

# Small States In a Changing World of Regions: Understandings of Multipolarization in the Balkans and the Caucasus

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## **Abstract**

In academic IR literature and political discourse on the rise of multipolarity in the early 21st century, great and emerging powers are perceived as major actors of change, as shapers and major beneficiaries of a transforming, regionalized international system. Conversely, small states have been sidelined in the process of power and identity transformation that provides for new meanings of world politics. By dominantly focusing on structural effects of power distribution, mainstream IR research fails to offer a more nuanced understanding of world politics from the perspective of these “Lilliputians” and their underappreciated agency within various political, economic and security regionalisms. By engaging the literature on small states, regional security and new scholarship on multipolarity, I offer an interpretive framework that aims to capture the local receptions of multipolarity and its material and discursive dimensions in foreign and security policies of small states in the Balkans and the Caucasus regions - with regards to the penetrating roles of China and Russia in a transforming regional setting. The continuity/change of respective foreign policies of Serbia and Azerbaijan are discussed in particular, by employing the convergence/divergence model that can help us understand how these small states conceive of their positions between the EU, Russia, and China in the past quarter century. This shall help us better understand the possibilities, and constraints for a small state agency-in-change in a contextualized regional perspective.

**Keywords:** agency; identity; regionalism; foreign policy; small states, great powers, China, Russia, great powers, discourse, Serbia, Azerbaijan

## Introduction

Small states are unjustly neglected in the research about on multipolarization of international relations. While great and rising powers in “a world of regions” (Katzenstein 2005) in the processes of globalization and internationalization has a critical impact on the dynamics of world politics, small states make for the greater part of that world and are mostly represented in the discourses of world politics as objects and users of the system that is created by the more powerful actors. Those “Lilliputians”<sup>1</sup> of world politics take two-thirds of the total number of recognized states in the world, and they act as allies, users but also as leaders in some spaces or thematic areas of politics. However, their sense of or attempt at subjectivity and agency in the world is, if not only contested, then in most cases represented as futile and pointless in a world of rather fixed categories of meaning and power that can be seen as a dominant form of small state reality.

This paper aims to explore the place of small states with regard to the ongoing process of multipolarization of international order, by thematizing a theoretical debate on the agency-structure in international relations from a small-state perspective, while engaging in a discussion about what kind(s) of regions are making our world.<sup>2</sup> The concepts of *multipolarity*, *multipolarisation*, and *multilateralism* are in everyday is in academic and lay discourse. Multipolarity as a structural terms is tied to great powers as dominant holders of power in international system. The authors such as David Scott, for example, define multipolarity as “measurement of the distribution of power as concentrated in several poles of power, those poles being Great Powers”<sup>3</sup>, whereas multipolarization for the same author means “the process leading to a multipolar system”, that is realized through the policy of “multipolarism”<sup>4</sup> The current international system goes through the process of multipolarization, and it can be expected that already in a couple of decades it becomes multipolar in this or that form, most of all by means of affirming considerable poles of power in world regions.<sup>5</sup> Hence, multipolarity calls for a more reflexive thinking about international

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<sup>1</sup> In his 1969 article „Lilliputians’ Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics“, Robert Keohane was first to use this metaphor to vividly portray a world of small states. See Keohane 1969.

<sup>2</sup> About this problem, see, for example, Wight 2006. Carlsnaes 1992, Wendt 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Scott 2013,30–31.

<sup>4</sup> Scott 2014,19–20.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, some data about the economic redistribution of power in the World Bank report Global Development Horizons for 2011 where an estimate is made that by 2025 Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, and Russia, together with the developing countries will be the main drivers of economic growth, which, if we are looking from a historical perspective addresses the possibility that great economic transitions pose challenges and uncertainties that are related to global systemic themes and related institutional responses (p. xi). „This new global economy, in which the centers of growth are distributed across both developed and emerging economies, is what *GDH 2011* envisions as a multipolar world.“ See more in „Global Development Horizons 2011“, World Bank, Washington D. C., 2011, p. 3.

relations, so it is justified to consider a role of great powers at a global level, and small states in a world of regions.<sup>6</sup>

There is a significant number of papers that speak about different implications this change in power distribution and consequence of the decline of the US the “return of the East”, as well as rising powers such as BRICS countries that are seeking a maneuvering space where they can project their rising international presence. This paper, inspired by the conceptions about regional security dynamics and interaction among great powers and small states at a regional level, seeks to examine how “small state reality”<sup>7</sup> as a concept can contribute to understanding of receptions of the process of multipolarization “bottom-up” against the background of the encounters between small states and great powers that is largely constituted by this new redistribution of power and identities in the international society. In my reading of the literature, the scholarly discussions at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century feature several different views regarding the conceptualization of the changing global order and its direction: according to the first, we live in a “world of regions”<sup>8</sup>; the second points to the “emerging regional architecture of international politics”<sup>9</sup>, and “multiregional system of international relations”.<sup>10</sup>

By observing the international order “bottom-up”, from a perspective of the Lilliputians of world politics, some alternative interpretations of world politics can be pinpointed, which are not necessarily converging with the dominant discourses of great powers – and all this opens up a field for researching the assumptions, possibilities and limitations for action and agency of small states in a more general way.<sup>11</sup> Writing about the state of a great debate about structure-agency problem in International Relations, Colin Wight concludes that we cannot establish *a priori* whether it is structure or agency that has the decisive causal impact on a given outcome, but it is up to a researcher in most of the cases to have an ontological assumption (choice) that must be then empirically examined in an attempt to get an answer that is as reliable as possible.<sup>12</sup> In his seminal article on this problematique, Alexander Wendt thirty years ago directed the research agenda in the

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<sup>6</sup> In political and public discourse, the term multilateralism is often used for and it also signifies what is comprehended as multipolarity. Scott (2013, 31) proposes that multilateralism is understood as a process in which at the same time participate small states, middle powers and great powers, as opposed to multipolarity that is created by great powers only. This is a significant conceptual differentiation.

<sup>7</sup> This term is mentioned in passing, and remained not elaborated in Wilhelm Christmas-Moller, „Some Thoughts on the Scientific Applicability of the Small State Concept: A Research History and a Discussion“, in: Otmar Holl (ed.), *Small States in Europe and Dependence*, Braumuller, Vienna, 1983, pp. 35–53. For a discussion about what these different realities may mean, also see Kovačević 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Katzenstein 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Acharya 2007.

<sup>10</sup> The term „multiregional system of international relations” is used by Andrew Hurrell (2007). For a discussion about the study of regions and regionalism also see Nolte 2010, 882.

<sup>11</sup> For an overview of the academic discussion about agency and structure, see Wight 2006, Wendt, 1999, Carlsnaes 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Wight 2006, 119.

direction of the constitutive theorizing, and the structuration theory by Anthony Giddens – thus the idea about mutual constitution of actors and structures is the point that I take in this paper.<sup>13</sup>

Herewith, it is suggested in this paper for the possibility of small-state agency due to normative reasons – because the negation of autonomy and choice in international politics would be a deeply anti-emancipatory move (even if the structure and power logics are predominant). A standpoint is taken about the important of observing and conceptualizing such international relations that are in the state of flux and change, where their interpretations are not always bound to be imposed from the above (the systemic level).<sup>14</sup>

Region as a space in which various interaction of internal and external actors weave together due to their geographical positions is prone to changing geopolitical constellations of influences in the context of multipolarization of international relations. Although it could be possible to come up with some preliminary assessments about some implications of the changing internal material structure of the world system – that is marked by a horizontal and vertical moving of power (between the states, as well as from the state to non-state actors) – in this paper I start from the following assumption: instead of the usual focus on power and materiality in the study of international relations, multipolarity can be also seen as a process of discourse production. This discourse of multipolarity produces and determines the positions and possibilities for action that the actors within the international system can have. This enables a different type of exploration: by means of analysis of the official discourses, this paper argues it is possible to locate some meanings and interpretations of multipolarization that can help us in understanding how the state identities are formed and reconstituted in light of the changing dynamics of ‘power-as-discourse’ relations. This analysis is informed by a Foucauldian understanding of discourse in its holding of power that affects the way subjects are constituted – so it is possible to use this in extension from the societal level to that of the international relations. Looking from a small-state perspective, it is possible to formulate a discursive juxtaposing vis-à-vis the usual and conventional view of the “structural” (read: great power) view of international structure and power-based systemic discourses. How can this be used in practice? By looking at the cases of Serbia and Azerbaijan one can examine the understandings of multipolarity, whereas their representations of the latter are predominantly shaped and conditioned by the stronger actors such as the European Union, China, and Russia that discursively (politically, economically, culturally) constitute the space in which small states can act. In the Balkans at the beginning of this century (or, more specifically, in the post-Yugoslav space), Serbia is strategically oriented toward the European Union as a candidate-country, it has close

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<sup>13</sup> See, Wendt 1987.

<sup>14</sup> For some parallels and thinking about emancipation in International Relations, see for example, Booth 2008, and Tickner and Blaney 2013, eds.

relations with Russia based on the narrative of ‘traditional friendship’ and ‘Slavic brotherhood’, and a growing economic cooperation with China. In the region of the South Caucasus, Azerbaijan is geopolitically nested between Russia, Turkey, and Iran – which is vividly described by Zbigniew Brzezinski as a “cork” in the bottle of the regional energy riches, and this country takes the policy of “pragmatic neutrality”.<sup>15</sup> I take these two countries for my analysis due to a very strong and prominent geopolitical discourse on the Balkans and the Caucasus regions, as well as the context of the recently initiated bilateral cooperation between these two countries (since 2010), which brings an additional dimension to the puzzlement of the link between these two small state regions in the network of the “world of regions”.<sup>16</sup>

This paper proceeds in four sections. In the first part, a critical overview of theoretical discussions about regionalization of world politics and multipolarity is offered. The second part takes on a discursive understanding of multipolarization and regionalization of international relations in the practices of Russia and China, that are linguistically making sense of the space in which they can place their agency framed for a changing regional and global environment. The notion of state identity that is seen as a constructivist “bridge” between discourse and action enables the conceptualization of discursive foreign policy and its application on both small states, and great power actions in other, external regions. In the third section, the discourses on multipolarity in Serbia and Azerbaijan are examined by looking at their understanding of the roles of China and Russia in world politics. In the conclusion, some assessments of the meaning and possibilities for agency of small states in light of the influence that great powers project in neighbouring and remote security regions (complexes) are drawn – following by a discussion of some possible implications for the theories and practices of agency in international relations more generally.

## **Multipolarity, Regionalism, and Discourses in International Relations**

### *Setting the scene – roles, actors, changes*

During the past decade, the economic growth of China and the BRICS countries has been a subject of considerable academic interest.<sup>17</sup> The recurrent discussions between the “declinists” and those who believe in the durability and adaptability of the present world order led by the United States have taken place, but there are growing volumes and arguments coming from the “non-western” brand of theorists and scholars who write about the “return of the East”, or “the end of

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<sup>15</sup> In the Global Development Horizons 2011 report, Azerbaijan was classified as an emerging economy.

<sup>16</sup> Serbia-Azerbaijan bilateral relations. [http://www.mfa.gov.az/files/file/Azerbaijan\\_-\\_Serbia\\_relations\\_20.04.2015.pdf](http://www.mfa.gov.az/files/file/Azerbaijan_-_Serbia_relations_20.04.2015.pdf) (accessed 12 February 2017.)

<sup>17</sup> On BRICS and the discussions about world order, see for example, De Coning, Mandrup, and Odgaard. 2015, eds.

American world order.”<sup>18</sup> The time of multipolarization of the international system is manifested in the migration and redistribution of power – both horizontally (among states), as well as vertically (from states to non-state actors) in the regions where “emerge” the states which by the set of goals and their actions are posing a challenge before the present order and its embedded constitutive distribution of power, norms, and practices. In those discussions about the conceptualization of world order, that are featuring the themes of continuity and change in IR, one finds largely a realist logic of power that is aimed at countering “revolutionary” attempts at change that is expressed in at least two positions.<sup>19</sup> For the first, a change in global distribution of power could disrupt the functioning of international institutions and pose a challenge for the established international norms for it leads to the change in understanding about what the core values of international society are. This question is rightly posed by Charles Kupchan in his 2012 book *No One’s World* as to whether the post-western order be different that the one that has been established in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. An argument supporting this claim could be that today there are now ways of supplying political and economic legitimization of political communities that are different from the liberal model (e.g. the so-called “Beijing Consensus”). The second position, proposed by Kishore Mahbubani, in his 2013 book *The Great Convergence*, puts forward an argument that the change in global redistribution of power does not undermine the Western system because the success of capitalist production and democratic governance are still bringing benefits to the developing states whose elites are socialized into a liberal type of order. Such a change, according to Mahbubani, could lead to a gradual transformation of the existing system so as a more important role could be trusted to the new members, whereas such a system is seen to possess a mode of flexibility that allows for the reconciliation of their mutual differences without a need to change its key building blocs.

China can already be characterized as a global power in the making and it has been spreading its growing economic power and influence on a global playing field by promoting the discourse on multipolarity. On the other hand, Russia after a decade of post-cold war retreat has shown its bid for engagement in regional and trans-regional affairs. However, what is the real or imagined position of small states in this changing and changeable “world of regions”, or the constellation that Amitav Acharya (2014) metaphorically calls the “multiplex cinema” of world politics? In what way are their foreign and security policies created and realized in the time period that is located between the “unipolar moment” from the early 1990s, and what can be seen today as the beginning of a multipolar world? Mahbubani considers this is the time of a globalized politics

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<sup>18</sup> For example, see: Mahbubani 2013; Acharya 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Kupchan 2012.

and convergence in the world due to the significant forces of economic and cultural connectedness that are acting upon and are labeled under the discourse of the “return of the East”.

A somewhat different narrative about the world in the state of flux is provided by Kupchan, who argues that the future world will not belong to no particular state, but it will be marked by the world regions in which the dominant roles will be distributed among the key regional powers such as China, Russia, and others.<sup>20</sup> Further conceptualizations are offered, for example, by Trine Flockhart, who writes about the “polycentric world” – where the characterization of a changing world depends on whether we take into consideration space and geography, or, power.<sup>21</sup> A regionalist perspective is also propounded by Barry Buzan, who thinks that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be marked by “decentered globalism” with no superpowers, but with great powers that are going to be regionalized to a significant degree.<sup>22</sup> Amitav Acharya writes about “the end of American order”, and he suggests that a new international system will be characterized by “the making and management of order is more diversified and decentralized, with involvement of established and emerging powers, states, global and regional bodies, and transnational non-state actors.”<sup>23</sup> Given the previous observations, it seems reasonable to argue about the viability of a future system in which several states are the centres of power within different world regions, and upon them could be dependent the majority of interactions that are taking place at regional level. This is close to the argument proposed by Katzenstein who writes about regionalization of the world and its “porous regions” whose states developed internal dynamics and simultaneously are in interaction with other regions.<sup>24</sup> However, a differentiation has to be drawn here. While Katzenstein emphasizes the importance and viability of the regions in a US-led world, in this paper I am pointing to a possible reconceptualization of this regionalist perspective by showing the advantages of a regionalized world that is seen in its “multiplex” version as proposed by Acharya<sup>25</sup>:

“A multiplex world would be a world of diversity and complexity, a decentered architecture of order management, featuring old and new powers, with a greater role for regional governance. Multiplex stresses not the number of powers but the interdependence among them. Second, a multiplex world is more decentered than a multipolar world, with greater scope for local and regional approaches. It limits the possibility of a collective hegemony of the great powers over the rest, which is quite possible in a multipolar world. A multiplex world allows the audience more variety, more choices, and more control over what they wish to see. In this respect, a multiplex world is more of a two-way construction... Overall, the agency in building world order is more dispersed, and lies more with the audience than with the producers (great powers).”

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Flockhart 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Buzan 2011, 3.

<sup>23</sup> Acharya 2014, 7–8.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Katzenstein 2005.

<sup>25</sup> Acharya 2014, 9.

This idea can be used to think about the position of small states in such a world order, and be brought into a re-contextualization from a small-state perspective given that, the “multiplex” discourse could enable a more prominent role for its users (small states) of the system in relations to the “producers” (great powers).

### *Small states in a (multiplex) world of regions*

The region as an analytical category has become a subject of a more sustained interest in the academic community – migrating from the field of Political Geography and International Economics to International Relations and Security Studies. For David Lake and Patrick Morgan, “regions are a substantially more important venue for conflict and cooperation than in the past.”<sup>26</sup> Peter Katzenstein goes as far as to suggest that “regional politics” is a replacement for international politics.<sup>27</sup> It was Barry Buzan who in Security Studies systematically introduced the regional level of analysis as sub-systemic, although Ronald Yalem earlier (1982) suggested this level of analysis can be added on to the Waltz’s system of international politics.<sup>28</sup> Buzan’s theoretical framework developed in his later works can be characterized as *inclusive* because it is conceived on the theoretical premises of the structural theory of international relations, while at the same time it breaks away from the state-centric approach in international relations.<sup>29</sup> The interrelationship between the different levels of analysis and the complex of regional dynamics that is dispersed across multiple levels can be called a “constellation of security” in the terms of the Regional Security Complex Theory, and according to Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, “To paint a proper portrait of global security, one needs to understand both of these levels independently, as well as the interaction between them.”<sup>30</sup> This makes regional level of analysis a place where the majority of all interactions among states can be located and observed, regardless of their size, might, or power. It is material and non-material capabilities, as measurable parameters, together with interests, that make that the greatest number of states conceives and meets its interests at a “lower”, regional level.<sup>31</sup> For

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<sup>26</sup> Lake and Morgan 1997, pp. 5, 7, quoted in: Katzenstein 2005, 24.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Onuf 1995. Also, see Yalem 1982 (reference mentioned in Ejodus 2012).

<sup>29</sup> More details in Buzan, Jones, and Little, 1993. Buzan and his colleagues later in other place mention there are five levels of analysis: international system, international subsystem, units, sub-units, and individuals. Buzan, De Wilde, Waever 1998, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Buzan and Waever 2003, 4.

<sup>31</sup> Buzan and Waever 2003 emphasize the criteria for differentiation between global and regional powers – that boil down to their range and durability in power projection, as well as the recognition of their power status by other actors, which adds to the constructivist view.

most states international security interactions and primary security threats are still conditioned by their closer geographical environments and are tied to the neighbourhood, or, their region.

I would argue there are two reasons why small states are not in the position to take on the agential roles that outside of their local security regions. First, the deficit of objective material capabilities that are necessary to provide for a more lasting and systematic activity (agency) in other security regions, and, second, there is a subjective (and subject) position in which those states self-perceive (see, understand) themselves in most cases as small or weak states, or they are perceived by other actors in international relations the same way, where the external actors by their actions can tone up or tone down such beliefs. If agency is a characteristic of every actor - and small states beyond the Thucydides' dictum about the right of the might manage to find ways to achieve their goals in world politics. In small states literature certain regularities are found speaking about the behavior of small states, such as the strategies of "binding", "hiding", or "shelter" – the three most common choices that small states as rational actors make in international relations.<sup>32</sup> Although small states beside all the materiality-driven constraints can seek agency also as normative actors, or to get specialized in some particular areas of practice given the limited resources they possess.<sup>33</sup>

#### *A discursive understanding of multipolarity*

This paper begins with the premise that materiality of world politics presents us with concrete set of constraints – that is, materiality is a factor to be reckoned with its inevitable and variable distribution of power and capabilities among the actors. However, here we do not discuss about the characteristics of a multipolar system and its genealogy, but seek to contribute to a critical examination of the conceptualized roles of small states in specifically chosen world regions by analyzing different discourses on multipolarity and narratives created by small states about their position against the changing type of order. I suggest that states use such discourses, or are under their influence in the process of creating foreign and security policies, because the states see the discourses either as their producers (subjects) or users (objects). In the literature can be found examples of such speech acts. For example, Jorge Garzon suggests this is a "rhetoric in public diplomacy", while David Scott finds normative and strategic differences in the interpretations of multipolarity on the cases of the EU and China.<sup>34</sup> In his analysis of Russian foreign policy discourses, Andrey Makarychev points out that multipolarity "originates in the sphere of ideas" and that can be imagined different "arrangements" in such order upon which depends an answer to the question what the subject in such a system is.<sup>35</sup> That is why next it should be addressed a possibility

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<sup>32</sup> For this see more in Wivel 2014, 1-2. For typical small state foreign policy behavior see Hey 2003, 6.

<sup>33</sup> For the concept of norm entrepreneurs, and small states, cf. Ingebritsen 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Garzon 2015, Scott 2013.

<sup>35</sup> Makarychev 2011, 1.

of multipolar order as a discursive space inhabited by small states that interpret the meanings of structure that is represented in language and practices.

In his book *Discourse, Materiality, Power*, Iver Neumann writes about “linguistic turn” in International Relations and draws our attention to the importance of the method of discourse analysis and its application in empirical studies.<sup>36</sup> In discourse analysis, the main analytical unit is the statement, which is comprehended as one of the “carriers of social situation” [translation by the author from Serbian]. For a constructivist scholar Alexander Wendt, it is possible to imagine a social structure that constructs units and assigns their agency in the world – what, then, makes speech acts (and discourses) be connected with identities as expressions of collectivity and sociability.<sup>37</sup> Discourses are, as Neumann reminds us of the position taken by Jens Bartelson, “a system that can produce statements”, and those contain “representations” that either describe or “produce” the reality [translated by the author].<sup>38</sup> For this reason, it is necessary in the discourse analysis that works with power relations and description of reality, to limit the field of observation in this particular case on foreign policy discourses as part of a broader political discourse. If we go even more precise, writing about this method, Neumann also addresses the possibility of examining similar discourses in different countries, what is going to be the case in this paper that looks at the reception of and the discourse of multipolarity in two great powers, Russia and China, and two small states – Serbia and Azerbaijan. The representations of multipolarity are analyzed in based on selected academic texts, with the references to the observations about this ongoing process in strategic and doctrinary documents on foreign and security policy (e.g. strategies of national security, white papers, statements from official institutions, and other relevant policy texts). All these documents make what Neumann calls “textual material reality” which through their representations show certain “social resonants” that are affected on their “reproduction through social practices”.<sup>39</sup> Given that the discourse is constitutive of reality, then in the field of international relations can be found elements or practices for which “multipolarity” discourse creates certain preconditions for the change in practices and actions of states. That in the continuation requires a greater attention to unpacking of the discourses of multipolarity in their materiality within academic discussions – and, accordingly, by noticing the key representations thereof in China, Russia, Serbia, and Azerbaijan.

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<sup>36</sup> Nojman 2009, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Wendt 1999.

<sup>38</sup> Nojman 2009, 22, 42, 72.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 100, 109.

## **Discursive multipolarity: great powers in a world of regions**

### *Discourse of multipolarity in China*

Discourse of multipolarity is of constitutive importance for China's positioning in the international system. In its official discourse, China is represented as an actor whose interests are spread across the world, and its "destiny" is globally conditioned, what is presented in its Defence strategy from 2015:<sup>40</sup>

„China's destiny is vitally interrelated with that of the world as a whole. A prosperous and stable world would provide China with opportunities, while China's peaceful development also offers an opportunity for the whole world”

The economic growth of China is followed by the process of parallel strengthening of its political ambitions that are enacted in the understanding of pluralization of power and China's global role. In other words, imagining of a different order, in which China is the biggest global economy, together with a strengthening of other BRICS countries in a polycentric or multipolar system for which, as notes Trine Flockhart, will be based on the "partnership diplomacy"<sup>41</sup>. Such a conception would be significantly different from the position of China during the cold war, or, from the more recent, post-Cold War period in the discourses of the "unipolar moment" or "uni-multipolarity" in the Western literature. Since the beginning of this century, China has been beefing up its network of partnerships with smaller and larger states alike. In its official documents, such sort of diplomacy and foreign policy communication is presented as the expression of a "new type of international relations" that promote the benefits for all sides involved.

For example, China's foreign minister Yang Jiechi writes about a vision and practice of such type of international relations<sup>42</sup>:

„China has given its clear answer to the call of the times. Chinese President Xi Jinping has proposed to work for the building of a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, with this concept reflected in political, economic, security, cultural, and all other aspects of China's cooperation with the rest of the world”.

This discourse of multipolarity is used as a means of linguistic legitimation of China's striving to build a new system of international relations, that is usually described by terms such as "equal", "partnership", and by which China seeks to delegitimize something which the rising powers and the aspirants on the creation of a different order see as "domination" of the western countries.

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<sup>40</sup> „China's Military Strategy“ (27 May 2015). Available from: [az.china-embassy.org/eng/xwdt/t1267266.htm](http://az.china-embassy.org/eng/xwdt/t1267266.htm) (last accessed 12 February 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Flockhart 2014, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Jiechi 2015, 13.

China sees multipolarity as a constitutive fact, something that is inevitable in the long term,<sup>43</sup> and the official Beijing in accordance with its strategic plans wants to attain a conversion of its economic power into a political influence and an upgraded status in international system that would fit the global interests of China. This discourse of multipolarity is also compatible with the “civilizational discourse” that bears the notions about the continuity and tradition of the Chinese civilization with the ancient period in what is a recontextualization in a globalized world characterized by plurality of cultures and civilizations. A prominent spot is also given to an ideological moment in which China see its road toward furthering development as unstoppable, and hereby in the *China's Peaceful Development* white book (2011) can be found in multiple places the language that shall point to the power of Beijing. According to such views, it can be said there is a position that is structurally conditioned, that is seen as “China's peaceful development conforms with this global trend.”<sup>44</sup> By showing that it is open to the world, China is ready for cooperation and strategic relations with the great powers (US, Russia, EU), while with other smaller countries it primarily it develops relationships via economic cooperation. In the same way, Beijing perceives the more remote world regions in which it primarily acknowledges the leading countries (or the EU as a coherent actor), or it sees a continent as a whole (Africa, for example). For China, the relations with the European Union are of strategic importance, what is also seen in regards to the regions of Central and Eastern Europe, and the Balkans. This cooperative discourse has been operationalized in the past several years through the representation of the new Silk road project (“Belt and Road” initiative) which encapsulates a specific geopolitical and geo-economics discourse shaped in the manner of complex interdependence for “global community”.<sup>45</sup> The project can also be seen as a framework for thematizing the relationship that China has with the regions of the Caucasus and the Balkans that features a strengthening of the economic cooperation by means of infrastructure building (roads, railways, etc.). China connects the themes such as cooperation and peace with development, and it shapes a global foreign policy discourse that seeks to represent itself as

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<sup>43</sup> „In today's world, the global trends toward multi-polarity and economic globalization are intensifying, and an information society is rapidly coming into being. Countries are increasingly bound together in a community of shared destiny. Peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit have become an irresistible tide of the times”. „China's Military Strategy“

<sup>44</sup> People's Republic of China, „China's Peaceful Development“, Beijing, September 2011. Available from: [www.gov.cn/english/official/2011-09/06/content\\_1941354.htm](http://www.gov.cn/english/official/2011-09/06/content_1941354.htm), (last accessed 12 February 2017).

<sup>45</sup> In an official document by the Chinese ministry of foreign affairs it is stated that the project Belt and Road is “in the interest of the world community” and that it “Reflecting the common ideals and pursuit of human societies, it is a positive endeavor to seek new models of international cooperation and global governance, and will inject new positive energy into world peace and development.” that „will inject new positive energy into world peace and development. “. People's Republic of China, „Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road“, 20 March 2015. Available from: [az.china-embassy.org/eng/xwtd/t1250221.htm](http://az.china-embassy.org/eng/xwtd/t1250221.htm) (last accessed 12 February 2017).

cosmopolitan, inclusive, and on an equal footing for all the actors involved.<sup>46</sup> What place is provided for small states in such discourse? The defense “white book“ provides the following explanation:<sup>47</sup>

“China respects the right of the people of other countries to independently choose their own social system and path of development, and does not interfere in other countries' internal affairs. It is opposed to the practices of the big bullying the small and the strong oppressing the weak, and to hegemonism and power politics. China calls for settling disputes and conflicts through talks and consultation and by seeking common ground while putting aside differences. It does not impose its own will upon others and acts in the fundamental interests of the Chinese people and the common interests of all peoples throughout the world.”

### *China's relations with central and eastern Europe*

The relationships between China and Serbia at the beginning of the 21st century in the public discourse are assessed as good and friendly, and are marked by economic cooperation and the support of the official Beijing to Serbia's policy of countering the independence of Kosovo at the UN. After the high level meetings, the officials of the two states characterize the bilateral relations as being „at the highest level”, a subject that has been advancing under the framework for the strategic partnership between the two countries.<sup>48</sup> The development of the contemporary Sino-Serbian relations can be better understood in the context of the wider regional cooperation China has with the 16 countries of the CEE (so called 16 plus 1 format), and its goals in Europe. At the summit held in 2013, Chinese premier Li Keqiang addressed the readiness of his country for advancing further cooperation primarily on the economic level – which contributes to the implementation of an infrastructure development strategy in the framework of the One Belt, One Road project.

“From Budapest to Warsaw and now to Bucharest, from the economic and trade forum to the meeting of heads of government, the cooperation between China and CEE countries has come a long way and left clear footprints. I am confident that our cooperation will continue to be substantiated and expanded. I look forward to my visit to Central and Eastern Europe. I wish the people of CEE countries greater happiness.”

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<sup>46</sup> About China's foreign policy and multilateralism, see, for example, Tiewa Liu, „China and the 70 Years of the United Nations: Retrospect and Prospect“, MUNPlanet, 2 October 2015. Available from: [/www.munplanet.com/articles/fridays-with-munplanet/china-and-the-70-yearsof-the-united-nations-retrospect-and-prospect](http://www.munplanet.com/articles/fridays-with-munplanet/china-and-the-70-yearsof-the-united-nations-retrospect-and-prospect) (accessed 28 November 2015).

<sup>47</sup> People's Republic of China, „China's Peaceful Development“

<sup>48</sup> Tanjug, „Dačić i Li: Odnosi Srbije i Kine na najvišem nivou“ *Večernje novosti*, 24 July 2014. Available from: [/www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/politika/aktuelno.289.html:502362-Dacic-i-Li-Odnosi-Srbije-i-Kine-na-najvisem-nivou](http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/politika/aktuelno.289.html:502362-Dacic-i-Li-Odnosi-Srbije-i-Kine-na-najvisem-nivou) (last accessed 28 November 2015).

The discourse on cooperation and equality in the relations of the states in the regions which take part in the realization of the project is confirmed from the first summits in 2012, and is so far materialized in the support of China to the railway and construction projects. The 2014 summit of China and 16 CEE states held in Belgrade pointed to a continuity and further solidifying of the cooperation discourse.

#### *Relations between China and the region of the South Caucasus*

In China the relations with the states in the South Caucasus region are not perceived as a significant priority, and its interests in this region are seen as part of broader foreign policy goals.<sup>49</sup> Observers of the relations in this region point to the fact that the Western countries (US and the EU for the most part), Turkey and Russia have the main say in the economic cooperation with Azerbaijan, while China takes the 10<sup>th</sup> place among the trade partners of Azerbaijan in 2012.<sup>50</sup> At political level, China leads a “balanced policy” and supports sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, what reflects Chinese principled position regarding the respect of public international law. In geopolitical terms, the strengthening of China’s presence could implicate the strengthening of its political influence, and the commentators usually emphasize the importance that Beijing-Moscow relations as well as the competition with the US in this region have.<sup>51</sup>

#### *Discourse of multipolarity in Russia*

Russia’s foreign policy discourse features a strong reliance on the concept of multipolarity that is predominantly rooted in a Realist worldview.<sup>52</sup> Its foreign policy takes place in the context of what its minister of foreign affairs Sergey Lavrov calls a “polycentric order”.<sup>53</sup> During the 1990s Russia’s power was in the state of decline compared to the Cold War levels, and the resulting vacuum of power begun to be filled up again around the turn of the century when the role of Moscow started to change with the emergence of Vladimir Putin as the head of state. Some scholars, such as Andrey Makarychev note that the recovery of Russia’s power has been decoupled from a Realist discourse, which makes possible to speak about different “mental maps” that serve as scenarios for Russia’s acting in a multipolar world.<sup>54</sup> For example, in National Security Strategy of

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<sup>49</sup> See: Ogutcu 2015,103.

<sup>50</sup> Trade exchange between the two countries in 2012 was 1.5 billion USD (quoted in Ogutcu 2015, 103).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>52</sup> Makarychev 2011, 2.

<sup>53</sup> Lavrov 2015, 12.

<sup>54</sup> Makarychev 2011,3.

Russia for the period until 2020, multipolarity is situated as a context in which Russia should develop its role as “world power” in “multipolar international relations”.<sup>55</sup>

The official and unofficial foreign policy discourses in the Strategy show variety, and can be summed up in what an astute observer of Russian foreign policy Andrey Zagorski frames as “the tension between a multilateral order and a balance-of-power system, more unstable and unpredictable, and [which] challenges the ability of the European Union and the United States to work for in-depth reform of the international system.”<sup>56</sup> For Makarychev, in Russia’s foreign policy discourse (official and public), it is possible to identify eight possible strategies, and here I emphasize the two that are useful for the understanding of relations toward small states: “civilizational” and “multiregional”. The first sees Russian Orthodox Christian civilization as having its specificity and this perspective can be used as a means for interpretation of the logic of Russian relations toward other peoples (most notably, Slavic peoples). The same author argues that the civilizational discourse has a role to play in relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia while the same discourse holds the potential for activation if we want to understand the relations between Russia and Serbia as Slavic countries. The “multiregional” discourse is characteristic for Russian official foreign policy and its prominent carrier is the foreign minister Lavrov who has recently brought forward a conceptualization about “regional solutions for regional crises and a need for the participation of Russia in various post-Soviet and European regionalisms.”<sup>57</sup>

### *Relationship between Russia and the regions of the South Caucasus and the Balkans*

In the South Caucasus region, Russia in the short war with Georgia in the summer of 2008 showed that its “near abroad” is a sensitive area in which other foreign influences would not be tolerated (for example, the expansion of NATO), based on which the policy of Moscow toward Georgia, and in a lesser degree to Azerbaijan, could be described as balancing the West. A statement made by the Russian premier Dmitry Medvedev from 2008 is a telling example of the constitution of a region in which Moscow has “privileged interests.”<sup>58</sup> After Kosovo’s declaration of independence the same year, Russia activated a normative discourse around protection of public international law, and as one author notes, in the cases of its recognition of North Ossetia and Abkhazia, and non-recognition of Kosovo exposes the conflict among the principles of international

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<sup>55</sup> According to Russia’s National security strategy by 2020, a goal of its policies is „transforming the Russian Federation into a world power, whose activity is directed at supporting the strategic stability and mutually beneficial partner relationships within the multipolar world“. Russian Federation, „National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020“, Moscow, 12 May 2009. Available from: [rustrans.wikidot.com/russia-s-national-security-strategy-to-2020](http://rustrans.wikidot.com/russia-s-national-security-strategy-to-2020) (last accessed 12 February 2017).

<sup>56</sup> See, de Vasconcelos 2009, 11.

<sup>57</sup> Makarychev 2011, 8–9.

<sup>58</sup> Mankoff 2011, 27.

law – the non-violation of the territorial integrity and the right to self-determination.<sup>59</sup> What can this tell us about the meanings of multipolarity for Russia? An argument can be made that those are constitutive for maneuvering of Russia as a state that seeks regional preponderance in its further definition of relations with the EU and China. The discourse of multipolarization is widening the space for legitimation of a foreign policy that enables the freedom of maneuver that goes hand in hand with the consolidation of Russia's political influence in its immediate neighbourhood.

What are the relations between Russia and Serbia like at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century observed against the backdrop of the multipolarity discourse? According to a Russian historian of the Balkans, Konstantin Nikiforov, “the Balkans is for Russia a ‘middle abroad’, a strategically important region” [translation mine],<sup>60</sup> while Serbo-Russian relations are perceived as traditionally close and bound by a cultural connectedness and importance of the energy supply from Russia. In the following section, we are going to see how Russia and Azerbaijan perceive and understand this transforming order in the context that is shaped by far more powerful actors. This opens up the space for examining tensions that emerge in the cracks between the structural effects and a marginalized agency of small states.

### **Small state foreign policy and discourses of multipolarization**

A typical behavior of small states, writes Jeanne Hey, is characterized by a low level of their participation in international relations, that is mostly reserved for the narrow regional framework, multilateralism, and the respect for international law. Also, depending on the context and other elements, small states in security policy pick membership in the security alliances, or in lesser numbers opt for neutrality within Europe.<sup>61</sup> Having that in mind, a regional concentration and usage of multilateralism comes as no surprise, but it is worth observing the relations these countries have with great powers that are engaged in relations within their regions in the process of multipolarization. Although it can be possible to find some regularities in the small state behavior, there should not be neglected a possibility of variation and “innovation”. In the forthcoming section I offer an analysis that uses examples of foreign policies of Serbia and Azerbaijan.

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<sup>59</sup> Makarychev 2011, 15.

<sup>60</sup> Nikiforov 2014, 227.

<sup>61</sup> Hey (2003, 5) suggests there are ten characteristics of foreign policy behavior of small states, of which the aforesaid can be somewhat more specific to the cases of Serbia and Azerbaijan. Of course, it is possible to find the differences in the way states “behave”. Hey answers this question as follows:

: „the answer depends whether the scholars can identify the conditions under which small states choose among the behaviors available to them.”... “Those differences in behavior could largely be accounted for by the ideology and preferences as well as by the issue area under consideration. This was not to say that smallness did not influence foreign policy, only that its influence was not uniformly directed.”

Hey 2003, 6.

Foreign policy of Serbia after 2000 has been to a significant degree shaped around the goal of the re-entrance in the international society after a period of international isolation during the Yugoslav wars. The framework of EU integration process has been seen as a counterbalance to the politics of the authoritarian regime of Slobodan Milošević in the decade of the 1990s. A story about Serbian foreign policy in the past quarter century can be one of the continuity and change, although it can be seen recognized a certain degree of transformation compared with the lows of the international status the country was faced in the decade between 1991 and 2000. Some flexibility and a consciousness about the changing international environment have become integrated in the foreign policy conception of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (de facto, Serbia) in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – showing an expressed readiness to add to its EU-oriented strategic direction a cooperation with “Russia, US, China, Japan, India, and other states, as well as regional organizations,” was proclaimed in an official discourse from 2001.<sup>62</sup> This was part of the discursive and practical discontinuity with the policies of the Milošević regime at that time, as well as premise for establishing a more pragmatic and what seemed at that time a reasonable policy direction that is in accordance with a small-state identity in international relations. This has however revealed tensions between the self-understanding and the external perception of the self, and in the period of 16 years after the democratic changes in 2000, some degree of coherence has to be acknowledged as to the declaratory focus on the regional affairs, EU integration, and a balanced relations with great and emerging powers. In the Strategy of National Security of 2009, multipolarity is recognized as a context and a type of environment in which are enacted the contemporary international relations. Specifically, this environment is defined as “multipolar and multilateral” and this points to the duality of discourse and an awareness about the position of a small state that can find its way in international institutions, but at the same time it has to accept the effects from the structural perspective that are dominantly shaped by great powers.<sup>63</sup> The EU-Serbia relations are recognized and reaffirmed in the strategic discourse, while the close relations with Russia, the need for advancing the relations with the US, and the “deepening of the close ties with the People’s Republic of China, India, and Brazil” are given prominent place, which, by virtue of this strategic document that has been in place for 7 years now, makes Serbia declaratively positioned as open for broad and flexible cooperation in the multipolarizing world.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>See the address by foreign minister Goran Svilanovic before the Federal Assembly of FRY, 24 October 2001, Dragojlović, Sretenović, Đukanović, Živojinović 2010, 288.

<sup>63</sup> See “Strategija nacionalne bezbednosti RS,” 2009, 4. Also, the context of complex interdependence is adopted in the document.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

Although the EU integration is at multiple occasions reaffirmed as the main foreign policy priority of Serbia, that is a candidate country for EU accession in the time of the crisis of the “Enlargement policy” of the Union, the country is bearing a heavy burden of inherited and still unresolved political problems from the 1990s and the era of Milošević’s rule. Those problems are closely connected to the declaration of independence of Kosovo, which was not without consequences foreign and security policy approaches, dynamics, and actions that are manifested on the discursive terrain in the positions of the political elites. After 2006, Serbia restored its statehood tradition after the Yugoslav period (following Montenegro’s referendum on independence), the relations with Russia are strengthened, and the lively diplomatic activity is recorded, what can be interpreted in accordance with some theoretical propositions that small states take risks in cases when they are presented with significant risks or they feel threatened.<sup>65</sup>

The discourse on military neutrality has taken a prominent place in the political place after 2007, and this also created some room for questioning the possibilities for participation of Serbia in some form of Eurasian integration not even beyond the marginal discourses. As to the conflict in Ukraine, Serbia takes a balanced approach,<sup>66</sup> and has refused to impose sanctions on Russia that were part of a broader EU approach what is seen as a test for its EU commitment on one hand, and the reliance on Russia that is also tied to its path dependent policies. On the other hand, Sino-Serbian relations have seen a significant upswing since 2009, and the conclusion of the strategic partnership – with the agreed and realized projects in the sectors of infrastructure, energy, and most recently, privatization of the steel industry in 2016. Belgrade in 2014 was a host to the “16+1” summit, what also indicated strengthening of the bilateral political ties between the countries, although Serbia still has a small fraction in the mutual economic exchange.<sup>67</sup> This can be interpreted as an effect of the structural forces of multipolarization and the spreading of the Chinese influence in the region and beyond. The changes in the current international setting may also be fruitful for considering the conditions of possibility for a multidimensional policies, as well as thinking about the reaches of flexibility and autonomy in the foreign policies of small states.

#### *Azerbaijan and multipolarization of international relations*

The position of Azerbaijan is constituted in a complex geopolitical constellation nested between the influences of Russia, Turkey, Iran, the EU and the United States, and this is the main reason this

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<sup>65</sup> Hey 2003.

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, Đukanović and Gajić 2012, 55.

For the analysis of Serbia’s military neutrality and the position vis-a-vis the war in Ukraine, see Ejodus 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Tanjug, „Ekonomiska saradnja Srbije i Kine sve jača“, *Blic*, 14. decembar 2014. Available from: [www.blic.rs/Vesti/Ekonomija/519263/PARTNERSTVO-Ekonomiska-saradnja-Srbija-i-Kinesve-jaca](http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Ekonomija/519263/PARTNERSTVO-Ekonomiska-saradnja-Srbija-i-Kinesve-jaca) (last accessed 29 November 2015).

country promotes a “multidimensional and balanced foreign policy.”<sup>68</sup> As one of its principles is emphasized the maintenance of the openness toward Europe and Asia in an attempt to keep the flow of energy and commerce across its territory. How, then, is possible to interpret the meaning of multipolarity in this country? After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a geopolitical vacuum, Azerbaijan has provided access to the Western companies and economic interests in the oil sector, which has run to the resistance of Russia that at that time was quite burdened by the complex domestic problems.<sup>69</sup> The frozen conflict dynamics with its neighbour, Armenia, regarding the territory of the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh shows the tremendous complexity of the post-Soviet regional security. When it comes to the contemporary relations with Russia, they are established at the level of strategic partnership and are broadened through the network of European or other regional organizations.<sup>70</sup> In the academic discourse the relations with Russia are usually termed as “pragmatic” and are acknowledged as a sort of a pillar determinant of Azerbaijan’s foreign policy. Multipolarity and the maintenance of the balance of power in the South Caucasus goes in Azerbaijan’s favor, whose security is tied to the energy stability and the interests of the Western countries with the economic cooperation being the chief priority. When it comes to the relations with China, their intensification was manifested through multiple growth of the investments and economic exchange between the two countries – and also followed by Beijing’s respect for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. There is also additional space for further development of the relations, and the project of One Belt, One Road is seen as a driver of economic growth in this region, and globally, according to the official discourses. This is also in line with the narrative about the positioning of Azerbaijan between East and West, as well as its aspirations to get integrated in the western political and economic structures.

In its 2007 National Security Strategy, Azerbaijan is represented by a range of normative claims and narrative that move this country closer to the European discursive field. A rather complex and significant geostrategic position is marked by a sense of importance of international law and the extension of support to the concept of human security. On a societal level, the discourses of development and multipolarization seem to be a convenient background for, at least, normative thinking about emancipation in politics and broader societal goals that are part of the ongoing process of nation building. On a cultural level, it can be said that soft power and big projects connecting the country with the European activities make for a unique grand strategic view

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<sup>68</sup> Republic of Azerbaijan, „National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan“, Available from: [www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lang=en&id=154917](http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lang=en&id=154917) (accessed 3 November 2015), 3.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 13. Also, see Kubicek 2009, 245.

<sup>70</sup> Interestingly, the presidents of Russia did not pay visit to Azerbaijan between 1991 and 1999, indicates more about the situation of strategic vacu in the period that other states used for strengthening their own influence in this country. See more in Mammadov, 2014, 34.

for Azerbaijani that is expressed in its public diplomatic practices and promotion of its national brand. The development of Serbia-Azerbaijan relations can be seen from this perspective and are followed primarily by a rising economic and some forms of cultural cooperation.<sup>71</sup> Overall, an assessment can be made about the context of multipolarization as a boost for the contextualization of Azerbaijan's sense of international agency engaging with the interested actors through developing bilateral relations, and having in mind the balancing and multidimensionality of foreign policy toward the EU, US, Russia and China, as well as regional actors – Turkey and Iran.

### **Conclusions: Advancing a small-state reality in international relations?**

Some of the characteristic features of small state foreign policy behavior, observes Jeanne Hey (2003), are a narrow regional focus, emphasis on international law, as well as the choice of neutrality and great power protection.<sup>72</sup> However, here we can also address some significant exceptions. The examples of Azerbaijan and Serbia show that both states point to the importance of respecting international law. Azerbaijan, though, expresses a degree of reservation in bilateral relations, whereas more recently it takes on significant public diplomacy campaigns that are intended for presenting a positive image of the country and its achievements in the world (i.e. Eurosong contest 2012, European Sports Games 2015). This also raises a question as to what degree these two states are constrained by the international structure, and how much they are willing to go based on their understanding of agency and in what limited domains of practice? While their declaratory pleading for international law may look as way of projecting a normative agency, especially for Serbia, it is necessary to clarify what this could mean that a state acts as an agent in international relations. An inspiration for thinking about this problem I draw from Rita Floyd's discussion about normative securitization theory where this scholar takes off from a liberal theoretical position and points to a conclusions that it is not possible to have a full freedom of action. If this is correct, then a small state subject (agent) is only left with a very limited choice between some previously bounded options which is known as the „autonomy“ of action.<sup>73</sup> Accordingly, if the concept of agency is framed under the concept of autonomy, then we accept a sort of institutional conditionality of a small-state agency. However, small states can act in

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<sup>71</sup> On the process of nation building in Azerbaijan and the creation of discursive space that has a goal to overcome the discourse of conflicts toward more productive cultural strategies and public diplomacy, see Ismaylov 2012. 833–851.

<sup>72</sup> Hey 2003, 5.

<sup>73</sup> Compare with Floyd 2011.

international relations and achieve their national interests by focusing some of their priorities in multilateral organizations (e.g. Republic of Ireland in the UN Security Council), or in specialized areas of practice (so-called niches in the case of Scandinavian countries as normative actors).<sup>74</sup> Process of multipolarization could then be thought to open possibilities for reconceptualization of the action space for „Lilliputians“ of world politics, which must be prepared for constant learning and re-examining of their positions and roles in regional and global contexts. Having this in mind, the theories of international relations, too, need to create a discursive environment that is fruitful for advancing such „small state reality“ that is emancipatory in its character, and what ontological and epistemological reflexivity could provide at least in the intellectual field.

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<sup>74</sup> About this see more in Thorhallsson 2012, and Ingebritsen 2002.

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