



## Editorial

### MAPPING THE FRONTIERS OF A TRANSFORMING WORLD ORDER

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The launch of *Global Geopolitics* comes at a moment when the international system is undergoing profound and irreversible transformation. The certainties that once underpinned a unipolar or even loosely bipolar order have eroded, giving way to a landscape defined by fragmentation, competing projects of world-making, and the assertive return of geopolitics across every domain, from energy and migration to language, identity, and normative authority. As power diffuses, so too does the terrain of global analysis. Understanding the emerging world demands not only new empirical insights but also new conceptual tools, methodological imagination, and a willingness to engage critically with the structures that shape global political life.

This inaugural issue reflects that ambition. The five articles gathered here examine the shifting parameters of global order through diverse but convergent analytical lenses. What unites them is that they show how global power is being reconfigured in an increasingly contested world order across refugee protection, strategic partnerships, energy infrastructures, language regimes, and regional actorness. Each contribution, in its own way, reveals how

states and institutions renegotiate hierarchy, autonomy, and legitimacy under these changing conditions.

Marika Jeziorek's article, "The Theatre of Protection: Performing Refugee Protection in a World of Stratified Compassion," conceptualizes refugee protection as a geopolitical performance. By critically analyzing Canada's CUAET and the EU's Temporary Protection Directive, she shows how selective humanitarianism sustains racialized and gendered hierarchies even as states project moral leadership.

In "Strategic Appeal of Multipolarity: The Intersection of Realpolitik and Normative Tensions in Sino-French Relations," Ahmet Gedik traces how France's Gaullist legacy of strategic autonomy shapes its ambiguous stance toward China's rise. The article reveals both the strategic opportunities and the credibility risks of France's current balancing act within an emerging multipolar order.

Turning to debates over global polarity and the future architecture of international order, Wang Zhen and Tian Hong'yu examine how Chinese scholarly and policy discourse engages the renewed bipolarity thesis, while articulating a distinctive vision of an "equal and orderly" multipolar world. Using conceptual analysis, they clarify the relationship between polarity and world order, evaluate claims about a nascent Sino-U.S. bipolar structure beyond purely economic indicators, and highlight the limits of static hard-power comparisons by emphasizing institutional influence, alliances, and ideational power. The article situates China's evolving multipolar outlook within deeper historical, philosophical, and diplomatic traditions.

Shifting the global focus to the Middle East, Vrushal T. Ghoble's "Strategic Repositioning of the Middle East: Energy Infrastructures, Security Imperatives, and Multipolar Geopolitics" examines how changing global energy patterns, new corridors, and securitized maritime routes are recalibrating the region's geopolitical role, even as they heighten exposure to rivalry and conflict.

Finally, in "The European Union as a Geopolitical Actor: Towards a Pragmatic-Normative Agenda," Krzysztof Sliwinski

analyzes the EU's evolving identity as a hybrid civilian–military actor. Drawing on classical and neoclassical geopolitics, he proposes a “pragmatic-normative” approach to reconcile the Union's value-based aspirations with the constraints of a turbulent strategic environment.

Together, these contributions underscore the urgency of rethinking geopolitics for a world in flux. They remind us that power today is exercised not only through territorial competition or military capability, but also through humanitarian regimes, energy infrastructures, and competing claims to normative legitimacy. As *Global Geopolitics* embarks on its mission, we hope to cultivate a space where such multidimensional analyses can flourish—where established paradigms are challenged, emerging voices are amplified, and the complexity of global transformation is met with intellectual rigor and critical openness. We invite scholars, practitioners, and readers to join us in this endeavor as we continue to map, question, and interpret the shifting frontiers of world politics.