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**ON THE CONFLICT BETWEEN GLOBAL INTERESTS AND RUSSIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY**

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Structurally, the Russian state incorporates a variety of elements, its population being ethnically diverse and multi-confessional. The diversity of Russia's nationalities, their different development levels and historical destinies, the fact that they represent different historical and cultural cross-sections of world civilization, which has left them with widely varying state, legal and esthetic traditions, their mutual influence upon each other – all of that has determined those inimitable forms and kinds of interethnic interaction that now characterizes Russia. The need to consolidate and expand this interaction has always been and still is the focus of the state nationalities policy.

Political science views the changes in (dilution, disappearance of) national sovereignty chiefly within the framework of studies in globalization and the emergence of the new world order, and also in connection with military actions against individual countries (Iraq, Somalia, Yugoslavia, etc.). However, the causes of a state's sovereign prerogatives undergoing a change have not, in my view, been explored deeply and comprehensively enough. The impression is that most political scientists, particularly in Russia, grossly underestimate the extent of the process of transformation of sovereignty and, most importantly, the degree of its impact on every sphere of public life. The limitations of the approaches they use have above all to do with their view of

transformation of national sovereignty as a process that unfolds under the influence of powerful supranational forces, as it were regardless of or even against the will of the states concerned.

Political science normally views sovereignty as a major feature of the state expressed in the latter's full independence, i.e. supremacy in domestic and independence in foreign policies. The first interpretations of this concept, in particular as "the absolute and perpetual power of a Republic" (Jean Bodin\*) appeared way back at the start of the Modern Times in the works by Niccolo Machiavelli, Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes, and others. The content of the concept of sovereignty was constantly changing, depending on who or what was the supreme sovereign – the feudal monarch invested with the "right to make a gift of or dissect states in sharing out his legacy,"<sup>1</sup> the enlightened absolute monarch acting on behalf of his people, or the nation itself. Once the Westphalian system of international relations became established, the principles of state sovereignty were acknowledged throughout Europe. Yet this normative trajectory of international law was not properly described till the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century.

The inclusion of clauses on states' sovereign equality and the right of nation-states to self-determination in UN documents (and certain other international documents) helped establish the idea of national sovereignty in international relations in the second half of the 20th century. In particular, this found expression in the world community rejecting any aggression and violation of state sovereignty for the sake of achieving ideological goals. Thus, the world public opinion took grave exception to the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine that served to ideologically substantiate the right of the Soviet Union and other members of the socialist camp to military interference in the affairs of those socialist states that opted for the capitalist path of development. In turn, the U.S. interference in the affairs of countries on the American continent was similarly disapproved of.

The concept of sovereignty is complex and not at all unambiguous. Its content continues to change along with the twists and turns in international relations and political systems of various states. The need to achieve a comprehensive reappraisal and revision of the concept of sovereignty nowadays is prompted by the emergence of the world political community, the curbs on the sovereignty of individual states and on the principles of their combination with one another, and the emergence of their hierarchy. It is also due to the new agents currently active on the international arena that are rivals of the state, like multinational corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and supranational entities.

So what is globalization? Without claiming to produce an unambiguous definition, let me define it thus: globalization is a process which results in the world becoming more closely knit and more dependent on all of its entities. It entails an increase both in the number of problems that are common to all states and in the number and types of integrating entities. In other words, a sort of system emerges whose typical features are rapidly strengthening and ever more complex mutual ties in major areas of economic, political and public life that are acquiring global dimensions.

Interestingly, many scholars focus mostly on the economic nature of globalization. Positing economic and technological changes as the motive force of this process means that it has to be seen as irreversible: it cannot be halted or reversed on any account, because progress in new technologies can be neither stopped nor slowed down.

To control globalization it is necessary primarily to control the direction and speed of economic and technological development. At the moment this looks utterly utopian. Nevertheless barriers in the way of this process in the shape of various regulations and quotas cannot be ruled out in the future.

Technologies, trade, transport, transnational corporations, and international capital are enmeshing the world in ever more new network links and making national borders transparent. The result is that the extent of national sovereignty is shrinking, and the position of the state as the chief international relations entity is undermined. Thus changes in productive forces result in alterations in every other area of life, the political sphere included. Tectonic changes are also occurring in the behavior patterns both of states, corporations and groups, and of masses of people. While the future of the state – is it withering away or is it growing stronger? – is a matter for frequent debate, the consequence referred to here gets discussed far less often.

Progress and regress always go hand in hand. Some of the changes make the existing situation worse than the previous one. In my view, the diminishing extent of the state's sovereign prerogatives also has both positive and negative consequences. For instance, increased openness of national borders not only serves to boost trade, but also helps the spread of terrorism and makes drug trafficking easier. The plus-minus ratio differs from country to country, region to region, territory to territory, and even society stratum to society stratum. Hence the ambivalent attitude toward globalization. Its critics point out, with good reason, its chaotic and unjust nature, and the growing gap between the living standards in different countries.

While sculpting the new order, globalization breaks up the former one that functioned within the state systems. In the process the speed at which the destruction of the old relationships is proceeding is often far greater than that at which new ones are erected. In particular, in some countries this is manifested most graphically in the scrapping of traditional ideology based on the sanctity of one's country and nation, and in the consequent weakening of such values as patriotism, through the spread of alternative national preferences and identities. Globalization is yet to offer a new, clearly expressed ideology potentially attractive to the masses.

In practical terms, sovereign rights and powers of nation-states have always been restricted by one-off factors. Still, Westphalian sovereignty (i.e. unlimited sovereign rights) did exist in theoreticians' minds. Today the idea of complete freedom of action for states is wrong even from a theoretical point of view. The point is that the extent of internal sovereignty has shrunk considerably *de jure* due to international agreements, including those in the area of human rights, and *de facto* – on the strength of traditions that have taken shape.

This country's political analysts have especially noted that a fundamental fact has been underestimated – since the postwar period many countries have voluntarily restricted themselves in matters that most obviously affect their sovereignty. The right to impose duties and taxes, ban or encourage commodity or capital export/import, print money, borrow, proclaim or limit political freedoms, lay down election rules, use capital punishment – these and many other things are no longer determined by the will of the states themselves.

Not so long ago Europeans gave up their holy of holies, their own currencies that had painfully matured over centuries, for the sake of a single common one, the euro.

Eventually even that which used to be acknowledged as the main aspect of sovereignty, the right to declare war and conclude peace, ended up under international control. Over half a century ago, in their famous antiwar manifesto Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein warned that eradicating war would require measures to limit national sovereignty, which was bound to hurt the feeling of national pride.\* At present such measures do not hurt national pride any more. World wars and totalitarianism have shown with graphic clarity how dangerous absolute sovereignty can be, including as it does, among others, the right to unleash wars and repression. It can confidently be said that the area of internal competence of a state not to be interfered in and to be regulated by none but national law and custom has been diminishing, while international law or the law of a certain community (collective participation) has been expanding.

As justly noted by U.S. political scientist Michael Mann, in their works on the position and role of the national state in the contemporary world most analysts are engaged in one-sided argument about whether the state system is weakening or strengthening. Meanwhile, the process is rather more complex and less straightforward: in some things the position of the state is weakening, while in others it is strengthening. Thus Susan Strange points out that there is now hardly any sphere that the state bureaucracy would not interfere in, be it house building or family relations.<sup>2</sup>

Susan Strange sees this as paradoxical, which it is not. Generally, processes never develop unilinearly and strictly in one direction. The resulting vector is always a complex balance between variously directed changes, and the weakening of the system is typically accompanied by some of its elements strengthening.

The modern world no longer knows the kind of ethnic or national sovereignty that would be integral and indivisible. Sovereignty is increasingly divided among supranational, national, subnational, and sometimes even regional and municipal entities. Transformation of national sovereignty is a process affected by a whole series of factors: technological and economic changes, global problems that have to be tackled jointly, regional integration, desire to avoid wars, growing numbers of democratic regimes, etc. Voluntary reduction of the extent of the state's sovereign powers is among the most important factors here. Moreover, it is this factor that in my view makes this trend irreversible.

At present internationalization has risen to a qualitatively new level as compared to the previous epochs.

- First, it has involved the entire world.
- Second, the most typical form of association is now economic alliances. Some economic organizations (WTO, the IMF) nowadays comprise most of the world's countries.
- Third, contacts between state leaders occur on a permanent basis and have become closer. The issues they address are likewise of a different nature.
- Fourth, few countries can afford to practice isolationism, steering clear of any alliances (similar to the British policy of Splendid Isolation in the 19th century).

Paradoxical though it may seem, the greatest sovereignty, i.e. minimum restrictions on their sovereign rights, is now enjoyed by states that are ideologically and economically closed (China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, some Muslim countries, North Korea, Cuba). Not infrequently, it is these "sovereign rights" (including the right to build nuclear

weapons) that occasion serious world conflicts. On the whole, however, even their sovereignty is beginning to shrink. As for the reasonably open and developed states, the tendency toward delegating their powers to regional and global organizations is obviously there. The only exception is the United States, which occasionally feels free to go against the will of many countries, unashamedly placing its national interests above those of the world and even of its allies. The confrontation between the U.S., on the one hand, and a sizeable group of states capable of expressing a sort of collective opinion, on the other, may well eventually constitute the chief intrigue of the transformation of the present system of international relations.

Under the impact of powerful factors the state is gradually ceding its place of number one sovereign to bigger, including supranational, formations and entities. In the future the trend will merely increase, I believe. However, it is obvious that while in some areas (e.g., in matters of economic strategy) sovereignty will diminish, in others it will be consolidated and even expanded. According to Egbert Jahn, professor of political science at Mannheim University, Germany, the state will increasingly perform ethnolinguistic, cultural and social functions.<sup>3</sup> Some researchers warn that a sharp contraction of the state's sovereignty and traditional functions is fraught with chaos. Bearing this possibility in mind, a hasty burial of the state looks like a poor strategy; it will continue to be a major actor on the world political arena for a long time to come.

There is one more tendency worth mentioning: against the background of diminishing national sovereignty, there has been an explosive growth of nationalism expressing itself in even the smallest ethnic groups intent on having their own sovereignty. Explanation of the reasons for present-day separatism may at first sight seem paradoxical: nationalism is growing because the states are getting weaker as systems. In fact there is nothing paradoxical here. Nations are not eternal entities, but are ethno-political communities most typically taking shape within states.

Under some conditions their cohesiveness and homogeneity increase, while under other conditions they weaken. For this reason the formation of supranational systems in the 20th century went on as colonial empires collapsed, and even some old and newly emerging states suffered the same fate, especially multiethnic ones, some of them seemingly quite stable (Austro-Hungary, and later the Soviet Union). This kind of disintegration, although most painful, is not without its positive side either, as it helps along regional and global integration.

Obviously nationality problems will still be acute in various regions and countries for decades to come. Meanwhile the world public is growing increasingly critical, however inconsistent and difficult the process, about abuse of the right of nations to self-determination, which, according to Urs Altermatt, a prominent European expert in the nationalities issue, has become a veritable "opium for the peoples."<sup>4</sup> Aggressive nationalism that rends states apart and jeopardizes the world order must gradually decline. Let me stress that this is not about nations and national distinctions disappearing altogether, but about removing nationality problems and relations from the sphere of politics and heated battles to a more peaceful plane, the way it has happened in most European countries.

In the 1990s, the Russian Federation encountered a multitude of problems in its domestic and foreign policies. Disintegration processes that started in Russia in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse caused negative tendencies in federative relations: the

supremacy of the RF Constitution and federal laws was violated, there was no clear-cut, balanced division of powers between the federal Center and Federation entities, the executive vertical lost a good deal of its efficiency, interbudget relations grew unstable, Federation entities broke the laws of local self-government, financial and economic differences between regions increased, and so on.

However, these consequences cannot be seen as exclusively the result of mistakes and subjective actions by power agencies within the federative relations between the Center and constituent entities. It is generally acknowledged that deficiency of state power is the most serious problem of the transition period, when its new social basis is yet to form, while the balance of political forces representing the new and the old structures is fairly volatile. Transformation of the system of state management entails disorganization of the entire power vertical.

The policies and reforms conducted within a state tend to have considerable impact on that state's position in the world. In the early 1990s Russia's socioeconomic development made superpower status beyond its reach. Russia's leaders lacked a clearly formulated state ideology, an idea of national goals and interests of society and the state, the means of their attainment, or foreign and domestic policy priorities. In consequence, there was no consistent strategy in Russia's foreign policy. Although in April 1993 the Russian Federation's conception of foreign policy was worked out, there was only a limited number of copies of the document published and the general public had no access to it.

In 1994, the RF President's address to the State Duma entitled "On Strengthening the Russian State" said that "consistent promotion of national interests through openness and cooperation, ensuring favorable conditions for internal development and continuation of reforms are the chief objective of the Russian state's policies in 1994."

In 1995, the conception of the RF foreign policy doctrine was finally drawn up and made public. According to Yevgeny Primakov, then Russia's foreign minister, the main line in our foreign policy was protection of Russia's national interests and restoration of its one-time great power status, so that it could have a fitting place in the world community. Russia's foreign policy priorities were to defend its territorial integrity; to rebuff any encroachment on this integrity; to seek integration of ex-Soviet republics, not by means of restoring the Soviet Union, but on a voluntary, mutually advantageous basis; to stabilize international relations on the regional level; to prevent new hotbeds of tension from appearing in the world, particularly given the fact that some states possess nuclear weapons of mass destruction.

Likely options and forecasts for Russia's foreign policy aspirations were at the time proposed by A.V. Vakhrameyev.<sup>5</sup> One of the scenarios envisaged continuance of the western line as a U.S. and NATO junior partner, which was begun in the early 1990s in the hope that the West would help the country ride out the crisis. But that policy would hardly have been in Russia's national interests. Moreover, Russia could not count on any substantial assistance. The situation in Russia at the time was to the West's advantage, but there was the risk of the Russian Federation splitting up. In that case chaos and destabilization on its territory, raging crime, floods of refugees, and uncontrolled nuclear potential would pose a very real threat to the West and the entire world. Another option could have been Russia's alliance with the East and the South to counterbalance the West. But China and India would hardly have agreed to join that kind of alliance. China

follows an independent foreign policy free from membership in any military-political alliances. India is one of the founder states of the nonalignment movement. An alliance with world politics outsiders could have left Russia in international isolation.

There was a chance of isolationist policy, of an Iron Curtain around the borders, and a besieged fortress situation within the country, xenophobia, hatred for all things foreign. But the Soviet Union had already tried that policy, with the result that the country started badly lagging behind industrialized states. More of the same would have pushed Russia to the fringe of global progress in science, technology, and culture.

Thus the only option acceptable to Russia was openness to the world, goodneighborly relations with other states, Russia's role as a sort of bridge, a link between the East and the West, the North and the South. But for the traffic on that bridge to proceed successfully, strong abutments are needed: a dynamic economy, a democratic political system that protects the rights and interests of the individual, society and the state, a spiritually sound society capable of preserving and increasing its national and cultural values and absorbing the best that world culture can offer. This is the option basically being implemented at the moment.

In December 1997, the Concept of the National Security of the Russian Federation was approved, while in January 2000 the language of the document was somewhat changed. It should be said that the 2000 document is more abstract in the section dealing with the national interests than was its predecessor. Both documents offer similar definitions of national interests as a sum of "balanced interests of the individual, society and the state in the economy, internal policy, social, international, information, military, border issues, environmental and other spheres." But the RF Concept of National Security of 1997 speaks not of balanced, but of basic interests of the individual, society and the state, it makes no mention of border issues and the environmental sphere, but does mention the spiritual sphere and culture. It should be stressed that the 2000 Concept specifies that national interests are long-term and determine the main goals, strategic and current tasks of the state's domestic and foreign policy, and are guaranteed by state power institutions that perform their functions in conjunction with public organizations.

Further, the 2000 document formulates the interests of the individual, which are interpreted as practical implementation of constitutional rights and freedoms, provision of personal safety, improved quality of life and living standards, physical, spiritual and intellectual development of the individual; the interests of society, which consist in consolidating democracy, creating a law-governed, socially oriented state, attaining and keeping public accord, and in Russia's spiritual rebirth; the interests of the state, interpreted as stability of the constitutional system, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia, political, economic and social stability, maintenance of law and order, and development of equal and mutually advantageous international cooperation.

Given all that, one cannot but agree with D.V. Dolenko, a Russian political scientist, that this interpretation of interests refers to certain basic needs of the individual, society and the state that are subjective, whereas the nature of national interests is both objective and subjective, i.e. "on the one hand, they are determined objectively, while on the other, comprehended and expressed subjectively. It may thus be said that national interests are the needs of the individual, society and the state subjectively comprehended and expressed on the state level."

The 2000 Concept of the RF National Security gives a very clear definition of Russia's national interests in the domestic policy area, which consist in maintaining stability of the constitutional system and state power institutions, ensuring civil peace and national accord, territorial integrity, unity of legal space, law and order, and completing the formation of democratic society, as well as in neutralizing the causes and conditions conducive to political and religious extremism, ethnic separatism and their consequences – social, interethnic and religious conflicts, and terrorism.

Political analyst O.A. Kolobov names as the premier national interest of this country ensuring Russia's national security that implies defense of its sovereignty, territorial integrity and constitutional system.<sup>6</sup> In turn defense relies on efficient armed forces, and modern military infrastructure.

National interest number two is economic security. Singled out within that conception are geopolitical and strategic interests. Geopolitical interests are primarily determined by the geographical position, and O.A. Kolobov names Eastern Europe among major areas meriting Russia's attention (politically speaking, Eastern Europe should include the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Moldova, apart from the former Warsaw Pact partners), as well as the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Far East. The second belt incorporates Western and Central Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Relations with the United States are a thing apart: America is a superpower, and Russian-U.S. relations are strategic rather than geopolitical.

However, should the regional interests of the two powers clash, strategic issues are likely to turn into frankly geopolitical ones. Russia's strategic interests imply the existence of allies in areas of interest; they include military, geopolitical, and intelligence interests in a global dimension and reflect the nation's permanent demands. They invariably include maintenance of the balance of forces within the international system of relations, settlement of regional conflicts, reduction of armaments, and support of Russia's authority in vitally important regions.

Analyzed in terms of the conflict theory, regional security aims at identifying the threats and risks that are likely to cause escalation of social tension, and also spread low-intensity conflicts as the result of unstable geopolitical situation. The latter are fraught with increasingly tough confrontation between political agents and can destroy stability and unbalance the political system. Multifactorial analysis of a regional conflict could attain maximum adequacy if the researcher proceeds from the principle of methodological plurality.

The development of the domestic conflict theory implies search for new research techniques and explanatory models, which can help define significant methodology principles for tackling the most complex problems emerging in the 21st century on the global and regional levels. Permanent conflict interaction in social space by agents in confrontation necessitates a study of the process by this kind of multifactorial analysis that would best highlight all aspects of the phenomenon under examination. It would appear that this type of analysis were possible only through reliance on theoretical and methodological plurality expressed in a variety of scientific trends – from positivist, entirely science-oriented doctrines to their alternatives – ethical-subjective and qualitative interpretations.

Russia's political strategy is oriented toward maintaining the country's unity, strengthening the state and raising the efficiency of the executive bodies in the Center and

Federation entities. But to ensure territorial integrity on the basis of tolerance and voluntary coexistence of its parts, which are so disparate in size and culture (both in terms of geography and mindset), a comprehensive study is needed not only of global, but also of regional developments. That is why theoretical research now tends to take a regional approach, which is most evident in the advance of such areas of scientific knowledge as regional studies, political regional studies, regional sociology, regional conflictology, and others. Research centers are set up to look into regional issues; theoretical journals and publishing houses are established, and theoretical conferences are held on a regular basis.

Regional security, interpreted as protection of the vital interests of regional social groups and local state institutions against external and internal threats, is defined both by means of collecting, systematizing and analyzing statistics, registering major events, and on the basis of methods of qualitative analysis. The world is faced with risks going increasingly global.

The Russian Academy of Sciences has set up the Center for Security Issues. Regional models of security are getting ever more topical.

To quote V.L. Shults, PhD, deputy president of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Corresponding Member of the Academy, “sustained development as the point of all economic, political and other society transformations is precisely what is meant by secure development, security of the individual and society. Anything that hampers this development constitutes a threat.”<sup>7</sup>

In the post-Soviet period a variety of political regimes and models of power took shape in the regions, with the traditionally strong central power being squeezed out by regional elites intent on gaining considerable autonomy and increasing their influence with the help of populist slogans about self-sufficiency and even superiority over other regions, exploitation of the provinces by the state, etc.

Regional leaders endeavored to achieve greater independence from the Center, exploiting the public’s general resentment of reforms that were then under way, and the chief vector of conflict interactions was determined by the relations between regional elites and Moscow, the central authority.

Increasing regionalization and the emergence of various theories of regionalism were particularly significant against the backdrop of the deep politico-economic and worldview crisis. The ideas of specific scenarios of regional development (known as regional modeling) became increasingly widespread. According to E.N. Ozhiganov, Ph.D., professor at the Department of Political Sciences of the Russian Academy of Civil Service under the RF Government, “the Russian Federation has specific features that must be taken into account in assessing the economic, demographic and political environment of the regions. These include shadow economy, unregistered income, and latent relations in the area of authority and administration.”<sup>8</sup> Regions are frequently jealous and distrustful of each other. The difference in their living standards, “administrative jealousy,” international and geopolitical factors are causing all kinds of claims and conflicts. According to analysts, it is the ethnic component that is the dominant feature of conflicts in the North Caucasus.

The authorities’ political image can be presented as an image of power institutions purposefully and actively formed in the public’s minds in order to successfully implement their policies to meet public expectations. In this context the authorities’

political image must be included in the system of regional government as an effective resource. This will allow the government agencies to be brought closer to the public, and not just diagnose potential problems, but also promptly solve them meeting the public's daily needs. As a result, active mechanisms of object perception help form the strategic basis of regional development. Here strategy acts as "a system of interconnected decisions and directives determining action priorities..."<sup>9</sup>

At present the theory and practice of state governance encounter a serious problem. "The main thing about strategy is aiming at a new quality, new level, new condition. People tend to forget this and pass off as strategy continuous preservation of some phenomenon, relationship or process within the same parameters (homeostasis); long-term prolongation of a certain condition; distant goals that contain nothing new apart from the fact that they are distant; formulating state agencies' principal objectives in terms of status, and much else linked to the functioning of the agents of governance, which makes virtually no difference to the quality of the objects governed."<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, "...any governance impact should invariably contain a precise goal and an exact direction of movement toward it; moreover, it should be practicable, i.e. really cause movement toward the goal and getting increasingly close to it."<sup>11</sup>

The development of global civilization in the 20th century was judged unstable by representatives of nationalities who then proclaimed a new strategic choice – co-evolutionary sustained development with Agenda 21 in conditions of overwhelming and just globalization. But de-facto this important step both in the theory and in the practice of development failed to bring any tangible results; demographic, food, energy and environmental problems have become increasingly obvious.

A developing region mostly has to tackle the problems of economic development while lacking the resources to purchase and introduce expensive new technologies. To that end such regions have just one source to fall back on – natural resources. However, stepping up their extraction invariably aggravates the state of the environment, and so forces them into an impasse. Therefore the emerging multifactorial tendencies of crisis development require new approaches to the solution of strategic problems of development which unite at least three objectives (points of view): economic effectiveness, economic fairness, and nondestruction of the environment. The global nature of sustained development strategy, moreover, does not rule out, but conversely implies that each country (region) will achieve it in its own way. So it is supremely important that the established historical and cultural traditions should be taken into consideration, as should the way of life, economic standards, sociopolitical conditions, and the degree to which the chief, most acute problems are widespread and urgent.

Efficacious solutions in contemporary conditions can be found in the Conception of Globalization, Regionalization and Sustained Development that views modern humanity in terms of its multivariant interdisciplinary genesis, which helps take into account a set of major mutually conditioned problems. Besides, to quote Russian political scientist A.V. Pozdnyakov, "there is no development unless there are contradictions, when everything is balanced and in perfect harmony: progress from an unstable state caused by an external impact toward a new state up to the changed conditions is precisely what constitutes development."<sup>12</sup>

As indicated by analysis of theoretical works, fragmentation of the ongoing global integration leaves no areas of invariance. Yet Immanuel Wallerstein, founder of the

world-systems analysis, believes that no sequence of events is without structure, i.e. entirely random. Each event occurs within existing relations. Each event creates a part of the context for future events.<sup>13</sup> This is difficult to dispute. After all, most important decisions are now known to be taken strictly on the regional (supranational, national and subnational) levels. Because the world system's integration dynamics are largely determined by the dynamics and behavior of all of its regions individually and their mutual influence, it is the principles of world regionalization, or singling out these regions, that are coming to the fore in world-systems research.

Russia, being among the largest regions in the world, responds variously to the challenges of today. Within the country these responses take the form of attempts to regroup the established territorial order. Also typical here is transition from the vertical kind of ties (the Center – the regions) to the horizontal one (regions as partners of one another and of the Center). However, neglect of regional distinctions (and of globalization and sustained development) gives rise to errors on every level of the country's governance that are difficult to compensate for. Also, each branch of sociohumanitarian knowledge continues to work out its own vision of globalization, regionalization processes, and sustained development of the community.

The problem of adequately linking up global interests with regional ones is becoming highly topical as the possibility exists of one type of interests turning into the other. The borderline nature of the global and the regional is reduced in the process to two situations: when general issues of the philosophy of science are involved, the borderline between them (in terms of their research objects) disappears; in practical terms the borders between them are fragmented by state institutions of regional systems.

The general prerequisites for the concept of balanced, global, sustained development are as follows: a systems approach to natural phenomena and society's impact occurring on a given territory and in the human environment; a dynamic approach to habitat issues viewed as a process of development and constantly occurring changes; perception of the habitat and man in their interaction; approaching it as a system of interdependencies and interconnections between various forms of its use, territorial development and the natural environment; a systems approach to elements of the environment in terms of the role they play in a certain whole, and also the possibility of their performing various functions; assessment of changes in the quality of the environment taking into account the main criterion – maintaining the ability of the socioecosystem to ensure balanced development.

As they describe the entire development process from different standpoints, these fundamental categories can also promote, through profound transformations in various spheres of human activity, the world's unity and differentiation, providing, in a goal-directed manner, adequate responses to the challenges of the time, and finally, ensuring constructive development of coevolutionary, economic, political, environmental and other doctrines that predetermine the efficiency and length of the period of presustained development for a specific community.

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