

Preface

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Over the last few years, particularly in the last couple of years, the events in the world have been rapidly developing. In fact, there is an impression that they are accelerating. The World System experiences really dramatic transformations which exacerbate conflicts and tension, turbulence and backslides in the society. So one may say that globalization reversed together with Donald Trump's attempts to 'make America great again' and the COVID-19 pandemic (Grinin, Korotayev 2020; Grinin, Grinin, Korotayev 2021; see also in this volume: Ilyin and Leonova 2021; Komlosy 2021; Grinin L., Grinin A. 2021). But it is quite natural for important processes to unfold in a wave-like manner, with tides and backslides. The current backslide is caused by the fact that economic component of globalization went considerably ahead of the political one. So, the latter should catch the former and this appears a rather painful and turbulent process (Grinin, Grinin 2016; Grinin, Korotayev, Tausch 2019; Grinin 2022).

Today the weakening power of the USA has become obvious (Grinin, Korotayev, Tausch 2019; Grinin, Korotayev 2020) and in this context turbulence will continue increasing. We suppose that a new tide of globalization will result from the started formation of the new world order which in many respects will be associated with regulation of global agreements and mechanisms connected with activities on climate change and ecology.

One should analyze any processes from different perspectives: both in detail and in general, as well as in the context of current problems, in retrospective and in the long run. This volume presents views on globalization and global issues from different angles. We investigate current processes both in more depth and from the Big History perspective.

The twenty-first century can be called the era of globalization which will obviously fluctuate between high and low tides. It is also clear that the former globalization trend with the USA being its driver is fading away so there are needed new 'fuel' and constructive solutions. The crisis of the old world order and destructive processes involving the World System also become evident. But we know that natural historical processes usually proceed with destruction of the old and according to the principle of clearing the way first (we have already pointed this fact, see Grinin 2017). Unfortunately, the formation of a new order also does not accord with any agreements or plans (which would exist if the rulers were wise) but unfolds just in the naturally and historically determined way, which brings destabilization and destruction (we have also written about this in our contribution to this yearbook: Grinin, Ilyin, Andreev 2016). At that, the main destructive actors are finally to become the main losers. All the above said is enough to prove the importance of the study of global processes. But still this is just a part of a scientific horizon.

We more and more acutely perceive global processes. Probably, the most debated and apparent is the global climate change. Also the close link between global processes in the World System and every society, as well as between the human civilization and nature

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becomes more and more evident (see Grinin, Grinin 2021). And the global processes are clearly a part of the processes in our Universe and even in a wider macrocosm. So we become completely aware of the physical connection between the Earth and the cosmos while learning their riddles.

Thus, global processes imperatively make us think broadly and cover megaevolution and contemporary political processes. The present volume contributes to this approach. This is already the eighth volume in the series *Globalistics and Globalization Studies* touching a broad range of subjects within Global Studies. The volume has a subtitle – *Current and Future Trends from the Perspective of Big History*. The volume has a traditional structure and consists of three parts. Part I is entitled ‘*The Present and Future of the Global World*’ and it comprises eight contributions considering different phenomena currently observed in the globalized world and give an insight into the future. The second Part is entitled ‘*Political and Cultural Global Trends*’ and consists of eight contributions covering different social and political aspects of current globalization. Finally, seven contributions of ‘*Part III. Big History Studies*’ consider various issues associated with Big History.

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