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Globalisation and Asian Regionalism: Coinciding and Differing Points in India, China and Russia’s Approaches to Globalisation

Vassily V Mikheyev

Addressing the problems in the development of globalisation and Asian regionalism, this paper analyses interpretations of globalisation in India, China and Russia, as well as attempts to show the new challenges and opportunities as being brought about by globalisation for the three countries and the new tasks facing the three countries in the context of globalisation.

Globalisation of the world economy appears to the author in the three dimensions:

- as an objective trend of the world’s economic development;
- as a target set forth by political leaders of world states; and
- as a methodology to analyse economic development of countries and international relations, and to help in the articulation of an economic strategy.

As an objective trend of the world development, economic globalisation reflects the growing interconnection of various sectors of the world economy—growing to the extent that development and stability of one economy becomes impossible without development and stability of others. As a target, globalisation represents an intentional policy of states, directed towards consolidation of integration-type economic cohesion of the world, and ultimately to the creation of a single world economy. So far the issue is posed in this plane only in academic discussions rather than at the government level. As a methodology, the concept of globalisation provides analysts, economists and policy makers with the new methodological basis for better understanding of such things as the current direction in the course of international relations, the condition of a national economy or a corporation and, more generally, 'what is good and what is bad'
for international security, for economic growth of a state or for performance of a company, and what should be done in order to build up the good and to reduce the bad.

Globalisation of the world economy activates another important trend of our time—personification of international relations. Expansion of economic actors' interests beyond national frames and growing interdependence predetermine the formation of additional (that is, other than national states and international organisations) sources of foreign policy initiative, which include international non-government organisations, private corporations and the individual as such. These interests might be different from or in conflict with the national and state interests as interpreted by those political forces, political leaders and their supporting bureaucratic and analytical structures, which take hold of power in the given country at the given moment.

Globalisation of the world economy and personification of international relations create prerequisites for development of political globalisation. The latter means that political events (conflicts, political struggle, elections, etc.) in some or another country, being an exceptionally internal affair of the latter according to the currently prevailing idea of inadmissible interference in domestic affairs of sovereign states, might acquire a global value and affect political interests of other countries. Therefore, political globalisation requires to enact new peacekeeping mechanisms in the world practice.

Specific to the Asia-Pacific situation in the sphere of integration is seen the fact that the region does not have an inter-state structure similar to the EU. Integration-type interaction of Asian states takes place at the three levels: (a) APEC; (b) sub-regional integration groups—either actually existing (ASEAN) or under discussion and planning (East Asian Forum); and (c) bilateral arrangements (like Japan–ROK plans to enter an agreement on the free-trade zone).

In their works on the problems of globalisation Indian scholars devote major attention to the study of practical consequences of globalisation for national economies and national societies. Such studies are marked by: (a) a stronger (compared to Western studies) emphasis on the ‘negative aspects of globalisation’; (b) ample anti-imperialist rhetoric based on interpretation of globalisation as a new form of neo-colonialism; and (c) accusations of the West for unwillingness to share the fruits of globalisation ‘fairly’.

The Chinese approach to globalisation is based on the principle of opposition to interference into its domestic affairs on the part of the West. At the same time China seeks to use economic globalisation for the solution of its national economy and financial tasks, arising from the course of reforms, and, like many less developed countries, China would like to redistribute ‘fairly’ the financial and intellectual resources of developed countries in favour of developing ones.

Beginning from the year 2000, Russian attitudes to globalisation started changing gradually. Russian leaders at the federal regional levels ever more often exploit this notion in their discussion on development strategies for Russia and its regions. The academic community activates the discussions aimed at
understanding of globalisation and its consequences. The First Baikal Economic Forum, held in Irkoutsk in September 2000, played an important role in formation of a new and more pragmatic approach to globalisation. Participants to that forum made an attempt to formulate strategic directions for Russia’s development through the prism of globalisation methodology.

Globalisation offers new opportunities and brings new challenges to China, India and Russia. In order to realise the opportunities and to respond to challenges, we need a permanent mechanism for exchange of views, and for coordination of actions to be taken along this direction in future.

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