

Contributors

David Baker studied his PhD in Big History at Macquarie University in Sydney under David Christian. He now teaches Big History at the universities of Amsterdam, Eindhoven, and Rotterdam alongside Fred Spier and Esther Quaedackers. His research interests include Universal Darwinism, collective learning, the rise of complexity, and demographic-structural theory. He is also engaged with the IBHA Publications Committee in setting up a Big History academic journal. In 2014 he released a Big History series on Youtube in partnership with Crashcourse and Bill Gates' bgC3.

Craig G. Benjamin is an Associate Professor of History in the Frederik J. Meijer Honors College at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, USA. At GVSU Craig teaches Big History, World History, and East Asian history, to students at all levels, from first-year to post-graduate. Craig is a frequent guest presenter at conferences worldwide, and the author of numerous published books, chapters and essays on ancient Central Asian history, Big History, and World History. He is the co-author (with David Christian and Cynthia Brown) of a Big History textbook – *Big History: Between Nothing and Everything* – published by McGraw-Hill in August 2013. Craig is also editor of Volume 4 of *Cambridge History of the World*. In addition to his many publications, Craig has recorded several programs and lecture series for the History Channel, The Teaching Company and *Scientific American Magazine*. Craig is a member of the College Board Test Development Committees for both the AP and SAT World History exams; Treasurer of the International Big History Association; and current President (2014/15) of the World History Association.

Valentina M. Bondarenko, PhD in Economics, is a Leading Research Professor at the Center for Real Economy Studies in the Institute of Economics, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Director of the International Kondratieff Foundation. In 1991, she defended her Ph.D. thesis on 'Political Economy' at the Institute of Economics of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Her academic activity is connected with cross-disciplinary studies, in terms of political economy and world view positions, as well as the agenda connected with formation and functioning of the mechanism of interconnection among production, distribution, exchange and consumption within various forms of production relations. Her current research interests are in the areas of search and substantiation of new production relations and relevant production forces, formation of Russia's development strategy and new life-organization model. She is the author of the monographs *Forecasting the Future: A New Paradigm* (2008) and *Crisis-Free Development – A Myth or the Reality?* (2012, 1st edition; 2014, 2nd edition). She has published more than 220 articles in Russia and abroad, and wrote a number of chapters for various monographs, published in Russian and English, which address fundamental theoretical problems, pertaining to formation of transition strategies that Russia and other countries can follow on the way to crisis-free development.

Rendt Gorter is a social scientist who obtained his PhD studying environmental democracy at the University of Auckland in New Zealand, where he continues to live and work.

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with A. Markov and A. Korotayev); *Global Crisis in Retrospective: A Brief History of Upswings and Crises* (2010, in Russian; with A. Korotayev); *The Evolution of Statehood: From Early State to Global Society* (2011); *The Cycles of Development of Modern World System* (2011, in Russian; with A. Korotayev and S. Tsirel); *From Confucius to Comte: The Formation of the Theory, Methodology and Philosophy of History* (2012, in Russian); *Macrohistory and Globalization* (2012); *Cycles, Crises, and Traps of the Modern World-System* (2012, in Russian; with A. Korotayev), as well as *Great Divergence and Great Convergence* (2015, in English; with Andrey Korotayev).

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David LePoire has a PhD in Computer Science from DePaul University and BS in physics from CalTech. He has worked in environmental and energy areas for many governmental agencies over the past 25 years. Topics include uncertainty techniques, pathway analysis, particle detection tools, and physics-based modeling. He has also explored historical trends in energy, science, and environmental transitions. His research interests include complex adaptive systems, logistical transitions, the role of energy and environment in history, and the application of new technologies to solve current energy and environmental issues.

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Jane Gray Morrison is an ecologist, author and filmmaker whose work has taken her to over 30 countries. As a filmmaker, Ms. Morrison has produced numerous films for such networks as Discovery, PBS (for which she also co-directed 'A Day in the Life of Ireland' for Irish Television and WNET) and Turner Broadcasting for which she served as Senior Producer for the 10-hour series, 'Voice of the Planet'. Ms. Morrison recently completed a feature film documentary trilogy: 'Mad Cowboy', 'No Vacancy' and 'Hotspots' – all of which have aired on Public Broadcasting. In addition to numerous articles and essays, Ms. Morrison's books include *A Parliament of Souls: In Search of Global Spirituality* (co-editor); *No Vacancy: Global Responses to the Human Population Explosion* (co-editor); *Donkey: The Mystique of Equus Asinus* (co-author with Michael Tobias); and, *Sanctuary: Global Oases of Innocence* (co-author with Michael Tobias). For many years, Ms. Morrison has worked for the nonprofit Dancing Star Foundation.

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Michael Charles Tobias is an ecologist, author, filmmaker, historian, explorer, anthropologist, educator and non-violence activist. His work encompasses ecological anthropology and aesthetics, the history of ideas, environmental psychology, comparative literature, philosophy and ethics, global biodiversity field research, systematics, deep demography, animal rights and animal liberation. In addition, he focuses on aspects of zoosemiotics and ethology, and the critical links between human demographic pressure (various population issues) and the genetic corridors and diverse, remaining habitats on Earth. He has received The Courage of Conscience Award, the Parabola Focus Award, in addition to countless film awards, nominations, and accolades. Tobias did his PhD in the History of Consciousness at the University of California-Santa Cruz focusing upon comparative literature, and the psychology, ethnography and history of ideas and aesthetic orientations pertaining to human views toward Nature. Tobias has lectured worldwide and has held teaching positions at several universities, including Dartmouth, the University of New Mexico (where he once held the Garrey Carruthers Chair of Honors), and the University of California-Santa Barbara (where he was a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Environmental Studies, as well as a Regents Lecturer). Tobias is the author of over 45 published books and the writer, director, producer and/or executive producer of well over 125 films, focusing primarily on ecological and humanitarian issues, both documentary and some drama and docu-drama, including the award-winning ten-hour dramatic miniseries, 'Voice of the Planet', starring William Shatner and Faye Dunaway, for Turner Broadcasting, and based upon Tobias' best-selling novel (Bantam Books, 1990) by the same title; and Tobias' hard-hitting 600 page book, and PBS documentary, *World War III: Population and the Biosphere at the End of the Millennium* (1994).

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