Globalization and Contemporary Russia: The Need for Innovation

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Abstract

This essay examines the concept of innovative development that emerged in the early 21st century to replace the outdated traditional ideological concepts. The struggle for political and economic leadership in today's globalized world is unthinkable unless innovative breakthroughs are made. The author systemically describes the key approaches to the issue of introducing innovation and analyzes the relevant categories and concepts. Special attention is paid to the examination of Russian innovative projects. The author notes how one of the current projects is not based on the practice of “Catch up and Overtake” but rather on the principle of “Be the Leader” while maximizing the efficient use of domestic economic, social, and technological resources. The author also argues that the innovation-oriented way of thinking is mainly a characteristic of the most advanced part of the ruling establishment and that such ideas have not yet met with approval by the general public and the business community.

Keywords


The world today is in a state of ideological, political, and economic turbulence. This situation is largely due to the fact that the old concepts of the 20th century are gradually dying out, and humanity has just begun developing new principles of integration. Nevertheless, the concept of innovation may be attributed to the basic values of the 21st century because it gives the countries and peoples a chance to achieve unprecedented improvement and secure peace and prosperity for many years to come.

The turn of the 20th and the 21st centuries was marked by a serious fall of traditional ideologies – political and philosophical concepts that had
determined the peoples’ lives over the last 200 years. Most of the concepts have turned out to be lacking competitiveness and could not meet the challenges of the new century. The liberal political, social, and economic concept was the last to fall. On the one hand, the liberals' position was undermined by the overly assertive attempts made by the United States and the European Union (EU) to divulge “the only true” knowledge everywhere, and, on the other hand, by the global financial and economic crisis which caused people to doubt the universality and efficiency of the liberal market model. This resulted in attempts being made to meet the challenges of the new century by looking into the past. Therefore, on the political front, people became increasingly interested in concepts that were popular in the 19th and the 20th centuries (communism, social democracy, conservatism) and in “quasi-political” theories (political feminism, religious and political doctrines, globalism, anti-globalism, post-industrialism, environmentalism), while on the economic front people turned to a new version of Keynesianism. However, this path leads nowhere. By turning to the past or using concepts that are inappropriate in the new reality, the public officials, policy-makers, and economists virtually ignore qualitatively different types of political, social, and economic relations that came into being in the early 21st century. In what way is the new age fundamentally different from the earlier periods? The answer is the following:

- Higher overall speed in political, social, and economic development is observed that requires more flexibility and a more prompt response to the instant demands of people;
- Contradictions are observed in the global environment. On the one hand, the globalization process is ongoing; on the other hand, the influence exerted by third world countries and civilizations that are confronting Western civilizations is growing;
- The shortage of vital resources (energy, water, food, territorial, human, technological, and others) is growing;
- Latent growth of reasons for international conflicts, hidden arms races, and “unofficial” preparation for a new world war are in place;
- Virtually omnipresent lack of ideology in the social and community life and a reduction in the community political activity is observed;
- An information society has emerged; information space has become transparent, and new information technologies are spreading;
- The very principles upon which human life is based changed in the 21st century; the icon of hedonism and the “consumption cult” play a major part.