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WESTERN BALKANS U. S. POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESIDENT TRUMP’S GRAND STRATEGY***

Abstract

Many critics of Donald Trump argue that Donald Trump’s Grand Strategy is an absence of Grand Strategy or that his foreign and security policy is driven by impulses and tactical approach. However, such policy leaves us with practical consequences which mean that we have to follow this sort of a Donald Trump approach to foreign affairs and politics in general. The best guide in that sense would be the 2017 U. S. National Security Strategy idea of principled realism which is the most important written strategic statement of the Trump administration up to this date. If Trump’s approach “is guided by outcomes not ideology” and if “prosperity depend on strong, sovereign nations that respect their citizens at home and cooperate to advance peace abroad”, then the U. S. policy to Western Balkans has to be considered in that context. The

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Prespa agreement between Greece and North Macedonia is one form of that approach put in practice. Having in mind Belgrade–Pristina negotiations and Bosnia and Herzegovina’s future as well, the main thesis of this paper is that we may expect some kind of unusual approach from the United States to this region, different from the framework that was set up in the 1990s. That will have consequences both for the region and for the outside great powers, especially the European Union.

Keywords: Donald Trump, Grand Strategy, Foreign and Security Policy, Principled Realism, Western Balkans

INTRODUCTION

Does Donald Trump have, understand or follow some Grand strategy in his foreign policy; do we have any kind of Trump doctrine; do we have any coherent foreign policy track of Donald Trump administration at all? Those are the questions that many pundits and analysts put on the table when we talk about the U. S. Foreign and Security Policy in the Trump Era. Nevertheless, having in mind the President of the United States is such a powerful actor in both creating and implementing the U. S. Foreign and Security Policy, we have to understand at least the consequences of his approach without getting an answer whether his approach is strategic or not. Of course, we have to answer the following question first: *What is strategy at all today?* In other words, do we need the classical strategic approach in substantially changed circumstances?

Western Balkans, as a region which is still *unfinished* in terms of any final settlement and even deteriorating as a “zone of stable peace” in the last few years, is not exemption in all of this.¹ The anxiety about the Euro-Atlantic future of the region, having been partially forgotten during the Obama administration, especially before the Ukrainian crisis in 2014, is once again getting stronger during the Trump administration along with European Union deep crisis, and the Enlargement policy fatigue. However, if Trump

1) According to Kupchan, Stable Peace is “grouping of nations among which war is eliminated as a legitimate tool of statecraft”, See: Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies becomes friends – the sources of Stable Peace*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2010, p. 2.

approach in essence “is guided by outcomes not ideology”² and if according to him “the element of surprise wins battles”³ then the U. S. policy towards the Western Balkans has to be considered in that context. The Prespa agreement between Greece and North Macedonia is one form of that approach put in practice. Considering the Belgrade–Pristina negotiations and Bosnia and Herzegovina’s future as well, the main thesis of this paper is that some kind of unusual approach to this region might be expected from the United States, an approach which may be different from the framework set up in the 1990s. That will have consequences both for the region and for the outside great powers, especially the European Union.

Theoretical approach that we use in this article represents a certain mix of realism, liberalism and constructivism. Namely, we adopt approach used by Balzacq, Dombrowski and Reich formulated in their book about comparative grand strategies.⁴ In this new International Relations subfield of comparative Grand Strategy they try “to initiate a new research program in the field of grand strategy that links international relations theory to area studies.”⁵ According to them, neither realism, neither liberalism, nor constructivism alone are enough to capture essence of certain country’s Grand Strategy.

With President Trump in charge, in the sense of influencing American Grand Strategy, the nature of the global system and the role of domestic institutions and domestic politics are no more important than his own character and personality. They are going beyond rational approach of the realist and liberal theories of international relations, rejecting “a preponderantly systemic and rationalist approach in favor of a heterogeneous one that focuses on the interaction between the external environment, subjective interpretations of that environment, and the key historical and

2) *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, December 18th 2017, Internet, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>, 18/12/2017, p. 1.

3) Donald J. Trump, *The Crippled America – How To make America Great again*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2016, p. 40.

4) See Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich (eds.), *Comparative Grand Strategy – A Framework and Cases*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2019.

5) Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich, “Introduction: Comparing Grand Strategies in the Modern World”, in: Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich (eds), *Comparative Grand Strategy – A Framework and Cases*, op. cit, p. 1.

domestic political factors that condition state responses.”⁶ They “treat grand strategy as an ‘empirical concept’.”⁷ They also conceive the grand strategy as a polythetic concept: it combines elements which recur in political processes—through which a state articulates its ways, means, and ends...”⁸ So, even if there are some constant features of American grand strategies over time, with Trump as U.S. President we have something different, because we have new circumstances, new institutions, and new decision makers.

The Paper consists of four parts. In the first part we will speak more about Trump’s understanding of the world politics and his world view. Second part deals with Trump’s Grand Strategy and his 2017 National Security Strategy which serves as a kind of guideline in foreign and security policy to his administration. The third part lays down the Western Balkans state of affairs at the moment, and the fourth is about the Trump administration approach to the Western Balkans.

1. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP’S WORLD VIEW

Even being a president with no governmental and political experience at all, and being a president guided by “erratic, combative, self-indulgent, and decidedly unpresidential behavior”⁹ does not mean that Trump lacks strong, long-lasting and very hard-changing worldview. Namely, according to Laderman and Simms there are some Trump “bedrock beliefs shorn of tactical consideration for 2016 presidential election”.¹⁰ Contrary to conventional views and “though Trump’s personal behavior is often clownish and boorish and he has shown astonishing ignorance of some world issues, he has articulated a set of basic stances on foreign policy. And he has clung to them with remarkable consistency over many years in the public spotlight and now in the White House.”¹¹

6) Ibid, p. 4.

7) Ibid, p. 9.

8) Ibid.

9) Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions – America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the decline of U. S. Primacy*, Farrar Straus and Giroux, New York, 2018, p. 132.

10) Charlie Laderman, Brendan Simms, *Donald Trump – The Making of a World view*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2017, p. xiii.

11) Ibid, p. 7–8.

First of them is that “almost every international problem that beset the United States was explained by the idiocy of its leaders.”¹² Moreover, “In Trump view, for the United States to become a ‘winner’ again and reassert its ‘greatness’, all that is required is effective leadership.”¹³ So, “Trump is believer in the power of human agency to bring about fundamental change, particularly when that agent is Trump himself”.¹⁴ Voluntarism and subjectivism – as Onuf puts it “the World of our making”.¹⁵

Second, “the essence of Trump vision for the World is the revival of American national greatness. He wants to make ‘America Great again’.”¹⁶ He is attached to Americanism not globalism.¹⁷ therefore, echoing deep “Jacksonian tradition” in U. S. Foreign Policy, “America first” is his main credo.¹⁸ Even that this “America First doesn’t mean America alone”¹⁹, it is still “strong commitment to protecting and advancing our (American) – vital interests.”²⁰

Third, “by contrast with every single Democratic and Republican President since World War II, including George W. Bush, Trump rejects the liberal International Order. At the heart of Trump’s revolt against that order is undoubtedly economics. Reviving the American economy is essential to make America great again. Central to that project is a revision of terms of trade.”²¹

Fourth, “like so many Americans of his generation, Trump’s world view was shaped by the trauma of the hostage crisis and the sense of US decline in the late 1970s and 1980s. He also shared the widespread sense that America’s allies were not pulling their weight, in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, and that these ‘friends’

12) Ibid, p. 2.

13) Ibid, p. 5.

14) Ibid.

15) See: Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *World of our making – Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, SC, 1989.

16) Charlie Laderman, Brendan Simms, *Donald Trump – The Making of a World view*, op. cit, p. 10.

17) Ibid, p. 10.

18) See more in Walter Russel Mead, “Jacksonian Revolt: American Populism and Liberal Order”, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2017, p. 2–7.

19) H. R. McMaster and Gary D. Cohn, “America First Doesn’t Mean America Alone”, May 30, 2017, Internet, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/america-first-doesnt-mean-america-alone-1496187426>, 30/05/17.

20) Ibid.

21) Charlie Laderman, Brendan Simms, *Donald Trump – The Making of a World view*, op. cit, p. 12.

were taking unfair advantage of the United States with respect to trade.”²²

Fifth, Trump has a strong sense of life as a “struggle” which he transfers from the business to the political sphere... he states that his personal philosophy rests on seeing “life to a certain extent as combat” reflecting his Hobbesian perspective on international affairs, in which world is anarchic and strength is paramount.”²³ According to McMaster and Cohn, “the president embarked on his first foreign trip with a clear-eyed outlook that the world is not a ‘global community’ but an arena where nations, nongovernmental actors and businesses engage and compete for advantage.”²⁴

Sixth, “the emphasis on ‘respect’ as the basis of his foreign policy outlook was to endure for the rest of his career. As Polly Toynbee would point out in 1988 interview, this obsession with ‘respect’ leaves Trump sounding like a character out of *The Godfather*, a film that Trump has said is his favorite.”²⁵ As he said in the interview to Rona Barrett, on NBC, on October 6 1980, “respect can lead to other things. When You get the respect of the other countries, then the other countries tend to do a little bit as you do, and you can create the right attitudes.”²⁶

Seventh, “despite all his rhetoric of deal-making in business and real-estate, where his experience was considerable, and he had often shown a capacity to compromise, Trump’s pre-presidential rhetoric suggested that he had a very limited and belligerent idea what constituted a successful diplomatic negotiation.”²⁷ For him, there is no win-win, but there is a zero-sum game in his Manichean world.

Eighth, “Trump has expressed immense confidence in his own judgement, even in areas in which he had no technical expertise.”²⁸ He often said that in terms of foreign policy advise, he is

22) Ibid, p. 19.

23) Ibid, p. 24

24) H. R. McMaster and Gary D. Cohn, “America First Doesn’t Mean America Alone”, op. cit.

25) Charlie Laderman, Brendan Simms, *Donald Trump – The Making of a Worldview*, op. cit, p. 24–25.

26) Ibid, p. 27.

27) Ibid, p. 103–104.

28) Ibid, p. 104.

speaking with himself, “number one because I have very good brain and I’ve said a lot of things... I’m like smart person.”²⁹

Ninth, “Trump has long championed a particularly intuitive style of decision making. He had said in the past that people “are surprised by how quickly I make big decisions, but I’ve learned, to trust my instincts as not to overthink things.”³⁰

Tenth, as he himself said many times, “he was the man setting policy: ‘I’m my own strategist’.”³¹

All in all, with Donald Trump, we have the process of “Berlusconification of global politics” at global scale at its best.³²

2. TRUMP’S GRAND STRATEGY AND HIS 2017 NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

Many critics of Donald Trump’s Presidency argue that Donald Trump’s Grand strategy is an absence of Grand Strategy or claim that impulses and tactical approach drive his foreign and security policy. However, that kind of policy leaves us with practical consequences which means that we have to follow this sort of a Donald Trump specific Approach to foreign affairs and politics in general. There are at least two approaches to Trump’s Grand Strategy: 1) that he has no grand strategy at all and that he doesn’t need one, and 2) that he has grand strategy which is so consistent that we may call it a doctrine and not just a grand strategy.

The main representative of the first group is Ionut Popescu, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Texas State University. He implemented the term “emergent strategy” to the studies of the US presidents’ grand strategy from economy in his PhD thesis and later published book.³³ According to Popescu, contrary to the usual grand strategy approach in which we have plans linking ways,

29) Ibid, p. 105.

30) Ibid, p. 104.

31) Ibid, p. 133

32) Ibid, p. 103.

33) For his PhD Thesis see: Ionut Popescu, “Design and Emergence in the Making of American Grand Strategy”, Duke University, 2013, Internet, https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10161/8073/Popescu_duke_0066D_12098.pdf?sequence=1,05/01/19; For his book on that topic see: Ionut Popescu, *Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy: How American Presidents Succeed in Foreign Policy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2017.

means and ends, “emergent strategy, on the other hand, assumes the ends as well as the means should change based on circumstances. Successful strategies, that is, can form without being fully formulated in advance – and indeed, the complexity of the world often makes such formulations impossible. The important thing is not to plan but to learn.”³⁴

Popescu argues that all critics of Donald Trump’s Twitter grand strategy “share a crucial assumption: that a grand strategy – a coherent, long-term plan for ordering national objectives and devising realistic methods to achieve them – is the key to a successful foreign policy. But... this assumption is unwarranted. In a complex world where leaders’ knowledge is always inadequate, foreign policy victories are often won through improvisation, incrementalism, and adaptation to changing circumstances – an approach that I call ‘emergent strategy’, since its contours emerge over time instead of being planned in advance.”³⁵

Moreover, “the key test for the Trump administration’s strategic performance is not whether it is pursuing some long-term plan behind the scenes but whether it is capable of allowing a successful strategy to develop incrementally. In other words, to the extent that the administration can pursue an emergent strategy, its deviations from the tenets of the grand strategy school should not preclude it from succeeding on the world stage.”³⁶ If we agree that main problem of Trump’s Foreign Policy is the absence of rational and conventional foreign policy process, then emergent grand strategy is heavily outcome and result driven.³⁷

When we are dealing with the president who, according to “Washington Post ... has spoken or written more than nine thousand untruths and misrepresentations”³⁸ up to March 2019, we need to consider that he likes surprises and being underestimated. As an outsider in something what Ben Rhodes (former President

34) Ionut Popescu, “Trump Doesn’t Need a Grand Strategy – Why Planning Is Overrated”, *Foreign Affairs*, Internet, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2018-05-21/trump-doesnt-need-grand-strategy>, 21/05/18.

35) Ibid.

36) Ibid.

37) The best report on Trump Foreign Policy is: Robert D. Blackwill, “Trump Foreign Policies are better than they seem”, *The Council on Foreign Relations Report No. 84*, April 2019, Internet, https://cfrd8-files.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/CSR%2084_Blackwill_Trump_0.pdf, 24/04/2019.

38) Ibid, p. 2.

Obama's foreign policy advisor and speechwriter) calls "Blob", Trump believes there's something deeply wrong with the Washington foreign policy community as a part of the American foreign and security policy.³⁹

In Trump's own words from the time of the Presidential Campaign 2016, "now that I am running for president, which so many experts predicted I would not do, the same trait has made it really hard for all my critics to figure out how to compete with my message. They're all busy playing nicely, following all the establishment rules, taking every predictable step, trying to fit inside the conventional wisdom – and when I don't play that game, they don't know how to respond."⁴⁰

Why is he doing this? He said that if you read history you would find that "tipping your hand is one of the dumbest mistakes you can make in a military confrontation. I've read a lot of history and I don't recall reading that General George Washington made hotel reservations in Valley Forge, or that he sent ahead his best wishes to Hessians in Trenton".⁴¹ As we've already emphasized, according to him, "the element of surprise wins battles. So, I don't tell the other side what I'm doing, I don't warn them, and I don't let them fit me comfortably into a predictable pattern. I don't want people to know exactly what I'm doing – or thinking. I like being unpredictable. It keeps them off balance."⁴² Contrary to have one strategy for all, Trump thinks that "there is no one-size-fits-all foreign policy. We need to make our beliefs very clear and let them form the framework of our policy."⁴³ Simply speaking, it is well known that strategy is not only what one did, but often what one missed to do... in other words, strategic consequences are the only that matter and not the intentions. What makes action successful in the sense of strategic behavior is not only rationality but relying on instincts as well. It is better not to always be rational.

39) See: Ben Rhodes, *The World as it is – A Memoir of the Obama White House*, Random House, New York, 2018. Much more on "Blob" see in: Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions – America's Foreign Policy Elite and the decline of U. S. Primacy*, op. cit., especially chapter 3.

40) See Donald J. Trump, *The Crippled America – How To make America Great again*, op. cit, p. 40.

41) Ibid.

42) Ibid.

43) Ibid.

In that sense, the best depiction of Trump's specific approach to grand strategy is something what Peter Dombrowski and Simon Reich call "calibrated strategy."⁴⁴ Trump seriously takes into account new and changed circumstances: regarding speed and friction – strategic dynamics. For them, "in contrast to conventional wisdom, then, we argue that over the past two decades America has increasingly implemented a series of calibrated strategies. Their selection is highly context-dependent, but several are routinely employed: from primacy and unilateralism to multilateral 'deep engagement'; from 'restraint', with its focus on reduced overseas commitments while attempting to control the commons of air, sea and space, to Stephen Bannon's current version of isolationism."⁴⁵ So, "the evidence suggests that the Trump administration, like its two predecessors, is employing calibrated strategies."⁴⁶

When we talk about the second school of thought which argues that Donald Trump has a Grand strategy there is a clear intention to connect Donald Trump's world view with the American foreign policy tradition and history, especially as we've already mentioned, Jacksonian one. According to Colin Kahl and Hal Brands, a lot of people think that "Trump's endless streams of erratic and apparently improvisational ideas don't add up to anything consistent or purposeful enough to call a grand strategy. We see it otherwise."⁴⁷ For them, "Beneath all the rants, tweets, and noise there is actually a discernible pattern of thought — a Trumpian view of the world that goes back decades. Trump has put forward a clear vision to guide his administration's foreign policy — albeit a dark and highly troubling one, riddled with tensions and vexing dilemmas."⁴⁸

They set up very high standards for what constitutes a grand strategy, especially in the Trump case. They define Grand Strategy as "the conceptual architecture that lends structure and form to foreign policy. A leader who is 'doing grand strategy' is not handling global events on an *ad hoc* or case-by-case basis. A grand

44) Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich, "Does Donald Trump have a grand strategy?", *International Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 5, 2017, p. 1013–1037; doi: 10.1093/ia/iix161.

45) *Ibid.*, p. 1021.

46) *Ibid.*, p. 1035.

47) Colin Kahl, Hal Brands, "Trump's Grand Strategic Train Wreck", *Foreign Policy*, January 31st 2017, Internet, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/31/trumps-grand-strategic-train-wreck/>, 31/01/17.

48) *Ibid.*

strategy, rather, represents a more purposeful and deeply held set of concepts about a country's goals and orientation in international affairs."⁴⁹ For them, "at a minimum, a grand strategy consists of an understanding of the basic contours of the international environment, a country's highest interests and objectives within that environment, the most pressing threats to those interests, and the actions that a country can take in order to address threats and promote national security and well-being. Grand strategy, then, is both diagnostic and prescriptive. It combines an analysis of what is happening in the world and how it impacts one's country, with a more forward-looking concept of how a country might employ its various forms of power — hard or soft, military or economic — to sustain or improve its global position. Every grand strategy has a 'what' dimension, a notion of what constitutes national security in the first place, and a 'how' dimension, a theory of how to produce security in a dynamic international environment and given the tools at hand."⁵⁰

In the Trump administration grand strategy system "three dangers dominate the new president's worldview"⁵¹ For them "the first is the threat from 'Radical Islam' – which, for the president and many of his closest advisors, pose an existential and 'civilizational' threat to the United States that must be 'eradicated' from the face of the Earth"⁵² Second threat is about "unfair trade deals and the trade practices of key competitors as grave threats to the U.S. economy and therefore a national security priority."⁵³ The third one deals with the illegal immigration.⁵⁴

49) Ibid.

50) Ibid.

51) Ibid.

52) Ibid.

53) Ibid. See for more in: Ana Swanson, Paul Mozur, "Trump Mixes Economic and National Security, Plunging the U.S. Into Multiple Fights", *The New York Times*, June 8 2019, Internet, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/08/business/trump-economy-national-security.html>, 08/06/19; According to authors "President Trump is increasingly blurring the line between America's national and economic security, enabling him to harness powerful tools meant to punish the world's worst global actors and redirect them at nearly every trading partner, including Mexico, Japan, China and Europe." Ibid. Moreover, "Economic security is national security," Peter Navarro, the White House trade adviser, said in November 2018 in a speech in Washington. "And if you think about everything the Trump administration has been doing in terms of economic and defense policy, you understand that this maxim really is the guiding principle.", Ibid. For economic consequences of the Trump Presidency see: Ivan Vujacic, Aleksandar Milosevic, "The Economic Consequences of Mr. Trump", *Serbian Political Thought*, Institute for Political Studies, Belgrade, No 2/2016, p. 25–42.

54) Ibid.

In order to “address these perceived threats, Trump has put forward an ‘America First’ grand strategy with four key pillars.”⁵⁵ The First pillar is what Steve Bannon, former chief White House strategist, called “economic nationalism”.⁵⁶ A second pillar is about “extreme” homeland security.⁵⁷ All stories about a-wall with Mexico, fight with illegal immigration are parts of this important pillar. The third and, according to Kahl and Brands, most important pillar of Trump Grand Strategy is “amoral transactionalism”.⁵⁸ In its essence, this third pillar presumes that “the United States should be willing to cut deals with any actors that share American interests, regardless of how transactional that relationship is, and regardless of whether they share – or act in accordance with – American values. In the battle against radical Islam, for example, Trump has said: “All actions should be oriented around this goal, and any country which shares this goal will be our ally.”⁵⁹ In this pillar we may put also Trump insistence that allies pay up for their defense much more.⁶⁰ The fourth Pillar of Trump Grand strategy is “a muscular but aloof militarism.”⁶¹ Like President Reagan, he sees the most important ingredients of American global power in strong military. He often emphasizes that “everything begins with a strong military.”⁶² According to Milan Krstic, during presidential campaign, “Rebuilding of military” was the second mostly used message when it comes to foreign policy instruments, since this phrase was used in 39,53% of speeches.”⁶³

55) Ibid.

56) Colin Kahl, Hal Brands, “Trump’s Grand Strategic Train Wreck”, op. cit. “In his inaugural address, for example, Trump declared: “From this day forward, it’s going to be only America first. Every decision on trade, on taxes, on immigration, on foreign affairs will be made to benefit American workers and American families. We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our product, stealing our companies and destroying our jobs. Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength.”. Ibid.

57) Ibid.

58) Ibid.

59) Ibid.

60) Ibid.

61) Ibid.

62) See Donald J. Trump, *The Crippled America – How To make America Great again*, op. cit., p. 40.

63) See Milan Krstic, “Donald Trump’s 2016 Presidential Campaign in the Light of the U.S. Foreign Policy Traditions”, *Serbian Political Thought*, Institute for Political Studies, Belgrade, No 2/2016, p. 51.

For Kahl and Brands, all this is proof of strong discontinuity to American foreign policy tradition and grand strategy of so called “deep engagement”.⁶⁴ Moreover, as Joseph S. Nye, Jr., put it “at mid-term in 2018, of the four major strands of the so-called liberal order ... – security, economics, global commons, and human rights and liberal values – the record is mixed. Thus far, though the Trump administration has weakened American alliances, it has not destroyed them. And the security regimes for restraining proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are challenged but remain in place. The damage to economic institutions, particularly those related to trade, appears to be greater than that to the monetary order (where the dollar still dominates). On global commons issues, the Trump administration has withdrawn US participation in the Paris Climate Accords, but the market-based substitution of natural gas for coal continues. As for values, in contrast to his predecessors, Trump has shown less interest in human rights and has been willing to embrace authoritarian leaders, but has been less prone to intervention.”⁶⁵ Hence, it’s not strange that John J. Mearsheimer argues that “by 2019, it was clear that the liberal international order was in deep trouble. The tectonic plates that underpin it are shifting, and little can be done to repair and rescue it.”⁶⁶ Or as Henry Kissinger puts it, “...Trump may be one of those figures in history who appears from time to time to mark the end of an era and to force it to give up its old pretences. It doesn’t necessarily mean that he knows this, or that he is considering any great alternative. It could just be an accident.”⁶⁷

Nevertheless, the National Security Strategy is the most official and the most important document that every U.S. administration has in that sense. President Trump issued the Strategy

64) For Brooks and Wohlforth “a decision for deep engagement involving an American presence on the ground in Europe and East Asia, institutionalized alliances, and active efforts to shape the regional security setting, foster an open global economy, and sustain multilateral institutions to manage interstate cooperation“, See Stephen G. Brooks, William C. Wohlforth, *America Abroad – The United States Global Role in the 21st Century*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2016, p. 77.

65) See Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “The rise and fall of American hegemony from Wilson to Trump”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 95, No. 1, 2019, doi: 10.1093/ia/iyy212, p. 78.

66) John J. Mearsheimer, “Bound to Fail – The Rise and Fall of the Liberal International Order”, *International Security*, Vol. 43, No. 4, Spring 2019, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00342, p. 7.

67) See Edward Luce, “Henry Kissinger: We are in Gray Period”, *The Financial Times*, July 20th 2018, Internet, <https://www.ft.com/content/926a66b0-8b49-11e8-bf9e-8771d5404543>, 20/08/18.

on December 18th, 2017.⁶⁸ Even with the fact that McMaster and Cohn Wall Street Journal's article was a kind of introduction to this Strategy, its most important element is so called "principled realism". Strategy begins with Trump's wording which sounds similar to what he had said in the presidential campaign before: "This National Security Strategy puts America First".⁶⁹ According to authors of the strategy, "an America First National Security Strategy is based on American principles, a clear-eyed assessment of U.S. interests, and a determination to tackle the challenges that we face. It is a strategy of principled realism that is guided by outcomes, not ideology. It is based upon the view that peace, security, and prosperity depend on strong, sovereign nations that respect their citizens at home and cooperate to advance peace abroad. And it is grounded in the realization that American principles are a lasting force for good in the world."⁷⁰ According to the Strategy, principle realism has the following meaning: "It is realist because it acknowledges the central role of power in international politics, affirms that sovereign states are the best hope for a peaceful world, and clearly defines our national interests. It is principled because it is grounded in the knowledge that advancing American principles spreads peace and prosperity around the globe. We are guided by our values and disciplined by our interests."⁷¹ Also, an important part of the strategy is the perception of the new U.S. President and his administration that we live in "a competitive world."⁷² Namely, "The United States will respond to the growing political, economic, and military competitions we face around the world."⁷³ Because United States now faces serious competition (remember Trump's Hobbesian understanding of the World), "these competitions require the United States to rethink the policies of the past two decades—policies based on the assumption that engagement with rivals and their inclusion in international institutions and global commerce would turn them into benign actors and trustworthy partners. For the most part, this premise turned out to be false".⁷⁴

68) *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, December 18th 2017, op. cit.

69) *Ibid*, p. II.

70) *Ibid*, p. 1.

71) *Ibid*, p. 55.

72) *Ibid*, p. 2.

73) *Ibid*.

74) *Ibid*, p. 3.

Because “President Trump, unlike his predecessor, does not consider nuance a virtue”⁷⁵ we cannot say, as we’ve seen in first chapter of this paper, that Trump doesn’t have a strong and defined understanding of the world around him. The National Security Strategy is up to this date the best guide for his “America first” Grand Strategy.

Therefore, we ask if Trump’s Grand Strategy is coherent and comprehensive, farther reaching enough that we may talk about it as a Trump Doctrine? Some people from his surroundings, like Michael Anton, who served on the U.S. National Security Council as deputy assistant to the president for strategic communications (February 2017 to April 2018), think that we may indeed talk about the Trump Doctrine.⁷⁶ Contrary to all claims about Trump’s incoherence and unpredictability, “Yet Trump does have a consistent foreign policy: a Trump Doctrine. The administration calls it “principled realism”, which isn’t bad – although the term hasn’t caught on. The problem is that the Trump Doctrine, like most presidential doctrines, cannot be summed up in two words... Yet Trump himself has explained it, on multiple occasions. In perhaps his most overlooked, understudied speech – delivered at the APEC CEO Summit in Da Nang, Vietnam, in November 2017 – he encapsulated his approach to foreign policy with a quote from The Wizard of Oz: “There’s no place like home.”⁷⁷ Or phrase like „great reawakening of nations.”⁷⁸ According to Anthon, “For all its bluntness and simplicity, America First is, at its root, just a restatement of this truth. Countries putting their own interests first is the way of the world, an inexpugnable part of human nature. Like other aspects of human nature, it can be sublimated or driven underground for a time – but only for a time.”⁷⁹ Moreover, “there is also a more positive formulation of the president’s approach, which begins with an observation about human nature and attempts to make a virtue of necessity. It can be stated like this: Let’s all put our own countries first, and be candid about it, and recognize that it’s nothing to be

75) John Bew, “Is There a Trump Doctrine?”, *The National Interest*, December 22, 2017, Internet, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/there-trump-doctrine-23773>, 22/12/17.

76) Michael Anton, “The Trump Doctrine”, *Foreign Policy*, Spring 2019, Internet, <https://foreign-policy.com/2019/04/20/the-trump-doctrine-big-think-america-first-nationalism/>, 20/04/19.

77) Ibid.

78) Ibid.

79) Ibid.

ashamed of. Putting our interests first will make us all safer and more prosperous. *If there is a Trump Doctrine, that's it.*"⁸⁰

Anthon believes that there are few pillars of Trump doctrine. "The first pillar of his foreign policy is a simple recognition of this overlooked reality: that populism is a result of all this enforced leveling and homogenization"⁸¹ because, "globalization reduces differences in thought in any number of ways: through media consolidation, for example, or through the homogenization of the elite – who these days all seem to come from the same background, attend the same schools, and go to the same conferences."⁸² The Second pillar is „liberal internationalism – despite its very real achievements in the postwar era – is now well past the point of diminishing returns. Globalism and transnationalism impose their highest costs on established powers (namely the United States) and award the greatest benefits to rising powers seeking to contest U.S. influence and leadership."⁸³ Anthon proposes consistency as the third pillar of Trump doctrine "not for its own sake but for the sake of the U.S. national interest. Unlike several of the world's other leading powers – China, for example, but also Germany, which treats the EU as a front organization and the euro as a super-mark – Trump does not seek to practice 'globalism for thee but not for me'. On the contrary, his foreign policy can be characterized as nationalism for all. Standing up for one's own, Trump insists, is the surest way to secure it."⁸⁴ The Final pillar is "that it is not in U.S. interests to homogenize the world. Doing so weakens states whose strength is needed to defend our common interests."⁸⁵

Trump strongly believes that "beyond all this, globalism makes the world less rich, less interesting, and more boring"⁸⁶. According to Anthon, "Trump's foreign policy is fundamentally a return to normalcy. What we had before couldn't go on. It is too generous to say it was going to end in disaster: It had already produced disaster. Getting back to some semblance of normal is necessary, good, and inevitable. Anything that can't go on forever

80) Ibid.

81) Ibid.

82) Ibid.

83) Ibid.

84) Ibid.

85) Ibid.

86) Ibid.

won't. The only question is how it ends: with a hard crash or soft landing? For the establishment, Brexit and Trump and all the rest may feel like the former, but they're really the latter—a normal response by beleaguered peoples who have been pushed too far. Trump is simply putting U.S. foreign policy back on a path that accords with nature.”⁸⁷

Second understanding of the Trump Doctrine is that of the former State Department's director of policy planning (August 2018 to August 2019), Kiron Skinner from her “public talk about the topic with New America head Anne-Marie Slaughter at the think tank's Future Security Forum on April 29.”⁸⁸ She said that U.S. competition with China would be especially bitter, she argued, because “it's the first time that we will have a great-power competitor that is not Caucasian [...] To the extent that there is a Trump Doctrine, Skinner nailed it: It's the belief that culture and identity are fundamental to whether great-power relations will be cooperative or conflictual.”⁸⁹ According to Musgrave, “She offered the document's recognition of the arrival of a new era of great-power competition a backhanded compliment: “The National Security Strategy was an important document early in the administration”, she said. But “we've evolved since then.” Post-McMaster, she argued, the administration had distinguished Russia's role as a great-power competitor from the “more fundamental threat” posed by China. McMaster, she implied, had let China policy be seized by finance and economic advisors in the White House who did not grasp the problem they were facing. Their focus on economics and trade, she argued, was “really a symptom of the China problem, which has deeper historical and strategic roots than we've really understood.”⁹⁰

3. WESTERN BALKANS: STATE OF AFFAIRS

As mentioned in the beginning of this paper, we consider Western Balkans region as a contested zone of stable peace. Imple-

87) Ibid.

88) Paul Musgrave, “The Slip That Revealed the Real Trump Doctrine”, *Foreign Policy*, May 2nd 2019, Internet, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/02/the-slip-that-revealed-the-real-trump-doctrine/>, 02/05/19.

89) Ibid.

90) Ibid.

menting Charles Kupchan's four phases of stable peace process, one may see that we have process of deterioration in every phase of that. Namely, according to Kupchan, "Stable peace breaks out through a four-phase process. Reconciliation begins with an act of *unilateral accommodation*: a state confronted with multiple threats seeks to remove one of the sources of its insecurity by exercising strategic restraint and making concessions to an adversary... Phase two entails the practice of *reciprocal restraint*. The states in question trade concessions, each cautiously stepping away from rivalry as it entertains the prospect that geopolitical competition may give way to programmatic cooperation. The third phase in the onset of stable peace entails the deepening of *societal integration* between the partner states. Transactions between the parties increase in frequency and intensity, resulting in more extensive contacts among governing officials, private-sector elites, and ordinary citizens... The fourth and final phase entails the *generation of new narratives and identities*. Through elite statements, popular culture (media, literature, theater), and items laden with political symbolism such as charters, flags, and anthems, the states in question embrace a new domestic discourse that alters the identity they possess of the other. The distinctions between self and other erode, giving way to communal identities and a shared sense of solidarity, completing the onset of stable peace."⁹¹

Unfortunately, we have a "war of the opposite narratives" in this region and there is no stable peace zone at all. Therefore, foreign Guarantors of peace, especially the U.S. and the European Union are of crucial importance to keeping Western Balkans region in some kind of negative peace at best.

In EUISS publication "Balkan Futures – Three Scenarios for 2025" from August 2018 there are "six megatrends, processes that have been happening and that will, it can be surmised with a high degree of certainty, continue to be present in 2025 in the Western Balkans: (i) population decline; (ii) high unemployment and high public debt; (iii) underperforming institutions; (iv) ethnocentrism and contested statehood; (v) an outdated and deficient education system; and (vi) globalisation trends (internet penetration and urbanisation)."⁹² All this megatrends may be affected by

91) Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies becomes friends – the sources of Stable Peace*, op. cit, p. 6.

92) Marko Čeperković, Florence Gaub (eds.), "Balkan Futures: Three Scenarios for 2025", Chaillot

the following game changers: potential EU accession, disruptive external actors, regional cooperation and bilateral disputes, regional and national security, good governance and the rule of law, and economic transformation.⁹³

With all these megatrends and game changers they offer us three scenarios for the Future of the Balkans: 1) The Hour of Europe; 2) The Balkans in limbo; 3) The Ghosts of the Past.⁹⁴ The first and the most optimistic scenario, “presents a positive and optimistic vision of the future evolution of the Western Balkans. Its starting point is the resolution of the ‘name issue’ between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which has precipitated a snowball effect of positive change across the region. In the wake of this, Kosovo[*] and Serbia have managed to normalize relations, allowing them to move forward in the accession process. Robust economic growth in the Western Balkan states has resulted in the reduction of unemployment and an increase in domestic labour demand. In 2025, Montenegro and Serbia become members of the European Union, while the remaining Balkan countries have made irreversible progress towards European integration.”⁹⁵

The second and much more realistic scenario is Balkans in limbo. According to that scenario, “Balkan countries are still on the path to EU integration but are making slow progress in implementing reforms due to a lack of political will. The normative framework has been improved in numerous areas that are the subjects of the negotiating chapters with the EU, but all too often the commitments signed up to by the states are not translated into concrete action.”⁹⁶

The third and the most pessimistic scenario refers to the “ghosts of the past”. In this “scenario, the Western Balkans is haunted by the ghosts and the EU integration process has slowly slipped off the political agenda, while geopolitics and violent conflicts are resurgent. The dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo[*] has

papers 147, August 2018, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 2018, Internet, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFFiles/CP_147%20Balkan%20Futures.pdf, 01/09/19, p. 11.

93) *Ibid*, p. 20.

94) *Ibid*, p. 5–7; 29–66.

95) *Ibid*, p. 5.

96) *Ibid*, p. 6.

resulted in the division of Kosovo[*], triggering the secession of Republika Srpska from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and giving impetus to the secessionist aspirations of other ethnic minorities across the region. The redrawing of borders in the Balkans has not taken place without bloodshed this time either – armed clashes around the newly-demarcated borders, as well as violent incidents in the areas populated by ethnic minorities, are almost a daily occurrence.”⁹⁷

4. TRUMP ADMINISTRATION’S WESTERN BALKANS APPROACH

Before explaining Trump’s approach, it is necessary to say a few more things on the Obama administration’s Western Balkans politics. When we consider American politics towards the Balkans during Obama, there was a kind of hibernation regarding American interests and activities over there. Obama’s Grand Strategy of retrenchment and sustainment, was at least the result of “Iraq War frustration” and of his “Emperor Hadrian view” of the limits of American power.⁹⁸ Still, the Ukraine crisis in 2014 and deterioration in the relations with Russia, together with the rise of China and the crisis of the European Union (especially in the self-confidence and enlargement perspective), put this region in the focus of American foreign policy again, together with some other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. According to Jakub Grygiel and A. Wess Mitchell, this region is a part of something they call “unquiet frontier”.⁹⁹ According to them, “in many of the world’s capitals, it is taken as an article of faith that the United States is slipping from its decades-long position of global preeminence and that the long-standing U.S.-led international system will eventually give way to a multipolar global power configuration. It is also driven by the perception that, declining or not, the United States is simply not interested in maintaining the stability of frontier regions – that the alliances it inherited from previous eras will be a net liability in an age of more fluid geopolitical competition.”¹⁰⁰ Moreover, “U. S.

97) Ibid.

98) More on President Obama Grand strategy see: Colin Dueck, *Obama doctrine – American Grand Strategy today*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2015.

99) See Jakub J. Grygiel, A. Wess Mitchell, *The Unquiet Frontier – Rising Rivals, Vulnerable Allies, and the Crisis of American Power*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 2016.

100) Ibid, p. 8.

retrenchment from these regions creates a permissive environment for rising or re-assertive powers. All three of America's primary regional rivals – China, Iran, and Russia – possess prospective spheres of influence that overlap with America's exposed strategic appendages in their respective regions."¹⁰¹

In something they define as a "strategy of probing", revisionist powers "use low intensity tests of a leading power on the outer limits of its strategic position. The purpose is both to assess the hegemon's willingness and ability to defend the status quo and to accomplish gradual territorial or reputational gains at the expense of the leading power if possible. These probes are conducted not where the hegemon is strong but at the outer limits of its power position, where its commitments are established (and potentially extensive) but require the greatest exertion to maintain. Here, at the periphery, the costs of probing are more manageable than those of confronting the hegemon directly, which could generate a strong response by the leader."¹⁰² On the thesis of the above mentioned, we consider the Western Balkans to be one such region.

During last nearly 30 years, since the beginning of the Yugoslav crisis, the United States of America invested a lot of resources and time in this region, but this remains unfinished business, as we had already said. Moreover, with the rise of Great Power Competition, especially after the crisis in Ukraine, America rediscovered Western Balkans. However, vacuum of power in the Western Balkans is already partially filled with some strong foreign powers' presence, in particular Russia and China.

With all of this in mind the key question remains what the American interests in the Western Balkans are. According to professor Jim Seroka there are four main U.S. interests in the Western Balkans region: "1. Since the early 1990s, it has been U.S. policy to encourage stability and prevent armed conflict... 2. It has been the policy of the United States to preserve the sovereignty and integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This has largely been achieved, and neither Serbia nor Croatia appears to have any intent to infringe on the integrity of the Bosnian state... 3. A third goal is to help build the Kosovo* state as a capable sovereign entity. In this respect,

101) Ibid.

102) Ibid, p. 9.

progress has been made, but it is not complete... 4. The fourth goal of U.S. policy in the region is to enable all the states who wish to qualify for the EU membership and/or membership in the NATO...”¹⁰³

With the Trump administration those interests are still basically the same, but there is some anxiety and unpredictability as ever with Donald Trump. So, what could we expect from Donald Trump and his Grand Strategy with regards to the Western Balkans?

First, when it comes to his general approach to the world affairs and foreign policy Trump is an anti-establishment President, very doubtful towards the old solutions and conventional things. This can be sensed in a wide range of questions – from North Korea and Israel, to relations with Russia.

If Trump’s approach “is guided by outcomes not ideology”, then we may expect some new, innovative solutions for the most complex Western Balkans issue, Belgrade–Pristina negotiation. Some in Serbia think that the State Department officials, especially middle range and high ranking diplomats had their mind–set formed during the 1990s when Serbia was the “bad guy” of world politics, so it is better to have the National Security Council officials and President Trump on their side if that is possible. More so with a kind of the President who likes to be considered a “fixer”, “problem solver” and “deus ex machina.” And who above all, likes to be flattered.

Second, if Trump is “the Godfather style President” and if he likes to be respected, then we may expect that he will respect the “face” of every nation here in the region. Paraphrasing Richard Nixon, The Western Balkans needs Peace but Peace with Honor. Kissingerian approach suggests that a deal every side is unsatisfied and unhappy with may be better than the situation in which only one, or most sides are winners and some of them are desperate losers.

Third, Trump’s “amoral transactionalism” (according to Kahl and Brands, the most important pillar of his Grand Strategy), may

103) See: Jim Seroka, “Directions of U. S. Foreign and Security Policy under the Obama administration with applications to the Western Balkans”, in: *Politika Sjedinjenih Američkih Država prema Regionu Zapadnog Balkana i Republici Srbiji*, (Dragan R. Simić, Dragan Živojinović, eds.), Univerzitet u Beogradu – Fakultet političkih nauka, Beograd, 2015, p. 135–136.

help him deal with strongman politicians here in the region, however there's a question of durability of such action. Still, with the EU in the limbo and the new European Commission in the making, with grim perspectives of the EU membership, the Western Balkans needs such kind of approach right now. It may be a part of a deal involving other great powers, especially Russia but nevertheless, that may be a kind of a deal. "The Hour of Europe" has ended badly at the beginning of 1990s...

Last but not least, if unpredictability is President Trump's main characteristic and if according to many analysts of the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy, the third year of Presidential mandate brings the most freedom for his actions, than we may expect something at the end of this year or beginning of the Presidential Elections Campaign next year. He desperately needs some "peace agreement signature" on the White House lawn and maybe some Western Balkans deal is the cheapest and quickest way for him to acquire one. With Trump as President, as we already know, surprise is the most certain thing to expect; remains to be seen.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to describe and explain the Western Balkans U. S. Policy in the context of the President Trump's Grand Strategy. Using Comparative Grand Strategy approach which combines both rational and idiosyncratic, and less rational elements of certain country's Grand Strategy, we've tried to prove that even with President Trump, whose behavior is very hard to predict, it is possible to find constant elements in his world view. Yes, he is prone to *ad hoc* solutions and improvisations, but still they are a part of his "bedrock beliefs", which make his understanding of the world very important to describe. Also, his view of the international politics is deep-seated in his business experience. We have found that putting big emphasize on his personality and his behavior is of great importance for understanding of formulation and implementation of his foreign and security policy. With respect to his grand strategy, we are much prone to real than to normative demands and dimensions of Grand Strategy Theory. We believe that Trump policy leaves us with consequences no matter that his actions are short of some grand strategic framework or strategic

planning. Having in mind that President Trump's Administration most important strategic document up to date is the 2017 United States National Security Strategy, we found that it is a very pragmatic document, which puts outcome over ideology and interests over values.

American Foreign Policy tradition, especially after the end of the Cold War is very different from what we are witnessing now. Experience of the 1990s and American involvement here in the Western Balkans Region established some "path dependence" approach from U.S. establishment and successive administrations. Regarding President Trump and his close team, we have certain discontinuity in that approach and certain amount of solutions which are different from the usual, already seen models especially from the State Department. Belgrade-Pristina negotiations are the most important thing to watch in that sense. As the third year of Presidential mandate is unfolding, we expect it to bring some "peace agreement signature" and the Western Balkans offers some good opportunities.

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**ПОЛИТИКА СЈЕДИЊЕНИХ АМЕРИЧКИХ ДРЖАВА
ПРЕМА ЗАПАДНОМ БАЛКАНУ У КОНТЕКСТУ
ВЕЛИКЕ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ ПРЕДСЕДНИКА ТРАМПА**

Резиме

Циљ овог рада био је да се опише, истражи и објасни америчка политика према Западном Балкану у контексту велике стратегије Доналда Трампа. Употребом метода упоредне велике стратегије који представља комбинацију реалистичког, либералног и конструктивистичког приступа са нагласком и на рационалним и на идеосинкратичким елементима велике стратегије, анализирана је велика стратегија Сједињених Америчких Држава у време администрације председника Доналда Трампа. Главна теза овог рада је да без обзира на то да ли председник Трамп има велику стратегију или не, његови поступци остављају последице, како по америчку спољну и безбедносну политику тако и у односу на остале актере међународног система, самим тим и на Западни Балкан. У првом делу текста бавили смо се Трамповим погледом на свет односно његовим виђењем међународних односа. Ово је важно јер у случају председника који не обраћа превише пажње на институције и процес доношења одлука, а имајући у виду фактичку моћ коју председник САД има у процесу стварања и спровођења спољне и безбедносне политике, његово виђење света и кључне претпоставке о начину функционисања међународних односа могу бити од помоћи у покушају да се уоче извесне правилности и сталности у његовом понашању и одлучивању. У другом делу рада бавили смо се великом стратегијом Доналда Трампа и документом који је по нама најважнији стратешки документ његове администрације до сада, Стратегијом националне безбедности Сједињених Америчких Држава из децембра 2017. године. Многи критичари Доналда Трампа сматрају да његовој спољној и безбедносној политици недостаје постојаност и промишљеност односно да се он понаша више *ad hoc* и тактички него стратешки. У том

смислу можемо говорити о две школе мишљења. Прва школа коју предводе Јонут Попеску, Питер Домбровски и Сајмон Рајх сматра да није могуће говорити о сталној Трамповој великој стратегији већ пре о нечему што називају „великом стратегијом у настајању” (Попеску) односно „калибрираном великом стратегијом” (Домбровски и Рајх). Имајући у виду да по њиховом мишљењу није могуће имати једну велику стратегију за различите изазове са којима се Сједињене Државе суочавају, присталице ове школе верују да је за успешну велику стратегију потребно стално калибрирање односно константно прилагођавање стратегије све динамичнијем стратешком окружењу. Друга школа, у којој главну реч воде Колин Кал и Хал Брандс, пак сматра да је без обзира на све несталности у понашању председника Трампа и његове администрације, могуће говорити о Трамповој великој стратегији. Као кључне стубове, „Америка на првом месту” велике стратегије, они наводе економски национализам, екстремну отаџбинску безбедност, аморални трансакционализам и снажни милитаризам. Посебно је значајан аморални трансакционализам, који дефинишу као спремност Сједињених Америчких Држава да сарађују са било којим актером ако је то у америчком националном интересу, без обзира да ли је то подударно са америчким вредностима. Кад је у питању стратегија националне безбедности Сједињених Америчких Држава из децембра 2017. године, на трагу ове изражене прагматичности администрације Доналда Трампа, кључни је такозвани „принципијелни реализам” који ставља нагласак на то да је оно што сада усмерава америчку политику резултат, а не идеологија. За разлику од његових постхладноратовских претходника на месту председника Сједињених Држава, Трамп покушава да направи отклон према њиховом веровању да је могућ договор са свим актерима и да у тој игри свака страна може да буде задовољна. Он пре верује у „игру нултог збира” и компетитивну и изразито хобсијанску природу данашњег света. Трећи део рада бавио се кључним одликама Западног Балкана данас. По нама, Западни Балкан је данас, према критеријумима које поставља Чарлс Капчан, далеко од зоне стабилног мира. Штавише, уз несигурност у погледу америчких намера према региону као и имајући у виду дубоку кризу Европске уније и несигурну перспективу њеног проширења на овај регион те појачано присуство Русије,

НР Кине и Турске, сасвим је јасно да будућност Западног Балкана изгледа прилично магловито. Четврти део рада се бавио америчком политиком према Западном Балкану у време администрације Доналда Трампа. Иако се америчка спољна политика тешко мења, аутори виде извесни простор за промену, иначе врло окошталог и тешко промењивог приступа америчке администрације према овом региону. Ипак, имајући у виду неконвенционалан и прагматичан Трампов приступ америчкој спољној и безбедносној политици као и његову усредсређеност на резултате а не идеологије, аутори очекују да би могло да дође до обнове и напретка у преговорима Београда и Приштине.

Кључне речи: Доналд Трамп, Велика стратегија, спољна и безбедносна политика, принципијелни реализам, Западни Балкан

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