
GLOBALIZATION AS A POLITICAL PROCESS

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This paper examines globalization as a political process. Although according to its different descriptions, globalization may be regarded as either economic or socio-cultural or political process, in the present paper the focus is on the political aspect. The analysis considers the influence of globalization on the global, regional, and local political structures. The author comes to a conclusion that globalization most significantly influences on the vertically organized political structures such as states and political parties. This influence almost inevitably leads to some changes, either evolutionary or destructive.

Keywords: globalization, political structures, world order, state, political party.

For a more profound comprehension of the events occurring in the contemporary world it seems important to search for a deeper understanding of globalization and, first of all, of its specific features that expose fundamental and sometimes decisive influence on the character, depth, internal structure, and even speed of current political processes at the inter-country, regional, and international levels.

The term globalization initially had an economic meaning and used to be even more practical than the term ‘internationalization’ which was often employed to describe global processes especially within the framework of the soviet Marxist school.

The Evolution of the Term and of the Process

The term ‘globalization’ was introduced by Theodore Levitt, the professor of Harvard Business School, in his article ‘The Globalization of Markets’ (Levitt 1984) and it denoted the process of formation of worldwide markets of globally standardized products, that is a phenomenon that could have hardly been imagined before.

However, in economic terms globalization seemed to be a logic continuation of the process of internationalization in a form already described by Karl Marx in *The Economic Manuscripts of 1848* and in *Das Kapital* as well as in Karl Kautsky's and Vladimir Lenin's works on imperialism. The latter analyzed the process of formation of global market, international division of labor, *etc.* as well as their political outcomes including ‘the division of the world’ (Lenin 1969; see also cited in Kautsky 1924; see also Gilferding 1924).

A similar logic was employed in other primary works describing globalization that were published in the 1980s. For example, a Japanese scholar Kenichi Ohmae in his book *Triad Power* considered the global market of technologies dominated at that time by the USA, Japan, and Western Europe (Ohmae 1985).

However, in his later works published in the 1990s Ohmae not only uses the notion of globalization expanded both in economic and political sphere, but also shows the emergence of some aspects within this process that were not previously observed within internationalization (which proceeded from the mid-nineteenth until the last quarter of the twentieth century). In that period the formation and development of the nation-states

was the main trend which rapidly emerged after World War I and obtained a global character after the disintegration of colonial system and was almost completed by the disintegration of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia; while different international structures including the UNO, military, economic, and other associations were supranational and were of no account for the political structures of nation-states.

Starting from the last decade of the twentieth century globalization tends to undermine both from inside and outside the seemingly solid basis of the nation-state which used to be the foundations of the existing world order (Ohmae 1990, 1995). According to Ohmae, the State is converting into a 'nostalgic non-entity' (Ohmae 1995: 12).

Within the variety of assessments of the nation-states' ability to progressive development, the above-mentioned trend of their weakening is one of the principally new political factors that affects the character and structure of the states and of the world order in general. However, this is a particular feature of globalization and pointing this trend out does not reveal its internal mechanisms.

On the basis of the above-mentioned and some other works that consider the process under study (in particular, see Robertson 1992 which is of special significance in the context of the present article since it pays attention to socio-political, civilizational and cultural aspects of globalization) it appears possible to give some preliminary assumptions concerning the concept of globalization.

1. Globalization is an outcome of the post-industrial society's development which appears at its rather advanced stage when the post-industrial features start to be determinative at least in those countries and regions of the world which define the main vector of the historical unfolding in financial and economic sphere as well as (at least partly) in political one. Undoubtedly, at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s among those actors were the USA, Western Europe, Japan and Canada which were later on caught up by the 'Asian Tigers', China, India, Russia, and the most advanced countries of Latin America (first of all, Brazil, Chili, Mexico, partly Argentina and Uruguay); besides, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries of the Persian Gulf caught them up at least with respect to one aspect – that of the operating the global finance flows. Today globalization involves an overwhelming majority of countries of the world. The question, however, is whether this or that country or region is a subject or just only an object of globalization.

The development of globalization and its transformation from a primarily financial-economic process into a structural and political one coincided with completing global process of formation of nation-states which proceeded with the collapse of the world socialist system including the internal disintegration of the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia which led to the formation of pure nation-states. (The question is to what extent this or that country actually corresponds to the definition of 'nation-state', the fact that has been justified by 'disputed' and 'unrecognized' states such as Kosovo, Abkhazia, Southern Ossetia, and Trans-Dniester region, *etc.*, disintegration of the Ukraine as well processes of national-ethnic sovereignization in some countries of Western Europe). Anyway, after this process is completed the number of nations and large ethnic groups lacking their own formed nation-states reduced to historical minimum. With the exception of Tropical Africa where a large part of societies still live at the preindustrial stage this mainly refers to nations and ethnic groups composing 'the Instability Curve' described by Zbigniew Brzezinski.

The concurrent development of globalization and the disintegration of the world socialist system which was one of the basis of the binary structure of the world order

(the so-called 'Yalta World Order' that existed from 1945 to 1991) could not but lead to a unipolar world dominated by the USA (in the period from 1991 to 2006).

1. At the same time the primary reason for the USA becoming the leader or, in other words, the apogee of the world order consists not in the disintegration of the USSR (that resulted from the fundamental inability of the soviet political system to evolve in accordance with post-industrial realities), but in the fact that the USA was the first country to have entered the post-industrial stage and therefore, it was the first to profit its qualitative advantages. That is why the USA has given and still does the strongest impetus to globalization. At the same time during the recent, though rather very short period (starting from 2005) it has become evident that the USA has started to lose its exclusive role of the only center of globalization.

Let us turn to the first point since in our view it is the most crucial for understanding of the main features of globalization as well as of the vectors of its development.

The theorists of the post-industrial society first of all point out the following features that distinguish it from the previous industrial stage: intellectualization of the production process, control and final product; developing of new technologies that ensure flexibility of production and its ability to both quantitative and qualitative reproduction; making information and communication based on the main factor of production and exchange as well as of all other spheres of social and political life (Rostow 1960); the integration of information with the most advanced technologies which makes the media sphere (TV, Internet, *etc.*) become the most important systemizing factor of social, economic, and political life.

All that makes communication become the factor defining the global development and allows Brzezinski to call the post-industrial age the 'technetronic' (Brzezinski 1971), while Alvin Toffler used to call it 'informational' (Toffler 1964, 1970, 1980). Levitt also mentioned this factor by pointing to 'new technologies as the main condition that led to the emergence of global markets.'

Here one should mention that a decade before the term 'global' first appeared in a strange, as it then seemed, context ('Global Village') and was used by Marshal McLuhan in his two books: *Understanding Media* (McLuhan 1964) and *War and Peace in Global Village* (McLuhan and Fiory 1968). (One should also note that Roland Robertson when working out his concept of globalization also refers to McLuhan.)

Speaking about large communication systems (at that period that referred to TV and radio, later there were added fax copying machines, computers, mobile phones and finally, Internet which integrated all of them into an overwhelming global system) McLuhan described them not only as 'Global Media' but also as a phenomenon that changed the world since it undermined the state, regional and other borders, and eliminated the time and space barriers between all countries and regions of the world as well as transformed any significant event wherever it happened into a global phenomenon. Thus, every individual who participates in communication process becomes a witness and very often a counterpart of all that happens in the world – that is the real meaning of the term 'the Global Village.' Such interpretation of the role of communication systems in the modern world makes it possible to consider them both as the most important prerequisite and the main factor of globalization.

Meanwhile, the existing different interpretations of the term 'globalization' reveal the problem of defining the essence of the phenomenon:

1. Globalization as an economic process (Levitt, Ohmae's early works and others);
2. Globalization as a socio-cultural and socio-civilizational process (Robertson, McLuhan and others);

3. Globalization as a political process (Ohmae's later works, Brzezinski, especially in his last five works and others).

At the same time these three different interpretations of globalization do not only point to its three aspects, but also show certain stages of its development: although all the three aspects may be observed in this or that way at all its stages, but in every period one of the aspects may play a relatively dominant role.

It is evident that globalization in its primary form started to unfold during the transition from the industrial to post-industrial society and it was expressed in the development of global communication systems such as radio and TV. At that period it manifested itself first of all in socio-cultural and socio-civilizational realms, namely, in the creation of transnational mass culture – cinema, jazz, rock, and show business – as well as in the mass counter culture – transnational protest movements primarily aimed against the existing way of life and socio-cultural environment (in the 1960s and 1970s). However, even at that time it had certain political consequences when the counter culture would turn into anti-war movements and there would appear national and international ecological and human rights organizations which influenced the political sphere and organization in some leading countries of the world. It is also important to mention that communication explosion of the 1960s and 1970s (mainly the radio) crossed the border of the 'iron curtain' and in the Western mass culture succeeded to penetrate into the Soviet bloc which would also bring some political outcomes.

In the 1980s globalization developed mainly as an economic process in the form of establishment of the global market. But at that very stage globalization concurred with the process of 'perestroika', and later with the collapse of the world socialist system including its citadel, the USSR. This fact may be regarded as a certain manifestation of the political dimension of globalization since the elimination of bipolarity and relative homogenization of political world order was one of the conditions of an explosive development of globalization as an economic process.

Brzezinski noticed that it was exactly the period when economic and political institutionalization of globalization occurred. He stated that the creation of the World Trade Organization, together with the changed role of the International Monetary Fund with its reserves as well as the World Bank's counter corruption actions constitute a system of institutions and measures that form globalization in institutional terms (Brzezinski 2010a: 16–17).

At the same time the early 1990s can be considered a starting point of globalization as a political process that has already affected the structure of the world order and that is still producing a profound influence on global political structure as well as on the political structures of regions and countries. In what follows I study globalization mainly as a political process, although in my analysis it would hardly be possible to completely ignore its other aspects.

Globalization and the Structure of the World Order

At first it may seem that monocentric and unipolar world order correlated rather well to the main vector and internal logics of globalization. To create the basis for the new unified world order globalization should have broken the countries' and regional barriers, created a unified global system of communication and market of technologies, exchange and implementation of ideas; this would make inevitable the stagnation of any political, economic and spiritual restraints. Besides, globalization was accompanied by the unprecedented and almost noncompetitive expansion of liberal values and demo-

cratic forms of political organization that had an effect of almost total homogenization of political structures¹ which served a precondition for the above mentioned unification.² A linear logic allows making a conclusion that such a world order could be nothing else but monocentric and that such organization of the world order should be most stable and long-term.

This conclusion seems also to have been proved by the course of international events. After the disintegration of the world socialist system, including the Soviet Union, the United States obtained the role of the 'world governor' as they appeared to be the only global center of power possessing an unprecedented technologic, economic, financial, military and political power. The latter included such global means as NATO, control of the UNO, a system of various bilateral and multilateral alliances involving practically all the continents and finally, the primary role in control over the world communication systems. All these instruments still remain at the USA's disposal. That means that the model of the unipolar world has not lost its significance.

Meanwhile, the events of the first and especially the second decade of the twenty-first century show that the situation in the world is rather ambiguous.

One should note that even in the last century some theorists of the post-industrial era and contemporary Global Studies have noticed that the above-mentioned trend toward unification and monocentrism was opposed by the trend of discrete global and local processes forming a mosaic and occasional picture of contemporary world.

McLuhan was one of the first to draw attention to this trend. He considers the phenomenon of television news flows to be mosaic both in respect to the technology of presenting news and to the audience' perception, and he quite definitely shows that both these aspects are immanent to the whole picture of modern life (McLuhan 1964). The discrete character of the global processes is also evident in Z. Brzezinski's *Between the Two Ages* (Brzezinski 1971). The post-modernists especially emphasized this aspect of post-industrial society in their works and they made it both their credo and the starting point of their approach.

Of special significance here is *The Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel Huntington (Huntington 1996). In polemics with *The End of History* by Francis Fukuyama, Huntington rehabilitated the role of contradictions as the driving forces of history; yet, he emphasized not the contradictions between ideologies and related political systems but the contradictions between civilizations; thus, he opposed unification and multiplicity and monocentrism versus plurality. All these verifications of the discrete character of the global processes and polycentrism of the political world seem quite natural since already at the early stage of political globalization two contradictive trends started to expose themselves – the global façade of 'Pax Americana' against the background of the outlines of a multipolar world.³

This contradiction between the two trends of globalization is manifested most evidently in the conflicts which expanded to the global scale. During the last three decades prior to the events of the Arab Spring there have been three such most important situations: 1) the Balkan crisis; 2) the 9/11 events and the Afghan expedition that followed them; and 3) the occupation of Iraq.

The outcome of the Balkan crisis seemed an indisputable victory of the political line of the USA, NATO and European Union (EU) and it was rather obvious that these three actors looked as an integrated force with an absolute internal solidarity. However, the picture looks less unequivocal if we take into account that the Balkan crisis resulted in the fact that China and Russia fell out of the general picture of the unipolar world. Moreover, exactly at that period China started to transform into the second world center

by a number of aspects while Russia started to regain rather rapidly its significance as one of the world centers. One should note that as a result of the Balkan crisis there happened a considerable strengthening of the EU as an economic and to some extent as a political power with its own interests differing from the interests of the USA. The EU was on the way to the transformation into a separate world center much less dependent on the USA and less inclined to follow the course of the USA in any possible case.

The 9/11 events caused a wide wave of solidarity with the USA and hardly any country could stand aside. This solidarity was one of the reasons of the successful first stage of anti-terrorist operation in Afghanistan which resulted in the defeat of Taliban and forming of a coalitional government backed by international military forces. It is quite necessary to recall that Russia and its Central Asian allies played one of the key roles in this operation – not only through the logistic support of the operation but also in direct aid provided to the Northern Alliance whose participation in capturing Kabul and crushing Taliban was decisive. The Chinese logistic support to international forces was less noticed by world media, nevertheless, it also deserves attention in this context.

Meanwhile, the positions of Russia, China and Central Asia were based not only on solidarity with the USA but also on their own national interests of opposing the danger of international terrorism that had threatened them already for a long time from the territory of Afghanistan, namely from Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

But the irony of the first three years of this millennium marked by the tragedy of 9/11, defeat of the Taliban, isolation of Al-Qaeda and relative pacification of Afghanistan, consists in the following. On the one hand, the US leadership in the unipolar world has been significantly strengthened which can be proved by Afghanistan operation which was planned and brought into action under the undeniable American leadership and harmonic direct or indirect participation of the majority of the leading countries of the world. Along with NATO, Russia, China, and Central Asian countries, other countries played a role in Afghan regulation including India, Japan, a number of Arab countries and even Iran whose relations with the USA were far from being good. On the other hand (and this may be considered to be one of the effects of globalization), for the first time after Pearl Harbor, the events of 9/11 demonstrated the US vulnerability which actually questioned and even weakened the US absolute global leadership.

These speculations make the shared responsibility for Afghan operation look in a bit different way. As it was already mentioned above, in addition to solidarity with the USA there was a coincidence of interests which was strategic with respect to global terrorism but only tactic in the actual expression which was supporting the US policy. In other words, the outlines of the multipolar world were almost inexplicit while their implicit action increased.

One can draw different conclusions from the situation.

The US republican administration of that time definitely overestimated the strength and strategic depth of solidarity with the USA and decided to use it to deliver another (supposedly pre-emptive) blow to terrorism and thus to enforce the US leading positions in the world. It seems that this particular motivation and not the utilitarian 'oil factor' was decisive for planning and implementation of the military operation in Iraq.

At this very moment there came to the fore the crucial discrepancy of interests between the USA and other world-centers that had already accumulated a substantial potential of self-sufficiency and did not need the US absolute leadership anymore (that had been an evident need, *e.g.*, for Western Europe during the period of the Cold War or for the countries of Eastern Europe during the period of post-totalitarian transition). More than that, they even lost the need in the US relative global leadership to harmo-

nize the international relations. In this sense it seems quite relevant to argue that the world entered the Iraqi war in a unipolar form and came out of it (at least relatively) in a multipolar configuration.

The multipolar character of the current post-industrial world is often interpreted in a rather one-dimensional manner – as the one having only a number of steady poles presented by the major countries and regional centers with the geopolitical space forming around them. Of course, this component of the world geopolitical configuration is an evident element of the developing world order. But that is not all. Along with these steady poles, there appear active and shifting poles in the form of regional and other supranational alliances that often possess a situational character while the borders of these poles may often overlap each other. This factor provides probably the highest dynamics to multipolarity of globalization and contributes to its multidimensional character.

The emergence of steady poles starting from the mid-2000s has significantly changed the character of the contemporary world structure. It is remarkable that its outlines to a certain degree resemble the global panorama drawn in Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* (Huntington 1996). Indeed, in the modern world one can find eight major poles which also possess a civilizational dimension. These poles are the USA, European Union, China, Japan, India, Brazil, Russia, and the Islamic World.

As to China, Japan, Russia, India, and Brazil, they all have recently been considered and sometimes are still considered as regional powers.⁴ In other words, their authority used to be considered rather sufficient for domination in related regions but evidently insufficient for the status of the world-powers while the USA still played the role of the only world power.

Nowadays such an estimation of the role of these five powers seems obviously unsatisfactory. The total potential of each of these countries quite evidently exceeds not only the national but also the regional frames and their influence on the world policy obtains a global dimension.

It is also rather evident with respect to China that ranks second in terms of its GDP volume and has the third place in terms of its military and strategic potential as well as turned into a 'global industrial workshop,' while having the largest gold-monetary reserves. Starting from 2012, it ranks the first in the global trade volume⁵ and finally, according to a number of sources, by the end of 2014 it overcame the USA in the GDP volume at purchasing power parity. In case this data seem insufficient to characterize China as the world power one should pay attention to China's activity in the Asia-Pacific Region, in Africa and South America, and in the post-Soviet territories, its active contribution in solving the EU financial problems and finally, to its position as the USA's major creditor.⁶

The position of Japan, in comparison with China, looks less pretentious especially at the background of financial and other disturbances experienced by the country during the last two decades. Nevertheless, Japan remains the world's third largest economy and according to the level of scientific and technologic achievements it occupies the leading positions defining to a great extent the most perspective trends. This fact determines the Japanese role and authority not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also its economic and technological incorporation in the USA and EU, as well as its continuing technologic expansion and presence practically in all parts of the world. Besides, the level of technological development gives Japan an opportunity to quickly increase its military potential when necessary, especially in the direction which guarantees its national security and helps to cope with internal challenges.

India's rapidly growing economic and military potential has also driven it beyond the frames of a regional power. It has joined the post-industrial world with such a product as computer software and has leading positions in its export which demonstrates that the country has occupied an important niche in contemporary world that guarantees it a favorable position in the process of globalization. These and other components of India's total potential (of course, including the nuclear sphere) make its activity in the global arena of political relations increasingly tangible.

It becomes more and more evident that Brazil, occupying the leading if not dominant position in South America goes beyond the continent boundaries in economic, technological, military and political terms and has a growing influence on the global process.

Despite the rapidly decreased potential as compared to the USSR, Russia descended to an unnatural for it position of a regional power only for a very short in historical terms period of a decade. It was unnatural because even from fairly geographic point of view its significance cannot be limited by the regional frames. Being the largest country of the world, occupying vast territories of the two continents and directly bordering with the third one, entering the water zones of the three of the four existing world oceans, Russia even from point of view of its national security ought to be permanently present at the global political arena.

At the same time even taking into consideration the political, economic and social challenges which Russia faced during the first decade of its post-soviet existence, it preserved the status of the second world-power in terms of its strategic military potential. And this is not only the matter of quantity: the military strategic potential of Russia has allowed preserving the nuclear-missile parity of mutual guaranteed extermination with the USA. During the last years there has occurred a rapid quantitative and qualitative increase of the Russian military-strategic potential. This has already led to practical elimination of disparity with the USA and to significant innovations in some segments of strategic weapons that cause an increasing concern of the USA and NATO.

Now when its economic potential has been relatively restored at least to the level that allowed gaining a position among the six leading countries in terms of GDP volume, Russia has become one of the leading states with respect to its gold-monetary reserves and has launched some directions of technologic innovations. Together with its position of a superpower in terms of natural resources,⁷ this made Russia actually regain the rank of the world power.⁸

The most important peculiar feature of the European Union is that it presents a supranational, suprastate alliance which most vividly exemplifies the global trend of creating regional communities within which the integrational process proceeded not only in trade and economy but also in political sphere. Today when the EU experiences one of the most critical periods in its development, the voices of skeptics about not only its further prospects of development but its further existence as well are sounding especially loud. Anyway, it is worth reminding that skepticism has always accompanied this integrational project since its very emergence in the form of the European Coal and Steel Community as well as during further stages when the draft of European Economic Community started to appear.

At present the EU is actually a relatively homogeneous supranational community not only from economic but also from political point of view with a unified legislative power as well as executive power taking relatively a clear shape, unified borders and an expanding zone of the unified passport system and unified currency. In terms of total GDP and export potential it occupies the first place in the world surpassing the USA

and China. The emergence of Euro created a new situation when for the first time during the post-war period there appeared a real competitor to the dollar as a world reserve currency. All these features characterize the EU as one of the global poles.

As to global politics the role of EU is much less defined. In political strategy the EU continues to hold the line of an absolute solidarity with the USA within the framework of common Euro-Atlantic course in a number of decisive cases. That was the case during the Arab Spring and especially during the NATO military expedition in Libya when the structures of the Alliance played an indirect and in some episodes a frankly direct role in the operation to overthrow Muammar Qaddafi. A similar rate of solidarity and coordination was observed in actions against the Syrian regime as well as during the Ukraine crisis and the sanction war against Russia. But if we have a more thorough look at the matters we can easily find the differences in the outlook of America and EU both towards Ukrainian crisis and anti-Russian sanctions. More than that, the matter of sanctions led to increasing contradictions within the EU and now it is facing a real dilemma: Euro-Atlantic (EA) solidarity or EU unity. This dilemma is generating a threat either of breaking EA solidarity that would lead to a new situation within the multipolar world or of disintegration of the EU.

It is reasonable to add that during the last decades there deepens a difference of approaches between the USA and EU towards Middle East conflict whose heart is the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation. It was shown, for example, by voting in the UNO for recognizing Palestine an observer-state in the Organization in December 2012. The United States of America together with Israel voted against while the EU practically unanimously (excluding Czechia) voted in favor of Palestine (Tsylyurik 2012).

The statement that Islamic world is one of the world poles arouses certain rather reasonable doubts. Indeed, on the one hand, it is a large region stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the southern part of the Pacific Ocean with a population of more than a billion people who are descendants of a great civilization and are bounded by a deep, sometimes nearly fanatic, belief in their religion and their historical mission. But, on the other hand, it is a conglomerate of the states which are very different in many respects and suffer from various internal, regional and confessional contradictions. Besides, there rises a question to what extent it is possible for these countries to be adequately included in the post-industrial world. It concerns not only the most poor and underdeveloped countries like Somalia, Mauritania or Yemen which can be compared by GDP per capita or by the level of socio-economic development only with countries of Tropical Africa or the most poor island states of the Pacific Region or the Caribbean. It also concerns the richest countries like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Qatar and the countries of the middle-rate development such as Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Jordan in the following meaning: to what extent they are capable to be not only an object but also a subject of globalization. It may be associated with their ability to produce and not only to consume high-technology products.

Nevertheless, there is a number of serious arguments supporting the idea of considering Islamic world as one of the world poles. First of all, it is a trend, typical for each of the global poles, to expand its geopolitical area. The expansion of the Islamic world can be compared to that of China by its scale and exceeds it in physical and purely geopolitical terms. Firstly, it is widening the area of Islamic world towards Tropical Africa that proceeds rather quickly and does not have any definite limits (contrary to EU within which such limits start to manifest themselves). Secondly, it is re-islamization of a large part of the post-soviet space – Central Asia, Northern Caucasus and the Volga region as well as re-islamization of part of the Balkans (Albania and Bosnia). Thirdly, it

is a permanent increase of Islamic diaspora population in Western Europe, internal Russia and in the American continent.

The available natural resources (for the Islamic world they are primarily petro and gas reserves) do not immediately create a contemporary resource potential, but one should pay attention to its direct outcome – the financial capacities of the Islamic world. With respect both to the huge financial capital and to the participation in global financial streams the richest countries of Islamic world (first of all, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman and to some extent Indonesia and Malaysia) play a significant and often underestimated role in global trade-finance circulation while Islamic banks occupy a significant and increasing position not only in regional but also in global financial system being present practically in all leading countries of the world. A number of representatives of the above mentioned countries turned to be an organic part of the world financial elite.

This fact in particular is one of the most important contributions of Islamic world in the process of globalization and probably a prerequisite for its entering the post-industrial world (the post-industrial stage of development has already turned into reality at least in Malaysia and for Turkey it seems to be rather a close prospect).

One of the evident characteristics of the multipolar world is heterogeneity of the described poles – to the extent that it is almost impossible to undertake a satisfactory ranging of contemporary multipolar world, with the only exception of the allocated role of the USA, the fact that helps to preserve the unipolar world along with the projection of multipolarity. Yet, the former trend seems to decline while the latter to increase.

A number of analytics think that the multipolar trend leads to weakening opportunities of predicting global events and contributes to growing conflictogenity of contemporary world. Such point of view was expressed, for instance, by Sergey Rogov, the Director of Institute for the US and Canadian Studies at the Russian Academy of Science.⁹ It is quite evident that such an approach has its logics and historical background. In particular, Rogov also admits that current situation reminds him the situation in nineteenth-century Europe after Vienna Congress in 1815 and that finally led to global conflict.

It is also evident that during the last decades there appeared an intensifying trend of local and regional conflicts that led to the formation of regional conflict zones with direct or indirect involvement of the USA and other major powers. That causes a growing discontent of the global community towards a possibility of a global conflict.

At the same time at the threshold of such conflicts the multipolarity was substituted for the trend of bipolarity of alliances typical to many historical periods including the periods before and during the two world wars in the twentieth century. As regards the stability of the bipolar system of the Yalta world that lasted from 1945 to 1991, one should note that it was based on the ‘balance of fear’ – or on the nuclear and later missile-nuclear parity between the USSR and USA, as well as on the awareness of guaranteed mutual extermination in case of global conflict.

This ‘balance of fear’ being a factor reducing the possibility of global conflict has been preserved in the current multipolar world. But the reduced possibility of global conflict in the multipolar world is also based on the fact that multipolarity within globalization obtains a multidimensional character: it is not limited only by the above mentioned steady poles.

Besides, the poles may be represented by various international associations that either go beyond the framework of regional organizations or cover vast regions thus, obtaining a global dimension. NATO, a political and military alliance involving countries of North America, West and Central Europe is an evident example of such organization

which extends its influence and a real theater of activities far beyond the boundaries of the respective regions. After abolition of the Warsaw Pact, NATO has no analogues in the world and in this sense it remains an element and instrument of the unipolar world.

At the same time NATO's influence is balanced to a certain extent by a number of organizations of non-block character that reduce its efficiency and limit the sphere of its activity in this or that direction. These are Russia-NATO Council, as well as G8 until it has returned to the form of G7, and from recent times G20 where global strategic economic and political decisions are made and where the US domination is not as overwhelming as in G7 or NATO. This is also Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), an organization that includes 21 countries of the region presenting the current center of global production and trade and in which, as evidently seen during its last year session in Shanghai, the influence of China increases while the American influence declines. This is also Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which is sometimes considered as a strategic counterbalance to NATO that does not seem correct enough because, although it contains the elements of common security efforts, the Organization itself does not have a character of military alliance. Besides, if we take into account not only the members of this Organization (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) but also observer countries (India, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan), some of which may enter the full membership rather soon, the influence of the Organization goes beyond the regional frames since it includes the larger part of Asian continent, three of the ten largest world economies and a number of countries having clearly different geopolitical interests (Russia, China, and India) from the USA or are in a certain confrontation with it (Iran). Finally, this is BRICS which includes countries presenting an exclusively wide geopolitical range of countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) whose total GDP and the role in global trade is practically equal to G7. One of the most peculiar episodes in the short history of this alliance took place during its last session in Brazil when a number of Latin America countries demonstrated their solidarity with the alliance which showed not only its economic but also geopolitical prospects, which was supported by an important implementation in the start of construction of the Nicaragua channel undertaken by China with defense participation of Russia.

This landscape of the world order existing in a permanent action shows that the process of globalization leads and to some extent has already led to a dramatic change in the global system of coordinates, and to permanent shifts in the focus of the world politics that affects the internal processes in various societies. No country or region can escape this influence as it often happened in the previous historical periods. Meanwhile, this multidimensional picture shows a multilateral influence of the global factors upon regional and internal processes in various countries. That is why it would be a big simplification to imagine these processes only resulting from the influence of the only though the mightiest power, or as the result of influence of only a small group of Western countries.

Globalization and the Process of Change of Political Structures

The wide-spread in contemporary political science descriptions of destructive influence of globalization on state and other political structures often seem too abstract and far from political reality.

In order to understand that the threats coming from globalization to existing state and general political status quo are not exaggerated at all and that they are also the precursors of future essential changes one should remember two well-known events divided by a decade. One was perceived by the majority of humanity as a tragedy, while the

other at least by some part of it – as a fortuitous event. The former was the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001, the latter – the scandal publication of secret files from the USA and other states by WikiLeaks.

Anyway, if we thoroughly consider the reaction of the governments (first of all, of the US administration, yet the reaction of a number of other governments was rather similar) we will find out that it was the same in both cases. And in both cases it included two main steps: 1) to persecute the criminal (in the first case it was Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, in the second – Julian Assange); and 2) to strengthen security measures (in the first case these measures did not confine to forcing security in airports but led to establishment of the Department of National Security and Strategy that united all special security and intelligence services as well as to serious limitations of civil rights such as wiretapping of telephone talks, enforcing shadowing people coming or originating from Muslim countries, preventive arrests, kidnaping some of them by CIA agents, tortures in various secret prisons; in the second case it was an essential increase of the Internet control and after turmoil that took place in 2011 a toughening control on social networks).

Why the governments' reaction to such differing events was so similar in its essence – they were both considered a threat to national security? It is obvious that this happened because both cases were regarded as activities threatening the existing communications system and its infrastructure.

One should note that the governments of the Arab countries – Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Syria and Saudi Arabia were acting in a similar way during the Arab Spring: they tried to block the TV nets, Internet, social networks and mobile phone connection. Another thing is that Saudi Arabia and Syria managed to put TV and Internet Media and mobile connection under the government control while Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya failed and that happened to be one of the most important factors of the fall of the ruling regimes there.

But regardless of the extent to what these governmental activities are successful with respect to preserving the existing regimes and political order in general, there comes a question about their efficiency in strategic terms as well as the question of their adequacy.

Within the theory of political systems, the issue under study is the response function and especially the response to what David Easton called 'disturbances' (Easton 1953). So, one of the most important features of globalization is that with increasing manifold diversity of communication means and quantity of various and contradictive information, the mentioned disturbances increase at the same rate. Almost every person can perceive it but a similar influence is experienced by human collectivities including social and political systems.

One can hardly overestimate the consequences of this influence on political life. Every political action occurs within the media field. In this sense the term 'the fourth power' ceases to be a metaphor: any political figure or political institute realizes its activity by means of mass communication, primarily via electronic ones. Nowadays it is realized not only by means of TV but increasingly by means of Internet and social networks.¹⁰ But this media space absorbs the sphere of politics converting politicians and political institutes into media actors and eliminating absolute hierarchy both personal and institutional in political organization.

The ability to respond cannot change spontaneously as fast and repeatedly as there occurs a manifold increase in communication channels and in the quantity of information they distribute. Thus, there exists a gap between communicational impact and its

inherent information flow, on the one hand, and the ability of political systems to respond to it, on the other hand. This gap is one of the significant manifestations of globalization, and, moreover, a critical one that can bring a critical situation in political life.

Due to the fact that the function of response is connected directly with the function of adaptation forming a mechanism of direct and reverse action with it, it seems quite evident that the speed and adequacy of response is one of the most important signs of the ability of political structures and political systems to adapt to globalization.

One can easily note that a significant decline of weight and role of vertical communication connections and unanimous increase of weight and role of horizontal ones is one of the most important effects of global communication systems. In political practice it means a dramatic challenge for the hierarchal political structures in which states and political parties are the most important entities.

It would be at least premature to conclude from this observation that the decline of state predicted by Karl Marx and advocated by the anarchists over a century and a half has already started. It seems more true to say that now almost all the states in the world face a historically new dilemma: either to become much more flexible and be ready for eliminating the boundaries and for unification with close and even rather far neighbors or to be condemned to destructive and disintegrational processes until diversion into failed states. One of the main conditions of successful development including the ability to participate in integrational processes is an internal flexibility of the government institutions and the ability to adjust to a rapidly changing socio-political landscape. Moreover, the political parties deal with almost the same dilemma although in a somewhat different way.

Firstly, the surveys held in a number of the Western European countries during the last two decades of the twentieth century showed a consistent decline in the level of social confidence to traditional political parties. This trend continued during the first decade of the present century even more accelerating during the very last years.

Secondly, this trend touched upon mass parties more than others. Mass parties described by Maurice Duverger as more complicated and more sophisticated party mechanism in comparison with preceding to them cadre parties (Duverger 2000) entered one of the most critical periods in their development during the last four decades. One of the main reasons was their rigid vertical hierarchy.

One of the most vivid examples here was Italy where two mass parties – Christian democrats and communists – dominated in political space during four post-war decades. But in the second half of the 1980s both parties faced a severe crisis and their domination was dismissed by a cadre party ‘Forza Italia’ led by Silvio Berlusconi. This party's success was endorsed by an unprecedentedly long preserving of the government power by Berlusconi cabinets. It is important to note that the period of ‘Forza Italia's power was a period of total reconstruction of the whole Italian political and party space which continues up to this day.

As to other mass parties that managed to preserve their influence in political sphere – such as Christian Democrats and Social Democrats in Germany, Social-democratic parties in Scandinavian countries, Socialists in France, Labor and Conservative parties in UK – all these parties have experienced a complicated structural evolution that led to the remission of hierarchal rigidity and to significantly increasing role of horizontal ties within the party structure.

Thirdly, starting from the late 1960s the traditional parties meet a growing competition with new political forces – the process that also proceeds until this day.

At that period the started first stage of development of global communication systems coincided with the emergence and impetuous growth of mass youth movements (as well as contributing to their promotion) which had a weak and unsteady hierarchy but possessed flexible and rapidly growing horizontal ties. The cultural cross-border character of those movements brought about, among others, a political transnational phenomenon. The possible realization of both features was determined by immediate multiplication of their activities by global communication systems. As a direct result of these activities there emerged mass human rights and ecological movements that soon turned to be a permanent factor within national political landscape in the overwhelming majority of West-European and North-American countries while a number of these movements transformed into transnational organizations possessing global influence – such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Greenpeace, Doctors without Borders, *etc.*

Moreover, the emergence and rapid development of these movements led to an essential change in character and structure of political systems in Western Europe and North America as well as changed the political party spectrum there. It is especially relevant to Western Europe where some of these movements transformed directly into a new type of political parties like *Die Grunen* in Germany that occupied a prominent place in party system there or started to play a significant role in political coalitions like the *Nouvelle Gauche* and their derivative structures in France that still play a significant role in the left part of political spectrum of the country.

One should also add that these changes touched not only the left-wing political structures of Western Europe but the right-wing as well. There started a trend of a peculiar evolution of such an old ‘new right’ party as the National Front in France along with the emergence of a number of new parties of similar type in Austria, Netherlands, UK and some other countries. Earlier all these parties were often attributed to right radicals and even to neo-nazis but in fact they turned almost exclusive keepers of traditional and conservative values. And this factor seems to be one of the most important reasons for their growing popularity.

These structural-functional changes in the character of political systems were not limited only by the Western part of the European continent. Its Eastern part started to share these changes already during the totalitarian (socialist) rule. Here we should mention Czechoslovakia where the democratic movement emerged in 1968 and was rather amorphous at first yet possessing relatively strong horizontal ties. It was then suppressed under Soviet occupation but as the further events showed not to the full. Even to a more extent this refers to Poland where the strong horizontal ties and advanced communicational technique (at that time first of all copying machines) allowed the Solidarity movement to obtain an advancing preference in informational and communicational sphere in comparison with government structures. This advantage helped Solidarity turn into a dominant national force and afterwards into the foundation of a new political party space of post-totalitarian Poland. One should also note that creation and evolution of party systems in post-soviet countries including Russia was greatly influenced by the described structural, functional and communicational factors of the post-industrial era.

The described political structures as well as transnational corporations that on the political level acted as forceful interested groups possessing cross border interest and presented the most important and to a great extent decisive political actors that turned globalization into a universal political process.

The given examples of change and evolution of political structures show the developing adaptation to the process of globalization starting from its initial stage. Besides, they demonstrate that the process of adaptation was inevitably accompanied by crises, experienced by the political structures and by social and relevant political systems as well.

One of the most important manifestations of such critical states was the phenomenon directly connected with globalization and described in literature as an 'informational shock.' For the Western societies the first such shock was connected with live coverage of the Vietnam War that caused an explosion of antiwar movements. For inhabitants of the USSR and the East-European countries it was connected with the period of 'glasnost' when the single information flow which common people had got accustomed to all of a sudden changed to a multichannel one including a mass stream of critical reconsideration of the life mode formed during the lifetime of whole generations. This flow appeared one of the triggers that led to the disintegration of existing political order in these countries.

However, these crises did not occur only to the past. One of such critical states was the 9/11 events that presented a global informational shock caused by live broadcast of attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. To an undoubted critical state one can attribute the global socio-political turbulence that involved 84 countries in 2011. As for the Arab countries that happened to find themselves in the very center of this turbulence, the role of a detonator was played to a great extent by informational explosion in social networks that involved the overwhelming majority of these countries.

Yet, one should ask a question, probably, the most important for the present study: why do the crisis phenomena end in some cases in continuing the evolutionary process, let it be through a number of tests and mistakes and not excluding tragic episodes, while in other cases they lead to disintegration of the existing political order? The answer to this question lies in the ability of political systems and other political structures to adapt to challenges posed by globalization.

At the first stage of globalization (between the 1960s and 1970s) the most critical disturbances of globalization affected most of all the Western countries – the USA and Western Europe. But they managed to adapt to these disturbances due to a number of factors including the flexibility of their political systems that succeeded to accumulate some elements of counter-culture including some associated personalities as well as socio-political structures based on it.¹¹

Meanwhile, the countries of the Soviet bloc remained unaffected by these disturbances with the exception for Czechoslovakia and Poland but the events in these countries at that time can be regarded as rather peripheral towards the whole world socialist system.

However, at the next stage of globalization (between the 1980s and 1990s) the socialist countries were mostly affected by the critical impact. This impact turned to be fatal for them: the overdue attempts to make their political systems more flexible failed to improve the matters and on the contrary only accelerated the collapse.

The current stage of globalization exposes political structures and political systems to new risks, namely:

1. The unprecedented in its scale and opportunities terrorist threat due to the communicational facilities allowing immediate covering any distances, penetrating any territory, and accessing the means of mass defeat or using transport means, objects of infrastructure and energy including nuclear electric stations, dams, chemical plants as destruction weapon, *etc.* One of the most important aspects of contemporary terrorism

is its media component which gives its activities a global character that was demonstrated by the 9/11 events and later by universally transmitted terrorist activities of the Islamic state and the terrorist attack on *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris. The terrorism itself, especially in its contemporary jihadist form, claims for a global role which is expressed not only in ambitious project of the World Caliphate but also in the very scale of its activity that includes the majority of leading states and regions of the world. Today, after establishment of the Islamic state with not only a regional dimension in the territories of Iraq and Syria but with obvious global intentions proved by support from terrorist groups in Northern Africa and Afghanistan and terrorist attacks in Europe, the threat of global terrorism increases with growing dynamics.

2. The threat of indirect terrorism started to be no less urgent than the direct one. It is connected with security measures and other acts undertaken by the states facing terrorist danger since this may lead to turning them into 'surveillance states' with respective limitations of civil and political rights, interference into citizens' private life, possibility of preventive arrests and violent interrogation. This trend was quite convincingly shown by Brzezinski by the US example (Brzezinski 2005; 2010a: 227–239) but similar tendencies are observed in the UK, France, and some other countries.

3. A trend of cross-border synchronization of protest activities promoted by new communicational facilities. Until a certain moment this trend was expressed mainly by antiglobalistic movement that, in spite of its wide advertisement, included rather a narrow part of the global public. But starting from the 'color revolutions' in the post-Soviet states the situation started to change. These revolutions were characterized by a high rate of cross-border coordination. Most Russian analysts explained this by exclusively artificial coordination of this activity from a single foreign center. This factor surely was present in these events but it shadowed another, no less important, aspect of the problem.

However, if to apply the same approach to analyze the Arab spring it appears much less relevant. If you analyze these events to the full extent¹² instead of pointing out only some countries of the whole context of the Arab spring, it will become clear that attributing to the USA and the West in general an exclusive role in organizing and coordination of all these events including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrein and Kuwait is equal to accusing the leading Western powers in suicidal intentions. Thus, it becomes clear that one should distinguish between the objective course of events involving the technological implication of means and channels of communication, on the one hand, and the way these realities are used by these or other political forces in their interests, on the other. This became even more evident in the course of riots that took hold of many countries outside the Arab world including the USA and Western Europe. A great role in these events belonged to the action 'Occupy Wall Street' that started in the USA but later was reproduced in various forms in many other countries. One should also note that disorders of 2011 continued in 2012 in the countries of Southern Europe – Greece, Spain, Italy, and Portugal that started to have a cross-border coordinated character by the end of the year and gave birth to new mass movements like SYRIZA that came to power in Greece in 2014. So, we may conclude that the trend of transnational and cross-border protest movements organized and coordinated through mass media, first of all through Internet, are increasingly distributed at the present stage of globalization and turns to be one of the most important phenomena of the current epoch.

4. The trend of fragmentation of the multinational states.¹³ This trend that originated at the previous stage with the disintegration of a number of federative states – the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia – poses now a real threat to take if not universal

but at least exclusively wide character and to involve many countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

The precedent of recognition of separation Kosovo from Serbia triggered a chain of events starting from Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia in 2008 after the defeat of the Georgian invasion on Tskhinvali that started with an attack on the Russian peace keeping forces; then happened the referendum in the Crimea in March, 2014 that led to separation of the peninsula from the Ukraine and its integration to Russia; the war in Donbass made very doubtful the prospects of its further stay under the Ukrainian control; the trend toward further disintegration of this country is regarded by many analytics as a strongly realistic one. Moldavia lives in the situation of actual disintegration since the early 1990s after the separation of Transnistria resulted in the civil war. This trend threatens to be continued in this country: February 2, 2014 the referendum in Gagauzia, the territory in the south of Moldavia inhabited by the Turkish speaking ethnic group showed readiness of the population of this region to separate from Moldavia in case of its unification with Romania or joining the EU. All these examples showed that the refusal of Georgia, the Ukraine, and Moldavia to undertake steps toward federalization or, at least, to take into consideration political and cultural rights of the linguistic, ethnic, confessional and other groups in attempt to build a unitary state in a divided society will inevitably lead to disintegration.

The trend of state disintegration in Europe is not reduced to former Yugoslavia and post-Soviet space. The disintegration tendency in Belgium makes questionable the preserving of a unified state there. The referendum in Scotland, in spite of the fact that its results anyway guaranteed its further stay in the UK, will have long-term consequences for the further coexistence as well as to relations with other non-English ethnic groups inside the UK. Spain after decades of confrontation with the Bask separatism suddenly faced the fact of actual (although prohibited officially) referendum in Catalonia where the majority of its participants voted in favor of independence and now a similar trend is developing in Galicia. The wave of separatism involved even such monolithic countries as Italy and Germany where some influential political groups claim for independence of Northern Italy and Bavaria.

While in the most developed countries this process, even if it takes an exclusively wide-scale and irreversible character, still has good chances to stay in the ranks of 'civilized divorce' (that is to follow the Czechoslovakian but not the Yugoslavian scenario), in the majority of the Asian and African countries including the Arab states the forecasts are much more gloomy.

The Sudan example shows that 'divorce' in this country cost decades of civil war and many thousands of human lives. The problem is that multiplied trend of disintegration carries bloody nightmares with it and some of them have already turned into reality.

One of the most negative results of the Arab spring has been the disintegration of the Libyan state that threatens with a danger of a long-term sub-ethnic and tribal confrontation that definitely takes a cross-border character and involves a growing Islamist factor. Libya became the second after Somalia disintegrated state in Africa and the second and much more dangerous breeding-ground for jihadist terrorism. The disintegration of Mali and establishment of another terrorist center in its territory was a direct result of the events in Libya. This creates a situation in the very center of Africa that is similar to that in Afghanistan during the Taliban rule. This center involves the interests of practically all countries of Northern, Western, and Central Africa threatening their order and integrity. The link between disintegrated Libya and Mali through Niger lies to terrorist Boko Haram that has already brought this most populous country in Africa to

the edge of ethno-confessional disintegration and threatens Cameroun, earlier one of the most stable states in the continent.

If one could imagine still a more dangerous situation than the described one, he should look at the events in Syria and Iraq and the surrounding area.

Firstly, some Arab analysts, for example, Ali Fayad, professor of the Beirut University and Member of Lebanese Parliament (Fayad 2012), consider that a stalemate situation developing in Syria, in which no confronting side is able to defeat the other, might lead to disintegration of the country into two parts – Sunni Arab, on the one hand, and multiconfessional, on the other, with a further territorial fixation of this split. The establishment of the Islamic state in the territories of Syria and Iraq did not lead only to a multiple increase of this trend in Syria but also to its reproduction in Iraq practically divided now into Sunni Arab, Shiite Arab and Kurdish parts.

Secondly, the involvement of the Kurdish factor into the confrontation between Syria and Turkey has already led to an actual establishment of the Kurdish territorial autonomy in the north of Syria with citizenship given not only to the Syrian but also to some groups of Turkish Kurds and having direct links with the territories of Iraqi and Turkish Kurdistan. It opens a direct way to the creation of a united Kurdish national center beyond the control of any of these states.

If we add here that the factor of ethno-confessional confrontation affects not only Syria, Iraq, and Turkey, but also Lebanon, Israel, Yemen, Iran, Saudi Arabia and other countries of the Persian Gulf (taking into consideration that practically all of them are involved directly or indirectly into the Syrian and now also into Iraqi conflicts and all of them are multiethnic states), the scenario of development of this conflict from internal into a full-scale regional one becomes more than probable.

The trends described in the present paper pose a serious challenge to the institute of State itself as well as other political institutes. It is difficult to find a country in the world that can avoid this challenge and real threats accompanying it.

NOTES

¹ A surprising synchronism of the process of perestroika in the USSR with political process in China until a harsh oppression of the student revolt in Beijing in 1999 caused a long-lasting impression that democratization in China, quite similar to the Soviet one, would have taken place in a near future. In this case this kind of unification would have taken a dominantly global character.

² That seems to be the essence of Fukuyama's understanding of 'the end of History' (Fukuyama 1992).

³ Three books by Zbigniew Brzezinski deal with the issues of globalization and the world order: *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives* (Brzezinski 1998), *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership* (Brzezinski 2005), and *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower* (Brzezinski 2008, 2010b). It is interesting to note that in the first of these books, first published in 1998, the concept of the unipolar world headed by USA is essentially dominant while in the second one that was written later during the administration of George Bush Jr., the situation in the world did not seem to the author so unequivocal. He noted that the unprecedented combination of globalization and the US dominant role in the world included two critically important factors or, maybe, contradictions: 1) between the dynamics of globalization and the US interest in keeping its sovereignty; and 2) between American democratic traditions and the power duties. America declares the fruitful benefits which the world community obtains from globalization but it follows the rules itself mainly when it is useful for it. It seldom acknowledges that globalization widens and strengthens its own national advantages even although this globalization generates raging and potentially dangerous discontent in the world. Besides that, the American power contradicts to American democracy, both internal and exported. The internal American democracy hampers the implementation of national power in the international arena and vice versa the American global power

may cause a danger to democracy inside the USA itself. Moreover, considering itself a historic advocate of democracy, America subconsciously exports democratic values via globalization flows. But this creates expectations in the world that hardly correspond to hierarchic expectations of the hegemonic power (Brzezinski 2005; 2010a: 162–163). This shows that in spite of the apologetic context of the book the author started to acknowledge the ambiguity of the global unipolar configuration with the US dominant role and an unpleasant for the American ideologist emergence of multipolar dimensions within it. This vision was expressed even more evidently in the book that followed *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower*. And finally, in his last book *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power* (Brzezinski 2013) he showed the signs of the USA decline similar to the ones appeared in the Soviet Union before its collapse.

⁴ One can easily refer to one of Obama's speeches in Congress in 2014 where he rated Russia as a regional power that caused ironical comments not only in Russia and Europe but in the USA as well.

⁵ 'China became the leading trade partner for 127 countries surpassing the USA with its list of trade with 78 states... Among these countries there are also the US allies such as South Korea and Australia' (Skosirev 2012).

⁶ China's position as at least economic superpower and in this sense one of the world poles has been acknowledged even by Brzezinski (who still denies its role as a world power) who says that China's joining the WTO helped its swelling and 'turning into a leading global player' (Brzezinski 2008: 17).

⁷ This status is acknowledged by some of the leading American analysts. For example, Brzezinski emphasized that Russia used its oil and gas resources to get the position of an energetic superpower (Brzezinski 2008: 17).

⁸ These characteristics of Russia were already mentioned by the representatives of the Russian academic community Vitaly Zhurkin, Andrey Kokoshin, Nikolay Shmelev, Mikhail Nosov, and Sergey Rogov and others in their report '*Between the Last and the Future. Russia in the Transatlantic Context*' presented in 2001 and later published as a book under the same name. 'Firstly, Russia has remained, along with the USA, a nuclear superpower. Their strategic missile-nuclear potential numerously exceeds the total opportunities of all other powers possessing nuclear weapons. In spite of all difficulties that Russia faces, this proportion will be preserved at least for the nearest decade. Secondly, the anti-terrorist operation showed the significant role of Russia in the struggle against international terrorism. Thirdly, Russia will still remain the greatest producer of all basic kinds of energy resources for quite a long-term perspective. In the course of its economic growth Russia will also increase its power as an exporter of modern industrial production, primarily, of its science-based types. Fourthly, the development of market economy in Russia should widen the sphere of the world economy and play a positive role in processes of its globalization. Russia is an expanding market for the leading countries of the West – the European states and the USA as well as for China, Japan, India, and other major countries of the East. Fifthly, the geopolitical significance of Russia necessitates at least to reckon with it' (Zhurkin 2001). One should admit that this characteristic has not lost its significance during the past years and some of the mentioned points such as strategic missile-nuclear potential and geopolitical significance remained in their absolute and relative meaning while other such as Russia's role as energy resources producer and exporter increased extensively.

⁹ 'All of us, as it is well known, have lived in a bipolar world for a long time, but now it returns to multipolarity. But this multipolar world is absolutely deficient of any 'rules of game', it lacks a system of collective security, UNO is ineffective... That is why multipolarity to which we return can be properly characterized as a 'multipolar chaos' (Institute of Oriental Studies 2007).

¹⁰ Understanding of the political structures as 'actors' has appeared before the media blow up of the second half of the twentieth century. Gabriel Almond fairly connected it with 'behaviorist revolution' (Goodin and Klingemann 1999). But the media explosion and especially its second wave connected with Internet has increasingly widened the number of political actors including into their ranks wide strata of politically active people.

¹¹ In the USA starting from Carter's administration that included some of the participants of the youth protest movement as the President's assistants, many of the former protesters joined political elite. Probably, the most demonstrative example here is President Bill Clinton, the participant of the antiwar movement in the late 1960s. The ruling circles of Western Europe consist of former participants of the youth protest movement even to a larger extent. It would be sufficient to name such fig-

ures as former British prime-ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, former German chancellor Gerhard Schroder and foreign minister in his cabinet Joschka Fisher. All of them had previously been active participants in the leftist radical youth movements. One of the most famous leaders of the May students' riot in Paris in 1968, Daniel Kohn-Bendit is a deputy in the European Parliament now.

¹² I have undertaken such an analysis in the work published in 2011 (Truevtsev 2011).

¹³ I am using here the term first coined by Arend Lijphart in his book *A Consociational Democracy* (Lijphart 1969) as a widening of the definition of the states divided by ethnic, confessional, ethno-confessional, or federative principle.

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