

CHINA IS BEING MODERNISED ON THE BASIS OF NATIONALISM

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China is a country that modernised relatively late compared to the rest of the world and is still trying to catch up. The country was convulsing for the majority of the 20th century. A lot more time has yet to pass before we can say that Chinese modernisation has produced a modern society in the sociological sense of the word. It is not a modernised society just yet; rather, it is a modernising one.

We can point out several factors contributing to the success of the Chinese approach to modernisation. First and foremost, **Chinese modernisation is built on solid ideological, social and cultural grounds in the form of Chinese nationalism.** The modernisation that we see in China is in no way a communist one. China is modernising itself on the basis of nationalism, which also guarantees a high level of credit within society. It helps realise collective success strategies and engage the Chinese diaspora in nationwide decision-making. The diaspora has proven much

more successful than residents of mainland China, and its members have long been investing in China; thus, they have become a vital investment channel for China.

The nationalism model does more than involve foreign Chinese investment. Nationalism provides for the gradual assimilation of the country’s minorities, and it integrates the lower classes of society, inspiring them with a positive aspirational model. At the same time, nationalism guarantees the loyalty of the elite, of the ruling class, towards society.

On the whole, modernisation policies become successful only in combination with a relatively active and established collective identity. In this sense, the examples of other Pacific Rim countries are very similar. The modernisation process of both South Korea and Japan also had nationalistic elements at their very core.

Another factor contributing to successful modernisation is the quality of governance. **The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party is a powerful guiding force, which manages to demonstrate a decent level of competency.** It also shows that party cadres take responsibility for the work performed and that the personnel policy is implemented in direct accordance with transparent and comprehensible rules. It also succeeds in ensuring a high level of predictability. This is a factor that is necessary to ensure the ability to plan ahead and invest for future decades.

A third factor for successful modernisation is finding a niche in the world economy. China has managed to find its niche in the world economy in the most effective way. A cheap and disciplined labour force represents only one of the advantages it presents. The size of the Chinese domestic market has attracted investors from the West and from other countries of the Pacific Rim region. To access the Chinese domestic market, the most developed western markets, especially the US market, have opened themselves up to Chinese production. The U.S. also opened up specifically as a result of a political decision made in the context of Cold War politics.

The aforementioned success factors associated with China’s modernisation

are also critical for Russia. In this regard, we should learn from the Chinese experience. However, we cannot simply copy the solutions and recipes they have employed. We need to develop our own success model in each of the relevant three areas.

China is a threat to Russia in any scenario. It is a threat in the event that social and economic problems arise in China due to market conditions or internal processes like perestroika. Pending that no internal collapse should take place, a managed and modernised China also poses a threat to Russia. Current development trends in China are driving the country towards resource, demographic and economic expansion.

However, one existing threat towards China itself is the inappropriateness that Russia’s elite has demonstrated in its relations with China. **Nobody has forced Russia to do so, but we have nevertheless recently concluded a number of humiliating colonial-type agreements.** These agreements entail that China is not buying Russian resources, but Russian elite.

Several such agreements like this exist, such as contracts for the delivery of oil at prices below those of the market for a term of forty years. Other examples include an agreement to co-develop East-Siberian and Far-East resources (under the condition to process the raw materials in China or the Russian Federation with Chinese guest labourers). We can see yet another instance in the agreement concerning a transboundary transportation network in order to facilitate migration between the two countries.

It might be true that we are not at capacity to resolve some of the problems of the eastern region’s exploration alone. In this case, we need to develop a well-balanced international pool of partners for different projects, as it is not in our best interests to seek a bargain with a single “general buyer”. Diversification would enable us to maintain geopolitical sovereignty over the region and ensure that we prioritise those industrial and infrastructure projects carried out on our territory that are necessary for the development of our raw materials. ■

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