At the turn of the 20th–21st centuries, Russian social geography showed a heightened interest in globalization problems, which stemmed from the change in the sociopolitical system and the transfer from one socioeconomic formation oriented at development within the socialist system of states to another that relied on broad involvement in the global economy. Against this backdrop, we see the theoretical and methodological formalization of a new trend in social geography—geoeconomics [for more, see 12–14, 25, 26]. At the same time, the first geoeconomic ideas in Russian economic–geographical science can be linked to V.E. Den, P.N. Savitskii, V.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shanskii, G.A. Mebus, I.A. Vitver, and other geographers–social scientists who worked in the first half of the 20th century. L.A. Bezrukov rightly points out that Savitskii “was among the first who implemented the geoeconomic approach to analyzing geopolitical processes, and he initially based the dualism of continental and maritime countries on sharp differences in the economic efficiency of marine and ground transportation, which in his opinion predetermines the shortage of transport possibilities of continental Russia (in terms of its possible active participation in the global economic exchange)” [2, p. 146]. At this first stage (the end of the 19th—beginning of the 20th centuries), geoeconomics in Russia formed on a geopolitical substrate. Various publications often consider both trends (geopolitics and geoeconomics) as interchangeable, although their names indicate obvious differences in content. Both trends widely use basic geographic categories, such as geospace, economic—political—geographical location, spatial division of labor, integral and sectorial districts, nodal and linear forms, spatial organization of social structures, the geosystem, etc. They reflect the heterogeneity, complexity, and dynamics of spatial processes, which have always been in geography’s field of view, including its social section, but from different viewpoints.

Speaking about the intermediate place of economic geography between geography and economics, Den understood political geography and geopolitics as analogs. He precisely pointed out that, “in fact, geopolitics or, equivalently, political geography is increasingly turning into an independent discipline, lying between geography and politics” [8, p. 30]. Then comes his key thesis: “the part of politics that Kjellén calls “ecopolitics” or economic politics (Kjellén does not use this word in the sense adopted by economic science) is largely covered by the contents of economic geography.”

The development of modern geoeconomic ideas in Western Europe and the United States also started in the first third of the 20th century. We should recall Den’s words about Germany: “If we observe in post-war Germany intense interest in geography in general and in economic (as well as political) geography in particular, this is explained by this country’s urge to preserve and amplify its position in the world market, which is of paramount importance for Germany” [8, p. 20]. He understood that economic geography holds the basics of geoeconomic and geopolitical research. In his article, he drew attention to the fact that the economist “A. Dix and, even earlier, Professor W. Röpke, University of Jena, proposed to create a new science under the name of geoeconomics [our italics—A.A., S.L.] that would belong to economic geography just as geopolitics belongs to political geography” [9, p. 41].

The rapid development of ideas in geoeconomics occurred at the second stage in the 1940s–1970s. In addition, we should note that military terminology was
always present in early publications on this topic. American geographer G.T. Renner was one of the first researchers to use the term *geoeconomics* (our italics—*A.A., S.L.*) in 1942 [22]. In the 1950s and 1960s, polemics started about who was the first to use the term *geoeconomics*.

D. Cowen believed that the term geoeconomics was used by the French economic geographer J. Boudeville (1966), who considered his growth poles theory in terms of geoeconomics [19, p. 38]. However, as often happens, the replicated error resulted in the introduction of this term being ascribed to another researcher, E.N. Luttwak (United States), who imbued the term with politological and geostrategic meaning [20, 21]. He believed that the old version of state rivalry is now usually called “geoeconomics.” Luttwak relies on his geographical studies on former military and geostrategic terminology, which came from the geopolitical tradition. In particular, he writes that, “in geopolitical competition, the law of power shares roles as in wartime. The winners receive a very advantageous and leading role for themselves, while the losers are limited to domestic production only if their domestic market is sufficiently deep” [20]. In addition, he made a noticeable contribution to the genesis of geoeconomics as an independent scientific trend. B.S. Babić (Serbia) notes that, on the one hand, in separating geoeconomics from geopolitics, Luttwak pays attention to the growing importance of economic issues in international relations not only for commercial reasons, and, on the other hand, he proves that geoeconomics has its own object and method that separate it from geopolitics [18, p. 30].

At the third stage of development of geoeconomics in the 1980s onward, researchers in different countries made their own additions to geoeconomic ideas. For example, M. Foucher (1997), proceeding from Clausewitz’s postulates of geostrategy (early 19th century), held that geoeconomics appeared where usual war was impossible. Mamadu (1999) stresses that, in geoeconomics, states compete for economic power and only a little for territorial power (cited from [18]). Their concepts have not departed far from Luttwak’s basic ideas. The position of Italian geoeconomists C. Jean and P. Savona is well known: geoeconomics is economic geopolitics coming to replace, at least in industrially developed countries, the predominantly military geopolitics of the past [10]. They stress the geopolitical basis of geoeconomics and define it as a discipline that studies politics and strategies to improve the competitiveness of states that remain key elements of the international system under current conditions (cited from [28]). In this connection, noteworthy is the thesis that, in order to keep a national economy under conditions of international competition, it is necessary not only to protect it, but also keep it ready to counter strikes from competitors. In order to win, there is no need for imprudent isolation; on the contrary, competent openness and support for strong and promising producers, instead of weak and uncompetitive producers, are necessary [28, p. 38].

For example, this thesis is violated in Russia; a strong producer has to survive independently, competing with transnational corporations, and a weak producer continues to lose its competitiveness against the background of government support (recall the Russian automobile manufacturers AVTOVAZ and UAZ).

Jean and Savona stressed that military power lost its traditional role, which determined the hierarchy of states and which was the main instrument of geopolitics. They note that geoeconomics has become the main parameter of international order after the collapse of the global bipolar system [10]. Agreeing with this statement, we still insist that geoeconomics became an important factor of international relations not after the collapse of the bipolar system but already much earlier, in the 1940s—1950s. We should state that the Wehrmacht military machine had run against the colossal geoeconomic potential of the Soviet Union and was unable to conquer it. This potential, created during the war years and amplified in the 1950s—1970s, ensures the implementation of the Russian Federation’s foreign policy now in market conditions. As is known, the US economic power largely increased in the years of the First World War against a background of boosted industrial development. However, it reached its prime in the 1940s—1950s with the rapid advent of advanced industries oriented at meeting the needs of the army and the navy, including lend-lease deliveries.

P. Lorot has played a large role in the creation of geoeconomic ideas [29, 30]. Following Luttwak, he thinks that relations between developed countries depend on economic competition, which replaced military conflicts. Nevertheless, the number of military conflicts after 1991 is only growing. They are still predetermined by both the geopolitical and economic interests of the most powerful country—the United States—which in the 1990s and 2000s actively interfered in the domestic affairs of various countries (Iraq, 2003; Somalia, 1993; Afghanistan, 2001; Libya, 2011; Syria, 2012–2013; and so on).

Lorot thinks that the state plays a key role in entering foreign markets and gaining technological superiority. The state plays a key role in each geoeconomic strategy [30, p. 16]. The state’s role is especially expressive in implementing Russia’s energy policy, which “is one of the pivotal activities of the state and its business structures oriented toward achieving the goals of both general economic (ensuring profit and securing a strong standing in the market) and geoeconomic nature” [15]. In this respect, Russia’s strategy should be aimed at reaching “the top priority of foreign economic policy—an increase in Russia’s role in ensuring global energy security and the improvement of its standing in the hydrocarbon market” [27].

The French geoeconomists, unlike Luttwak, proceed from the fact that geoeconomics today represents