

Russia in the Epicenter of Geopolitical Turbulence: Signs of Eventual Domination



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Abstract. The paper investigates a set of factors contributing to Russia's transformation into a new world capital accumulation center in the next two to three decades. The novelty of our approach lies in the fact that we consider the current phase of global geopolitical turbulence through the prism of the capital accumulation cycles theory in order to determine the vector of future development of the world economic system. We dig into the topic by forming a comprehensive picture of Russia's potential advantages that are quite versatile. Thus, we look into the following phenomena: geographical (ice decline in the Russian Arctic; Russia evolving from a land power into a sea power; natural resources endowment), philosophical (dialectical confrontation of homogeneity and heterogeneity of the world system), historical (syndrome of false contender for the role of a world capital accumulation center; passionarity of the ethnos), political (parade of sovereignties and imperial revanchists, diffusion of the nuclear syndrome, legitimization of the struggle against political and managerial opposition), political economy (cycles of capital accumulation; world capital accumulation center; Russia's economy joining the world system of capitalism), economic (effectiveness of international economic sanctions; general-purpose technologies; industry cycles; regulatory and technology triads), demographic (demographic curse), cultural (openness of the Russian Civilization to immigrants, its civilizing experience in relation to other peoples, high civilizational absorption), military (latent and active phases of hybrid warfare; hybrid warfare paradox), factors and management effects (autonomous and authoritarian management, hegemon and leader models). This helped us to reconstruct the system of checks and balances formed around the Russian Federation in

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the hybrid warfare between the West and the Non-West. We deepen the analysis by providing our own interpretation of sea states and land states. The main conclusion of the research is that Russia possesses unique geopolitical advantages that allow it to successfully counteract the Collective West and eventually become a new leader of the world economic system.

Key words: geopolitical turbulence, world capital accumulation center, competition, war, world economic system.

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Introduction

The reformatting of the global geopolitical space (GGPS), which started in 2022 following the beginning of Russia’s special military operation (SMO) in Ukraine, is in full swing. As a result of this process, a new world capital accumulation center (WCAC) should emerge as a leader among the most powerful states of the present time. Earlier we provided a detailed substantiation of the idea that currently there are two actual contenders for this role, Russia and China (Balatsky, 2022). Moreover, out of the two, Russia has better chances to become leader due to a number of circumstances. We can argue that this very issue will be a major political intrigue of the decade. Thus, the goal set in the article is to provide a comprehensive insight into the factors and circumstances that allow us to consider Russia as a future WCAC and that provide it with the opportunity to stand at the helm of the Fifth Cycle of Capital Accumulation, which is going to replace the current one.

As it was shown earlier, the ongoing geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the Collective West implies their direct clash during the unfolding Fourth (hybrid) World War (Balatsky, 2022). In the paper, we will try and answer the question about its most likely outcome.

The novelty of our approach consists in the fact that we consider the current phase of global geopolitical turbulence through the prism of the

capital accumulation cycles theory in order to determine the vector of future development of the world economic system; we disclose the topic with the help of the knowledge provided by related sciences.

Genesis of a new potential world capital accumulation center

Russia’s capabilities as a new WCAC can be perceived only in the context of the outbreak of the Fourth World War of a hybrid type. However, let us first dwell upon how legitimate it is to talk about a new WCAC as represented by Russia. The fact arouses very strong doubts. For example, today it is already clear that China, which overtook the United States in terms of GDP (PPP) by 19% in 2021, is gaining the upper hand, while Russia, whose corresponding indicator is 5.7 times less than that of China, is rather an outsider than a future leader¹. However, in this case everything is somewhat more complicated than it seems at first glance.

Suffice it to recall the historical chronology of accumulation cycles according to G. Arrighi: the First Cycle, 1560–1740, Venetian-Genoese (lasted 180 years); the Second Cycle, 1740–1870, Dutch (130 years); the Third Cycle, 1870–1970, British (100 years); the Fourth Cycle, 1970 – present day, American (≈80–85 years) (Arrighi, 2006, pp. 42–49).

¹ See: https://databankfiles.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP_PPP.pdf

The chronology shows that the First Cycle was 1.4 times longer than the Second, and the Second was 1.3 times longer than the Third. If we assume that the reduction rate for an accumulation cycle remains constant, then we can expect that the Fourth Cycle will last 72–77 years, which means that the Fifth Accumulation Cycle will start approximately in 2042–2047. Given the scale of the recent geopolitical inversion, this period may shift to an even later date – beyond 2050. Thus, we have about 30 years ahead, quite a considerable timespan by historical standards. In this regard, without going into unnecessary details, let us recall a number of important historical facts in reverse chronology.

During the Third Accumulation Cycle (1870–1970), 30–50 years before the start of the Fourth Cycle, Germany was the main contender for the role of a new WCAC instead of Great Britain: having lost the struggle for colonies, Germany had its *technological perfectionism* to set against the British power (Arrighi, 2006). This strategy made Germany the world's leading industrial state and helped it to unleash first the First and then the Second World War; but its defeat in both of them put an end to these claims, and the possibilities of becoming a new leader opened up for the United States and the USSR. Fifteen years later, the Soviet Union lost the race that had started, and the United States became the fourth WCAC in the history of the capitalist formation.

During the Second Accumulation Cycle (1740–1870), the years 1796–1815 were marked by the Napoleonic Wars, when for a quarter of a century France, which briefly became a continental empire, was quite persistent in its claims to become a new WCAC. However, in the middle of the accumulation cycle, in 1815, it finally yielded its position to Great Britain.

In the middle of the First Accumulation Cycle (1560–1740), as part of the Eighty Years' War or the so-called Dutch Revolt (1566–1648), a fierce Anglo-Spanish war (1585–1604) was waged,

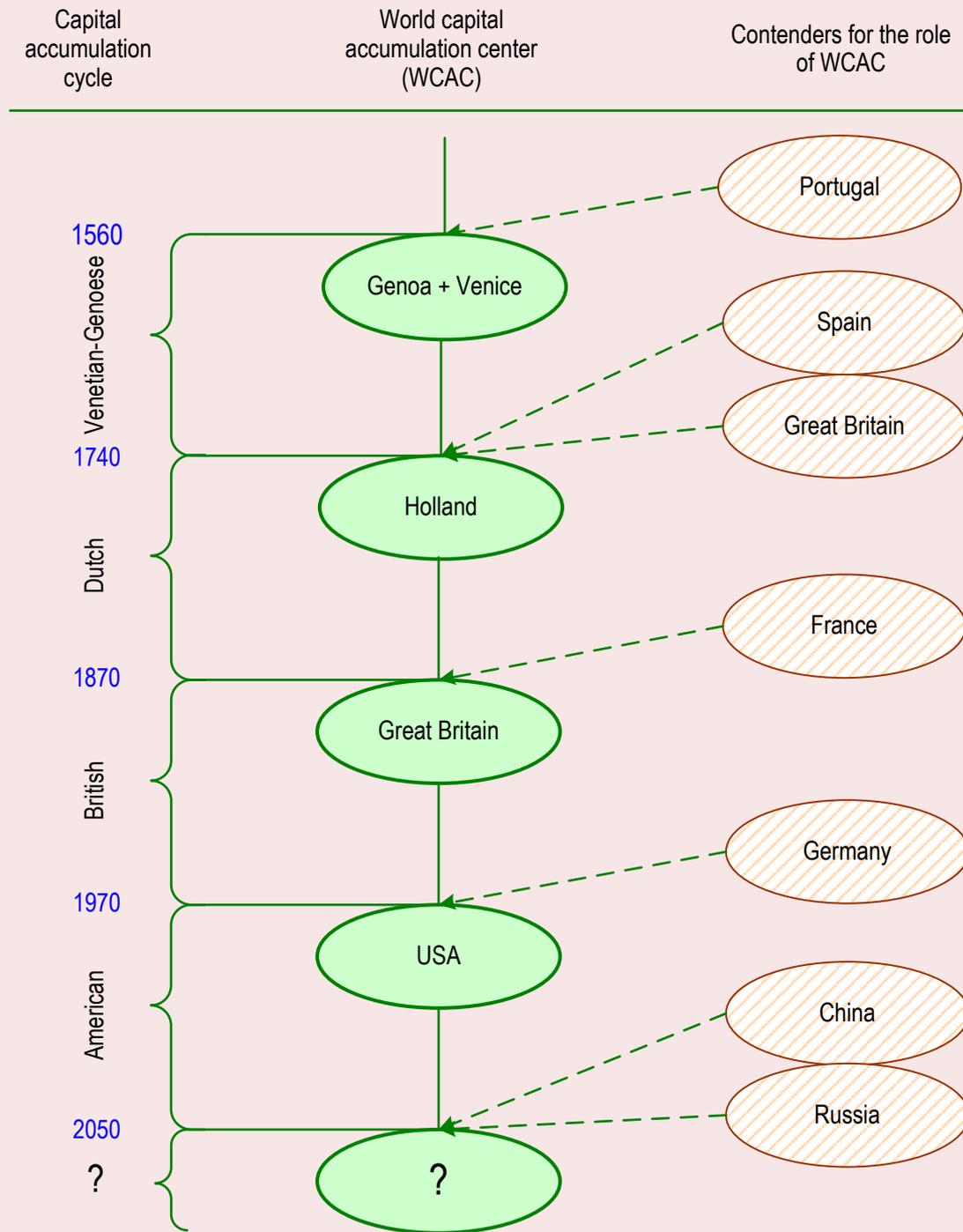
when Spain and Great Britain fought for the right to become a new WCAC. During this period, the Netherlands was under the protectorate of Spain and clearly did not claim to be at the forefront of the world system. It was only by the end of the First Accumulation Cycle that the Netherlands regained its independence, built a system of *warehouse capitalism* and created its own colonial empire with the subsequent displacement of Portugal from its overseas territories.

We can add that even Genoa and Venice, during the struggle for their hegemony, had a tough competition with Portugal, a country that in many ways surpassed these city-states. *Figure 1* shows a stylized chronology of the competition between different countries for becoming the WCAC in the world economic system.

These examples suggest an interesting pattern that can be called the *false contender syndrome*. Its essence consists in the emergence, approximately in the middle of an accumulation cycle, of a state claiming to be a new WCAC, but eventually losing its initial advantages and yielding a leading position to another country. The false contender syndrome requires a very careful approach when determining the global prospects of the world economic system. With regard to the current situation it means that 30 years before the start of the Fifth Accumulation Cycle it is premature to dismiss Russia and give the palm to China, because the situation may change dramatically over the next 20 years, as has already happened in the past. It is possible that China is a false contender today and will lose its leadership privilege in the future. Obviously, at the moment the question remains open.

We should emphasize that the false contender syndrome has a deep historical meaning and this effect itself is by no means accidental. The resulting desire of the social system to maintain an element of *secrecy* regarding the future leader is determined by the logic of intercountry competition. Thus, a contender state becomes the focus of attention

Figure 1. Stylized chart showing the competition of countries for the role of WCAC



for the current WCAC, which, using its gigantic administrative and resource capacities, is able to suppress the emerging political and economic activity in an external jurisdiction and thereby

prolong its own existence. That is why there is almost always some kind of false contender, which occupies the attention of the major players of the GGPS and thereby enables the true contender to

proceed with fewer risks and costs. At the same time, the very process of the emergence and crystallization of new players in the GGPS is largely spontaneous and unconscious: countries are fighting for their existence and are gradually enhancing their power to the level where they can claim a privileged position; the national elite becomes aware of their own global role, as a rule, only when crystallization of the new WCAC is completed.

The rise of Russia as a potential WCAC became obvious only in 2022 after the beginning of the second conflict with Ukraine; whereas in 2014, when the first conflict started, the possibility still seemed incredible. This fact confirms the position according to which the identification of a new WCAC in the context of geopolitical turbulence is a non-trivial task.

Now let us consider the logic of Russia's transformation from an outsider state that lost the Third World War (Balatsky, 2022) into a contender for the role of WCAC. The collapse of the USSR in 1991 led to the formation of a neocolonial political regime in the Russian Federation when the national government had no actual sovereignty. However, the Russian Federation retained its military potential, which still posed a threat of its political revenge. To prevent this, the United States set a strategic course for the final dismemberment of Russia, its demilitarization and transformation into a harmless raw material appendage. It must be said that due to the desire of the United States to preserve its global hegemony the above strategy had no alternative, but the tactical mistakes made by American political circles led to precisely the opposite result.

For example, until 2014, Russia, being entirely under the patronage of the network of emissaries of the West and the United States, was steadily and very surely degenerating technologically, culturally and spiritually. We can reasonably argue that if the established trend were to continue, then by 2030 Russia would most likely either fall apart itself,

or completely lose all ability to resist American pressure from the outside. However, political architects from the United States decided to get the desired result more quickly; thus they moved on to expanding NATO eastward and unleashing military conflicts along Russia's borders. This was supposed to demand additional resources of Russia and finally weaken it. However, in their desire to achieve the goal the United States crossed the line, and in 2014 a virtually hopeless situation arose for the Russian Federation when its military base in Sevastopol was to be dismantled and a NATO (U.S.) base could be established there instead. Russia was cornered and reacted by integrating Crimea and supporting the population in the LPR and DPR. From this moment, there began the Fourth (hybrid) World War between the West, represented by the United States, and the "awakened" Russian Bear (Balatsky, 2022).

We note that modern hybrid warfare involves a *latent* and an *explicit* (active) phase. In 2014–2022, the latent phase of the war unfolded, when limited economic sanctions were imposed against Russia, and Ukraine was being prepared as a springboard for future clashes with it. At the same time, the Russian government was subjected to economic blackmail by the United States that threatened to impose "terrible" sanctions like disconnection from the international financial system and imposition of an embargo on the export of Russian energy resources. Despite this, Russia unfolded military and industrial mobilization, developed and tested new types of weapons. By February 2022, the situation in Ukraine had reached a boiling point, and Russia started a special military operation. From that moment on, the Fourth World War entered an active phase with hot spots in the LPR, the DPR and then throughout Ukraine. In response, the Collective West imposed eight packages of sanctions against Russia, the cumulative scale of which reached its historical maximum. In addition, the United States and European countries provided military aid to

Ukraine against Russia. At that time, Russia finally destroyed its system of neocolonial dependence on the West and turned into a kind of alternative civilization in the times of increased global geopolitical turbulence.

We recall that some political scientists believe, and not without reason, that the events of 2008 in Tskhinvali, followed by the recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, triggered an open confrontation between Russia and the West (Dugin, 2009, p. 235). Back then, there was the first hot collision of the two poles of the GGPS. However, the point of no return had not yet been passed, as was proved by subsequent events when Russia still remained in the orbit of U.S. interests. Of course, there may be different dates of the beginning of the undeclared hybrid Fourth World War; hereinafter we will use the previously proposed date – 2014 (Balatsky, 2022). It was during this period that the reintegration of the Russian World began, and it served as the trigger for the world war. In 2014, Russia's territory extended due to the accession of Crimea, in 2022 – the Lugansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporozhye oblasts; the latter circumstance finally exposes the process of *reintegration of the Russian World* and does not allow the West to accept this fact and let the matter rest.

Today we can say for sure that it was Russia and its SMO in Ukraine that launched the deglobalization of the world system, which allows us to talk about the Russia as a potential WCAC. At the same time, we emphasize once again that we are not implying any determinism. As we have shown above, in the coming years a new contender, who has not yet revealed itself as such, may emerge. Hypothetically, in 3–5 years Iran might join the club of nuclear powers and, possessing an impressive resource base, become the joker in the current MGPP. However, this scenario cannot yet be considered with a certain degree of objectivity, since it has not manifested itself sufficiently enough.

Prospects of the Fourth World War

In accordance with modern war doctrine, its goal is to rebuild the world order on the terms of the winner (Vladimirov, 2018). It is the winner in the world war that will become a new WCAC and the architect of a new global geopolitical configuration. In this regard, a reasonable question arises: is it possible for Russia to win the unfolding Fourth World War?

To answer this question, we should bear in mind that the current war is a war between the West and the Non-West. This is much broader than the confrontation between the United States and Russia. That is why the SMO triggered the formation of global coalitions – Western (USA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, EU countries) and Non-Western (Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, India, etc.). In this regard, from a *system-wide* perspective, the war also acquires the homogeneity/heterogeneity aspect, and therefore the victory of the West will mean the unification of the world according to the Western model, the building of a homogeneous world with the predominance of artificial rather than natural life imperatives. Such an outcome can be considered impossible due to system-wide and philosophical reasons: the world develops only in the context of heterogeneity and contradictions between different subsystems of the GGPS; otherwise, cultural and institutional unification threatens the world with total stagnation and degradation. This means that in the long run, the coalition led by Russia is likely to win. Apparently, it is only a matter of time. It is this aspect of the problem that pushes various countries to create relatively stable anti-American alliances such as Russia-Iran-China and Russia-Iran-Turkey.

The second, *resource-based*, aspect of the war is connected with the inability of the United States to control the whole world, whose dynamism is rapidly increasing – various regional conflicts are multiplying (Israel/Palestine, South Korea/North Korea, Catalonia/Spain, Scotland/England, Serbia/

Kosovo, Taiwan/China, Poland/Germany, etc.). At the same time, on the one hand, the number of participants in *the parade of sovereignties* – Russia, Iran, North Korea, India, China, Turkey, etc. – is growing; on the other hand, the same is taking place with *the parade of imperial revanchists* (Turkey as the former Ottoman Empire, Iran as the Achaemenid Empire, China as the Sinitic Empire, the Russian Federation as the former Russian Empire, Poland as the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, etc.). Almost all these processes unfold in the Eastern Hemisphere, in Eurasia. The United States and the Collective West do not have enough resources to effectively manage these movements; therefore, they will get out of control, which will mean the weakening of the anti-Russian coalition and the defeat of the United States in the current hybrid war. The multitude of issues all over the planet today, six months after the start of the SMO in Ukraine, leads to the waning of the interest of the world community in this event against the background of even more significant conflicts (for example, China/Taiwan).

The third, *intrasystem*, aspect of the war is related to Russia's geo-economic advantages over Western countries. Thus, the West's expectations of Russia's early defeat in Ukraine have failed, as well as their hopes regarding the growth of popular discontent in Russia and the subsequent overthrow of its supreme power. Russia is slowly but surely conducting offensive actions on the Ukrainian front; there has been an obvious popular consolidation inside the country; a significant part of the people are filled with patriotic sentiment; import substitution is expanding; the production that was previously abandoned is being restored, and the impact of trade sanctions on the population has turned out to be mostly insignificant. In the future, these processes may transform into Russia's technological and economic breakthrough, which will finally put to rest all the hopes of its possible defeat.

Moreover, the intrasystem factor has another important dimension: the SMO proved to be extremely helpful in the internal political struggle and is actively used to *mop up* the political and managerial *opposition*. Under ordinary, peaceful conditions, a harsh purge of managerial personnel can be looked upon as an undemocratic maneuver on the part of the authorities that has no ample grounds and may be disapproved by the people; whereas under military conditions, on the contrary, this purge is perceived positively at almost all levels of public life. Given that purges help dismantle the Western network of emissaries inside Russia and increase the effectiveness of economic administration, we can argue that the country is already gaining the upper hand in the hybrid war at this stage.

To what has been said, we can add one more point, which is not quite obvious: Russia does not need a quick victory in the SMO; this contradicts its strategic interests. The fact is that the main problem of the Russian Federation in the previous 32 years was the presence of a restraining effect of the economy on the part of the Western network of emissaries – the so-called *fifth column*. In this sense, the SMO screens and legitimizes the fight against this phenomenon, and since this struggle is of a long-term nature, military actions have to be long enough to have time to completely clean up hostile management networks inside the country before the struggle ends. In peacetime, it is difficult to find an excuse for personnel purges, and in any case this will not be welcomed by the broad strata of the population; martial law radically changes the situation. This is one of the modern *paradoxes of hybrid warfare* – the longer military clashes last, the more purifying is their effect in the internal economic space of the country. So far, the SMO is working in favor of Russia.

We cannot but mention another aspect of the events. The West is gradually raising the stakes in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (supplying

increasingly heavy weapons to Ukraine; turning a blind eye on the bombing of nuclear power plants, etc.), while Russia does not respond to provocations and refrains from destructive military strikes.

Of course, all this does not mean a final verdict regarding Russia's victory in the SMO, even more so in the Fourth World War, and its transformation into the WCAC, but it makes the scenario under consideration very likely.

Prerequisites for the transformation of Russia into the Fifth World Capital Accumulation Center

Previously, some advantages of Russia, allowing it to claim the role of the WCAC, have already been considered (Balatsky, 2022); thus, we will now focus on relatively new facts and aspects of this problem. However, we note beforehand that here and further we substantiate the thesis of *the monocentricity of the GGPS* as opposed to the doctrine of *multipolarity*. The latter should be considered a false or at least outdated theoretical construction. A certain *semblance of multipolarity* arises only during periods of geopolitical turbulence, when the former WCAC weakens, and other states that have gained strength begin to claim this role for themselves. However, this is a kind of *transitional period* in the existence of the GGPS, which sooner or later ends with the emergence of a new WCAC. Given the scale of geopolitical processes, this transition period may last for several decades, but this does not change the essence of the monocentric model according to which the GGPS is organized.

When considering the factors contributing to the country's transformation into a WCAC, we emphasize that the growth rates of GDP and other national economic parameters in this context do not matter; they acquire a certain meaning only when the necessary conditions of *the scale and location* of the country are met.

The presence of passionarity. Using the shrewd terminology of L.N. Gumilyov, we can assert that in order for a country to transform into a new WCAC, its people must have a certain critical

amount of *passionarity* that is manifested in readiness to participate in hot conflicts in order to preserve their cultural identity and civilization (Gumilyov, 2016). The experience of the SMO shows that Russia is ready for the highest (human) sacrifices, while other potential centers have not yet shown themselves in this capacity. For example, on January 3, 2020, as a result of a U.S. missile strike on Baghdad, the commander of the Al-Quds special forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, General Qasem Soleimani, was killed; the strike was carried out by order of American President Donald Trump. Taking into account the fact that Qasem Suleimani was considered the second person in the military and political leadership of Iran, this U.S. action was an undisguised sabotage and political provocation. Although Iranian President Hassan Rouhani promised that "Iran and other countries in the region will take revenge on America", and Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei promised "severe revenge" in response to the murder of an Iranian commander², there was no retaliatory action on the part of Iran. Something similar took place when the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi made a provocative visit to Taiwan on August 2, 2022. The PRC regarded this visit as a violation of its own sovereignty, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that Beijing "will never leave room" for division and interference by external forces, regardless of how the United States "condones Taiwan's independence"; Chinese ambassador to Washington Qin Gang stressed that Beijing's response will be powerful and strong, the Chinese Foreign Ministry confirmed that "the United States will pay the price in case of damage to China's security interests", and the representative of the Chinese Ministry of Defense Tan Kefei promised that "the Chinese

² See: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/03/01/2020/5e0ede4b9a7947639df8729c?>; <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/7460997>; <https://rg.ru/2020/01/16/obratnaia-storona-operacii-likvidacii-pochemu-ssha-ubili-kasema-sulejmani.html>

military will never sit idly by and, of course, will take decisive measures to prevent any interference by external forces and separatist plots about “Taiwan independence”, and resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity”³. However, there were no retaliatory actions on the part of the PRC, apart from the subsequent demonstrative military exercises around Taiwan.

Consistency of economic systems. Earlier we noted (Balatsky, 2014) that already on the eve of the Second World War, the USSR was potentially an alternative WCAC, but its socialist system denied the very concept and existence of capital on its territory; therefore it could not fundamentally take on a mission of managing global capital flows. Today, Russia has capitalism, which allows it to operate on a global scale without fundamental institutional inconsistencies with other countries. In addition, commodity deficit and poverty that were typical of the USSR have been overcome in the Russian Federation today; besides, modern technology and climate warming allow it to use its entire territory with an unprecedented level of efficiency⁴. We can say that the institutional, economic, technological and climatic changes that have taken place since the middle of the 20th century act in favor of Russia and provide it with those advantages that are unprecedented by all historical standards. For example, currently Russia is engaged in full-fledged development of Siberia and Arctic regions; it is now that the agenda regarding Russian overland transit (the Great Silk Road) and the Northern Sea Route is coming to the fore once again. More and more such opportunities are opening up.

No less important is the fact that today Russia’s sovereign government can liquidate the “economy with a one-way hole” when there has been a negative

capital balance for 30 years. To understand the scale of the economic potential of this measure alone, we will illustrate it by providing some figures. According to available estimates, the total volume of Russia’s losses from the withdrawal of direct investments to Western countries for 2007–2020 alone is almost 600 billion US dollars (Gusev, Shiryayev, 2021). In 2020, the share of net gross fixed capital accumulation (net of its retirement) in the country amounted to 21.9%⁵. This means that the investment multiplier for the Russian economy during this period was 4.6. Consequently, according to rough calculations, the volume of investments Russia has lost over 14 years could produce an increase in Russian GDP equal to 2.7 trillion US dollars. If we take into account the exchange rate of the ruble at the end of 2020 (73.8 rubles/USD), we will get almost 200 trillion rubles of Russia’s “lost” GDP. In 2020, the volume of Russia’s GDP at current prices amounted to 106.6 trillion rubles, which is almost two times less than its lost volume. In other words, if Russia had managed to prevent the export of capital in the form of direct investments alone for 2007–2020, then its GDP would have been three times its current value⁶. World experience shows that export regulation policies have been successfully implemented in countries of late industrialization (for example, in South Korea). Thus, only stemming the outflow of capital from Russia will allow its natural accumulation to be restored and promote further dynamic development of the national economy.

⁵ See Rosstat data (<https://rosstat.gov.ru/>).

⁶ Let us explain that in this case, the total value of the “lost” GDP should not be translated into an average annual measurement by dividing it by 14 years. This is due to the fact that for simplicity of calculation, a simple summation of “lost” investments was carried out with their subsequent conversion into “lost” GDP, whereas in fact each annual portion of investments would have provided an increase in GDP over many years. In other words, in this case, the fact is taken into account that investments do not give a one-time effect of production growth during the year, but an annual and reproducible from year to year effect of stimulating production. A more accurate calculation provides even more impressive figures, but here the lower bound of the corresponding estimate is taken.

³ See: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/03/08/2022/62e91a819a794747582ae47b>; https://lenta.ru/brief/2022/08/02/pelosi_taiwan/

⁴ Today, the reasons why the ice in the Russian part of the Arctic is melting faster than in the U.S. part have already been established. Available at: <https://ria.ru/20190424/1553012341.html>. For more details see: (Ivanov et al., 2019).

The 21st century will witness amazing changes in the world order, including the situation regarding different types of states. One of the traditional postulates of geopolitics is the division of all states and cultures into two types – land and sea. This is of primary importance, since sea civilizations based on navigation, as a rule, have a market-based economic system and tend to a liberal-democratic way in politics, whereas land-based, on the contrary, prefer a non-market (planned or partially planned) economy and undemocratic (authoritarian) forms of society (Dugin, 2010, p. 246). However, going back to Halford Mackinder, the division of all peoples into two types – nomads of the land (land robbers) and nomads of the sea (sea pirates) – is not operational (Mackinder, 1904). This is due to the lack of simple and well-verifiable criteria for attributing a state to one of two types of civilization; this can be determined only with a certain degree of conditionality based on qualitative characteristics. Nevertheless, according to this largely heuristic methodology, all known WCACs can be attributed to refined sea powers; this indicates the presence of advantages of the country's maritime orientation. However, now the situation is radically changing.

For example, China, which has been in the shadow of the developed Western states for several centuries, cannot be unambiguously attributed either to the sea or to the land type of cultures. This has become especially evident in the last decade,

when the PRC has demonstrated incredible success in creating and expanding its naval fleet, which allows the country to activate 40% of its external borders. Russia has also been primarily a land state throughout its previous history, but today, with the launch of the Northern Sea Route, it is turning into a sea power, especially if we take into account its unique (monopoly) position in the market of nuclear icebreakers. Thus, excluding access to the Arctic Ocean, the share of the country's sea borders is 31.5%, which is less than that of China, whereas with the use of this transport corridor, Russia will be ahead of the United States (*Tab. 1*).

Let us assume that if the share of the maritime border of a state is more than 50% of its entire length, it is considered a sea power; otherwise, it is a land power. Then the PRC still remains a land power, and the Russian Federation changes its status from land to sea power. In any case, if earlier sea transportation was the most profitable in economic terms, then with the development of high-speed railway lines, this advantage is being lost at an increasing rate. In this regard, the ongoing convergence of economic systems of different countries under the influence of technological and climatic changes removes land-sea contradictions and equalizes the chances of Russia and China in comparison with the United States and other Western countries to dominate in the GGPS; the potential of the Russian Federation is seen as the most impressive.

Table 1. Length of the state borders of the USA, Russia and China, km

Length of the state border	Country		
	USA*	China	Russia
Total	32141	36957	60932
Sea	19924	14500	38807
Land	12217	22457	22125
Share of the sea border in its total length, %	62.0	39.2	63.7

* Excluding Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.
 Compiled with the use of: <https://tourisminchina.ru/granitsa-kitaya/>; https://translated.turbopages.org/proxy_u/en-ru.ru.fe6ad038-6307758b-b081c5a6-74722d776562/https/web.archive.org/web/20170313051914/http://www.rosgranitsa.ru/node/2636; https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%93%D0%B5%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%84%D0%B8%D1%8F_%D0%A1%D0%A8%D0%90

Availability of natural resources. Today, the world is facing the depletion of natural resources, so we can argue that a new WCAC should have a huge resource potential. The trend toward globalization of the WCAC, described in (Balatsky, 2014), implies not only the enlargement of the territory of the leading country, but also its resource base. In this regard, Russia has an absolutely unique position. Thus, according to the portal *247wallst.com*, Russia tops the rating of the world's ten most resource-rich countries and is far ahead of them (*Tab. 2*); resources with a narrow application or low cost are not taken into account in the rating⁷.

Table 2 shows that in terms of its natural reserves, Russia is ahead of the next country in the rating, the United States, by 1.7 times, and the third state in the list, Saudi Arabia, by 2.2 times. This is exactly the advantage that the WCAC should have in the new geopolitical reality. Such large-scale natural resources that Russia possesses allow it to function successfully in self-sufficiency mode even under a complete blockade by the West.

We recall that the brewing global resource crisis has led to a rearrangement of basic economic values: the primacy of natural resources and the secondary

nature of technology have become obvious (Balatsky, 2022). Under these conditions, Russia's position in the context of the Fourth World War becomes, if not unambiguously advantageous, then quite competitive.

At one time Giovanni Arrighi noticed the alternation of *extensive* and *intensive* types of development of the world system during the formation of capital accumulation cycles. Thus, the expansion of the world economy was carried out under the Genoese-Venetian and British capital accumulation regimes, and its geographical consolidation – under the Dutch and American regimes (Arrighi, 2006, p. 41). According to this pattern, the next cycle should again become extensive, but the current stage of exhaustion of redistributive opportunities within the framework of the GGPS inevitably transforms the existing mechanism. Let us explain what has been said.

The coastal cities of Italy – Genoa and Venice – sought to subordinate *trade communications* to ensure their market monopoly. At that stage, the control of trade routes was quite enough to solve the task. However, Great Britain already had to intensify its market expansion by conquering raw

Table 2. The world's most resource-rich countries, 2021

Country	Resources, trillion USD	Relative to Russia, %
Russia	75.7	100.0
USA	45.0	59.4
Saudi Arabia	34.4	45.3
Canada	33.2	43.9
Iran	27.3	36.0
China	23.0	30.4
Brazil	21.8	28.9
Australia	19.9	26.3
Iraq	15.9	21.0
Venezuela	14.3	18.9
The West Coalition	98.1	129.6
(USA + Canada + Australia)	150.3	166.4
Non-West Coalition	95.3	125.8

Compiled according to: <https://247wallst.com/special-report/2012/04/18/the-worlds-most-resource-rich-countries/>

⁷ The above rating does not take into account the arable land and fresh water reserves of the countries due to the uncertainty of the price of these goods. Taking into account these resources, Russia will further improve its resource position.

material bases, which required control of overseas territories, which the Italian city-states did not do. Accordingly, Holland expanded and strengthened the trade network and its grip on it, while the United States did the same with regard to trade and information networks, sales markets, raw materials and production niches, including labor resources. In this regard, the question arises: what should be the dominance model of a new WCAC?

Apparently, the next cycle will be a mixture of extensive and intensive types of development, which is achievable only with the unique Russian potential. Currently Russia is reintegrating its former territories, which sooner or later will end with at least partial (under certain conditions) inclusion of Belarus, Ukraine and even Kazakhstan in its zone of interests; it can possibly involve Armenia and Georgia as well. In any case, as A.G. Dugin pointed out, “the CIS is the pit of the coming empire” (Dugin, 2009, p. 233). Regardless of the final configuration of the recreated empire, this will provide an additional scale effect required for the phase of extensive development of the WCAC; other countries do not have such an advantage. Moreover, Russia is already deploying global transport projects – the Northern Sea Route, the Great Silk Road, the Trans-Siberian Railway. Most likely, all future transport lines will be more dense and high-tech, which automatically ensures a phase of intensive development of the WCAC. No other country has such capabilities; this fact makes Russia’s position absolutely unique when the extensive and intensive components of the accumulation cycle are implemented mainly on the territory of the country itself and do not directly enter into antagonistic contradictions with the interests of other countries.

Already today, the parade of sovereignties in many African states led to the fact that European powers, mainly France, have lost important resource deposits. In the future, we can expect a strengthening of the emerging trend. This means that all countries

will have to rely on their own resource base to a greater extent than before, which again brings Russia to the forefront. If we compare the resource potential of the Non-West coalition represented by Russia, Iran and China, it is 1.3 times greater than the potential of the West coalition represented by the USA-Canada-Australia geopolitical arc (see Tab. 2). This confirms that in the new geopolitical configuration, the West coalition will be far from paramount importance. All this again makes the victory in the Fourth World War of the Non-West coalition, in which Russia plays a key role, much more likely than the victory of the West coalition.

Ineffectiveness of economic sanctions against Russia. As mentioned earlier, an attempt to “punish” Russia for its actions in Ukraine was expressed in the adoption of eight packages of sanctions, but their political effectiveness turned out to be zero, and the economic effectiveness remains doubtful. The 2014–2021 period of sanctions against Russia is now widely known as the “vegetarian stage”, and subsequent events – the “sanctions tsunami” (Timofeev, 2022). Nevertheless, Moscow managed to avoid the economic catastrophe that the Collective West was counting on. For example, the May forecast of the RF Ministry of Economic Development assumed a drop in production in 2022 by 7.8%, inflation rates of 17.5%, a drop in real incomes by 6.8%, and unemployment rate at 6.7%, while the August forecast predicted the following figures: 4.2, 13.4, 2.8 and 4.8%, respectively⁸. Regardless of how accurate these figures are, it is revealing that the expected sanctions shock is not increasing, but weakening over time; therefore, the Russian economy is still coping with unprecedented economic pressure from the West. Thus, we can argue that the resistance of the Russian economy to international sanctions and its resistance to external influences turned out to be quite high.

⁸ See: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/articles/2022/08/16/936321-minek-prognoz-rublya>

At the same time, sanctions against Russia had a reverse vector – a negative impact on the well-being in Western countries. Thus, due to the SMO and its accompanying events, inflation pressure on the world economy has increased: problems with the supplies of grain, fertilizers and energy carriers have provoked a sharp increase in their prices. For example, in the United States, consumer prices increased by 9.1% on an average annual basis in June 2022, which was the highest in the last 40 years; food prices in the country rose by 10.4%, and gasoline prices – by almost 60%. In the EU at the same time, inflation reached 9.6% per annum, in the euro area – 8.6%. This is 4–5 times higher than the 2% target indicator set by the European Central Bank. At the same time, the growth of consumer prices in Germany according to the Eurostat methodology was 8.2%, in the UK – 9.4%, and in Lithuania and Estonia – 20.5 and 22%, respectively⁹. Against this background, by mid-May 2022, Moscow’s oil revenues increased by 50% compared to the beginning of the year¹⁰.

These figures indicate that the unfolding economic war was not as terrible for Russia and not as painless for the West as originally envisaged. In the future, these assessments may change, but it is already quite clear that Russia and the West can exist without each other, but it is equally uncomfortable for both sides.

The impact of the cycle of general-purpose technologies. Today, the term *general-purpose technologies* (GPTs) has already become widely recognized; it denotes technologies that are applicable in many sectors of the national economy, have the ability to improve in different directions, have various usage options and possess technological

complementarity (Bresnahan, Trajtenberg, 1995). Revealing the specifics of dissemination of these technologies, S.A. Tolkachev and A.Yu. Teplyakov put forward the industry cycles concept (ICC) for GPTs (Tolkachev, Teplyakov, 2019a; Tolkachev, Teplyakov, 2019b; Tolkachev, Teplyakov, 2020; Tolkachev, Teplyakov, 2022), according to which GPTs follow the rules of the technology and regulatory triads “production – transport – information” and “protectionism – free trade – globalism”, which are largely synchronized in time.

Identification of industry cycles over a time interval of 250 years allowed us to establish that in 2010 their new round began in the form of a qualitatively new stage of production of means of production (production of equipment): industrial Internet, additive and nanobiotechnologies, nanoelectronics, nanophotonics, nanomaterials, virtual and augmented reality, etc. (Tolkachev, Teplyakov, 2022); this stage is accompanied by the transition of most countries to a policy of protectionism; the onset of the phase of advanced development of vehicle production is approximately in the 2040s. Indeed, recent years have been marked by trade wars between the United States and China, partly between the United States and the European Union; moreover, the West has tried to exclude a number of countries (Russia, Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, etc.) from the world trade market. However, it is precisely these circumstances that play in Russia’s favor. The policy of protectionism is extremely beneficial for Russia, since it allows protecting the national producer, and the country’s engineering sector needs to be recreated on a new basis. This line is gradually beginning to be implemented, and by 2030–2035, most likely, it will have reached its peak. However, as already mentioned, it is during this period that the contender countries for the role of WCAC will be on the home straight. And at this very time Russia should launch the second phase of the industry cycle in the form of widespread expansion of

⁹ See: <https://www.rbc.ru/economics/22/07/2022/62d84de39a79478f87860522>; <https://zaim.com/poleznye-sovety/sravnenie-stavok/inflyatsiya-v-rossii-i-v-mire-v-godu-demonstriruet/>; <https://www.rbc.ru/economics/22/07/2022/62d84de39a79478f87860522>

¹⁰ See: <https://inosmi.ru/20220614/eksport-254536396.html>

transport networks. It is then that we can expect the full-fledged establishment of the country's transport communications system and receive a colossal economic effect on this basis, which should be the final step toward the status of WCAC. During this period, protectionism will be replaced by free-trading, which will allow Russia to fully realize the advantages of its existing technological economies of scale¹¹ (Balatsky, Yurevich, 2020) and thereby turn into a global transport hub. In the future, the country will already build an advanced communications production sector with its subsequent expansion across its own territory and nearby areas. Although this process may begin in 2060–2065, it is at this time that Russia can be expected to trigger globalization of the world communication market¹². Thus, the technological and regulatory patterns in the development of the world economy are still in favor of the Russian Federation.

Summing up, we can say Russia has sufficient military potential (weapons, officers' tactical experience and soldiers' combat training) and moral and psychological readiness (passionarity) to protect its right to exist; today its national economy is ready to restrain the impact of international sanctions and continue moving forward; the availability of its own gigantic natural resources base and

¹¹ We recall that the presence of technological economies of scale suggests that the increase in the capital-to-weight ratio of national production should lead to an accelerated increase in labor productivity (Balatsky, Yurevich, 2020, p. 48). It is noteworthy that this effect is a rare phenomenon and not many countries rely on it. In Russia, it is expressed extremely vividly and acts as its major economic advantage.

¹² We should note that the ICC has not yet been brought to its mature state, and therefore its authors proceed from the approximate constancy of the duration of the industry cycle (Tolkachev, Teplyakov, 2022). At the same time, as has been repeatedly noted, the cycles of capital accumulation are decreasing over time. It is quite obvious that these two cycles should be synchronized and a certain compression ratio should also be typical of the industry cycles of GPTs. This problem is not difficult to solve: the complete congruence of the two types of cycles takes place for the British accumulation cycle; in the future, starting from 1970, their duration should be approximately equal.

institutional framework attracting global capital allows the country to successfully move toward its mature phase of development with subsequent transformation into the fifth WCAC. The beginning of the first phase of the new GPTs cycle with its inherent protectionist regulatory policy will contribute to the realization of the task of Russian dominance in the GGPS.

The struggle for the status of a new world capital accumulation center: Russia vs China

If we consider Russia's right to claim the status of a future WCAC to be sufficiently justified, then now is the time to compare its potential with the potential of China, another contender for the this position.

The main thing that needs to be understood in this matter is which country objectively has more chances to become a world leader. To do this, it is enough to consider the key advantages of Russia over China, leaving aside issues that are either already well known (Balatsky, 2014), or are of no fundamental importance. In this regard, we will focus on two aspects of the geopolitical competition between the two countries.

China's demographic curse. There is no doubt that China has become a leading country and, being an economic giant, seeks to strengthen its position. However, the country has very ancient specifics that hinder these ambitious plans. So, China has always been a country with a huge and population whose density is very high. Moreover, as already noted, the Celestial Empire is still the only country for the entire existence of mankind, which explicitly regulated the birth rate and restrained the demographic factor (Diamond, 2008, p. 496; Popov, 2002). However, today this practice has been discontinued and the demographic genie of the PRC has been let out of the bottle again. What does this mean in terms of the WCAC status?

China's huge population contributes to the fact that even at the current peak of its power the country's per capita GDP (PPP) for 2021 is 1.7

times less than that of Russia, and 3.6 times less than that of the United States¹³. It means that in order to achieve an average level of material well-being of its population comparable to Russia, China must increase its GDP by another 70%, and to achieve the level of the United States – by 260%. Formally, it is impossible, but the problem is that at the current stage of human development, the planet simply cannot withstand the 3–4-fold growth in Chinese GDP. But even without reaching this level, the PRC will not be able to become a WCAC, because it must provide its population with the most comfortable living conditions and thereby serve as a kind of standard for other countries. For example, for many decades, the high standard of living of the average U.S. citizen has made the American model of economy and politics the most advanced and worthy of imitation in the eyes of the whole world. China will no longer be able to achieve this result in the foreseeable future, and therefore its position as WCAC turns out to be largely illusory.

Regarding the difficulty of the growth of Chinese GDP by 3.5 times, it is sufficient to indicate some of the consequences of the country's rapid economic growth: between 1972 and 1997, the Yellow River dried up in the lower reaches 20 times, and the waterless period increased from ten days in 1988 to 230 days in 1997 (Diamond, 2008, pp. 502–503); in 1998, 240 million people suffered from flooding (Diamond, 2008, p. 504); the average level of lead in the blood of Chinese urban residents is almost twice the level considered dangerously high worldwide and poses a threat to the mental development of children (Diamond, 2008, p. 508); due to deforestation, soil erosion and drought caused by human industrial activity, dust storms occur more often: for example, from 300 BC to 1950 they hit northwest China on average once in 31 years, in 1950–1990 – once in 20 months, and after 1990 – annually (Diamond, 2008, p. 509).

¹³ See: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD>

But, as J. Diamond points out, China shares the same planet, oceans and atmosphere with the whole world (Diamond, 2008, p. 494); therefore, the environmental damage caused by China will be global and will affect everyone. It can be assumed that new technologies will significantly alleviate the man-induced impact of the PRC on nature and thereby reduce the degree of environmental problems, but this issue remains open.

It can be said that by planting a demographic time bomb under itself the Celestial Empire exhausted its economic opportunities long before its rise. Now the huge population of China prevents it from becoming a leader in the formation of an exemplary lifestyle. Russia does not have this problem – it needs to increase its current relatively small GDP by 2.1 times in order to reach the level of the United States. With the available reserves of natural resources, favorable circumstances and effective public administration, the Russian Federation can do this painlessly within 12–15 years.

Cultural closeness of China and openness of Russia. Russia and China form two opposite civilizations – open and closed. There are well-known cultural factors in relation to China: the complexity of the language and its fundamental difference from European languages; living together in crowded communities in a limited space; a strictly defined Mongoloid anthropological type of a representative of the Chinese ethnic group. It is not surprising that these properties of the Chinese civilization do not allow it to integrate heterogeneous masses of newcomers into its environment. As a result, there is a kind of civilizational *rejection effect*, when even a European who knows Mandarin, history, customs and culture of China perfectly well, who has lived in the country for many decades, still cannot become Chinese – regardless of the desire of the immigrant and the local population. This is fundamentally different from the integration capabilities of the United

States, naturalization in which requires a European to know a similar and relatively simple language, understandable history and similar logic of thinking. Already these circumstances call into question the possibility of China replacing the United States as the next WCAC.

Russia, on the contrary, is characterized by *high civilizational absorption*, when people of completely different nationalities and peoples, coming to Russia, on the one hand, voluntarily and quite easily get into the spirit of the Russian culture and begin to consider themselves Russians, and on the other hand, they are perceived as such by the local population. The whole history of the Russian civilization is full of similar examples. Today it is difficult to imagine Russia without a representative of the Negroid race, Abram Petrovich Hannibal, Alexander Pushkin's great-grandfather, who was a military engineer and taught military affairs in Russian military educational institutions; it is even more difficult to do this without Pushkin himself – although he retained the external ancestral signs of his great-grandfather, this did not prevent him from standing at the origins of Russian literature. It is impossible to imagine Russia without its great travelers – Vitus Jonassen Bering, a Dane by origin, Ivan Fedorovich Kruzenshtern, a sailor of Swedish-German origin, Nikolai Mikhailovich Przhevalsky, a geographer and naturalist of Polish origin, etc. It is impossible to imagine the country without the creator of the History of the Russian State Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin from the Tatar family of Kara-Murza, and without the poet Gavriil Romanovich Derzhavin with the same national roots as Karamzin. And such examples are numerous, because this is the very essence of the Russian civilization.

Nothing has fundamentally changed in Russia today. The national and confessional polymorphism of Russian civilization not only continues to be appealing to foreigners, but also strengthens this appeal. It is not surprising that the American film

actor Steven Seagal, who is a Buddhist, received Russian citizenship and sincerely considers himself Russian¹⁴, and his son Dominic Seagal is going to live in Russia on a permanent basis¹⁵. The American-Russian mixed martial arts fighter Jeffrey Monson went even further in this regard: he not only received Russian citizenship and moved to live in Russia, but also renounced American citizenship in order to fulfill the duties of a deputy of the Krasnogorsk City Duma¹⁶. And again, we can provide numerous similar examples.

Thus, when we compare Russian and Chinese cultural systems in terms of the possibilities of involving citizens of other countries and regions into their orbit, we can state their incompatibility: a Chinese can become a Russian, while a Russian cannot become a Chinese; most immigrants of different nationalities can become Russians, but not Chinese. This is an important obstacle to the transformation of the PRC into a WCAC.

In the context of what has been said, we cannot but touch upon the question of the time factor and the timeliness of certain events. For example, regarding China, we can say for sure that it joined the race for world leadership too late. If it had managed to launch unprecedented economic growth 30–40 years earlier (not in the 1980s, but, for example, in 1950), then it would have been able to lift its demographic curse (there were no physical restrictions on expanding production at that time) and provide itself with the necessary volume of GDP; now it is either impossible, or extremely difficult to implement. The same can be said about Russia: if it had entered into direct conflict with the West in the 2000s or even in the 2010s, it would have obviously lost; at that time, the situation inside the

¹⁴ See: https://tsargrad.tv/articles/neizvestnyj-stiven-sigal-evrej-mongol-drug-putina_33174

¹⁵ See: https://www.popcornnews.ru/news/hochu-pereehat-syn-stivena-sigala-vyskazalsya-o-rossii_id295579_a157

¹⁶ See: <https://24smi.org/celebrity/1767-dzheff-monson.html>

country had not yet “matured” either economically or psychologically, and the West was monolithic. It was only in 2020 that a fundamental split between the Democratic and Republican parties emerged within the United States, and the unity of the West began to weaken. Similarly, 20 years ago it was hard to imagine that successful residents of developed Western countries, including the United States, would take Russian citizenship and move to live in Russia. All these circumstances bring to the fore the *doctrine of the conquest of time*; according to this doctrine, history is the sum of waves of different periods, and the art of politics consists in the ability to take into account the order of events and the ability to catch the most convenient moment in time when constructing the future (Devyatov, 2020, p. 72). According to this doctrine, any process is a wave with three important aspects: *chronos* (wave amplitude), *cyclos* (frequency) and *kairos* (phase of the wave with maximum energy of realization) (Devyatov, 2020, p. 71). The ability to catch a moment of luck (*kairos*) allows you to enter the opening window of opportunity (Devyatov, 2020, p. 72). From this viewpoint, China has missed its *kairos*, while Russia is still quite successfully fitting into the opening window of new opportunities.

A new geopolitical configuration in the Fifth Accumulation Cycle

Discussing the possibilities of turning Russia into a WCAC, it is necessary to understand the specifics of the country’s dominance in the Fifth Accumulation Cycle. If we consider whether Russia can achieve the same level of hegemony in the upcoming accumulation cycle as the United States in the current one, the answer will be unequivocally negative. It is impossible!

Let us explain what has been said.

The current type of management of the world economic system by the United States can be characterized as purely authoritarian or even *autonomously authoritarian*. The current WCAC lives in its own world, completely ignores the interests of others and solves problems by pushing through its

own agenda. It seems unrealistic to recreate such a system of world governance in the new conditions. Resources are largely exhausted, and direct armed conflicts are becoming more and more disastrous for their participants. Therefore, the future WCAC will most likely already be based not so much on the *hegemon model* as on the *leader model*. And this option looks quite feasible for Russia.

Today, the contours of the future capitalist system are actively discussed in the scientific literature. In particular, over the past 20 years, the focus of discussions on competition between liberal and coordinated market economies has gradually shifted to analyzing “dependent market economies” and “market economies penetrated by the state” (Yakovlev, 2021a). At the same time, most analysts believe that the response to the challenges facing global capitalism is possible only through cooperation between leading states based on the ability of their elites to limit their claims (Yakovlev, 2021b).

A more in-depth analysis shows that among all countries there is a cluster of seven states (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Switzerland and the Netherlands) that top the life satisfaction index (happiness index) and at the same time are leaders in the integral index of the quality of life, civic culture and institutional effectiveness; At the same time, the U.S. lagging behind the Seven has been increasing over time (Polterovich, 2022a).

Today, economic systems are usually divided into *liberal* and *coordinated* markets, social systems – into institutions of *shareholder capitalism* and *stakeholder capitalism*, and political systems – into *majoritarian* and *consensus democracies*. In each pair, the first type of systems relies mainly on competitive mechanisms, and the second – on mechanisms of cooperation. A thorough analysis shows that the achievements of the Seven are based on collaborative advantages, which are understood as the dominance of cooperation mechanisms in the economic, social and political spheres (Polterovich, 2022b).

This clearly sets the starting point for the future of the WCAC. Its *dominance model* is likely to be based not on *the hegemon triangle* (Fig. 2), as was typical of the United States, but on *the leader triangle* (Fig. 3).

We should note that Zbigniew Brzeziński can be considered the ideologist of the need to move from the hegemon model to the leader model; he made very clear statements in this regard. In particular, he wrote: “Imperial stability has historically depended on skilled domination, superior military organization, and – ultimately most important – political passivity on the part of dominated peoples against their less numerous but more assertive dominators” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 204). Today, the submissiveness of “third” countries is a thing of the past.

The hegemon triangle is based on the “power – monopoly – superprofits” chain, which assumes a closed circuit of three interrelated processes: ensuring *the power* of the hegemon state over the entire world economic system to maintain its *monopoly* in all the most important markets – economic and political; using monopoly to manage market imbalances, prices and, as a consequence, *the rate of profit*, which ultimately, helps to make *superprofits*; spending the received superprofits on preserving and strengthening its power over the world system. Today, the United States continues to act within the framework of this model: ignoring the political interests of other countries, total control over the market of high technology, drugs, weapons, etc.; financing any operations to preserve American

Figure 2. The hegemon triangle

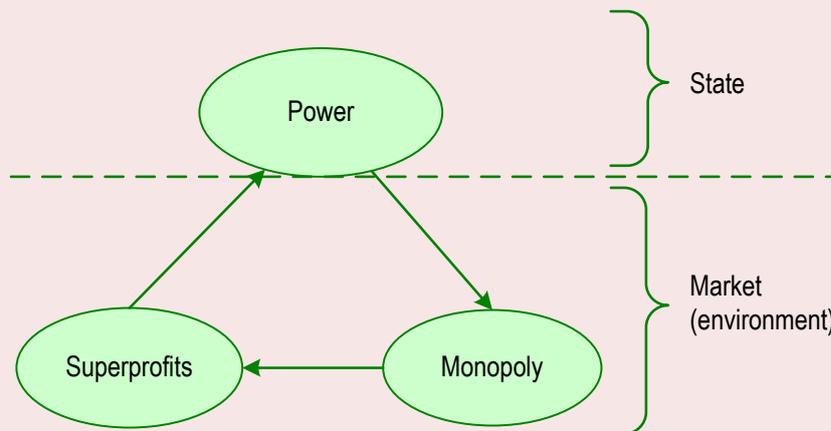
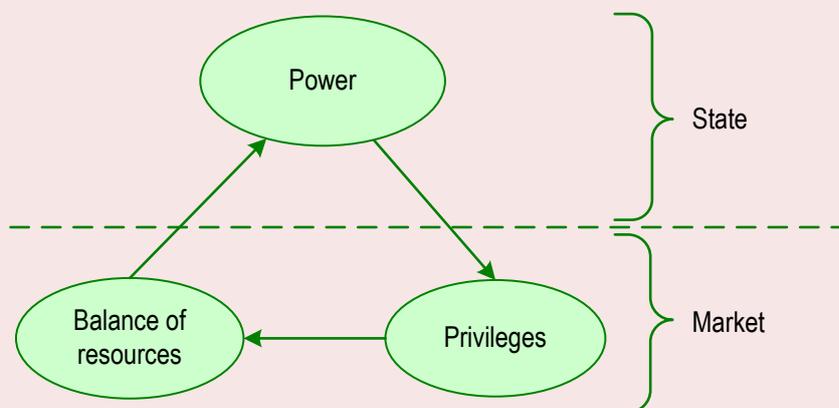


Figure 3. The leader triangle



political power on the territory of the entire planet. However, back in the first decade of the 21st century, Brzeziński expressed his concern about this: “Even the world’s paramount superpower can go badly astray and endanger its own primacy if its strategy is misguided and its understanding of the world is faulty” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 12). He also emphasized the following truth: “No longer is military power, reinforced by economic prowess and exercised by superior elite pursuing a sophisticated strategy, sufficient to sustain imperial domination. In the past, power to control exceeded power to destroy. It took less effort and cost to govern a million people than to kill a million people. Today, the opposite is true: power to destroy exceeds the power to control” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 214).

Today, the diffusion of the nuclear syndrome is unfolding in the world – the club of nuclear powers is at the start of a rapid expansion. Today, the United States, pursuing a strategy of Pacific confrontation with China, has included Australia in its orbit, which now is going to become the owner of a fleet with nuclear weapons produced on its territory. Thus, in 2021, the United States, the UK and Australia announced the establishment of a trilateral defense security alliance, known as AUKUS (an acronym formed from the names of its members: Australia, United Kingdom, United States), within which the Australian Navy will be able to build nuclear submarines for the first time¹⁷. Strengthening its position against China and North Korea, the United States is ready to agree that Japan and South Korea possess nuclear weapons¹⁸. As a response to this escalation of the situation, the President of Belarus A.G. Lukashenko announced the re-equipment of the country’s aircraft so that they could carry nuclear charges¹⁹; given that Belarus and Russia

are members of the Union State, such actions are considered completely legitimate. At the same time, not only Iran, but now Turkey and Saudi Arabia have joined the nuclear weapons race. As a response to the proposed expansion of NATO at the expense of Sweden and Finland²⁰, Russia intends to establish military bases in the Latin American triangle of Nicaragua – Cuba – Venezuela in close proximity to the United States²¹. All these events require different relations between the superpowers, their mutual respect and a different system of managing world economic processes.

In such circumstances, it is unlikely that the United States will be able to maintain its hegemony. “What once took centuries now takes a decade; what took a decade now happens in a single year. The paramountcy of any power will henceforth come under mounting pressure for adaptation, alteration and eventual abolition” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 206). To avoid a senseless catastrophe, Brzeziński urged the U.S. leadership to switch to a leadership model: “... the only way to exercise leadership is through subtle indirection and consensual rule” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 205).

The leader triangle is based on the chain “power – privileges – balance of resources”, which assumes a closed circuit of three interrelated processes: ensuring the *power* of the leader state over the world economic system to maintain its privileged position in all the most important markets – economic and political; the use of *privileges* to maintain the balance of resources, which ultimately allows the implementation of uninterrupted economic activity of the country; *balanced use of resources* is the basis for preserving and strengthening the power of the leading state over the world system. Privileges in the

¹⁷ See: <https://hightech.fm/2021/09/24/aucus>

¹⁸ See: <https://rg.ru/2017/09/10/ssha-prigrozili-kitaiuiadernym-vooruzheniem-iaponii-i-iuzhnoj-korei.html>

¹⁹ See: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/26/08/2022/630894409a7947e9ee51723a>

²⁰ See: https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/15576669?utm_source=yandex.ru&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=yandex.ru&utm_referrer=yandex.ru

²¹ See: <https://ria.ru/20220204/nikaragua-1771098369.html>

market mean one of the leading (but not necessarily the first) places of the state in the market if there are other participants in it – unlike a monopoly, where all other participants are eliminated. The balance of resources means the sufficiency of vital natural and other resources for the successful (normal) operation of the leader economy, which is the key to the stability of its world power and influence. Ensuring the power of the leader is achieved not by purely forceful pressure on the participants of the GGPS, as in the hegemon triangle, but due to the objective geopolitical superiority of the country.

Brzeziński gave quite a sufficient description of the leader model: “To lead, America must not only be sensitive to global realities. It must also be socially attractive” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 198). “Global leadership now must be accompanied by a social consciousness, a readiness to compromise regarding some aspects of one’s own sovereignty, a cultural appeal with more than just hedonistic content, and a genuine respect for the diversity of human traditions and values” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 214).

If we proceed from the fact that the future WCAC should act within the framework of the model not of a hegemon, but of a leader, then Russia’s prospects in this capacity seem quite realistic: Russia will almost certainly not be able to create a hegemon triangle, but it could create a leader triangle. Considering that in the past the Russian Empire acted as “Europe’s gendarme”, we can assume its broader powers in the Fifth Cycle of Accumulation – as a world gendarme or, in modern terms, coordinator and peacemaker of the global political system.

Thus, according to all available signs, in the Fifth Cycle of Accumulation, *a more sparing regime* of world governance by the WCAC should be implemented, based on greater equality and respect for the participants of the GGPS, consensual restraint of economic growth by all countries, their more responsible demographic and environmental behavior. Russia is quite suitable for this role.

Conclusion

We have brought together heterogeneous factors that influence possible future dominance of the Russian Federation as the Fifth WCAC. These are *geographical* phenomena (ice decline in the Russian Arctic, Russia evolving from a land power into a sea power; natural resources endowment), *philosophical* (dialectical confrontation of homogeneity and heterogeneity of the world system), *historical* (syndrome of false contender for the role of a world capital accumulation center; passionarity of the ethnos), *political* (parade of sovereignties and imperial revanchists, diffusion of the nuclear syndrome, legitimization of the struggle against political and managerial opposition), *political economy* (cycles of capital accumulation; world capital accumulation center; Russia’s economy joining the world system of capitalism), *economic* (effectiveness of international economic sanctions; general-purpose technologies; industry cycles; regulatory and technology triads), *demographic* (demographic curse), *cultural* (openness of the Russian Civilization to immigrants, its civilizing experience in relation to other peoples, high civilizational absorption), *military* (latent and active phases of hybrid warfare; hybrid warfare paradox) factors and management effects (autonomous and authoritarian management, hegemon and leader models).

With such a set of global advantages, Russia not only has every chance of becoming the Fifth WCAC, but is almost “doomed” to take this place. At the same time, one should remember Brzeziński’s warning: “Leadership is partly a matter of character, partly intellect, partly organization, and partly what Machiavelli called “fortuna” – the mysterious interaction of fate and chance” (Brzeziński, 2007, p. 13). In this regard, there is no predetermination in the future of Russia and there cannot be – much will depend on the subjective factor (the capacity of the power elite, the readiness of the masses for a new role of the country, the timeliness of necessary actions, etc.).

Today, the SMO in Ukraine is going on extremely slowly, and there is practically no change in the governing personnel. The mistakes accumulated during this time, the indecision of the authorities, their lack of a clear idea of the image of a future Russia – all this causes a feeling of dissatisfaction and anxiety in the masses. However, here we can only say that only six months have passed since the beginning of Russia's existence as a sovereign state, starting from February 24, 2022; over such short period it is difficult to expect any miracles. Even with the assumption that in wartime one year is counted as three years, it is still too early to draw conclusions about Russia's readiness or unwillingness to become a new WCAC. The architecture and content of the Russian Civilization, which allow the country to realize its potencies of the new center of the world, are beyond the scope of this article.

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