably ending in a hot one. Underpinning Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Kissinger, and Kennan's analysis is the fact that Russia considers – particularly Eastern Europe – to be its sphere of influence, whether because many of the states in Eastern Europe were part of the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet Union, or were members of the Warsaw Pact. Russia also has a clear security interest in controlling or de-politicising a corridor that has, historically, been used to attack it<sup>19</sup>.

17 Z. Brzezinski, *The premature partnership*, "Foreign Affairs", March/April 1994, vol. 73, no. 2.

18 J. Masters, *op. cit.*

19 O. Villar, *Great power competition in Ukraine amidst the emerging US-China rivalry*, "E-International Relations", March 2022, p. 2, <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/03/09/great-power-competition-in-ukraine-amidst-the-emerging-us-china-rivalry/> [9.03.2022].

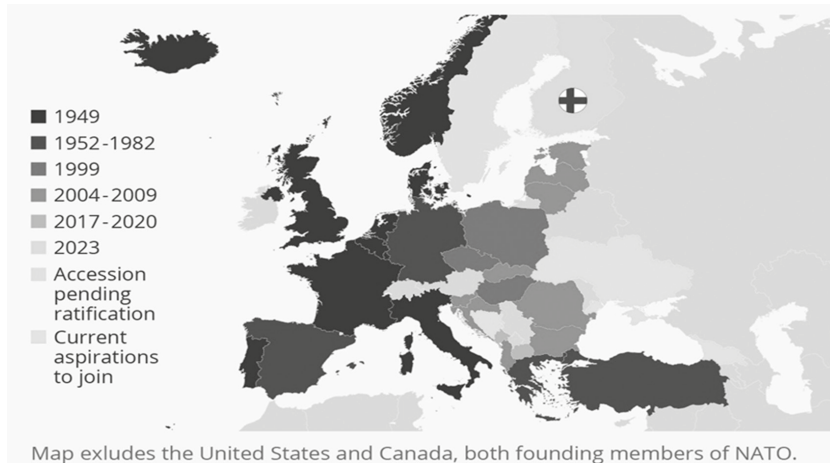
Z. Brzezinski was correct that Russia could still cause great problems for Ukraine, and evidently a “Finlandized Ukraine” seems to Brzezinski a reasonable price to pay to avoid potential chaos. What’s more, writing in the *Financial Times* (24 February 2014), Zbigniew Brzezinski explicitly endorsed the *Finlandization of Ukraine*<sup>20</sup>, in his opinion piece – *Russia needs a “Finland option” for Ukraine* – as a prerequisite for Ukraine making a peaceful (or relatively peaceful) transition into the European fold:

The US could and should convey clearly to Mr Putin that it is prepared to use its influence to make certain a truly independent and territorially undivided Ukraine will pursue policies towards Russia similar to those so effectively practised by Finland: mutually respectful neighbours with wide-ranging economic relations with Russia and the EU; no participation in any military alliance viewed by Moscow as directed at itself but expanding its European connectivity. This Finlandization of Ukraine would be necessary because Russia can still plunge Ukraine into a destructive and internationally dangerous civil war. It can prompt and then support the secession of Crimea and some of the industrial eastern portions of the country<sup>21</sup>.

The war in Ukraine plays a transformative role in the evolution of the international order in the 21st century. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has also sharpened the commitment of Western governments to a liberal vision of international order. Many states, particularly in the Global South, regard the rules-based order as an artificial Western construct, and the Ukraine war as a matter of geopolitics rather than norms and principles. Events in Ukraine have reinforced Washington’s

20 A week before Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger argued in the “*Washington Post*” that Ukraine emulate Finland so as not to antagonize Russia. “That nation leaves no doubt about its fierce independence and cooperates with the West in most fields but carefully avoids institutional hostility toward Russia”, Kissinger wrote. The most recent *eminence grise* to proffer “Finlandization” as a compromise solution to the Ukraine crisis has been “*Washington Post*” columnist David Ignatius. President Vladimir Putin, Ignatius wrote – “may be ready to accept a neutral country, between East and West, where Russia’s historical interests are recognized”. J. Kirchick, *Finlandization is not a solution for Ukraine*, “*The American Interest*”, 27 July 2014, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/07/27/finlandization-is-not-a-solution-for-ukraine/> [27.07.2014].

21 Z. Brzezinski, *Russia needs to be offered a “Finland option” for Ukraine*, “*Financial Times*”, 24 February 2014, <https://www.ft.com/content/e855408c-9bf6-11e3-afe3-00144feab7de> [24.02.2014].

**Map 3. NATO's expanding membership**

Source: K. Buchholz, *Turkey makes way for Sweden's NATO accession*, Statista, 12 July 2023, <https://www.statista.com/chart/26674/european-countries-by-year-of-joining-nato/> [12.07.2023].

views about two competing visions of global order – one democratic, the other autocratic. However, such binarism has little resonance beyond the West. For the Global South, the divide that matters is with the Global North. This is not only about relative influence and status in the international system but also diverging priorities. A rules-based international order is achievable, but not as commonly imagined in the West. The United States is still the pre-eminent power, but international power and authority have become much more diffuse. The template of unalloyed US global leadership and Western-dominated multilateral institutions has lost legitimacy and is no longer tenable. A rules-based international order is still feasible, but it will need to be much more representative and global<sup>22</sup>.

From this perspective, Zbigniew Brzezinski's thoughts on the evolution of the international order in the 21st century, appear very interesting:

The fact is that there has never been a truly “dominant” global power until the emergence of America on the world scene. Imperial Great Britain came close to becoming one, but World War I and lat-

<sup>22</sup> B. Lo, *The Ukraine effect: Demise or rebirth of the global order?*, Lowy Institute, 11 May 2023, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/ukraine-effect-demise-or-rebirth-global-order> [11.05.2023].

er World War II not only bankrupted it but also prompted the emergence of rival regional powers. The decisive new global reality was the appearance on the world scene of America as simultaneously the richest and militarily the most powerful player. During the latter part of the 20th century, no other power even came close. That era is now ending. While no state is likely in the near future to match America's economic-financial superiority, new weapons systems could suddenly endow some countries with the means to commit suicide in a joint tit-for-tat embrace with the United States, or even to prevail. Without going into speculative detail, the sudden acquisition by some state of the capacity to render America militarily inferior would spell the end of America's global role. The result would most probably be global chaos. And that is why it behoves the United States to fashion a policy in which at least one of the two potentially threatening states becomes a partner in the quest for regional and then wider global stability, and thus in containing the least predictable but potentially the most likely rival to overreach. Currently, the more likely to overreach is Russia, but in the longer run it could be China<sup>23</sup>. (...) Historically, America has shown that it rises to the occasion when challenged. But the world of the twenty-first century presents far different challenges than those in the past. The world is now almost everywhere politically awakened-with millions stirring restlessly in pursuit of a better future. It is also experiencing the dispersal of global power-with several new aspirants rapidly rising in the East. Consequently, today's world is much less susceptible to domination by a single power, even by one as militarily powerful and politically influential as the United States. But, since America is not yet Rome and China is not yet its Byzantium, a stable global order ultimately depends on America's ability to renew itself and to act wisely as the promoter and guarantor of a revitalized West and as the balancer and conciliator of a rising new East<sup>24</sup>.

23 Z. Brzezinski, *Toward a Global Realignment. As its era of global dominance ends, the United States needs to take the lead in realigning the global power architecture*, "The American Interest", 17 April 2016, vol. 11, no. 6, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/04/17/toward-a-global-realignment/> [17.04.2016].

24 Z. Brzezinski, *Strategic vision. America and the crisis of global power*, New York 2012, pp. 259-260.

**Map 4. Sphere of influence in a multipolar world**

Source: N. Schaffer, *What is a sphere of influence and how to leverage one for business*, <https://nealschaffer.com/what-is-a-sphere-of-influence/> [27.10.2023].

## Conclusions

Zbigniew Brzezinski is drawn to Ukraine not only by political sympathies but also by family ties. His father was buried in the Lviv region, and he himself became an honorary citizen of Lviv. Understanding the potentially important role Ukraine could play in Europe, he has been a leading advocate of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation. As an independent and sober analyst, he understood completely the ambivalence of Ukraine's place on the international scene, that while winning broad recognition after independence, it has still to find its place in the world, wavers between East and West, and finds its place with neither.

Zbigniew Brzezinski believed the US was tardy in recognizing Ukraine's geopolitical importance. At the same time, since the seventeenth century, Ukraine has had a tradition of political double-dealing, often with catastrophic consequences for the nation. As always, Brzezinski was blunt, pointing out that a problem exists of Ukraine's very self-determination as an independent state. Immediately espied are differences in principle between Brzezinski's views and those of the architects of Ukrainian foreign policy. While the latter announced a so-called multidirectional course in foreign policy, Brzezinski believed that Ukraine has only two real alternatives: integration into the CIS and with it a return to its traditional dependence on Russia or firmly setting out to become a Central European state and full-fledged mem-

ber of the world community. He found it obvious that this depends, above all, on the progress and content of economic reform and political democratization in Ukraine.

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