

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis deals with the issue of the conceptualization, analysis and understanding of the Balkans after 1991 as a specific geopolitical area in order to examine the proclivity of the region towards conflicts and give general idea of the geopolitical position of the Balkans in local and global context. First, the definition of the Balkans and its borders in physical and politico geographical structure along with the historical definitions and geopolitical position settings and significance prior 1991 are tackled. Then follows the application of the geopolitical theories and concepts on the geopolitical map with the states of the Balkans after 1991 in order to conceptualize the area and thus having a framework for examination and comparison of the territorial changes and geopolitical events that occurred in this historical period as well as for better understanding of strategic significance of internal and external geopolitical position of the Balkans. As a third step follows the explanation and outline of the greater territorial irredentist and geopolitical concepts of the Balkan nation states which have been revived and actualized in the period after 1991 serving as a background and basic platform for their geopolitical agenda. Lastly, the thesis tackles the territorial changes that came as a result of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and emergence of the independent nation states with their internal territorial divisions along ethnic and religious cleavages and their narrower as well as broader geopolitical significance. In the comprehensive review of the territorial changes related and accompanied by the events such as wars and involvement of the external greater geopolitical powers and players are included the identified findings of the conceptualization by the application of the geopolitical theories and concepts as well as greater territorial concepts of the states in order to show and understand their interrelation, compliance and significance. The thesis sums up with all of the findings brought together thus leading to a general conclusion for the geopolitical position of the Balkans after 1991 and opinion for the prospects for the future evolving from it.

### **Key words:**

Balkans, geopolitical theories, great territorial concepts, territorial changes, disintegration of Yugoslavia