Russia: An Imperialist Power or a “Non-Hegemonic Empire in Gestation”? A reply to the Argentinean economist Claudio Katz An Essay (with 8 Tables)

written by Michael Pröbsting | August 11, 2022

Ukraine military situation as of August 4, 2022.

Claudio Katz, a progressive professor at the University of Buenos Aires, has published a four-part essay under the title “*Is Russia an imperialist power?*”.[1] Katz is a member of “*Economistas de Izquierda*“ (Economists of the Left) and is well-known not only in Argentina but the whole of Latin America. The central thesis of his essay is that Russia is not an imperialist power but rather “*a semi-periphery country which is harassed by the United States*” and “*a non-hegemonic empire in gestation*.”

I consider such a view as wrong. Since the year 2001 I have defended the thesis that Russia is an imperialist power. This was part of my efforts to elaborate the Marxist theory of imperialism against the backdrop of the developments in the early 21st century.[2] As I am one of the few advocates of the Russia is imperialist thesis to whom Katz refers in his essay, I feel obliged to respond to his criticism.

However, there are more important reasons for such a reply. For many years, the discussion of whether Russia (and China) is imperialist or not was treated by most socialists as a rather abstract-theoretical issue. In fact, it did not provoke much interest. However, this has changed since 24 February when Putin invaded Ukraine. Now many people recognize that this is a theoretical issue with important practical consequences for the political strategy and tactics of socialists!

A critical discussion of Katz’s essay is particularly important because his concept fails to grasp the essential contradictory dynamic of imperialism today. Furthermore, it objectively serves to whitewash Russian imperialism and to justify refusal to defend oppressed countries (like the Ukraine). This is not accidental since, as a matter of fact, nearly all deniers of Russia’s imperialist character fail to defend the Ukraine against Putin’s invasion!

At this place, we will limit ourselves to respond to the most important arguments put forward by Claudio Katz. For a more complete presentation of our understanding of the Marxist theory of

imperialism as well as of our economic, political and military analysis of Russian imperialism we refer to the literature in the footnote above.

The "unipolar world order": a flawed theory of imperialism

Katz's refusal to recognize the imperialist class character of Russia is rooted in his flawed theory of imperialism. As it is well-known, Lenin elaborated the classic Marxist theory of imperialism in which characterizes this system as a specific historic stage of capitalism in which a small number of monopolies and Great Powers dominate and exploit the rest of the world.[3]

Claudio Katz claims that this classic Marxist theory of imperialism is no longer valid. Instead, he advocates an understanding of imperialism as a system which is dominated by a single core (the U.S. with its subordinated allies) to which all other parts of the world are related as periphery or semi-periphery.

"*In the 1914-18 war, a plurality of powers with comparable forces clashed in a scenario far removed from the current stratified supremacy exercised by the Pentagon. Contemporary imperialism operates around a structure headed by the United States and supported by alter-imperial and co-imperial partners in Europe, Asia and Oceania. NATO articulates this conglomerate under Washington's orders in major conflicts with its non-hegemonic rivals in Moscow and Beijing. Neither of these two powers are on the same level as the dominant imperialism. Differences with the situation at the beginning of the 20th century are large.*"

"*The existence of a dominant bloc led by the United States is the main characteristic of the contemporary imperial system. The world's largest power is the greatest exponent of the new model and the clear manager of the apparatus of international coercion that secures domination by the wealthy. A diagnosis of existing imperialism passes through an evaluation of the United States, which concentrates all the tensions of this apparatus.*"[4]

We could go on and provide many more similar statements, but we think this is sufficient to illustrate Katz's definition of imperialism today. This concept is very similar to the discourse of the so-called "*world-system theory*" of Immanuel Wallerstein and others who characterize modern imperialism as a "*unipolar world order*" dominated by the U.S. A similar analysis is also shared by many Stalinist and Bolivarian parties as well as by ideologues of Russian and Chinese imperialism like the journalist Pepe Escobar or Putin's long-time adviser Sergey Glazyev.[5] They all advocate that such an "unipolar" imperialist system should be replaced by a "*multipolar world order*" which supposedly would not have an imperialist character.

We shall note in passing that as a doctrine, such a concept is not new. Karl Kautsky elaborated a similar theory already in 1914 – the so-called theory of "ultra-imperialism". He claimed that all monopolies could unite to a single cartel and, hence, end the inter-imperialist rivalry between the Great Powers without replacing the capitalist mode of production.

Such a theory of imperialism was wrong in the past and is wrong today. It massively underestimates the fundamental contradictions of capitalism. Capitalism is a political and economic system which rests on private property of means of production as well as on nation states. It has always been characterized by competition between capitalists as well as rivalry between states in general and, in particular, between Great Powers. Lenin, Bukharin and other Marxist theoreticians did show that concentration of capital had reached such a point at the end of the 19th century that capitalism was transformed into a system dominated by monopolies which were related to a few Great Powers. Marxists characterize this stage of capitalism as "imperialism".

Of course, the imperialist world system underwent various changes and transformations as Marxists pointed out in the past decades. But its very essence – monopolies and Great Powers and the contradictions between these – remain the characteristic features of the capitalist world system today.

Hence, Katz's conception of imperialism is mistaken in its fundamental assumptions. There is no U.S.-dominated or transnational core of all monopolies which would jointly control the world economy. Neither does a U.S.-dominated or transnational core of imperialist states exist which would jointly control the rest of the world.

Likewise, such a theory underestimates the contradictions between the monopolies and Great Powers of the so-called core. It is true that the imperialist powers were forced to collaborate more closely with each other in the period 1945-91. This was because of the existence of a large bloc of Stalinist states led by the USSR. In this case, the systemic rivalry between the imperialist powers and the Stalinist degenerated workers states superseded or pushed back *to a certain degree* the contradictions between the imperialists.

But even at that time, Great Power rivalry continued to exist – just think about the conflict between the U.S., UK and France in the time of the so-called Suez Crisis in 1956 or when de Gaulle decided to withdraw France from NATO's integrated military command. In any case, since the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and the emergence of Russia and China as new imperialist powers, the Great Power rivalry has become once more a dominant feature of world politics.

In fact, the U.S. is no longer the absolute hegemon already since some time. As we demonstrated in our works, in all essential areas of the capitalist world economy – in the production of capitalist value, world trade, the top monopolies and billionaires, etc. – the U.S. is either challenged by China or has been even surpassed. In any case, while the U.S. remains a strong power, it is not dominating the world anymore. (In fact, this was the case only during a very short period after 1991!)

This development of decline of U.S. imperialism and the rise of its Eastern rivals has taken place on the political, economic, and military level as we have demonstrated in our works on the basis of a broad range of actual facts and figures. At this place, we will limit ourselves to provide a small selection. These figures demonstrate that the U.S., while still a strong power, is no longer a dominating force in the world economy. (See Tables 1-4.)

Table 1: Top 10 Countries by Share of Global Manufacturing Output, 2018 [6]	
China	28.4
U.S.	16.6
Japan	7.2
Germany	5.8
South Korea	3.3
India	3.0
Italy	2.3
France	1.9
UK	1.8
Mexico	1.5

Table 2: Top Countries by Share of World Exports of Goods in 2020 [7]

China (incl. Hong Kong)	14.7% (17.8%)
USA	8.1%
Germany	7.8%
Netherlands	3.8%
Japan	3.6%
South Korea	2.9%
France	2.8%
Italy	2.8%
Belgium	2.4%

Table 3: Top 5 Countries with Companies Listed in the Fortune Global 500 Companies (2020) [8]

Rank	Country	Companies	Share (in%)
1	China (without Taiwan)	124	24.8%
2	United States	121	24.2%
3	Japan	53	10.6%
4	France	31	6.2%
5	Germany	27	5.4%

Table 4. China and U.S. Lead the List of Global Billionaires, 2021 [9]

	Number	Share
China	1,058	32.8%
U.S.	696	21.6%

We shall note, in passing, that these figures demonstrate the fact that China plays a leading role in the capitalist world economy in all relevant sectors. This makes Katz's claim – that "*capitalism [in China, MP] is present but does not yet dominate the economy*" – an absurd idea.[10] How can a power play a leading role in the capitalist world economy *without* being fully capitalist?! However, dealing with this issue would go beyond the limits of this essay and we refer interested readers to our respective works.[11]

"Non-Hegemonic Empire in Gestation" – a mistaken concept

This brings us to the new category – "*non-hegemonic empire in gestation*" – which Claudio Katz invents in order to character Russia as a rising power. "*Russia is not part of the dominant imperialism, nor is it an alter-imperial or co-imperial partner within that network. But it carries out policies of domination through intense military activity. It is globally hostile to the United States, but adopts oppressive behaviours within its own radius. How can we define this contradictory profile?*

The concept of non-hegemonic empire in gestation synthesises this multiplicity of features. The non-hegemonic component is determined by the country's positioning in terms of the centres of imperial power. Like China, it is the object of systematic harassment by NATO. This harassment places Russia outside the main circuit of domination in the 21st century. The imperial element is emerging in embryonic form. Capitalist restoration in a power with centuries of oppressive practices has already been consummated, but indications of imperial policies remain solely as possibilities. The term empire-in-formation highlights a status that is incomplete and, at the same time, congruent with the return of capitalism."

It is certainly correct to point out that Russia is economically weaker than the U.S. as well as China. However, Moscow commands considerable military strength, is a veto-wielding members in the UN Security Council and a key player in world politics. (See Tables 5 and 6.)

Table 5. World Nuclear Forces, 2020 [12]

Country	Deployed Warheads	Other Warheads	Total Inventory
China	—	350	350
USA	1800	3750	5550
Russia	1625	4630	6255
France	280	10	290
UK	120	105	225

Table 6: The World's 10 Top Exporters of Weapons, 2016-20 [13]

Rank	Exporter	Global Share (%)
1	U.S.	37.0%
2	Russia	20.0%
3	France	8.2%
4	Germany	5.5%
5	China	5.2%

The problem with the category of a "*non-hegemonic empire in gestation*" is related to Katz's flawed understanding of the nature of imperialism. Since he does not recognize the contradictions between monopolies and Great Powers as fundamental for modern capitalism, he can only recognize the strongest power in the past historic period (i.e. the U.S.) as imperialist. All other are either not imperialist or only imperialist in so far as they are allied with the U.S. Hence, new Great Powers – like Russia and China – can not be considered as imperialist. It is a tautological logic.

However, as a matter of fact, modern capitalism was always uneven in its development. Hence, Great Powers have never been equal. There always existed stronger and weaker powers. They were in rivalry against each other, created alliances with some, threatened others and sometimes waged wars – either for the conquest of colonies or against each other. Some have been relatively strong in the economic but weak on the military level (e.g. smaller Western European states, Germany and Japan after 1945). Others were relatively strong in the military but weak on the economic level (e.g. Russia, Austria-Hungary, Japan or Italy before 1917 resp. 1945).

In addition, these Great Powers had quite different positions in world politics. Britain and France did possess large colonial empires. Germany and the U.S. had only relatively small colonial possessions and Austria-Hungary had none (if we leave aside the internal colonies). Between the years 1919 and 1938 Germany did not posses any colonies. In fact, in 1933 till 1938 Berlin was focused to get back German territories which it lost as a result of its defeat in World War I.

We have discussed these historical analogies in more details somewhere else and will therefore limit ourselves at this place to demonstrate this argument with a few facts.[14] (See Tables 7 and 8.)

Table 7: Relative GDP per capita and relative levels of industrialization in 1913 [15]

Country	Relative GDP Per Capita	Relative Level of Industriali-zation
Britain	100	100
France	81	51
Germany	77	74
Austria	62	29
Italy	52	23
Spain	48	19
Russia	29	17

Table 8: Great Powers' Share in Industrial Production, Trade, and Capital Export, 1913 [16]

	Industrial Production	World Trade	Overseas Investment
Great Britain	14%	15%	41%
United States	36%	11%	8%
Germany	16%	13%	13%
France	6%	8%	20%

If one accepts the methodology of Claudio Katz, we wonder which Great Power could have been recognized as imperialist before 1914 resp. before 1939? Is it not the case, that if we follow Katz's theory, Marxists could not have characterized backward Russia, Japan or Austria-Hungary as imperialist at that time?! And would Germany before 1938/39 not have constituted a prime example for a "*non-hegemonic empire in gestation*"?!

Katz argues that Russia and China are challenging the dominant forces of imperialism (i.e. the U.S. and its allies). But since they have not replaced the U.S., they are not already "hegemonic" and hence, he argues, they can not be considered as imperialist. But this concept is absurd. It effectively allows to characterize a power as imperialist only in the case that it did already decisively defeat the hegemonic imperialist power. This means only the strongest Great Power – and nobody else – can be considered as imperialist! One wonders, how can a power be able to seriously challenge a hegemon if it is not already imperialist?!

By defining imperialism as a system which is dominated by a single core (the U.S.), Katz misses the essential features of an imperialist state. Of course, it is important to recognize the changes which have taken place in the political and economic features of the imperialist world system. Most countries which were colonies in the past, have become semi-colonies by now. Hence, the dominance of imperialist powers usually takes rather place indirectly and only in certain cases directly, i.e. via military means. However, what has remained is the essential characteristic of imperialist powers – that they dominate world economy and politics and that they oppress and exploit, directly or indirectly, other nations. Lenin summarized his definition of an imperialist state in one of his writings on imperialism in 1916 in the following way: "*… imperialist Great Powers (i.e., powers that oppress a whole number of nations and enmesh them in dependence on finance capital, etc.)…"[17]*

Based on such an understanding, we have developed in past works the following definition: *An imperialist state is a capitalist state whose monopolies and state apparatus have a position in the world order where they first and foremost dominate other states and nations. As a result, they gain extra-profits and other economic, political and/or military advantages from such a relationship based on super-exploitation and oppression.*

Imperialism as aggressive-militarist foreign policy?

Katz's conception of imperialism results in the fact that it does not consider monopolies, oppression and super-exploitation as the essential features of this system but rather aggressive-militarist foreign policy. (We note in passing that this is another similarity with Karl Kautsky).

"*This decisive fact is omitted in evaluations centred on the features extracted from Lenin's recipe. Assessing the presence of economic ingredients — emphasised in this classic formula — is useless nowadays when it comes to issuing a verdict on whether a country belongs to the imperial circle. To work out this status, foreign interventions, external geopolitical-military actions and tensions with the war apparatus headed by the US must be analysed in greater detail. Such inquiry must privilege facts and not just expansionist statements. Imperialism is not a discourse. It is a policy of systematic external intervention. Using this criterion we have argued that China is not an imperialist power. In the case of Russia, we propose the concept of non-hegemonic empire in gestation.*"

"*Renewed Marxist theory offers the most consistent characterisation of 21st century imperialism. It underlines the pre-eminence of a coercive military apparatus, headed by the United States and cohered through NATO, to ensure domination of the periphery and harass rival non-hegemonic formations such as Russia and China. Those powers feature only embryonic or limited imperial modalities and carry out primarily defensive actions.*" [18]

There are several flaws with such a definition. First, it means that states which do not (or rarely) implement such an aggressive-militarist foreign policy could not be considered as imperialist. This would effectively exclude Germany and Japan from the ranks of imperialist powers (not to speak about smaller Western European states). And did France really make more military interventions abroad in the past decade than Russia?!

Is it really true that Russia "*carries out primarily defensive actions*"? What exactly are Russian troops "defending" in Syria, in Libya or Mali? Or in Kazakhstan in January 2022?

Russia – a semi-periphery country harassed by NATO?

Since Katz reduces imperialism to the U.S. and its allies, he denies the imperialist character of Russia. Not only this, but he also effectively presents Russia as a victim of imperialism which supposedly is mainly defending itself.

"[Russia] is a semi-periphery country, located in the intermediate link of the global division of labour. (…) Russia is not part of the club of powers that command world capitalism. Structural gaps remain between it and developed countries when it comes to every indicator of living standards, average consumption or size of the middle class. But its distance from the economies of Africa and Eastern Europe is equally significant. It remains in the semi-periphery, as far away from Germany and France as it is from Albania and Cambodia."

"Russia is harassed, with the same brazenness that the Pentagon exhibits towards all countries that ignore its demands. But the United States is confronted in this case with a rival that is not Iraq or Afghanistan, nor one that it can mistreat as it does in Africa or Latin America. Russia is a capitalist country that has rebuilt its international weight, but until the incursion in Ukraine did not have the general features of an imperial aggressor."

"Moreover, an imperial system is now operating in the face of a certain variety of non-hegemonic alliances, which only demonstrate imperial tendencies in gestation. The dominant nucleus attacks and the formations in construction defend themselves. Unlike in the past century, there is no battle between equally offensive counterparts."[19]

As a matter of fact, Great Powers always "harass" each other. No doubt, the U.S. and its allies have worked hard to push back Russia's position in its traditional spheres of influence. But one could equally argue that Russia is "harassing" the U.S. and Western Europe in its traditional spheres of influence. See Moscow's advance in Syria, Libya, and other Middle East countries. See the replacement of French troops by Russians in Mali. See the Kremlin's good relations with Nicaragua, Venezuela and Cuba. The category "harassment" is senseless in a Marxist discussion about Great Power rivalry.

In this context, Katz also suggests some kind of supra-historical relationship between Putin's Russia and the USSR and he states that the aggressive foreign policy of the U.S. against Russia would be also motivated by this.

"US ruthlessness against Russia includes one touch of inertia and another of historical memory of the experience of the Soviet Union. The goal of demolishing the country that incubated the first socialist revolution of the 20th century is a reactionary one that has survived even after the disappearance of the USSR. (…) the contemporary aggression against Russia includes traces of revenge against the Soviet Union."

It does not need much explanation among Marxists that there exists a gulf between the USSR – a deformed workers state based on planned property relations – and Putin's imperialist Russia. Socialists had to defend the former – but not the latter – against NATO.

Unfortunately, this statement also betrays a reactionary tendency of mixing anti-Americanism with Great Russian or Panslavic chauvinism. Of course, socialists must not support either side in a conflict between the U.S. and Russia. But if the U.S. is "demolished" as a state – as a result of such a conflict – we would certainly not consider this as a "reactionary" event. The same is the case if this would happen with Russia – even more so as the latter is a reactionary Empire where many national minorities are oppressed. As a matter of fact, it is only Great Russian chauvinists as well as many Stalinists and Bolivarians who take such a position as Katz states.

Our critical interpretation is also supported by another shameful statement in the essay under discussion. *"Russia is NATO's favourite target. The Pentagon is hell bent on undermining all the defensive devices of its great adversary. It seeks the disintegration of Moscow and came close to achieving it in the Yeltsin era. (…) The first step was the destruction of Yugoslavia, with the*

consequent conversion of an old Serbian province into the ghostly republic of Kosova. This enclave now guards the energy corridors of US multinationals in the vicinity of Russia."

This statement is outrageous in various ways. The formulation "*the disintegration of Moscow*" reflects the identification of the state "Russian Federation" with its ethnic Russian core. The formulation "*destruction of Yugoslavia*" suggests that Katz opposed the desire of the non-Serbian people for national self-determination. And, most outrageously, he characterizes "*ghostly (!) republic of Kosova*" as an "*old Serbian province.*" As a political activist who visited Serbia and Kosova several times during the wars in the 1990s, I must say that this is shameful violation of historical truth and a vulgar expression of reactionary Great Russian and Great Serbian chauvinism. As a matter of fact, Kosova is definitely not an "*old Serbian province.*" It was conquered by the Serbian Kingdom in 1912 against the will of the majority native Albanian population. Throughout the whole period until today it had a majority Albanian population who never wanted to be part of Serbia! It is an "*old Serbian province*" only in the mystic phantasy world of Great Russian and Great Serbian chauvinism![20]

Dangerous political consequences

It is true that Katz expresses clear political criticism against the Putin regime. He also states that he considers the invasion in the Ukraine as unjustified. But it should not go unmentioned that he also does not say a single word of support for the national war of defense of the Ukrainian people – something which is a key duty for socialists today.[21]

Worse, while he does not explicitly support Russia, he provides theoretical justification for such a position by claiming that it is not Russia but rather the U.S. resp. NATO which is the mainly responsible for Putin's invasion!

"*This approach forgets that the Ukrainian conflict did not have an economic origin. It was provoked by the US, which assigned itself the right to encircle Russia with missiles while negotiating Kyiv's accession to NATO. Moscow sought to neutralise this harassment and Washington ignored the legitimate security claims of its opponent.*"

In another article about the Ukraine War, Katz states: "*The U.S. commands the aggressor side and Russia is the side which is affected by the missile siege.*"[22]

This is not far from openly siding with the "victim" of "NATO aggression", i.e. Russian imperialism. It is hardly necessary to point out to the absurd logic of such statements. Surely, the U.S. and NATO are reactionary imperialist forces. But it was exactly such arguments which the U.S. itself did put forward against the USSR when the latter stationed missiles in Cuba in 1962. And would we call the U.S. a "victim" if Russia stations missiles in Venezuela or Nicaragua in the next years? By the way, a brief look at a world map shows that NATO has not "encircled" Russia but that it has come closer to Moscow's borders in the West.

Another statement of Katz which raises our suspicion about his concealed semi-sympathies for Russian imperialism is his positive appraisal of the electoral success of the Stalinist KPRF. „*But the promising results of the left in the last elections introduce a quota of hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel. The Communist Party (KPRF) achieved its best result since 1999 and consolidated its position as the second force in the Chamber of Deputies. This organisation has oscillated between supporting and criticising the government, but has started to open up towards radical currents inserted in the social struggle. These currents integrated activists into their lists of candidates, modifying the tone of the last electoral campaign.*"

Is it possible that Katz is not aware of the fact that Zyuganov's party is not so much "*oscillating*" but

that it has been a whip of Great Russian chauvinism and its reactionary wars?! Has he not heard that the KPRF full-heartedly supported the intervention of 3,000 Russian troops in Kazakhstan in January in order to smash the popular uprising? And does Katz really not know that this party has enthusiastically supported Putin's invasion since the first minute – it even introduced the crucial bill in the State Duma to formally recognize the "People's Republic" in the Lugansk and Donetsk which served as a pretext for the war![23] As a matter of fact, there are even a number of Stalinist parties (the international network around the Greek KKE) which sharply denounce the KPRF for its support for Great Russian chauvinism! But Katz presents this social-imperialist party as a "*light at the end of the tunnel*"! This is impermissible for an internationalist and anti-imperialist!

Conclusion

We shall summarize our critical discussion of Katz's theory of imperialism in the form of a few theses.

1) In our opinion, Katz is wrong to reject Lenin's theory of imperialism and to replace it with a conception influenced by the so-called "world-system theory". He divides the world into a core (the U.S. and its allies) which dominates the rest of the world (the semi-periphery and the periphery).

2) Such a concept ignores the nature of capitalism which rests on private property and national states and which, therefore, is characterized by the domination of the world by a small number of capitalist monopolies and Great Powers. Imperialism is not a single core which dominates the world, but it is a global system which is characterized by the contradictions between the dominating – and, at the same time, rivaling among themselves – monopolies and Great Powers.

3) Katz's concept of a "*non-hegemonic empire in gestation*" is theoretically flawed and its application for Russia is misleading. His refusal to characterize China as imperialist and even more so his statement that "*capitalism in China is present but does not yet dominate the economy*" – all this has no relation to reality. There have been always stronger and weaker Great Powers, more advanced and more backward, etc. But they must be all considered as imperialist – not only the strongest one! Furthermore, it must be taken into account that China has already surpassed the U.S. on several levels.

4) We consider it as mistaken to characterize imperialism primarily as aggressive-militarist foreign policy. It is more appropriate to use the following definition: An imperialist state is a capitalist state whose monopolies and state apparatus have a position in the world order where they first and foremost dominate other states and nations. As a result, they gain extra-profits and other economic, political and/or military advantages from such a relationship based on super-exploitation and oppression.

5) Likewise, we reject Katz's characterization of Russia as a semi-periphery country harassed by NATO. Effectively, he presents Russia as a victim of imperialism which supposedly is only defending itself. As a matter of fact, Great Power always "harass" each other. Socialists have no sympathy for one or the other.

6) Katz's theory of imperialism and his concept of Russia as a semi-periphery and a "*non-hegemonic empire in gestation*" has also dangerous political consequences. While he expresses political criticism against the Putin regime, he does not support the Ukraine. In fact, he provides theoretical justification for supporting Moscow by claiming that it is not Russia but rather the U.S. resp. NATO which is mainly responsible for Putin's invasion!

We conclude by emphasizing that Marxists consider theory not as a purpose in itself but as a guide

to action. The precondition for this is that the theory is capable of explaining the reality and its contradictions. Katz's theory of the unipolar world order fails to grasp the nature of the inter-imperialist rivalry. As a result, it is misleading as it opens the door for whitewashing of Russian and Chinese imperialism – the main challengers of the Western powers. Translated into the language of politics, such a theory objectively provides cover for social-imperialist support, or at least justification, for the reactionary policy of the Kremlin and Beijing.

Notes

[1] Claudio Katz: Is Russia an imperialist power? Part I; Part II; Part III; Part IV. This essay has been reproduced on various websites. The Spanish original can be also viewed on Katz's website (https://katz.lahaine.org). All quotes are from this essay if not indicated otherwise.

[2] For my elaboration of the Marxist theory of imperialism (in English language) I refer to two books: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*, RCIT Books, Vienna 2019; *The Great Robbery of the South,* 2013. Also: "Great Power Rivalry in the Early Twenty-first Century," *New Politics,* Vol. XVIII, No. 3, Whole Number 67, Summer 2021. See here for a bibliography of my works on Russian imperialism.

[3] See e.g. V. I. Lenin: Imperialism and the Split in Socialism (1916); in: CW Vol. 23, pp. 105-106

[4] Claudio Katz, "The imperial system in crisis," Links International Journal of Socialist Renewal, 6 June 2022. This essay has been reproduced on various websites.

[5] See e.g. "Events Like These Only Happen Once Every Century," Interview with Sergey Glazyev, March 27, 2022; Pepe Escobar, "Russia's Sergey Glazyev introduces the new global financial system," April 14 2022; Katharina Bluhm, "Russia's conservative counter-movement: genesis, actors, and core concepts," in: Katharina Bluhm and Mihai Varga (Editors), *New Conservatives in Russia and East Central Europe*, Routledge, New York 2019, pp. 25-53

[6] Felix Richter: These are the top 10 manufacturing countries in the world, World Economic Forum, 25.2.2020, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/countries-manufacturing-trade-exports-economics/; output measured on a value-added basis in current U.S. dollars.

[7] Alessandro Nicita and Carlos Razo, "China: The rise of a trade titan," UNCTAD, 27 April 2021.

[8] Fortune Global 500, August 2020, (the figures for the share is our calculation).

[9] Hurun Global Rich List 2021, 2.3.2021.

[10] See Claudio Katz, Deciphering China, Part II.

[11] For a bibliography of my works on Chinese imperialism, see here.

[13] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: *SIPRI Yearbook 2021*. Armaments, Disarmament and International Security, Summary, p. 15.

[14] See e.g. pp. 94-101 in the above-mentioned book *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*. See also my Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power, Aug. 2014.

[15] François Crouzet, *A History of the European Economy, 1000–2000*, University Press of Virginia,

2001, p. 148.

[16] The column with the figures for industrial production and world trade are taken from Jürgen Kuczynski: Studien zur Geschichte der Weltwirtschaft, Berlin 1952, p. 35 and p. 43. The column with the figures for overseas investment trade is taken from Paul Bairoch and Richard Kozul-Wright: *Globalization Myths: Some Historical Reflections on Integration, Industrialization and Growth in the World Economy*, UNCTAD Discussion Papers No. 113, 1996, p. 12.

[17] V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism" (1916); in: LCW Vol. 23, p. 34.

[18] Claudio Katz, *The imperial system in crisis*.

[19] Ibid.

[20] See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting, "Stalinists Support Serbian Expansionism against Kosovo Albanians," 13 Dec. 2018.

[21] See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting, "The Fundamental Meaning of the Ukraine War. The current events are a key test for revolutionary strategy in the coming period," 25 May 2022.

[22] Claudio Katz, Duas confrontações na Ucrânia, 04/03/2022, (our translation).

[23] See e.g. the pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting, "Putin's Poodles (Apologies to All Dogs). Putins Pudel. The pro-Russian Stalinist parties and their arguments in the current NATO-Russia Conflict," 9 Feb. 2022; by the same author: "Servants of Two Masters. Stalinism and the New Cold War between Imperialist Great Powers in East and West," 10 July 2021; see also: "'Socialism' a la Putin and Zyuganov. On a telling dialogue between the Stalinist party leader and the Russian President," 13 July 2022.