Political Rating Agency

The Political State of the World and Its Future

Author: Edmond Saint Samoht saintsamoht@politicalrating.org
© 2026 PRA™ — Political Rating Agency

Table of Contents

1 General Introduction

1.1 Main Anchor Points of the Work

This book originated from a methodological inquiry and gradually led to a broader question. Initially, the aim was to determine whether it was possible to measure a country's political state with sufficient rigor: institutional maturity, internal tensions, overall stability, and power projection. But as this measurement process developed, another question emerged with greater force: what becomes of a humanity whose power has become global when the institutions capable of guiding it remain fragmented?
This evolution is significant because it explains the work's distinctive character. The book can be read as an essay on the political state of the world and its future. It can also be used as a foresight tool: readers can follow the author's scenarios or use the variables, clusters, questionnaire, and Hypothesis Impact Matrix to build their own.
The work is therefore based on three anchor points: the problem, the instrument, and the trajectories.

1.2 First Anchor Point — The Problem

The problem can be stated simply: humanity has globalized its power before it has globalized its wisdom. This is not a mere metaphor. It points to a historical imbalance. Technologies, markets, weapons, platforms, data, supply chains, critical infrastructure, pandemics, narratives, financial flows, and now artificial intelligence all operate on a global scale. Institutions, responsibilities, solidarity, and forms of political prudence, however, remain largely fragmented.
Part I lays out this problem. It begins with the observation that human power has changed scale. It shows that political wisdom has not developed at the same pace. It then revisits the long history of the expansion of the circle of cooperation: families, clans, cities, empires, states, alliances, international institutions. This history is neither linear nor peaceful. Changes in scale often appear after upheavals, when old forms are no longer sufficient to contain new risks.
The year 1945 constitutes a decisive precedent in this respect. It did not bring about global wisdom, but it made possible a change of institutional scale: the UN, human rights, economic cooperation, the nascent international justice system, and European integration. The Cold War then revealed another form of restraint: not true peace, but the prudence imposed by deterrence. The unipolar interlude following 1991 then gave the illusion of an automatic liberal convergence, before the world reverted to fragmentation, historical humiliations, strategic dependencies, platforms, critical resources, and power rivalries.
Part I thus establishes the new geography of power. States remain central, but they are no longer alone. Technology companies, platforms, financial funds, logistical infrastructures, critical resources, ideological movements, armed groups, diasporas, and systemic private powers also participate in shaping the world order. Their power is not always sovereign, but it can be global through its effects.
Finally, Part I identifies the underlying forces that orient the actors: fear, humiliation, nostalgia for grandeur, economic interests, ideologies, personalization of power,

dependencies, technological acceleration, and a cooperative orientation. It is from these forces that the book moves from general reflection to methodology.

1.3 Second Anchor Point — The Instrument

Part II presents the PRA instrument. It first shows how a political rating can be built from explicit indicators: maturity, internal tensions, stability, geopolitical power, composite indicators, results tables, and validation through principal component analysis. This section serves as the method's initial testing ground.
The same logic is then extended to global foresight. The analysis is no longer limited to states; it covers approximately one hundred actors described by common variables: hegemonic propensity, restorationist narrative, critical resources, coercion, strategic autonomy, asymmetric dependence, personalization of decision-making, informational power, ideological pressure, and cooperative orientation.
Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and classification reveal seven families of actors, or clusters. These clusters are not political camps, nor are they moral judgments. They are analytical groupings based on similar profiles. The questionnaire and the Hypothesis Impact Matrix then allow us to transform future hypotheses into shifts in variables, actors, and clusters. The resulting scenarios are therefore not free-form narratives; they are conditional trajectories constructed from a map.
This method does not eliminate subjectivity. It makes it visible, manageable, and open to revision. It does not replace political judgment; it requires that judgment to make its assumptions explicit.

1.4 Third Anchor Point — The Trajectories

Part III presents three authorial scenarios. Reasonableness describes a world that does not become wise, but which, out of prudence, crisis fatigue, and fear of the worst, contains certain excesses. Wisdom describes a higher trajectory: humanity agrees to build institutions commensurate with the risks it has created. Chaos describes failure: power continues to grow without a common guiding principle, and the world becomes increasingly ungovernable without necessarily collapsing.
Part IV compares these scenarios and draws key lessons. In particular, it examines the concept of world war: should it still be understood as an event comparable to 1914 or 1939, or as a possible state of the system composed of regional wars, cyberattacks, weaponized dependencies, information manipulation, infrastructure disruptions, and interconnected crises? It also considers alliances: will they be alliances of fear, prudence, or convergence?
The overall conclusion returns to the central question: how can we globalize wisdom without abolishing political pluralism? The goal is not to dream of a perfect world. It is to prevent human imperfection, amplified by global instruments, from becoming irreversible.

1.5 What the Book Offers the Reader

The reader can therefore approach this work in several ways. They can read it as an essay on the political state of the world. They can read it as a method for political rating and foresight. Finally, they can use it as a tool: based on the questionnaire, variables, and matrix, they can discuss the proposed scenarios or generate their own scenario in just a few minutes, using a pre-existing framework.
This operational dimension is one of PRA's distinctive contributions. The book does not simply ask the reader to agree or disagree. It provides them with the means to trace the narrative back to the hypotheses, from the hypotheses to the variables, from the variables to the clusters, and from the clusters to the actors.

1.6 How to Read This Book

1.6.1 Three possible paths

The book's structure allows for several entry points. The reader can follow the complete order, begin with the scenarios, or use the methodological tool directly. These paths are not mutually exclusive; they simply cater to different needs.

1.6.2 First path — continuous and analytical reading

Readers wishing to follow the entire argument should read the book in its natural order: the problem, the instrument, the scenarios, and then the lessons learned. This path is best suited to those who want to understand the full development of the method, from the initial diagnosis to its foresight conclusions.

1.6.3 Second path — foresight reading

Readers initially drawn to the future can begin with Part III, devoted to the three authorial scenarios, then return to Part II to understand the methodology behind them, and finally to Part I to revisit the historical and conceptual foundations. This reversed reading order addresses the legitimate impatience of the contemporary reader without compromising the rigor of the approach.

1.6.4 Third path — practical use

Readers wishing to use PRA as a tool can begin with the variables, clusters, questionnaire, Hypothesis Impact Matrix, and Scenario Zero. They can then compare their own scenario with the authorial scenarios and examine the resulting shifts. This path is particularly well suited to analysts, journalists, geopolitical commentators, educators, policymakers, and students who want to produce a structured foresight analysis quickly.

1.6.5 One architecture, multiple uses

These three paths remind us that the work is not simply a text to be read linearly. It is also an architecture of understanding. Part I lays out the meaning of the problem. Part II provides the tool. Part III outlines the trajectories. Part IV offers the lessons. The reader can enter through any of these doors, provided they keep in mind the guiding principle: humanity has globalized its power before it has globalized its wisdom.

2 Part I — The Problem

Humanity facing its own power

The first part goes directly into the question that gives the book its title: what is the political state of the world, and toward what futures can this state lead?

It does not begin with charts or measuring instruments. It begins with the problem itself: human power has changed scale. It now operates through technologies, markets, weapons, data, platforms, critical resources, financial flows, infrastructure, and artificial intelligence. But the political forms capable of directing this power remain fragmented.

The central theme of this section can be stated simply: humanity has globalized its power before it has globalized its wisdom. This statement provides unity to the chapters that follow.

The aim is not to offer an abstract meditation, but to prepare the foresight method. Before classifying actors, constructing clusters, or formulating scenarios, we must understand why the world can no longer be read solely as a system of states or as a simple competition among traditional powers.

This section thus traces the historical expansion of the circle of cooperation, the upheaval of 1945, the paradoxical restraint of the Cold War, the end of the unipolar interlude, the new geography of power, and the underlying forces that orient the actors. It constitutes the intellectual gateway to the book.

The method will come later. The scenarios will come later. But they would not be intelligible without this initial diagnosis: the available power now exceeds the ordinary forms of political wisdom that should contain it.

2.1 The foundational diagnosis

2.1.1 Power Has Become Planetary, Wisdom Remains Fragmented

The book's starting point is an observable imbalance between two dimensions that political analysis sometimes conflates: an actor's internal stability and its capacity for power projection. A state can be powerful without being entirely stable. It can possess a considerable army, economy, technology, and diplomatic or informational influence, while still being beset by internal tensions, institutional weaknesses, ideological rigidities, or social vulnerabilities. Conversely, a state can be stable, mature, and relatively peaceful without possessing equivalent global power.
This dissociation invites us to ask a broader question: if power can exceed the stability that supports it, can it also exceed the wisdom capable of guiding it?

The question is not merely moral. It is political, institutional, and civilizational. Undirected or insufficiently contained power does not automatically become destructive. But it becomes available for contradictory uses: protection or domination, cooperation or blackmail, progress or surveillance, autonomy or dependence, liberation or control.

Power, therefore, is never just an ability. It is also a test.

It forces those who possess it to answer a question that the instruments themselves cannot resolve: What purpose will this power serve?

Power has changed scale

For a long time, human power remained limited by distances, available resources, slow communications, limited technical means, and the restricted scope of political organizations. Decisions made by those in power could be violent, unjust, or destructive, but their consequences most often remained confined to a limited geographical area, even when they had a lasting impact on entire regions.

This situation has gradually changed.

The agricultural revolution enabled sedentarization, the creation of surpluses, the specialization of roles, and the formation of larger societies. Writing, money, law, administrations, roads, armies, and empires then made it possible to organize even larger human groups. The industrial revolution transformed our relationship to energy, time, production, distance, and warfare. Modern science has increased our capacity to act upon nature, bodies, matter, communications, and life itself.

But the last two centuries, and even more so the last few decades, have introduced an even deeper break: human power has become, in several essential areas, planetary.

Weapons can threaten the existence of entire societies.
Emissions produced in a given area affect the shared climate.
A local health crisis can become global.
A financial collapse can spread in hours.
A decision made in a supply chain can destabilize distant economies.
A digital platform can simultaneously alter the perceptions, behaviors, and conflicts of millions or billions of people.
An innovation in artificial intelligence can transform work, education, warfare, government, research, creativity, and public space.

This is more than a quantitative increase in power; it is a change in both scale and nature.

Power is no longer just territorial.
It is technological, financial, cognitive, informational, energy-related, biological, logistical, and algorithmic.
It circulates through cables, satellites, platforms, standards, currencies, sanctions, patents, AI models, infrastructures, and narratives.

A world where power circulates in this way can no longer be understood solely from the perspective of classical political borders.

States remain essential. They retain legal sovereignty, military capacity, taxation, policing, diplomacy, and the power to declare war and peace. But a growing share of real power resides in hybrid spaces: technology companies, payment systems, energy networks, port infrastructure, attention platforms, financial funds, semiconductor supply chains, artificial intelligence laboratories, data producers, cyber actors, and transnational ideological groups.

Contemporary power has not only increased. It has been distributed differently.

Wisdom did not keep pace.

Faced with this growth in power, political wisdom has not progressed at the same pace.

We need to clarify what we mean by wisdom here.

Wisdom is not merely an individual virtue. It is not limited to the prudence of a leader, the moderation of a government, the foresight of an expert, or the generosity of public opinion. In PRA, wisdom means a collective and institutional capacity to assess the consequences of power, contain its excesses, limit its destructive uses, and direct it toward sustainable goals.

Political wisdom therefore presupposes several elements:

the ability to think long-term;
the ability to accept limits;

the ability to recognize the existence of common goods;
the ability to protect future generations;
the ability to prefer cooperation to domination when risks become common;
the ability to build institutions proportionate to the scale of the dangers.

This wisdom already exists in fragments.

It appears in certain constitutions, in checks and balances, in the rule of law, in mechanisms of democratic deliberation, in international institutions, in health standards, in climate conventions, in financial regulations, in supranational jurisdictions, in non-proliferation mechanisms, in certain defensive alliances, in scientific agreements, in cooperation initiatives and in efforts at technological regulation.

But it remains fragmented.

It is fragmented between states.
Fragmented between economic interests.
Fragmented between electoral horizons and long-term perspectives.
Fragmented between generations.
Fragmented between political cultures.
Fragmented between public institutions and private powers.
Fragmented between technical capabilities and democratic responsibilities.

The world has produced global tools, but it does not yet have an equivalent level of common guidance.

This contradiction can be stated simply:

Humanity has globalized its power before it has globalized its wisdom.

This statement does not mean that humanity is devoid of wisdom. It means that the available wisdom is not yet organized on a scale commensurate with the available powers.

The gap, therefore, is not between wholly irrational human beings and some external power. It lies between the rapid growth of our means and the slower construction of the purposes, rules, and institutions needed to guide them.

Power without wisdom does not disappear: it becomes disordered.

A poorly governed power does not always lead to immediate disaster. It can even produce considerable progress. This is one of the difficulties of the analysis.

Technological power heals, nourishes, transports, educates, protects, connects, and liberates. It has enabled extraordinary advances in medicine, communication, education,

agriculture, productivity, scientific knowledge, and the reduction of certain forms of suffering.

The issue, then, is not to set power against the good.

Power is ambivalent. It becomes dangerous when it detaches itself from the goals that should guide it.

The atom can produce energy or threaten annihilation.
Artificial intelligence can help heal, discover, organize, translate, and educate; it can also monitor, manipulate, replace, disinform, or automate vital decisions.
Finance can allocate capital and support development; it can also propagate systemic crises.
Platforms can connect individuals; they can also trap societies in bubbles of anger, suspicion, and cognitive fragmentation.
Globalized infrastructures can foster exchange; they can become instruments of dependency, punishment, or blackmail.
Biotechnology can save lives; it can unleash risks that institutions have not yet learned to anticipate.

The problem, therefore, is not power itself. The problem is power without sufficient direction, without proportionate responsibility, without adequate democratic control, without institutions capable of preventing its destructive uses.

As power increases, the error changes status.

A local error can become systemic.
A private decision can produce public effects.
A regional crisis can alter the global balance of power.
Cognitive manipulation can affect an entire democracy.
A peripheral conflict can lead to alliances.
A technology designed for limited use can become an infrastructure of domination.

This is why the governance of power becomes one of the great political questions of the century.

The gap between national institutions and global risks

Modern political institutions have primarily been built around the nation-state. This remains a crucial invention. It enables the creation of laws, the organization of sovereignty, the collection of taxes, the protection of borders, the representation of a population, the guarantee of rights, and the structuring of political belonging.

It would therefore be absurd to announce its disappearance.

But it would be equally insufficient to believe that it alone can govern the major powers and vulnerabilities of the century.

No state can govern the climate alone.
No state can govern pandemics alone.
No state can govern global financial flows alone.
No state can govern cyberspace alone.
No state can govern the risks of advanced artificial intelligence alone.
No state can govern critical supply chains of resources, energy, semiconductors, or data alone.
No state can govern global nuclear risk alone.

However, international institutions remain limited. They depend on the states that comprise them. They are riddled with power rivalries. They often proclaim principles that are broader than the means at their disposal to enforce them.

The contemporary world is therefore caught between two shortcomings:

The state remains indispensable, but it is no longer sufficient;
global governance is necessary in certain areas, but it remains incomplete, contested or fragile.

The world's political future is taking shape in this gap.

The temptation of national isolationism stems from a genuine concern: people want to regain control of their own destiny. But this regaining of control becomes illusory if it ignores the fact that the main risks transcend borders. Conversely, the abstract call for global governance can be troubling if it seems to deny sovereignty, cultures, freedoms, and democratic responsibilities.

The question is not about choosing between the state and the world. It is about inventing institutions capable of articulating the different levels.

What can be decided locally must be decided locally.
What falls under the purview of the nation must remain at the national level.
What requires regional coordination must be addressed at that level.
But what threatens all of humanity can no longer be left solely to the competition of sovereignties.

Perhaps contemporary political wisdom begins here: recognizing that sovereignty is not diminished when it agrees to cooperate on risks it cannot control alone. On the contrary, it is made more real because it ceases to confuse independence with powerlessness.

Private powers and the global legitimacy deficit

The gap between power and wisdom appears with particular intensity in the growing role of private actors.

Some companies now control infrastructures on which entire states, militaries, economies, or societies depend. They organize access to information, the cloud, data, payments, satellites, communications, artificial intelligence models, logistics networks, semiconductors, or critical resources.

They are not simply economic actors. They are becoming actors of order.

Their power is not inherently illegitimate. It can generate innovation, efficiency, technical solutions, growth, and capabilities that states do not always possess. But it raises a fundamental political question: what responsibility should accompany global reach?

A private actor can have global influence without a global mandate.
It can make systemic decisions without equivalent public deliberation.
It can control vital infrastructure without being subject to the same obligations as a sovereign power.
It can alter a society's cognitive landscape without being accountable to that society.
It can act on a global scale while pursuing its own particular interests.

The problem is not just legal. It is political.

Modern democracy has built, sometimes with difficulty, mechanisms for holding public authorities accountable: elections, parliamentary oversight, separation of powers, the judiciary, the press, public opinion, and the alternation of power. These mechanisms remain imperfect, but they exist.

Nothing comparable yet fully regulates globalized private powers.

The question then becomes: how to govern actors who are not sovereign, but whose decisions can have quasi-sovereign effects?

This question will be central to the scenarios presented in the book. In chaos, these powers can accelerate fragmentation or be absorbed by blocs. In a reasonableness scenario, they accept shared governance out of self-interest or necessity. In a wisdom scenario, they are integrated into convergence institutions proportionate to their influence.

Here again, the goal is not to eliminate power. It is to make it accountable.

Artificial intelligence as the ultimate revealer

Artificial intelligence, more than any other contemporary technology, concentrates the tension between power and wisdom.

It is not just a tool. It is gradually becoming an infrastructure for decision-making, production, language, knowledge, surveillance, warfare, creation, and social organization.

It can help diagnose, teach, translate, research, design, administer, simulate, predict, and assist. But it can also manipulate, replace, control, discriminate, misinform, accelerate conflicts, automate coercion, or obscure decisions that should remain human.

More profoundly, AI poses a new question: what becomes of humanity when it produces systems capable of executing, combining, predicting, or perhaps one day surpassing some of its cognitive abilities?

The question is no longer simply one of employment or productivity. It is becoming one of the status of humans in a world where an increasing share of decisions could be entrusted to non-human systems.

Who decides?
Who understands?
Who controls?
Who answers?
Who limits?
Who preserves the human purpose of the systems?

Political wisdom is measured here by the ability not to be hypnotized by efficiency.

A system can be faster without being fairer.
More predictive without being freer.
More optimized without being more humane.
More powerful without being wiser.

AI thus reveals with particular intensity the central question of the book: can power grow indefinitely without the institutions responsible for directing it changing in scale and nature?

In the scenario of reasonableness, AI is regulated prudently.
In the scenario of wisdom, it becomes the trigger for global governance of existential risks.
In the scenario of chaos, it accelerates cognitive fragmentation, coercion, and loss of control.

Thus, AI is not just one theme among many. It is the mirror in which humanity discovers the gap between what it can produce and what it knows how to govern.

Wisdom as a political infrastructure

If power has become global, wisdom can no longer be merely individual, moral, or contemplative. It must become institutional.

This does not mean that sages, philosophers, or poets should replace governments. It means that institutions must rediscover a sense of purpose, limits, and long-term perspective.

A policy without wisdom becomes short-term administration.
A technology without wisdom becomes the accumulation of resources.
An economy without wisdom becomes maximization without purpose.
A military power without wisdom becomes a constant temptation to coerce.
Information without wisdom becomes noise, manipulation, or cognitive warfare.

Political wisdom consists of embedding in institutions the capacity to ask not only what is possible, but what is desirable; not only what is effective, but what is compatible with a humane world; and not only what strengthens an actor, but what preserves the shared conditions of collective life.

It therefore demands rules, but also goals.
Controls, but also a vision.
Limits, but also a hierarchy of goods.
Checks and balances, but also a memory of disasters.
Experts, but also citizens.
Calculations, but also philosophy.
Institutions, but also a culture of responsibility.

This wisdom cannot abolish conflicts, interests, differences in civilization, or national ambitions. It does not promise a perfect world. It only seeks to prevent available power from being surrendered solely to the forces of domination, fear, immediate profit, revenge, or technological escapism.

It does not eliminate politics.
It makes it proportionate to the times.

The Fork in the Road

The gap between planetary power and fragmented wisdom does not lead to a single outcome. It opens a bifurcation.

The first trajectory is one of reasonableness. The world does not become wise, but it learns to contain certain excesses because the cost of chaos becomes too high. Powers remain rivals, institutions remain imperfect, democracies remain fragile, and platforms remain powerful, but mechanisms of restraint are rebuilt. It is a minimal form of

wisdom—often forced, sometimes cynical, but sufficient to prevent uncontrolled escalation.

The second path is that of wisdom. It presupposes a deeper qualitative leap. Humanity understands that it must build institutions of convergence commensurate with its shared risks. It does not eliminate states, but integrates them into a broader governance of vital goods: AI, climate, resources, health, information, peace, and human dignity. This is a regulatory utopia, not a prophecy.

The third trajectory is that of chaos. Power continues to grow, but institutions fail to direct it. Blocs harden, resources become weapons, platforms fragment cognitive space, radical ideologies flourish, exposed states become theaters of confrontation, and world war perhaps transforms less into a single event than into a diffuse state of the system.

These three trajectories are not predetermined. They already coexist as possibilities.

The role of PRA is not to predict which outcome will occur. It is to highlight the conditions that can promote them.

This chapter has laid out the central diagnosis: human power has become planetary, while political wisdom remains fragmented. The next chapter will examine one of the reasons why another outcome is nevertheless conceivable: human history demonstrates a recurring, albeit irregular, capacity to expand the circle of cooperation. It is this capacity, and its limits, that must now be explored.

2.2 The change of scale

2.2.1 The historical expansion of the circle of cooperation

The previous chapter laid out the central diagnosis: human power has become planetary, while political wisdom remains fragmented. This situation could lead to chaos if humanity remains trapped within institutions incapable of governing the powers it has created. But it could also lead to a new shift in the scale of political organization.

This hypothesis is grounded in history. Human groups have already experienced several major expansions of their circle of cooperation. Gradually and unevenly, people have learned to live, exchange, produce, fight, govern, and make decisions within increasingly large entities.

But this evolution should not be presented as a peaceful march toward wisdom. It has never been linear. It has never been guaranteed. It has often been brutal, discontinuous, caused by upheavals that called into question previous forms of collective existence.

Humanity does not change scale simply because it becomes more reasonable. It often changes scale because old structures are no longer sufficient to contain new crises.

From close-knit communities to organized groups

For the vast majority of its history, humankind has lived in small groups. These groups were not necessarily isolated. They could maintain relationships of exchange, alliance, kinship, rivalry, or conflict with other groups. But daily cooperation relied largely on proximity, mutual acquaintance, shared memory, family ties, reciprocal obligations, and the common rules of a still relatively small world.

In such groups, trust did not originate from abstract institutions. It arose from direct relationships, reputation, custom, the gaze of others, mutual dependence, and the necessity of surviving together.

The first major transformation occurred with sedentarization, agriculture, animal husbandry, storage, the specialization of tasks, and population growth. Human groups no longer simply occupied a space temporarily; they settled there, organized it, defended it, and administered it. The relationship to time changed. The relationship to the land changed. The relationship to property, surplus, inheritance, and hierarchy also changed.

This change is not just technical. It is political.

As populations become concentrated, resources are stockpiled, functions become specialized, and internal conflicts become more complex, new forms of rules, authority, and organization become necessary.

The size of the group increases, but that alone is not enough to explain the transformation. What changes are the upheavals that drive scaling up.

Major political developments do not simply result from the quiet progression of reason. They often respond to upheavals that render the old order inadequate.

A way of life becomes too fragile.
A territory becomes too contested.
A population becomes too large to be regulated by customs alone.
A war reveals the inadequacy of existing structures.
A technological innovation alters the balance of power.
An economic, climatic, military, or spiritual crisis forces the invention of new rules.
A catastrophe shatters the illusion that old institutions will suffice.

Political history can thus be read as a succession of responses, more or less successful, to shortcomings revealed by shocks.

Villages emerge when a mobile lifestyle is no longer sufficient to organize certain forms of production and storage.
Cities develop when human concentration demands rules, authorities, shared spaces, and more complex forms of decision-making.
Kingdoms and empires are formed when warfare, taxation, roads, resources, and

administration necessitate broader coordination.
Modern states strengthen when wars, taxes, standing armies, trade, and political identities require more integrated structures.
International institutions arise when global catastrophes demonstrate that the traditional balance of power is no longer sufficient to prevent disaster from recurring.

Upheaval does not always produce progress. It can produce regression, domination, violence, isolation, or collapse. But it often creates the moment when what seemed impossible becomes necessary.

This is why the idea of a more effective global governance should not be seen as the automatic outcome of an upward trajectory. Rather, it should be understood as a possibility that could become acceptable if a major upheaval revealed the definitive inadequacy of current structures.

Cooperating with strangers

Expanding the circle of cooperation requires a considerable mental and institutional transformation: learning to cooperate with strangers.

In a small group, cooperation is based on personal relationships. In a city, a kingdom, an empire, a state, or an international organization, it must be based on something else: rules, symbols, institutions, narratives, currencies, rights, administrations, beliefs, or shared interests.

Money allows us to trade with strangers.
Law allows us to resolve disputes without immediately resorting to revenge.
Administration allows us to organize geographically dispersed populations.
Taxation allows us to finance collective action beyond the family or local sphere.
Political representation allows, at least in principle, the involvement of millions of individuals in collective decision-making.
International institutions allow rival states to communicate in a common language, even when they do not trust each other.

Each increase in scale therefore requires a new level of abstraction.

We must accept that the other, whom we do not know, nevertheless belongs to the same order. We must accept that a common rule applies to individuals, groups, or states that do not always share the same language, the same religion, the same history, or the same immediate interests.

This capacity is one of humanity's great political inventions.

It does not eliminate violence. It does not eliminate injustice. It does not eliminate domination. But it makes possible a cooperation that goes beyond immediate proximity.

Human history can thus be read as the difficult learning of broad cooperation between strangers.

Size guarantees neither peace nor wisdom

However, it would be dangerous to confuse expansion with moral progress.

A larger society is not necessarily more just. An empire can unite many peoples while relying on conquest, exploitation, and subjugation. An alliance can protect its members while brutally excluding those who are not part of it. A global institution can proclaim universal principles while remaining paralyzed by the interests of its most powerful members.

Size answers a question: how many humans are we capable of organizing together?

It does not answer another, more crucial question: for what purpose and according to what values do we organize them?

A small group can be peaceful or warlike.
A city can be democratic to its citizens and violent to its slaves or neighbors.
An empire can impose internal peace while being founded on conquest.
A modern state can protect rights internally and practice domination externally.
An international organization can express a universal aspiration without possessing the political power necessary to fulfill it.

Therefore, we must distinguish between two developments.

The first concerns the expansion of the scope of cooperation. It is historically observable.

The second concerns raising the political, moral and institutional quality of this cooperation. It is uncertain, reversible and always contested.

Organizing intelligence allows for the aggregation of power.
Political wisdom consists of directing this power toward goals that do not destroy humanity.

The gap between these two dimensions recurs throughout history.

Empires: Organization and Domination

Empires provide a particularly instructive example.

They show that humanity is capable of organizing very large entities. They develop roads, administrations, tax systems, armies, languages of power, currencies, legal codes, forms of economic integration, and sometimes periods of relative stability.

But they also show that the group can be expanded through coercion.

The empire sometimes pacifies its interior because it has conquered its exterior. It creates order, but this order may be based on inequality, hierarchy, exploitation, or the denial of the autonomy of the subjugated peoples.

Empire is therefore ambivalent. It expands the scale of the organization, but it does not necessarily expand wisdom. It may even increase available power without increasing the corresponding moral or political responsibility.

This ambivalence remains relevant today.

Contemporary forms of domination are no longer always territorial. They can be financial, technological, energy-related, informational, logistical, or normative. An actor no longer needs to annex territory to make other actors dependent on its infrastructure, technologies, resources, or platforms.

The history of empires thus allows us to understand a constant: the ability to organize on a larger scale can serve both cooperation and domination.

The question is never simply: what is the size of the organized set?
It is: what type of order does this size make possible?

The nation-state: power, sovereignty and limits

The nation-state constituted another decisive step.

It has made it possible to unite a population, a territory, an administration, a legal system, a tax system, an army, political representation, and a national narrative in a relatively stable form. It has given modern peoples a powerful framework for belonging, protection, mobilization, and sovereignty.

It has also enabled major political achievements: citizenship, rights, representation, social protection, public education, infrastructure, economic development, justice, security.

But the nation-state also has its ambivalence.

It can become the framework for freedom or for total mobilization.
It can protect the dignity of citizens or organize their indoctrination.
It can embody democracy or aggressive nationalism.
It can represent popular sovereignty or the seizure of power by an authoritarian apparatus.

The 20th century demonstrated both the grandeur and the danger of this political form.

The nation-state has been the instrument of the emancipation of many peoples. It has also been the instrument of total wars, mass ideologies, murderous bureaucracies, and power rivalries pushed to the point of catastrophe.

Here again, expanding the organization is not enough. The political power of the state must be contained by law, checks and balances, democratic culture, historical memory, and international institutions.

When the state concentrates unlimited power, it can become the most dangerous actor in the system. When it agrees to enshrine its sovereignty in rules, alliances, norms, and responsibilities, it becomes, on the contrary, one of the possible instruments of collective wisdom.

The Upheaval That Makes a Global Institutional Outline Possible

World War II is one of the most powerful examples of a change of scale caused by upheaval.

Before 1945, alliances, treaties, organizations, systems of balance, and attempts at international cooperation already existed. But the two world wars revealed with new intensity the inadequacy of the old mechanisms.

The balance of power had not prevented the catastrophe.
Classical diplomacy had not prevented total wars.
Absolute sovereignty had not prevented mass crimes.
Industrial power had not produced wisdom.
Technological modernity had even made destruction more efficient.

The upheaval of 1939–1945 therefore made a new institutional level both conceivable and necessary: the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international institutions, European integration, mechanisms of economic cooperation, and, more broadly, the idea that some human problems had to be addressed beyond national sovereignty alone.

Humanity did not become wise in 1945.

But humanity understood that certain catastrophes could no longer be left solely to competition among powers.

The change of scale was therefore not the result of a peaceful maturation. It was the consequence of a trauma.

This point is crucial for the rest of the book. If a more genuine global governance is to emerge in the 21st century, it is unlikely to arise solely from a gradual increase in awareness. It could stem from a new upheaval, a major crisis, or a series of shocks revealing that current institutions are no longer sufficient to govern global power.

This is one of the assumptions of the wisdom scenario.
It is also one of the risks of the chaos scenario.

Toward global governance: possibility, necessity, danger

The history of the expansion of human groups might seem to naturally lead to the idea of global governance. This would be a hasty conclusion.

Global governance is not inevitable. It is not mechanically inscribed in history. Nor is it necessarily desirable in any form.

A single world government could rightly be a cause for concern: excessive concentration of power, bureaucracy without checks and balances, erasure of cultures, democratic alienation, risk of planetary domination, impossibility of escaping a power that has become universal.

Therefore, a distinction must be made between a world government and global governance.

A world government suggests a single central power.
Global governance, on the other hand, refers to a set of institutions, rules, and mechanisms capable of addressing problems that exceed the capacity of individual states.

The first idea can be dangerous if it implies absolute concentration.
The second becomes necessary when the risks are truly global.

This is not about abolishing nations.
This is not about homogenizing cultures.
This is not about erasing sovereignties.
This is about recognizing that certain areas require a higher level of organization: climate, AI, pandemics, critical resources, systemic financial flows, information space, nuclear risks, migration, vital infrastructure, oceans, space, biodiversity.

Political wisdom would then consist of organizing the levels.

What can be dealt with locally should remain so.
What falls under the nation's jurisdiction should remain national.
What falls under a region's jurisdiction should be governed regionally.
But what threatens all of humanity must be able to be dealt with by common institutions.

This articulation is not a weakness of sovereignty. It can be its modern condition.

A state that cooperates on risks it cannot control alone does not necessarily relinquish its sovereignty. It makes it more effective.

The next challenge to the status quo

The 21st century could face a threshold comparable, not in its nature, but in its scope, to the major upheavals that have already transformed political forms.

The combination of advanced AI, climate change, critical resources, migration, pandemics, cognitive fragmentation, precision weapons, cyber warfare, nuclear risks, and globalized private powers could render the inherited institutional order insufficient.

Humanity could then find itself facing an alternative.

Either it suffers these upheavals without managing to build proportionate institutions. Crises accumulate, blocs harden, powers protect themselves, exposed states become theaters of confrontation, platforms fragment the public space, resources become weapons, and chaos becomes the established state of the system.

Either it transforms fear into an institution, risk into cooperation, and shared vulnerability into shared responsibility. It does not become perfect. It does not eliminate interests. But it accepts the need to recognize that certain powers must be governed at the level where they produce their effects.

In this scenario, the upheaval would not only be destructive. It would become foundational.

History does not guarantee this outcome. But it shows that humanity has already been able, after catastrophes, to invent forms of organization that it would probably not have accepted before.

The problem of the 21st century is that the next upheaval could be faster, more systemic, and less forgivable than previous ones.

The wise course of action would therefore be not to wait until the catastrophe has fully proven itself.

What the Expansion of the Circle of Cooperation Shows

The long history of human groups therefore allows us to draw several lessons.

Firstly, humanity is capable of expanding the circle of cooperation. It has already invented forms of organization that go beyond the family, the clan, the city, the kingdom, the empire, and the isolated state.

Secondly, this expansion is neither linear nor guaranteed. It is marked by ruptures, setbacks, collapses, dominations and violence.

Third, the size of organizations does not guarantee their wisdom. Large entities can produce relative peace, but also domination. Small communities can be supportive, but also violent. The issue is not only one of scale, but also one of aims and limits.

Fourth, major changes in scale are often triggered by upheavals that reveal the inadequacy of existing structures. Crisis is not always creative; but without crisis, old structures often retain their inertia.

Fifth, global governance should not be conceived as the negation of states, but as the organization of areas in which no state can act alone.

These lessons prepare the way for the rest of the analysis.

While humanity possesses the capacity to expand cooperation, it also carries opposing potentialities: domination, fear, appropriation, humiliation, revenge, exclusion, fanaticism, and the will to power.

History is not determined solely by the size of groups. It depends on the human dispositions that institutions amplify or contain.

The following chapter therefore examines this ambivalence more directly: human potential and its collective amplification.

2.2.2 Human potential and its collective amplification

The previous chapter showed that human history can be read as a gradual, uneven, and often painful expansion of the circle of cooperation. Human beings have learned to cooperate beyond their immediate group, clan, city, kingdom, empire, and isolated state. But this expansion has never been purely peaceful, nor automatically virtuous. It has often been brought about by upheavals, wars, crises, collapses, or radical challenges to the existing order.

This observation raises a deeper question.

If humanity is capable of expanding cooperation, why does not it do so faster, more clearly, and more peacefully? Why does the same species that invents law, science, art, institutions, compassion, and solidarity also organize war, domination, humiliation, exclusion, propaganda, and destruction?

The answer cannot be simple.

Human beings are not defined solely by wisdom or violence. They possess multiple, sometimes contradictory, potentialities. They can cooperate, protect, transmit, create,

heal, understand, forgive, and admire. They can also dominate, envy, hate, humiliate, conquer, exclude, destroy, and be captivated by power.

The political problem, therefore, is not to assume a naturally good or naturally bad humanity. It is to understand which human dispositions are amplified by institutions, narratives, technologies, crises, and collective forms of organization.

Human societies do not create human beings from scratch. They select, strengthen, contain, or unleash particular human capacities and impulses.

This is why the question of political wisdom is not about hoping for a miraculous transformation of human nature. It is about building institutions capable of fostering cooperative tendencies, containing predatory tendencies, and preventing their destructive amplification.

Human Beings as Creatures of Potential

Human beings are inherently unfinished. They are not born with a definitive political form. They receive a language, a culture, rules, prohibitions, stories, examples, fears, loyalties, wounds, and hopes. They become human within a pre-existing human world.

This plasticity is one of its strengths. It allows for education, transmission, invention, adaptation, moral conversion, institutional creation, and political progress.

But it is also one of its weaknesses. It makes human beings susceptible to stories of fear, hatred, grandeur, humiliation, revenge, purity, domination, or absolute salvation.

They can learn cooperation.
They can learn blind obedience.
They can learn freedom.
They can learn submission.
They can learn respect for others.
They can learn their own dehumanization.

Politics begins in this ambivalence.

Politics does not work with beings who are entirely rational, transparent to themselves, and spontaneously oriented toward the common good. It works with beings shaped by interests, passions, attachments, beliefs, wounds, affiliations, fears, and desires for recognition.

Every institution therefore embodies a practical anthropology. It presupposes a particular view of human beings, even when that view is not explicitly stated.

A democratic institution presupposes that individuals can deliberate, accept alternation of power, recognize legitimate opposition, and respect common rules.

An authoritarian institution presupposes that a central power must contain society because it is supposedly too divided, too dangerous, or too immature to govern itself.
A totalitarian institution presupposes that the individual must be absorbed by a higher, collective truth.
A liberal institution presupposes that individual freedom can produce an acceptable order if it is framed by law.
An imperial institution presupposes that a center can organize peripheries in the name of order, mission, security, or grandeur.

Thus, political forms are not merely techniques of government. They express a way of amplifying certain human dispositions and containing others.

Cooperative Dispositions

Cooperation is not an artificial invention. It is deeply rooted in human experience.

Individuals cooperate because they need each other. They raise children, transmit knowledge, share risks, exchange goods, organize protections, build common memories, institute rules, and seek to make life less precarious.

Cooperation is based on several fundamental dispositions: trust, reciprocity, loyalty, the capacity for empathy, a sense of promise, the need for recognition, attachment to a group, the ability to anticipate consequences, and the capacity to project oneself into a common future.

These dispositions may remain limited to the close circle. Human beings initially cooperate more easily with those they know, those who resemble them, those with whom they share language, memory, religion, nation or destiny.

Political expansion consists precisely in making cooperation possible beyond this immediate circle.

Law allows us to trust a rule rather than a person.
Money enables exchange between strangers.
A contract allows us to stabilize a promise.
Citizenship allows us to belong to a political community larger than our family or clan.
Representation allows us to transform millions of individuals into a political body.
International institutions allow rival states to maintain a space for dialogue, even when trust is lacking.

Expanded cooperation does not abolish interests; it organizes them.

Nor does it assume that people become perfectly altruistic. It assumes that institutions can make cooperation preferable, possible, or less costly than permanent confrontation.

This is a central dimension of political wisdom: it does not ask human beings to become angels; it seeks to build frameworks in which their interests, fears, and ambitions can be directed toward a minimal common order.

Predatory Dispositions

But human beings also possess predatory tendencies.

They may want to possess what others possess. They may seek to dominate in order not to be dominated. They may turn fear into aggression, humiliate others for reassurance, prefer obedience to shared freedom, or pursue the greatness of their group at the cost of crushing another.

These practices are not solely a matter of individual criminality or personal pathology. They can be collectively organized, ideologically justified, and institutionally amplified.

Conquest can become a mission.
Domination can become order.
Vengeance can become historical justice.
Exclusion can become purification.
Violence can become the defense of truth.
Submission can become peace.
The crushing of an adversary can become the salvation of the people.

The political danger arises when these dispositions find effective collective forms.

A violent individual can create victims.
A violent state apparatus can turn a people against their will.
A violent ideology can persist for generations.
Violent technology can extend the reach of coercion.
Effective propaganda can transform widespread fear into organized hatred.
Military, economic, or informational power can empower a drive for domination to become systemic.

Collective power then acts as a multiplier.

What the individual could not accomplish alone, the organization makes possible. What passion could not sustain, the institution stabilizes. What hatred could not reach locally, technology disseminates.

That is why the political question is never simply one of intentions. It is one of the mechanisms that allow intentions to produce effects.

Collective amplification

Every society amplifies.

It amplifies trust when it builds law, checks and balances, fair procedures, and spaces for deliberation.
It amplifies fear when it organizes surveillance, suspicion, the enemy within, and propaganda.
It amplifies cooperation when it rewards exchange, responsibility, and reciprocity.
It amplifies predation when it values conquest, domination, or impunity.
It amplifies wisdom when it protects long-term perspective, memory, and boundaries.
It amplifies irrationality when it abandons the public sphere to perpetual agitation, anger, humiliation, and lies.

Collective amplification depends on several instruments: institutions, narratives, education, media, technologies, religions, ideologies, markets, armies, platforms, and crises.

None of these instruments is unambiguous.

Education can liberate or indoctrinate.
Religion can open doors to universality or trap people in fanaticism.
The market can foster exchange or unleash predation.
The state can protect or oppress.
Technology can connect or monitor.
The media can inform or manipulate.
Platforms can empower or fragment the public sphere.
Alliances can prevent war or create hostile blocs.

The same human disposition can therefore change its scope depending on the instrument that amplifies it.

The anger of an isolated group remains limited. Amplified by a narrative of persecution, relayed by platforms, exploited by political entrepreneurs, encouraged by foreign powers or tolerated by weak institutions, it can become a historical force.

Conversely, individual compassion can remain powerless. Amplified by law, social institutions, international norms, humanitarian organizations, constitutional protections, and democratic culture, it can become public policy.

Civilization, therefore, is not the abolition of destructive potentialities. It is the ever-renewed effort to prevent them from possessing the best instruments of amplification on their own.

Narratives of Grandeur, Fear, and Humiliation

Among the forces of amplification, narratives occupy a special place.

Human beings do not act solely based on material interests. They also act based on stories they tell themselves about themselves, their wounds, their enemies, their past, their destiny, and their greatness.

A people can endure immense sacrifices if they believe they are defending their existence, regaining their dignity, redressing a humiliation, fulfilling a mission, or averting a threat. A leader can mobilize a society by transforming the complexity of reality into a simple narrative: we have been betrayed, surrounded, humiliated, dispossessed; we must restore our greatness, purify our community, reclaim what is rightfully ours, and defeat those who prevent us from being ourselves.

These accounts are not always false in their origin. Humiliations exist. Injustices exist. Fears are not always invented. Peoples may indeed have been dominated, colonized, attacked, despised, or threatened.

But the danger begins when the memory of the injury becomes a permanent license to dominate in turn.

Suffering can open the door to compassion.
It can also become a justification for revenge.
Memory can protect against repetition.
It can also trap us in repetition.
Collective pride can uphold dignity.
It can also become a will to crush.

Narratives of grandeur are among the most powerful. They can support collective effort, independence, resistance, or reconstruction. But they can also fuel imperial nostalgia, restorationist nationalisms, political messianisms, and power struggles.

When a narrative of grandeur encounters military, economic, technological, or informational power, it can transform a fragile identity into a politics of domination.

This is why the book's foresight analysis will pay particular attention to actors driven by narratives of revenge, restoration, or expansion. Not because these narratives explain everything, but because they shape how available power can be used.

Rigidity of conviction and closing off the world

Another human disposition plays a central role in political trajectories: the need for certainty.

Faced with uncertainty, complexity, change, and fear, societies may seek simple, closed, all-encompassing answers. Rigidity of conviction arises when belief ceases to be a debatable orientation and becomes an untouchable identity.

It transforms disagreement into a threat.
It transforms the opponent into an enemy.
It transforms doubt into betrayal.
It transforms nuance into weakness.
It transforms complexity into conspiracy.
It transforms politics into an existential struggle.

This rigidity can take various forms: revolutionary or counter-revolutionary ideologies, religious fanaticisms, closed nationalisms, supremacisms, anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories, identity radicalisms, totalizing visions of salvation or purity.

Two mistakes must be avoided here.

The first approach would be to reduce these phenomena to excessive opinions. They are more than that: they are mechanisms of cognitive and moral closure.

The second would be to lump them all together. Each ideology has its own history, texts, actors, contexts, and modalities. But all share, to varying degrees, a common difficulty: they reduce the capacity of a political system to recognize the legitimacy of the other, to accept the complexity of reality, and to organize compromise.

Therefore, rigid convictions are a factor that weakens political wisdom.

A wise society is not a society without convictions. That would be an empty society. It is a society capable of holding together strong convictions and recognizing the limits of those convictions.

A wise society knows that political truth never belongs entirely to one side.
It knows that an adversary is not necessarily a traitor.
It knows that pluralism is not always a threat.
It knows that compromise is not always capitulation.
It knows that the strength of an institution is also measured by its capacity to protect those who do not think like the current majority.

Conversely, when rigid convictions take hold, power becomes more dangerous. It no longer serves merely interests; it serves a closed certainty.

Technologies That Amplify and Accelerate Irrationality

Human potential has always been amplified by instruments. But contemporary instruments give it a new speed, scale, and intensity.

Anger used to circulate through rumor, speech, pamphlet, press, meetings, or radio. Now it circulates through instant networks, viral images, recommendation algorithms, closed communities, coordinated campaigns, deepfakes, bots, and global platforms.

Propaganda is not new. What has changed is its granularity, its speed, its personalization, and its ability to simultaneously fragment multiple public spaces.

Surveillance is not new. What is changing is its sophistication, its automation, and its potential integration with predictive systems.
Psychological warfare is not new. What is changing is its connection to social networks, data, AI, and the cognitive vulnerabilities of open societies.
Manipulation is not new. What is changing is its capacity to become infrastructure.

Contemporary technologies do not invent irrationality. They can accelerate it.

They do not invent wisdom either. But they can help it, if they are oriented toward knowledge, education, scientific cooperation, early warning, crisis prevention, health, transparency, civic participation or the protection of common goods.

The issue, therefore, is not to oppose humans to technology. It is to understand which human dispositions technology amplifies.

A platform that maximizes attention can amplify outrage.
A well-designed education system can amplify understanding.
AI used without control can amplify manipulation or addiction.
AI governed by demanding rules can amplify research, medicine, prevention, and coordination.
A market without limits can amplify predation.
A regulated market can amplify useful innovation.

Technology is a multiplier.
The crucial question is the direction of the multiplier.

The scale transforms the nature of the risk

When human potential is amplified on a large scale, the risks change in nature.

Rivalry between two individuals can produce a local conflict.
Rivalry between two groups can produce a vendetta or a tribal war.
Rivalry between two modern states can produce a regional war.
Rivalry between nuclear, technological, economic, and informational powers can produce a global crisis.

The scale does not simply amplify the effects. It transforms the type of responsibility required.

In a world of low power, some mistakes can be absorbed. In a world of planetary power, some mistakes can become irreversible.

Humanity is thus entering an era where the available tools sometimes exceed the capacity of institutions to control the consequences.

This discrepancy explains the centrality of systemic risks.

A systemic risk is not simply a risk that is greater than another. It is a risk that spreads through the interdependencies of the system. It can start from a limited point and produce cascading effects: financial, health, energy, food, military, informational, or technological.

Contemporary crises do not respect administrative boundaries. They transcend levels. They combine the local and the global, the public and the private, the material and the immaterial, the military and the economic, the technical and the psychological.

This transformation forces us to rethink wisdom.

In a world with few connections, wisdom might primarily consist of governing one's city, kingdom, or state well. In an interdependent world, it must also consist of understanding the systemic effects of one's own decisions.

Political responsibility becomes broader than territory.
It becomes a responsibility of interdependence.

Institutions: Choosing What Humanity Amplifies

Institutions therefore have a decisive function: they select the human potential that will be encouraged, rewarded, contained or discouraged.

They do not make people perfect. They make certain behaviors more likely than others.

An institution can make corruption easy or difficult.
It can make compromise honorable or shameful.
It can make violence costly or profitable.
It can make truth useful or useless.
It can make lying risky or rewarded.
It can make cooperation rational or naive.
It can make accountability visible or obscured.

That is why the quality of institutions matters as much as the quality of intentions.

A good intention placed within a flawed system can become ineffective.
A bad intention contained by a sound system can be limited.
A society cannot rely solely on the virtue of its leaders. It must create conditions in which virtue becomes beneficial and abuse becomes difficult.

Political wisdom, therefore, consists less in seeking perfect rulers than in building institutions that reduce the effects of human imperfections.

It presupposes a clear-sighted anthropology: human beings can be admirable, but they can also abuse power, lie, make mistakes, seek revenge, be seduced by greatness or give in to fear.

Democracy, when it functions, rests precisely on this clear-sightedness. It does not assume that the people or the leaders are naturally wise. It assumes that power must be limited, controlled, rotated, debated, held accountable, and subject to criticism.

Democratic wisdom is not the naive belief in spontaneous goodness. It is the institutional organization of reasonable mistrust and possible trust.

This logic also applies on a global scale.

This is not to suggest that global governance would necessarily be wise. It could be technocratic, oppressive, ineffective, or captured by the most powerful. The point is to understand that the absence of any global governance in systemic areas leaves destructive forces without sufficient checks and balances.

The question then becomes: how to build common institutions that amplify cooperation without dangerously concentrating domination?

This is one of the fundamental issues of the wisdom scenario.

From political anthropology to foresight

This chapter does not claim to offer a complete theory of human nature. It seeks to highlight an idea useful for foresight: the trajectories of the world will largely depend on human dispositions, which will be amplified by institutions, technologies, and crises.

If narratives of fear, humiliation, revenge, and grandeur are amplified by powerful states, uncontrolled platforms, manipulative technologies, and weak institutions, the world will move closer to chaos.

If well-understood interests, fear of collapse, fatigue from conflicts and awareness of interdependencies lead actors to restore mechanisms of restraint, the world may enter into imperfect reasonableness.

If existential risks lead humanity to build new institutions capable of guiding AI, climate, resources, information, conflicts and common goods, then wisdom can become something other than an individual virtue: an organized political function.

The scenarios in the book therefore do not assume three different humanities.

They assume three forms of amplification of human potentialities.

In chaos, predatory, paranoid, narcissistic, hegemonic, or fanatical tendencies prevail.
In a trajectory of reasonableness, prudent, self-interested, and necessity-driven tendencies manage to partially contain excesses.
In a trajectory of wisdom, the most reflective, responsible, and long-term oriented tendencies find institutional expression.

The political destiny of the world depends not only on what human beings are, but on what their institutions encourage them to become.

The following chapter will examine a historical moment when humanity, confronted with a major catastrophe, attempted to change its institutional scale: 1945. This moment did not bring about global wisdom. But it showed that upheaval could make a new organization of the relationships between power, law, and responsibility conceivable.

2.2.3 1945: first global institutional shift

The preceding chapters have shown that humanity has already experienced several expansions of the circle of cooperation, but that these expansions have rarely been peaceful. They have often appeared after major upheavals, when the old forms of organization were no longer sufficient to contain the new problems.

The year 1945 was, in this respect, a decisive moment.

It does not mark the advent of global wisdom. It does not eliminate power rivalries, national interests, ideologies, or violence. But it represents a change of institutional scale: for the first time, humanity attempts to respond to a global catastrophe with a political, legal, and moral organization that aspires to be global itself.

The disaster was not only military. It was civilizational.

Two world wars in less than half a century had shown that technological modernity could increase destruction as much as progress. Industry, science, administrations, transport, propaganda, bureaucracies, and modern weapons had been mobilized in the service of total war, extermination, conquest, and annihilation.

Modern power had revealed its dark side.

It was not only capable of producing, healing, transporting, educating, or connecting. It could also organize mass destruction with an efficiency previously unknown.

This observation is central to PRA: power does not inherently carry its own guiding principle. It can be used to serve civilization or barbarism. The more power increases, the more essential the question of its governance becomes.

Trauma as an institutional foundation

The order that emerged after 1945 cannot be understood without the trauma that preceded it.

The Second World War simultaneously revealed several failures:

the failure of the classical balance of power;
the failure of national sovereignty conceived as unlimited power;
the failure of international institutions incapable of preventing war;
the failure of modern societies to protect humanity against their own technological power;
the failure of a civilization that sometimes believed that material progress would mechanically lead to moral progress.

Faced with this collapse, humanity does not suddenly become united. But a new truth emerges: certain catastrophes can no longer be treated as mere diplomatic or military accidents. They demand principles, institutions, prohibitions, and mechanisms of cooperation that go beyond the mere interplay of sovereignties.

The United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the institutions resulting from Bretton Woods, international conventions, the nascent international criminal justice system, economic cooperation mechanisms and the first steps toward European integration all contribute to this change of scale.

These institutions do not constitute a world government. They do not abolish states. They do not put an end to power struggles. But they introduce a new idea into the political order: sovereignty can no longer be conceived as indifferent to responsibility toward humanity.

This is a huge undertaking.

It does not mean that states agree to dissolve into a higher order. It means that they recognize, at least formally, that certain crimes, certain rights, certain risks, and certain principles exceed the moral competence of a single state.

After 1945, a state can no longer so easily claim that what it does to its own populations or to the outside world is its own business.

Recognition remains imperfect. Implementation remains uneven. Great powers retain privileges. But a threshold has been crossed: humanity is beginning to think of itself as a minimal political subject, not merely as an aggregation of peoples or states.

The birth of a universal language

One of the major contributions of the post-1945 era lies in the establishment of a universal language of rights, dignity and responsibility.

Before 1945, many principles already existed: human rights, the rights of peoples, constitutional traditions, humanitarian doctrines, rules of war, religious or philosophical principles of human dignity. But the post-war period gave them a new significance.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that certain rights belong to every human being, not because of their nationality, religion, political affiliation, race, class, or social utility, but simply because of their humanity.

This statement does not abolish the contradictions of the world. It does not prevent dictatorships, wars, persecutions, or double standards. But it provides a language in which injustice can be named across borders.

It is a profound transformation.

When a violation is denounced in the name of human rights, it is no longer just the affair of an injured group or a particular State. It becomes, at least in principle, a matter of universal conscience.

This language can be manipulated. It can serve political interests. It can be applied selectively. But its very existence changes the moral landscape of global politics.

Even those who violate it often feel compelled to justify it, circumvent it, or pretend to respect it. This is a sign that the principle, however weak, has acquired authority.

Political wisdom, therefore, does not reside solely in the creation of powerful institutions. It also resides in the formation of a common vocabulary enabling us to judge power.

Europe as a laboratory for transformation

European integration constitutes one of the most original responses to the trauma of war.

It is based on a simple and profound intuition: to prevent the return of war between European powers, it is not enough to call for peace; it is necessary to transform the material, economic, legal and institutional conditions of rivalry.

Post-war Europe does not abolish nations. It tries to unite them.

Europe is betting that organized interdependence can become an instrument of pacification. Coal, steel, trade, law, standards, jurisdictions, common policies, and shared institutions gradually become means of transforming former adversaries into structural partners.

This project is not without its limitations. It can be technocratic, slow, detached from citizens, vulnerable to crises, internal divisions, and rivalries between member states. It does not eliminate national interests. It does not automatically produce a unified geopolitical power.

But it represents a major experiment: that of partially shared sovereignty to make war between former enemies less conceivable.

Europe thus demonstrates that political wisdom does not consist solely in proclaiming values. It consists of creating interdependencies, rules, and institutions that modify the incentives of actors.

It illustrates one of the central ideas of the book: peace is not based solely on intentions. It is based on architectures.

The immediate limits of the 1945 order

However, it would be naive to present 1945 as a pure shift toward wisdom.

The new order carries within it its own contradictions.

The UN affirms the sovereign equality of states, but the Security Council grants special privileges to the victorious major powers. Human rights are proclaimed as universal, but their implementation largely depends on the balance of power. Decolonization is not immediate. Ideological rivalries quickly intensify. The Cold War takes hold. Conflicts do not disappear; they shift, transform, become regionalized, or become indirect.

Humanity has therefore not transcended the logic of power. It has only partially framed it.

The post-1945 era did not achieve harmony. It created instruments of restraint, dialogue, norms, and cooperation. It did not end the tragic history. It introduced into this history brakes, forums, references, and institutions capable, at times, of limiting the runaway effect.

The nascent global wisdom is therefore incomplete, fragile, and often powerless. But it exists.

It exists in the prohibition of genocide.
It exists in the reference to human rights.
It exists in the concept of crimes against humanity.
It exists in institutions of cooperation.
It exists in the memory of catastrophes.
It exists in the conviction that power must be held accountable.

The post-1945 world is not wise. But it now knows that a lack of wisdom can lead to the abyss.

1945 as a precedent for the 21st century

Why revisit 1945 in a 21st-century perspective?

Not because the current situation replicates 1945. Historical analogies must be handled with care: today's world is not the postwar world, and its actors, technologies, interdependencies, risks, institutions, and societies have changed.

But 1945 provides a methodological precedent.

It shows that a major upheaval can make previously unthinkable institutional changes acceptable. Societies and states sometimes accept new levels of cooperation when they recognize that old mechanisms have failed. It also shows that fear of the worst can become, if not wisdom, at least a source of institutional rationality.

This lesson sheds light on the scenarios in the book.

In the reasonableness scenario, the actors do not become wise, but they rebuild restraint mechanisms because the cost of chaos becomes too high.

In the wisdom scenario, a deeper upheaval leads humanity to build new institutions that are up to the systemic risks: artificial intelligence, climate, critical resources, information, pandemics, vital infrastructure, nuclear or near-nuclear war.

In a scenario of chaos, on the contrary, upheavals multiply without producing proportionate institutions. The world then experiences shocks without rebuilding.

The challenge of the 21st century can thus be formulated in simple terms: will humanity have to wait for a major catastrophe to change scale, or will it be able to anticipate enough to prevent the upheaval from becoming irreversible?

1945 was a response after the disaster.
The contemporary challenge is perhaps to build a response before the disaster is complete.

2.2.4 Cold War: Relative Peace, Deterrence and Restraint

The order that emerged after 1945 quickly revealed a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, humanity established universal institutions, proclaimed fundamental rights, built mechanisms for cooperation, and affirmed the need to prevent a return to world war. On the other hand, it divided into two antagonistic ideological, military, economic, and strategic blocs.

The Cold War is therefore not an external parenthesis to the order of 1945. It is one of its central forms.

It shows that the emerging institutional wisdom does not eliminate power rivalry. It partially contains it, under the pressure of a new risk: the possibility of mutual nuclear destruction.

The paradox of the Cold War lies in this formula:

Relative peace was not born of trust, but of the shared fear of annihilation.

This peace was far from perfect. It was not peaceful for the many territories affected by proxy wars, interventions, coups d'état, externally supported dictatorships, ideological conflicts, or regional clashes. But it did prevent a direct and total military confrontation between the two superpowers.

The Cold War thus shows a particular form of reasonableness: not moral wisdom, but restraint imposed by the awareness of the worst.

Deterrence as a discipline of power

Nuclear weapons radically transform the nature of warfare between great powers.

Conventional warfare still allowed for the possibility of victory. Widespread nuclear war makes victory uncertain, perhaps impossible, and in any case inseparable from an existential cost.

Military power then reaches a paradoxical threshold: the more absolute it becomes, the more its use becomes politically irrational.

Deterrence rests on this contradiction. It does not eliminate violence. It does not make actors virtuous. It does not disarm ambitions. But it does introduce a limit: some means are too destructive to be used without endangering the user.

Power is therefore contained by the fear of its own consequences.

This logic is not wisdom in the true sense. It is not based on a profound recognition of our shared humanity. It is based on calculation, survival, strategic prudence, knowledge of the cost, and fear of the irreversible.

But this caution matters.

It shows that reasonable policy can arise not only from shared values, but also from a clear understanding of common risks.

The Cold War did not bring about peace; it organized restraint between those who had acquired the capacity to destroy each other.

Bipolarity as a structure of readability

The Cold War was dangerous, but it possessed a characteristic that the contemporary world has partly lost: a certain legibility.

Two main poles structured the system. Alliances were relatively identifiable. Red lines, even if shifting, were known. Strategic doctrines, spheres of influence, military relations, and diplomatic channels formed a framework for interpretation.

This clarity did not make the world just. It did not protect people caught in areas of indirect conflict. It did not prevent serious crises. But it did allow the main actors to partially understand the boundaries that should not be crossed.

Bipolar disorder imposed a discipline.

Each side was watching the other. Every major crisis was interpreted through the lens of the risk of escalation. Every advance had to be assessed not only for its immediate benefit, but also for the possible reaction of the adversary.

In this context, caution became a strategic necessity.

One of the lessons of the Cold War is therefore that restraint does not always require friendship. It can arise from a rivalry sufficiently structured to make escalation predictable.

The contemporary danger is different: a fragmented, multipolar, technologically accelerated world traversed by non-state actors can become less legible, and therefore less controllable.

Peripheral wars and false peace

However, we must avoid retrospective idealization.

The Cold War was not a world peace. It was an absence of direct war between the superpowers, accompanied by numerous peripheral conflicts, internationalized civil wars, interventions, repressions, arms races, and ideological violence.

For a large part of humanity, the Cold War was not cold.

Conflicts in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and elsewhere demonstrated that central restraint could coexist with peripheral violence. The great powers avoided direct confrontation, but their rivalries played out in third-party territories.

This structure produces an important lesson for PRA: a global system can be relatively stable at its center and profoundly violent at its margins.

Global stability should therefore never be confused with universal peace.

An international architecture can contain escalation between major powers while allowing regional tragedies to unfold. It can protect the system without equitably protecting all populations. It can prevent the worst without guaranteeing justice.

In a reasonable approach, the world can avoid widespread escalation while remaining marked by regional conflicts. In a chaotic situation, peripheral conflicts can intertwine, transforming global war into a diffuse state of the system. In a wise approach, central restraint must be complemented by increased responsibility toward exposed areas.

Institutions under pressure

During the Cold War, international institutions did not disappear. They often functioned with difficulty, partially, and under constraints. The UN was frequently paralyzed by the rivalries of the great powers, but it remained a forum for discourse, legitimation, diplomatic confrontation, and sometimes mediation.

An institution can be weak without being useless.
It can fail to resolve conflicts while still maintaining a space for contact.
It can be manipulated while retaining normative value.
It can be circumvented while still reminding us of the existence of shared principles.

In a world of extreme rivalry, simply maintaining common forums already constitutes an element of restraint.

The Cold War thus demonstrates that international institutions do not need to be omnipotent to play a role. They can serve as channels, stages, repositories of memory, procedural frameworks, and points of reference. They can prevent rivalry from becoming purely savage.

But their effectiveness still depends on the minimum willingness of the actors not to break the common framework.

When this will disappears, institutions become decorative. When this will remains, even weakly, they can help to contain the escalation.

International reasonableness sometimes arises from that thin institutional layer that remains when trust has disappeared.

Ideological competition

The Cold War was also a competition of narratives.

Each side claimed to embody a future for humanity. Each side mobilized universal values: freedom, equality, justice, progress, emancipation, peace, sovereignty of peoples, the fight against imperialism, and the defense of the free world.

Power was not limited to arsenals. It included the ability to produce a global narrative.

A world order is never maintained by force alone. It is also maintained by the narratives that justify force, organize loyalties, mobilize societies, and give meaning to sacrifices.

The Cold War thus pitted material powers against each other, but also worldviews. It showed that ideological conflict can have a lasting impact on the international system.

The 21st century presents a different situation. The grand, universal ideological narratives of the 20th century have been transformed, weakened, or fragmented. But the narratives of grandeur, civilization, humiliation, sovereignty, revenge, purity, resistance, and salvation have not disappeared. They return in other forms, sometimes less systematic, but more pervasive.

This narrative fragmentation may be more unstable than a structured ideological opposition.

When several incompatible narratives overlap—nationalist, religious, identity-based, technological, conspiratorial, civilizational, anti-imperial, messianic, or restorationist—the system's legibility diminishes. Conflicts become more difficult to prioritize and contain.

The Cold War had two major competing narratives. The contemporary world has a multitude of them.

Restraint as a fragile right

The main lesson of the Cold War is therefore not that fear alone is enough to produce peace. Fear can also produce escalation, paranoia, an arms race, and miscalculations.

The lesson is more precise: when the fear of the worst is recognized by actors capable of calculation, it can produce restraint mechanisms.

These mechanisms take several forms:

diplomatic channels;
doctrines of deterrence;
limitation agreements;

recognition of red lines;
implicit acceptance of certain zones of caution;
shared awareness of nuclear irreversibility;
negotiation rituals even between enemies.

Restraint, therefore, is not an emotion. It is an architecture.

It assumes that the actors understand that they can lose together. It assumes that absolute victory becomes less desirable than avoiding disaster. It assumes that the adversary remains an adversary, not a mere object of annihilation.

This is one of the most important lessons for the 21st century.

If actors cease to recognize the shared risk, power once again becomes a temptation to misuse. If technology makes escalation faster than human decision-making, restraint becomes more difficult. If narratives transform the adversary into the absolute enemy, compromise becomes treason. If shared institutions disappear, fear no longer has a framework within which to transform into prudence.

The Cold War thus demonstrates a minimal wisdom: the ability not to do what one could do, because one understands that available power can turn against everyone.

A transition to the post-1991 era

When the Cold War ended, part of the world believed it was emerging from a tragic chapter of history. The disappearance of bipolarity seemed to pave the way for an expansion of the liberal model, economic globalization, progressive democratization, market integration, a reduction in ideological conflicts, and the establishment of a rules-based international order.

This hope was not entirely illusory. It was based on real developments: the collapse of an ideological empire, the expansion of trade, the broadening of certain institutions, technological progress, the rise of interdependencies, and the spread of democratic norms.

But that illusion underestimated several deep forces: the persistence of humiliations, the return of powers, the social effects of globalization, the fragility of democracies, the ambitions of authoritarian regimes, the power of identities, critical resources, technological dependencies, and the inability of global institutions to transform unipolarity into legitimate governance.

The post-Cold War era thus opens a strange moment: a world less structured by immediate nuclear fear, but also less disciplined by bipolarity.

The following chapter examines this interlude: the hope for a unipolar and liberal order, then the gradual return of fragmentation.

2.3 Contemporary fragmentation

2.3.1 From the unipolar interlude to the return of fragmentation

The end of the Cold War may have given the impression that history was entering a new phase. The defining confrontation between the two blocs was disappearing. The Soviet Union was collapsing. The United States was becoming the dominant power. The market economy seemed to be emerging as the global horizon. Liberal democracies appeared to be enjoying unprecedented prestige. Globalization promised interdependence, growth, openness, and perhaps the gradual pacification of international relations.

This moment can be described as a unipolar interlude.

It does not mean that the United States controlled the world. It does not mean that conflicts had disappeared. It does not mean that all regions shared the same trajectory. But it does refer to a period when one power possessed military, economic, technological, financial, diplomatic, and cultural superiority without immediate equal.

The unipolar interlude was also an intellectual moment. It fostered the idea that liberal convergence could become the normal destiny of modern societies. Markets, technologies, law, trade, international institutions, and economic openness were expected to gradually bring regimes closer together, mitigate conflicts, and make war less rational.

This hypothesis contained a grain of truth.

Interdependence can bring peace. Trade can create common interests. Institutions can stabilize expectations. Democracy can limit certain forms of violence. The rule of law can protect freedoms. Globalization can lift people out of poverty and promote the flow of knowledge.

But this hypothesis also contained an illusion: believing that economic interdependence would be enough to produce political convergence and institutional wisdom.

Unipolarity is not global governance

The first limitation of the unipolar interlude lies in a possible confusion between the domination of one power and the governance of the world.

Unipolarity concentrates power.
Global governance organizes a shared and legitimate authority.

These are two different realities.

A dominant power can provide public goods: maritime security, financial stability, technical standards, alliances, assistance, mediation, military capabilities, and protection of certain balances. It can help contain crises and structure order.

But it remains a unique power. It pursues its own interests, interprets the rules from its own position, benefits from asymmetries, can make mistakes, impose choices, provoke resistance, and be perceived as both judge and party.

Unipolarity can therefore produce order without always producing legitimacy.

Global governance would require something more: accepted rules, institutions capable of constraining even the most powerful, more balanced representation of interests, coordination between sovereign authority and common goods, and the capacity to address systemic risks at the scale of their effects.

The post-1991 era did not achieve this. It mainly saw the expansion of an order dominated by Western powers, with the United States at the center, in a context where the Soviet ideological alternative had disappeared.

This order may have seemed natural to those who benefited from it or who shared its values. It may have seemed unequal, intrusive, or humiliating to others.

This divergence in perception will gradually become one of the driving forces behind the return of fragmentation.

The illusion of automatic convergence

One of the major bets of the post-Cold War era was that economic integration would promote political openness.

By linking economies, developing trade, integrating production chains, attracting investment, spreading technology and multiplying contacts, the world was supposed to make regimes more interdependent, therefore less hostile, perhaps freer.

This logic produced real effects. Economies developed. Societies urbanized. Middle classes emerged. Knowledge circulated. Scientific, industrial, and commercial cooperation intensified.

But economic integration has not automatically produced political convergence.

Some regimes have used globalization to strengthen their power without liberalizing their systems. They have captured technologies, accumulated reserves, developed their industries, consolidated their surveillance apparatus, increased their strategic autonomy, and used economic openness as a source of power.

Globalization has therefore not only spread interdependence. It has also spread vulnerabilities.

Supply chains have become instruments of pressure.
Energy dependencies have become strategic levers.

Technologies have become arenas of rivalry.
Markets have become spaces for punishment.
Data has become a resource of power.
Infrastructure has become a point of vulnerability.

Interdependence was supposed to make war irrational. It has sometimes made coercion more subtle.

Economic dependence does not eliminate the logic of power; it gives it new instruments.

The return of historical humiliations

The unipolar interlude was also marked by wounds of recognition.

The end of an empire or bloc is never just a strategic event. It produces narratives, humiliations, nostalgia, loss of status, and desires for revenge.

Where some saw the expansion of freedom, others saw the erasure of a past grandeur. Where some saw the expansion of a rules-based order, others saw the imposition of the victor's rules. Where some saw globalization as a positive force, others saw the erosion of protections, sovereignties, identities, and collective dignity.

These perceptions are not always accurate. They can be manipulated by leaders, ideologues, or propaganda machines. But they do have real political power.

A humiliation, even if reconstructed or exaggerated, can become a driving force for action if it is shared by a society or mobilized by a power.

Restoration narratives often arise from this feeling: we have been brought down; our greatness has been denied; our place has been taken from us; the existing order prevents us from becoming ourselves again.

These narratives can fuel power politics.

They do not concern a single country or region. They can appear in various forms: imperial nostalgia, restorationist nationalisms, civilizational revenges, anti-Western protests, postcolonial resentments, refusal of downward mobility, identity tensions, refusal of dependence.

The unipolar interlude thus produced a paradox: the more the dominant order perceived itself as universal, the more some actors perceived it as particular, hierarchical or humiliating.

This divergence has contributed to the return of bloc politics, offensive sovereignty, and challenges to the established order.

The internal weaknesses of liberal democracies

The return of fragmentation does not stem solely from authoritarian or revisionist powers. It also stems from the internal weaknesses of liberal democracies.

These countries long enjoyed a symbolic advantage after the Cold War. They seemed to embody the victorious political model: public freedoms, regular elections, rule of law, open economy, civil society, alternation of power, fundamental rights.

But several weaknesses have gradually emerged: political polarization, distrust of institutions, perceived inequalities, crisis of representation, media fragmentation, weakening of mediations, rise of populism, democratic fatigue, difficulty in thinking long-term, feeling of dispossession linked to globalization or technological transformations.

Liberal democracies have not collapsed. But their moral authority has been challenged from within as well as from without.

A democracy that doubts itself finds it harder to project a model.
A polarized democracy struggles to embody stability.
A democracy that does not adequately protect its middle class fuels its own adversaries.
A democracy dominated by media immediacy struggles to manage long-term risks.
A cognitively fragmented democracy becomes vulnerable to information manipulation.

When democracies appear divided, inconsistent, or unable to decide, authoritarian regimes may present their own model as more efficient, more stable, or better suited to crises.

Global competition then becomes not only strategic, but also politico-symbolic: what type of regime seems capable of governing complexity?

Crises as accelerators

Several crises have accelerated the end of the unipolar illusion.

Difficult military interventions, protracted wars, financial crises, pandemics, energy tensions, migrations, social fractures, technological disruptions, and trade rivalries have gradually revealed the limits of the globalized liberal order.

Each crisis has produced a revealing effect.

The crises showed that interdependencies could be dangerous.
They showed that markets could not replace states.
They showed that global supply chains could break.
They showed that open societies could be vulnerable to manipulation.
They showed that international institutions could be slow, weak, or divided.

They showed that military power was not always enough to produce a lasting political order.
They showed that technologies could fragment as much as unify.

Thus, the world did not simply emerge from unipolarity through a mechanical redistribution of power. It emerged from it through an accumulation of disillusionments.

The unipolar order promised convergence.
The world has discovered a conflictual interdependence.

Multipolarity or fragmentation?

The contemporary world is often presented as multipolar. The term is useful, but insufficient.

Multipolarity refers to the presence of several centers of power. It implies a certain structure: identifiable centers, power relations, alliances, zones of influence, and balances of power.

Fragmentation refers to something else: the multiplication of fault lines, actors, arenas, technologies, narratives, dependencies, and vulnerabilities.

The world today is not only multipolar. It is fragmented.

There are rivalries between great powers, but also between autonomous regional powers, systemic companies, cognitive platforms, transnational networks, armed groups, fragile states, financial funds, critical infrastructures, digital dependencies, cartels, diasporas, ideological movements and technological actors whose reach sometimes exceeds that of many states.

This fragmentation makes governance more difficult.

In a bipolar world, the main question was: how to avoid direct confrontation between two blocs?
In a unipolar world, the question was: how to organize order around a dominant power?
In a fragmented world, the question becomes: how to govern systemic interactions between heterogeneous actors, divergent interests, and transnational risks?

The answer is much more complex.

The return of the tragic

The unipolar interlude had sometimes given the impression that world politics could become primarily economic, legal, and technocratic. Conflicts had not disappeared, but they seemed contained within a general horizon of globalization.

The return of fragmentation reintroduces tragedy.

Powers want recognition. People want protection. States want to control their dependencies. Regimes want to survive. Platforms want to grow. Businesses want to secure their supply chains. Ideologies want to persuade or conquer. Humiliated groups want redress. Exposed actors seek protectors. Alliances are reforming. Borders are once again becoming lines of fear. Resources are once again becoming strategic. Information is once again becoming a battleground.

The world is not becoming empty. It is becoming too full.

Too many actors.
Too many competing narratives.
Too many dependencies.
Too many weapons.
Too many ungoverned technologies.
Too many readily available humiliations.
Too many systemic interests without a sufficiently legitimate arbiter.

The problem is not just the return of power. It is the return of power in a world where the instruments of power are more numerous, faster, more distributed, and more difficult to contain than in the time of classical rivalries.

Toward a new geography of power

The end of the unipolar interlude therefore requires a change of perspective.

It is no longer sufficient to oppose democracies and authoritarian regimes, the West and the non-West, the North and the South, strong states and weak states. These distinctions remain useful, but they do not describe the entire structure of the system.

We need to identify the real places where power is formed: states, alliances, platforms, infrastructures, resources, technologies, financial networks, industrial chains, ideological narratives, information systems, coercive groups, public opinions, critical dependencies.

Power is no longer confined to capital cities. It flows through networks. It is stored in data. It crystallizes in semiconductors. It is projected into satellites. It is diffused across platforms. It is exerted through sanctions. It manifests itself in ports, cables, minerals, AI models, standards, currencies, and narratives.

Without this expanded mapping, foresight would remain trapped in a world that no longer quite exists.

2.4 The new geography of actors

2.4.1 A new geography of power

Political power has long been conceived primarily in terms of states: territory, population, military, economy, diplomacy, sovereignty, administration, fiscal capacity, and alliances. These dimensions remain essential. No contemporary actor entirely replaces the state. The state retains the capacity to make laws, decide on war, organize security, collect taxes, legally recognize other actors, and represent a political community.

But global power can no longer be confined to this single form.

The contemporary world is structured by a more complex geography, where states coexist with actors, infrastructures, technologies and networks capable of influencing the world order.

This new geography does not eliminate the old one. It cuts through it.

Borders remain. But flows transcend them.
Sovereignties remain. But interdependencies constrain them.
Armies remain. But platforms, data, semiconductors, cables, sanctions, and AI are also becoming instruments of power.
Diplomacies remain. But businesses, diasporas, armed groups, financial funds, NGOs, the media, and social networks also participate in shaping power dynamics.

Contemporary power is therefore composite.

It no longer resides solely in the ability to control a territory. It also resides in the ability to control dependencies.

States remain central

First, a point of equilibrium must be maintained: the State remains the central actor in the international system.

It is the only one with legally recognized sovereignty. It can raise armies, conclude treaties, control borders, define foreign policy, imprison, tax, regulate, nationalize, sanction, authorize, prohibit, protect and declare war.

Even the most powerful companies depend on a legal, fiscal, monetary, security, and diplomatic framework provided by states. Even global platforms must contend with regulators, jurisdictions, public procurement, national infrastructure, geopolitical constraints, and sometimes national security injunctions.

The state is therefore not obsolete. It is challenged, circumvented, extended and sometimes captured by other forms of power.

The contemporary problem is not the disappearance of the State. It is its relative inadequacy in the face of powers that it no longer controls alone.

The most powerful states then seek to regain control: industrial policies, sanctions, export control, digital sovereignty, strategic relocations, securing minerals, controlling critical chains, regulating platforms, controlling investments, protecting data, militarizing space and cyberspace.

This reaction shows that sovereignty has not disappeared. It is being redefined around dependencies.

Being sovereign no longer just means controlling a territory. It also means not being vulnerable to a disruption of semiconductors, energy, data, payments, satellites, medicines, cables, software, ports or critical resources.

Sovereignty becomes the capacity for continuity in a world of interdependencies.

Systemic private powers

The most visible new development lies in the role of systemic private powers.

Some companies have a greater capacity for action than many states. They control digital infrastructures, information platforms, logistics networks, artificial intelligence models, payment systems, energy resources, fleets, satellites, data or essential industrial chains.

They can accelerate innovation, solve problems, connect populations, and provide capabilities that states need. But they can also create dependencies, impose private standards, modify the public sphere, influence behaviors, shape access to information, or impact sovereign decisions.

Their power is unique: it is global in its effects, but private in its purpose.

A state, at least in principle, must answer to a political community. A company answers first and foremost to its mission, its managers, its shareholders, its markets, its growth strategy, and the regulations to which it is subject.

When the scope of a business becomes systemic, this difference becomes politically decisive.

A platform can alter the conditions of public debate.
A cloud provider can become indispensable to government agencies.
A satellite operator can affect a war.
A semiconductor manufacturer can influence entire industries.
An AI lab can transform access to knowledge, employment, and decision-making.
A financial actor can influence the financing conditions of states and businesses.

These actors have acquired a global reach without possessing global legitimacy.

This is one of the major imbalances of the era.

Critical infrastructure and silent power

Contemporary power also resides in infrastructure.

Some infrastructures are visible: ports, roads, gas pipelines, electricity networks, satellites, data centers, semiconductor factories, submarine cables, energy terminals, railway corridors, logistics platforms.

Others are less visible: digital protocols, payment systems, technical standards, financial centers, marine insurance, industrial software, cloud dependencies, certification chains, accounting standards, identification systems, databases.

These infrastructures organize the daily functioning of the world. They do not always make the headlines in political events, but they determine what can circulate, be financed, insured, produced, transported, connected, monitored or interrupted.

Infrastructural power is often silent until the moment it is withdrawn.

When a port is blocked, a cable is cut, software stops working, a currency becomes inaccessible, a component is missing, marine insurance disappears, a cloud is suspended, or an energy route is threatened, dependency becomes visible.

Power then consists less in possessing than in creating dependence.
Less in conquering than in being able to interrupt.
Less in occupying than in controlling the passage.

Straits, minerals, semiconductors, satellites, cables, data, standards and platforms are becoming places of power in the same way as borders and military bases.

The world map is no longer read solely in terms of surfaces. It is read in terms of nodes, flows, vulnerabilities, and points of rupture.

Informational power

Information power is one of the most defining dimensions of the new geography.

It is not just about spreading propaganda. It is about influencing how societies perceive reality, prioritize problems, identify enemies, trust institutions, or doubt any shared truth.

Information is no longer just content. It has become an environment.

Digital platforms, algorithms, global media, influencers, disinformation networks, intelligence services, coordinated campaigns, ideological communities, and AI technologies are transforming the cognitive space into a strategic field.

A society can be weakened without being invaded.
It can be divided without a shot being fired.
It can lose faith in its institutions, its media, its elections, its science, its justice system, or its shared history.
It can become ungovernable because it no longer shares enough of a common reality to deliberate on.

Informational power therefore acts upstream of political decision-making. It affects the very conditions under which a society can understand, will, and decide.

This power is all the more difficult to govern as it crosses borders and intertwines with freedom of expression, the economic interests of platforms, foreign influence strategies, genuine social anger, identity narratives and the psychological vulnerabilities of individuals.

Manipulation does not need to invent everything. It amplifies what already exists: fear, humiliation, resentment, distrust, anger, loneliness, need for belonging, rigidity of conviction.

Informational power thus links geopolitics to political anthropology.

Critical resources and strategic dependencies

Critical resources constitute another major source of power.

Energy, minerals, water, rare earths, components, industrial capacity, medicines, food, semiconductors, batteries, electrical grids and transport infrastructure determine the ability of societies to function.

In a world of energy transition, digitalization, sophisticated weaponry and industrial competition, certain resources become strategic not only because of their scarcity, but also because of their role in chains of dependency.

Power no longer consists solely of possessing the resource. It consists of controlling its extraction, refining, transport, financing, transformation, certification, industrial use, or technological replacement.

A critical resource can therefore become an instrument of coercion.

It allows one to delay an adversary, attract an ally, negotiate a dependency, circumvent a sanction, impose a standard, create an income or secure autonomy.

The energy transition, often presented as an environmental movement, is also a geopolitical realignment. It reduces some dependencies and creates others. It shifts vulnerabilities. It transforms industrial alliances. It revitalizes certain territories. It gives new importance to actors who control minerals, batteries, storage technologies, networks, or refining capacities.

Political wisdom here would consist of organizing critical resources as common strategic goods, or at least as dependencies to be governed. Chaos would transform them into weapons of blocs.

Non-state coercive actors

The new geography of power also includes non-state coercive actors: armed groups, militias, terrorist organizations, cartels, criminal networks, cybergroups, mercenaries, proxies, violent ideological movements.

These actors do not always possess sovereignty, a stable territory, or a fully developed economy. But they can alter regional balances, weaken states, control routes, disrupt supply chains, conduct information or cyberattacks, impose a criminal economy, influence diasporas, trigger crises, or serve as proxies for state powers.

They often thrive in grey areas: weak states, porous borders, protracted conflicts, illicit economies, identity frustrations, power rivalries, institutional vacuums.

Their importance lies in their capacity for asymmetry.

They do not need to be as powerful as a state to weaken it. They can exploit a vulnerability, saturate a border, target infrastructure, take a population hostage, provoke a disproportionate reaction, internationalize a local conflict, or render a region ungovernable.

In a fragmented world, these actors become multipliers of disorder.

They are particularly important for the chaos scenario, where power does not disappear but disperses into actors capable of harming, blocking, diverting, or igniting.

Alliances as a shifting geography

Alliances remain one of the major instruments of power. But they are changing in nature.

Traditional military alliances persist, particularly when a territorial or strategic threat is perceived as direct. But other forms of alliances are developing: technological, industrial, energy, financial, informational, normative, ideological, and transactional.

A state can be militarily allied with one actor, economically dependent on another, technologically linked to a third, energetically vulnerable to a fourth, and informationally exposed to several.

Alliances are becoming less total and more modular.

This modularity can be stabilizing because it prevents the formation of completely closed blocs. But it can also make positions illegible, opportunistic, and unstable.

Some actors become pivotal: they do not dominate the system, but their position allows them to negotiate with several poles, to arbitrate dependencies, to capture rents, to play rivalries or to become indispensable in a critical chain.

These central actors will be essential in the scenarios. They can foster reason by maintaining bridges. They can contribute to wisdom by participating in coalitions for the common good. They can accelerate chaos if they exploit rivalries without restraint.

A power without a single center

The new geography of power can thus be summarized by one idea: power no longer has a single center.

It is distributed among sovereignties, infrastructures, technologies, resources, platforms, capital, narratives, alliances, norms, networks and coercive actors.

This distribution does not make the world more equal. On the contrary, it can produce new concentrations. But these concentrations no longer always coincide with classic political borders.

A state can be militarily weak but control a critical resource.
A company can own no territory but structure the global information space.
A middle power can become indispensable through its geographic or industrial position.
An armed group can destabilize a strategic region.
A platform can alter the perception of a war.
A technical standard can become an instrument of domination.
A logistical dependency can be as valuable as a military base.

This complexity necessitates a method.

Foresight can no longer simply add up states. It must identify families of actors according to their functions in the system: hegemonic power, pivot, critical infrastructure, informational power, coercive actor, exposed state, cooperative power, private power, ideological network, resource holder, structuring alliance.

This is precisely the purpose of the typology that will be developed in Part II.

But before moving on to the method, we must identify the underlying forces that drive these actors. Because power never acts alone. It is directed by interests, fears, narratives, dependencies, ideologies, leaders, and perceptions of the world.

This is the subject of the next chapter.

2.4.2 The underlying forces that orient the actors

The new geography of power shows that the contemporary world can no longer be analyzed solely as a system of states. But identifying the actors is not enough. We must understand what motivates them.

A powerful actor does not act mechanically based on their power. They act according to interests, vulnerabilities, narratives, fears, ambitions, constraints, dependencies, doctrines, leaders, institutions, and perceptions.

Political foresight cannot therefore start solely from the question: who is powerful?

It must also ask: toward what is this power directed?

Two actors with comparable capabilities may employ them differently depending on their strategic culture, political regime, geopolitical exposure, historical memory, economic dependence, degree of personalization of power, or vision of the international order.

Power is a capacity.
The direction of power is a decision, a culture, or a dynamic.
Political wisdom lies in understanding the potential gap between the two.

Fear

Fear is one of the most constant forces in political history.

The actors fear invasion, demotion, encirclement, dependence, internal revolt, loss of resources, economic collapse, social chaos, humiliation, loss of identity, or betrayal by allies.

Fear can be realistic. It can also be amplified, exploited, or maintained.

An actor who is afraid does not necessarily become aggressive. They may seek guarantees, alliances, institutions, compromises, legal or economic protections. But they may also adopt an offensive posture, convinced that the best defense lies in striking, controlling, annexing, intimidating, or locking down.

Fear is therefore ambivalent.

It can produce caution.
It can produce paranoia.
It can encourage cooperation.
It can justify coercion.
It can lead to restraint.
It can trigger escalation.

During the Cold War, the fear of annihilation contributed to restraint. In other contexts, the fear of encirclement or social decline can fuel preemptive violence.

Foresight must therefore distinguish between clear-sighted fear and ideologically driven fear. The former can become a principle of reason. The latter can become a driving force of chaos.

Humiliation and revenge

Humiliation is a major political force.

It arises from the feeling of having been belittled, despised, defeated, dispossessed, deceived, or excluded from the place one believes one deserves. It can concern an individual, a group, a people, a civilization, a social class, a religion, or a state.

Humiliation becomes geopolitical when it is transformed into a collective narrative.

We have been betrayed.
We have been unjustly defeated.
Our greatness has been stolen.
Our sovereignty has been humiliated.
Our identity has been scorned.
Our destiny has been interrupted.
We must make amends.

This type of narrative can support legitimate reconstruction when it restores dignity without denying that of others. But it can also become a driving force for revenge, domination, or imperial restoration.

Revenge transforms the past into a political program.

It gives power a direction: to recover, to reclaim, to correct, to punish, to restore, to purify, to avenge. It can make compromise difficult, because any compromise then appears as a new humiliation.

This logic is particularly dangerous when it encounters significant military, energy, informational, or technological capabilities.

A humiliated but weak actor may harbor resentment.
A humiliated but powerful actor may seek to reshape the order.

Foresight must therefore pay particular attention to narratives of decline, lost grandeur, and historical redress.

Nostalgia for grandeur

The longing for greatness is close to humiliation, but it has its own logic.

Such a narrative does not merely say: we were hurt. It asserts: we were great, and we must become great again.

This nostalgia can take imperial, national, religious, civilizational, or ideological forms. It can be carried by a state, a movement, a leader, a society, or a diaspora.

It draws on a selective memory. It magnifies certain ages, forgets certain violence, transforms past dominations into harmonious orders, and presents ancient power as proof of a future vocation.

Nostalgia for greatness can sustain effort, cohesion, and resistance to decline. It can also fuel policies of expansion, border revision, restoration of influence, control of neighbors, or challenge to the existing order.

It is all the more powerful because it offers symbolic compensation to anxious societies.

When the present is difficult, the glorified past becomes a refuge.
When the future is uncertain, former grandeur becomes a promise.
When society is divided, the call for restoration can produce an artificial unity.

The danger arises when greatness becomes a right against others.

Political wisdom does not ask people to forget their history. It asks them not to transform their memory into a license for domination.

Economic interest and resources

Not all political drivers are symbolic. Economic interests and resources remain fundamental.

States, businesses and groups seek markets, raw materials, energy, technologies, roads, capital, labor, patents, infrastructure, data, logistics positions and industrial advantages.

These interests can foster cooperation. Shared trade, investment, production chains, and infrastructure can create both disruptive costs and reasons for stability.

But economic interests can also produce rivalry.

When resources are scarce, concentrated, strategic, or difficult to replace, they become objects of power. When dependencies are asymmetrical, they become instruments of coercion. When markets are linked to national security, they become arenas of confrontation.

The line between economics and geopolitics is blurring.

A business decision can have strategic implications.
A technological standard can shift the balance of power.
A port investment can create dependency.
A financial penalty can be as effective as a military operation.
Export controls can slow down a rival power.
A mineral can become a bargaining chip in an alliance.

Foresight must therefore integrate the economy not as a background, but as a central form of power.

Ideologies and Totalizing Beliefs

Ideologies guide power by giving it justification.

They can be emancipatory when they remind us of the demands of justice, dignity, freedom, or equality. But they become dangerous when they claim to possess a total truth about human nature, history, people, religion, race, class, nation, or civilization.

A totalizing ideology simplifies the world. It designates culprits. It promises a way out of complexity. It transforms politics into a battle of good versus evil. It makes compromise suspect and the adversary illegitimate.

This logic can take several forms: religious fanaticism, political messianism, radical nationalism, supremacism, permanent revolution, identity cleansing, anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories, ideologies of revenge or collective salvation.

These forms are not all identical. They do not have the same histories, the same doctrines, or the same actors. But they share one common trait: they reduce the capacity to recognize the plurality of reality.

Power guided by a closed ideology becomes particularly dangerous, because it no longer seeks only an advantage. It seeks confirmation of its truth.

It can then accept disproportionate costs, refuse reasonable compromises, glorify sacrifice, justify violence, and interpret any opposition as further proof of the necessity of the fight.

In the scenarios of the book, ideologies will therefore play an essential role: contained in reasonableness, partially overcome in wisdom, amplified in chaos.

The personalization of power

Leaders matter.

It would be excessive to reduce history to the psychology of leaders. Structures, institutions, interests, and societies all play a significant role. But it would be equally wrong to believe that leaders are interchangeable.

The personalization of power changes the use of power.

When institutions are strong, a leader is constrained by rules, checks and balances, a professional administration, a free press, an independent judiciary, elections, civil society, and allies capable of limiting their decisions.

When institutions are weak or captured, the vision, fears, obsessions, humiliations, ambitions, and calculations of one individual can bend an entire system.

Personalization can produce speed, consistency, and decisiveness. It can also produce blindness, stubbornness, reckless abandon, confusion between the leader's interest and that of the country, constant dramatization, the pursuit of prestige, or the inability to admit a mistake.

Power then becomes more unstable, because it depends more on a narrow psychological center.

In a world of powerful weapons, fast-moving markets, AI, social networks, cyberattacks, and systemic crises, the personalization of power increases the risk of miscalculation.

Political wisdom therefore requires institutions capable of slowing down, verifying, contradicting, and containing.

Dependencies

Dependency is one of the most deeply rooted forces in the contemporary world.

It can be military, energy-related, technological, financial, food-related, industrial, digital, informational, or diplomatic.

Dependence is not always negative. All cooperation creates a form of mutual dependence. Interdependence can be stabilizing when it is balanced, transparent, and governed by rules. It can create common interests and reduce the incentive for conflict.

But dependency becomes dangerous when it is asymmetric, opaque, critical, or open to manipulation.

Relying on a single actor for a vital resource, core technology, military protection, essential market, digital infrastructure, or strategic funding can limit freedom of decision.

Dependence then becomes a power of constraint.

Foresight must therefore observe not only the specific capabilities of the actors, but also the vulnerabilities that link them to others.

A seemingly powerful actor can be vulnerable if it depends on a critical supply chain.
A seemingly minor actor can become central if it controls a transit point.
An alliance can be militarily strong but technologically fragile.
An economy can be prosperous but vulnerable to supply disruptions.

The power of the 21st century is measured as much by the dependencies we impose as by those we escape.

Technology accelerators

Technologies do not solely guide actors, but they do modify their horizon of action.

They create opportunities, vulnerabilities, asymmetries, and temptations.

Artificial intelligence, cyber, drones, satellites, biotechnology, semiconductors, autonomous systems, platforms, digital surveillance, automated production and disinformation technologies are transforming costs, speeds and thresholds for action.

They can make certain actors more powerful without giving them more wisdom. They can reduce the time lag between perception and reaction. They can create surprise attacks. They can blur the line between war and peace. They can give average actors capabilities once reserved for great powers.

Technology, therefore, accelerates politics.

But wisdom needs time: time to understand, to verify, to deliberate, to limit, to correct, to take responsibility.

One of the major contemporary risks is that technologies of action become faster than institutions of reflection.

This acceleration can produce irreversible decisions before their political significance is even understood.

The cooperative orientation

Not all underlying forces push toward conflict. Actors can also be guided by cooperation.

This orientation can stem from values, but also from well-understood interests.

An actor cooperates because it believes in the rule of law.
It cooperates because it depends on stable trade.
It cooperates because it fears collapse.
It cooperates because it needs allies.
It cooperates because it knows that no actor can control certain risks alone.
It cooperates because war would be more costly than compromise.
It cooperates because its internal institutions promote accountability and debate.

Cooperation is therefore not always pure. It is often mixed with self-interest, prudence, morality, necessity, and calculation.

Reasonableness is built precisely in this space: imperfect actors, sometimes rivals, sometimes cynical, but capable of understanding that certain limits must be preserved.

Wisdom goes further: it transforms this forced cooperation into sustainable institutions oriented toward the common good.

From Deep Forces to Foresight Variables

These underlying forces are not merely topics for commentary. They must be translated into observable variables.

Fear can manifest in geopolitical exposure, dependence, militarization, or strategic rigidity.
Humiliation can manifest in a desire for revenge, nostalgia for grandeur, or hegemonic tendencies.
Economic interest can manifest in resource control, industrial power, critical supply chains, or financial coercion.
Ideology can manifest in doctrinal pressure, rigid convictions, or hostility to the existing order.
Personalization can manifest in the concentration of decision-making power.
Dependence can manifest as vulnerability or as leverage imposed on others.
Technology can manifest in informational, cybernetic, algorithmic, or industrial capabilities.
A cooperative orientation can manifest in alliances, respect for rules, participation in institutions, and the capacity for compromise.

This passage prepares the ground for the PRA method.

The foresight approach will not simply describe broad forces. It will place them within a typology of actors and then within conditional scenarios.

The following chapter forms the link between this theoretical reflection and the factual method: how to move from deep forces to a mapping of actors, variables and clusters?

2.5 From analysis to method

2.5.1 From theoretical hypothesis to factual typology

The preceding chapters have built the conceptual framework for Part I.

Power has become global.
Political wisdom remains fragmented.
Humanity has already expanded its circle of cooperation, often under the pressure of major upheavals.
Institutions amplify certain human potentialities rather than creating new ones.
The 1945 order represented an initial shift in global institutional scale.
The Cold War established a relative peace through deterrence and restraint.
The unipolar interlude has given way to a more complex fragmentation.
Contemporary power is now distributed among states, alliances, platforms, infrastructures, resources, narratives, technologies, and non-state actors.
These actors are driven by profound forces: fear, humiliation, interests, ideologies, dependencies, technologies, the personalization of power, and the capacity for cooperation.

We now need to transform this reflection into a method.

This is the subject of Part II. But before entering it, this chapter plays a pivotal role: it shows how to move from the theoretical hypothesis to a factual typology.

A purely philosophical approach to foresight risks producing beautiful narratives without sufficient grounding. A purely technical approach risks producing charts devoid of interpretive value. PRA seeks to bridge the two: to make the spectacular methodologically traceable.

Why create a typology?

The contemporary world is too complex to be understood by a simple opposition between a few blocs.

Democracies versus authoritarian regimes.
West versus non-West.
North versus South.
States versus markets.
Public versus private.
Power versus weakness.

These oppositions still have some utility, but they are no longer sufficient.

A democratic country can be fragile.
An authoritarian regime can be effective in some areas and vulnerable in others.
A private company can exert geopolitical influence.
A middle power can control a critical resource.
A weak state can become the arena for global rivalry.
A platform can affect the cognitive stability of societies.
An alliance can be military but technologically dependent.
An ideological movement can cross borders and influence multiple actors simultaneously.

Typology allows us to move beyond overly general categories.

It does not seek to say only who is powerful and who is not. It seeks to identify profiles of actors: hegemonic, coercive, cooperative, exposed, pivotal, infrastructural, informational, ideological, dependent, autonomous, revisionist, stabilizers or hybrid.

The goal is not to confine actors to definitive categories. It is to understand which families of behaviors and capabilities structure the global system.

A typology is not an absolute truth. It is a map.

It simplifies to make things readable. But it must simplify without betraying the essence.

The choice of a wider scope

The initial measurement sequence focused on a limited set of countries. This restriction was necessary to construct, test, and present the scoring method applied to states.
The foresight process must then broaden its scope.

Global foresight cannot be limited to the most visible states. It must integrate the actors who actually participate in the dynamics of the system: major powers, regional powers, exposed states, alliances, international institutions, technology companies, digital platforms, financial actors, energy actors, critical infrastructures, armed groups, ideological movements, criminal networks, diasporas, NGOs, industrial hubs and information powers.

This expansion does not mean that all these actors are of the same nature.

A state possesses sovereignty.
A company possesses economic and technological capacity.
An alliance structures commitments.
An international institution produces standards.
An armed group exerts coercion.
A platform organizes attention.
A financial fund directs capital.

A diaspora carries memories, resources, and influence.
Infrastructure creates dependencies.

The method must therefore allow for comparison without confusion.

This is why PRA does not seek to reduce all actors to a single measure of power. It describes them according to several variables, in order to reveal functional proximities.

Two actors with very different legal statuses can produce similar effects on the system. A technology company and a state can both wield informational power. An alliance and an infrastructure can both structure dependencies. An ideological movement and a state power can both amplify rigid convictions.

The typology is therefore based on the functions performed in the global system as much as on the legal nature of the actors.

From Actors to Variables

The transition from actors to variables constitutes the central step.

An actor is not described by a general impression. It is characterized by a set of dimensions that allow us to assess its position in the global arena.

These dimensions may include:

its projection capacity;
its strategic autonomy;
its critical dependencies;
its informational influence;
its coercive capacity;
its control of resources or infrastructure;
its vulnerability to shocks;
its cooperative or conflictual orientation;
its hegemonic will;
its ideological rigidity;
its decision-making personalization;
its insertion into alliances;
its capacity to stabilize or destabilize the system.

These variables do not claim to exhaust the reality of an actor. They serve to construct a common language.

They allow us to move from a qualitative assessment to a relative position. They make comparison possible, not because all actors are identical, but because certain traits can be observed in different actors.

A military power and a digital platform are not alike. But they can both have a projection capability. One projects forces; the other projects narratives, content, norms, or cognitive dependencies.

A resource-rich state and a company controlling critical infrastructure are not alike. But both can create dependencies.

An ideological movement and an authoritarian regime are not the same. But both can amplify a closed-mindedness of conviction.

This translation into variables is what allows the PRA method to avoid simple juxtaposition.

Factor analysis as mapping

Once the actors are described by variables, it becomes possible to search for the structure of the space thus constituted.

Factor analysis reveals the main areas of differentiation. It does not start from a predefined ideology. It observes the similarities and differences that emerge from the data.

Some actors may come together because they combine strong coercive capacity, hegemonic ambitions, and a weak cooperative orientation. Others may come together because they possess significant infrastructural power. Still others because they are exposed to, dependent on, or vulnerable to systemic tensions. And finally, some because they contribute more to cooperation, stabilization, or governance.

The PCA is not yet telling a story. It is building the map.

It allows us to see where the actors stand in relation to each other. It helps us understand which dimensions truly structure the analytical space. It sometimes reveals unexpected proximities or confirms intuitions.

Above all, it requires that the criteria be made explicit.

Without mapping, the scenario risks becoming an opinion.
Without criteria, mapping risks becoming arbitrary.
Without interpretation, statistical results remain meaningless.

The method is therefore based on the articulation of three elements: criteria, mapping, interpretation.

The formation of clusters

Based on factor mapping, classification makes it possible to identify clusters.

A cluster is a group of actors with relatively similar profiles based on selected variables. It is not an alliance, a moral judgment, or an official political bloc. It is an analytical grouping.

Two actors can belong to the same cluster without being allies. They can even be rivals. Their proximity means that they occupy comparable positions in the variable space.

A cluster does not say: these actors act together.
It says: these actors share certain structuring characteristics.

The resulting typology makes it possible to identify families: hegemonic poles, coercive actors, infrastructural powers, exposed states, pivotal actors, techno-informational powers, cooperative or stabilizing actors, according to the results of the analysis.

Clusters do not replace political analysis. They guide it.

They make it possible to know which groups of actors could be strengthened by certain assumptions, weakened by others, shifted toward more cooperation or toward more conflict.

From the Initial Map to Future Shifts

The typology is not yet the scenario.

It describes the initial state of the system, or Scenario Zero: the relative position of the actors before the introduction of future assumptions.

Foresight begins when we ask ourselves how this map might change.

If economic globalization slows, some actors dependent on open supply chains may become more vulnerable, while those capable of controlling resources or infrastructure may become stronger.
If technological blocs become more entrenched, techno-industrial powers and semiconductor manufacturers become more central.
If AI escapes regulation, actors with algorithmic, informational, or surveillance capabilities may gain power.
If multilateralism strengthens, cooperative or institutional actors may gain influence.
If radical ideologies gain ground, coercive, identity-based, or anti-establishment actors may move closer to the center of tensions.

This is the function of the Hypothesis Impact Matrix.

It translates the questionnaire responses into variable adjustments. These adjustments affect the actors, then the clusters. A scenario can then be interpreted as a conditional modification of the initial mapping.

The hypotheses no longer float in the narrative. They shift identified variables.

The scenario thus becomes traceable.

The role of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is not intended to predict the future. It serves to define a set of coherent hypotheses.

Each response expresses a possible direction for the world: slowing down or accelerating globalization, hardening or coordinating technological blocs, intensifying or regulating AI, progressing or retreating radical ideologies, weakening or strengthening multilateralism, rising or stabilizing conflicts, hardening or cooperating around critical resources.

Each hypothesis affects certain variables. These effects can be positive, negative, weak, strong, or neutral. They can strengthen cooperation, increase coercion, enhance dependencies, alter informational influence, increase geopolitical exposure, or shift the centrality of certain actors.

The questionnaire therefore allows us to move from a global judgment to an explicit mechanism.

Instead of merely saying that the world is becoming more dangerous, it asks: Which dimensions are becoming more dangerous? For which actors? Under which assumptions? With what effects on the different actor groups?

The Scenario as a Controlled Narrative

The final result, however, is not a static picture. It is a narrative scenario.

A scenario must tell a story. It must show actors in motion, tensions, turning points, decisions, knock-on effects, alliances, risks, surprises, and limitations.

But this narrative must remain controlled.

The spectacular should come from the narration of the consequences, not from the exaggeration of the hypotheses.

The PRA method seeks precisely this balance: scenarios concrete enough to be readable and traceable enough not to become mere fiction.

The narrative scenario must be open to question:

What hypothesis supports it?
What variable is affected?

What type of actor is strengthened or weakened?
Which cluster shifts?
What geopolitical consequence arises?
What risk of war or alliance emerges?
What proportion stems from reason, wisdom, or chaos?

This traceability does not eliminate the element of interpretation. It makes it visible.

Three scenarios, like three distortions of space

The three authorial scenarios can be understood as three possible distortions of the initial mapping.

In a reasonableness scenario, the map does not become harmonious. However, certain variables of conflict are contained. Cooperation progresses cautiously. The most destabilizing actors do not disappear, but their capacity to influence is partially limited. Coercive clusters remain, but they do not dominate the entire system. Key actors play a stabilizing role. Weak institutions regain a minimal level of usefulness.

In wisdom, the shift is more profound. The variables of cooperation, governance, accountability, risk management, and the commons gain centrality. Actors capable of contributing to global risk governance become more influential. Systemic private powers are integrated into accountability frameworks. Critical resources, AI, climate, information, and pandemics are progressively treated as shared domains.

In chaos, the variables of coercion, dependence, informational fragmentation, ideological rigidity, technological rivalry, and regional conflict are reinforced. The most destabilizing clusters gain centrality. Exposed actors become targets. Alliances harden. Platforms, resources, routes, and technologies become weapons. The world does not necessarily collapse, but it becomes increasingly ungovernable.

These three scenarios are not three imaginary worlds. They are three ways of evolving the forces already present.

The function of Part II

Part II must now describe the foresight method itself.

It will specify the actor universe, retained variables, ratings, PCA, classification, clusters, questionnaire, Hypothesis Impact Matrix, and Scenario Zero.

Without it, the scenarios risk appearing as mere authorial essays. With it, they become conditional trajectories based on an explicit mapping of actors and forces.

The method does not eliminate uncertainty, does not claim to predict the future, and does not replace political judgment.
It seeks to make this judgment structured, debatable, and revisable.

This is the condition for the credibility of the work.

Having shown why the world must be thought of from the perspective of the gap between planetary power and fragmented wisdom, it is now necessary to show how this gap can be observed, classified, displaced and narrated.

Foresight begins when the map becomes dynamic.

3 Part II — The PRA Instrument

Measure, classify, project

3.1 The State Measurement Laboratory

3.1.1 Sequence II-A — Measuring the political power of states

As international balances grow increasingly complex, analyzing national political systems requires tools that integrate their internal and external dimensions.

Traditional approaches tend to emphasize either institutional factors or geopolitical dimensions without always integrating the two.

This section proposes a comprehensive political rating methodology that addresses this limitation by combining:

- an analysis of the maturity of political systems;
- an assessment of internal tensions;
- a measure of overall stability; and
- an assessment of geopolitical projection capacity.

The objective is twofold:

- to provide a structured, comparable analytical framework; and
- to highlight the balances and imbalances specific to national systems.

Applied to a representative set of countries, the model yields several relevant insights into:

- the hierarchy of political systems;
- their evolution over time; and
- the relationship between internal stability and power.

This sequence is organized in two parts:

- a first part devoted to the results; and
- a second part devoted to the methodology.

The appendices supplement the analysis by detailing the criteria, tables, and scoring examples.

Preliminary: Purpose and Scope of the Rating

The overall political rating provides a structured assessment of national systems by combining two fundamental dimensions: internal stability and geopolitical projection capacity.

It is designed for several audiences:

- **geopolitical experts, who need a concise comparative framework;**
- academics, who can use it to structure analysis or research;
- journalists and analysts, who need a clearer framework for interpreting events;
- decision-makers, who can incorporate a structured assessment of political risk.

Its main contribution lies in combining dimensions that are generally analyzed separately, thereby providing a coherent and practical assessment.

Numerical Results

Central results table

Country	M	T	TSI	G	CMP
USA	6.88	5.13	6.00	7.25	6.63
Swiss	8.25	7.63	7.94	5.25	6.60
Israel	6.88	4.63	5.75	7.25	6.50
Germany	7.38	6.25	6.81	6.17	6.49
China	3.75	5.25	4.50	7.92	6.21
France	6.63	4.88	5.75	6.17	5.96
India	6.13	4.88	5.50	6.33	5.92
Russia	3.88	3.88	3.88	7.75	5.82
Türkiye	4.75	4.00	4.38	6.42	5.40
Iran	3.00	3.75	3.38	7.08	5.23

Meaning of the columns

- **M**: structural component of national systems
- **T**: level of internal tensions (short-term dimension)
- **TSI**: composite internal stability indicator
- **G**: geopolitical projection capacity
- **CMP**: composite of TSI and G

This table provides the basis for the analysis.

It immediately highlights a key disconnect:

- highly stable countries with limited geopolitical reach;
- major powers facing greater structural constraints.

The United States appears as a balanced power, combining a high level of projection (G) and intermediate stability (TSI).

Switzerland is distinguished by a very high level of internal stability, combined with a limited projection capacity.

Conversely, China and Russia exhibit high power but more constrained internal stability, reflecting a structural imbalance.

Country rankings and hierarchy

Country	TSI	CL
Swiss	7.94	1
Germany	6.81	2
USA	6.00	3
Israel	5.75	4
France	5.75	5
India	5.50	6
China	4.50	7
Türkiye	4.38	8
Russia	3.88	9
Iran	3.38	10

Country	G	CL
China	7.92	1
Russia	7.75	2
USA	7.25	3
Israel	7.25	4
Iran	7.08	5
Türkiye	6.42	6
India	6.33	7
Germany	6.17	8
France	6.17	9
Swiss	5.25	10

Country	CMP	CL
USA	6.63	1
Swiss	6.60	2
Israel	6.50	3
Germany	6.49	4
China	6.21	5
France	5.96	6
India	5.92	7
Russia	5.82	8
Türkiye	5.40	9
Iran	5.23	10

The CL column corresponds to the ranking of countries according to each of the TSI, G or CMP aggregates

The rankings allow for a direct reading of the hierarchies.

According to internal stability (TSI):

- Switzerland and Germany **occupy** the top **positions**
- They reflect solid structures that are not very exposed to stress.

The **United States** and **Israel** occupy an intermediate position, reflecting real stability but affected by some internal tensions.

Russia, Iran **and** to a lesser extent **China are** at lower levels of stability.

However, the ranking by geopolitical power (G) reverses this hierarchy:

- China, **Russia,** and the **United States** dominate
- Iran has a high power projection capability in light of its stability**.**
- Switzerland appears to **be** lagging behind

Key reading:

Thus, a country's position depends heavily on the indicator chosen.

The composite ranking (CMP) smooths out these differences:

- The **United States** appears in the lead
- Switzerland **remains** well positioned
- extreme differences are mitigated

But this summary masks the underlying imbalances.

Level Analysis

A detailed analysis of the central table helps to understand the observed discrepancies.

Maturity (M) is generally high in Western democracies, reflecting the strength of institutions.

Internal tensions (T) introduce differentiation:

- They are higher in certain countries such as the United States or Israel.
- They are more contained in countries like Switzerland

The TSI reflects this balance.

Geopolitical power (G) follows a distinct logic:

- it is based on military, economic and strategic factors
- It is not directly correlated with internal stability

Conclusion:

Internal stability and geopolitical power are governed by different logics.

Time analysis

Country	M_t2	Deviation at t1	Difference at t0	T_t2	Deviation at t1	Difference at t0
Swiss	8.25	0	0	7.63	0	0
USA	6.88	0	0	5.13	0.13	0.38
China	3.75	0	0	5.25	0	0
Israel	6.88	0	0	4.63	0.13	0.38
France	6.63	0	0	4.88	-0.13	-0.13
Iran	3	0	0	3.75	0	0
Russia	3.88	0	0	3.88	0	0
India	6.13	0	0.13	4.88	0	-0.38
Germany	7.38	0	0	6.25	0	0
Türkiye	4.75	0	0	4	-0.13	-0.25

Meaning of the columns:

- t2: Measurements taken on 06/06/2026
- t1: Measurements taken on 31/12/2025
- t0: Measurements taken on 01/06/2025

Dynamic analysis highlights a key characteristic:

- the maturity (M) is almost stable
- the variations come almost exclusively from the tensions (T)

In concrete terms:

- The **United States** is showing an evolution of tensions, affecting its stability
- France and Turkey are experiencing short-term adjustments.
- Some countries, such as Switzerland and Germany, remain highly stable.

Strong reading:

The dynamics of political systems are driven primarily by short-term changes.

This analysis goes beyond a simple photograph:

it introduces an interpretation of national trajectories

Cross-analysis of internal stability and geopolitical power

Country	TSI	G	G-TSI
Swiss	7.94	5.25	-2.69
USA	6	7.25	1.25
China	4.5	7.92	3.42
Israel	5.75	7.25	1.5
France	5.75	6.17	0.42
Iran	3.38	7.08	3.7
Russia	3.88	7.75	3.87
India	5.5	6.33	0.83
Germany	6.81	6.17	-0.64
Türkiye	4.38	6.42	2.04

The cross-representation of the TSI and G indicators highlights a differentiated structuring of national systems.

China, Russia, and Iran exemplify configurations of strong power projection coupled with more constrained stability. Conversely, Switzerland and Germany combine high stability with more limited power projection.

The United States and Israel occupy intermediate positions, characterized by a strong projection capability based on a generally solid internal base.

This distribution confirms the lack of systematic alignment between internal stability and geopolitical power.

The imbalance indicator (G − TSI) allows us to quantify the gaps between external projection capacity and internal stability.

The most marked imbalances concern Russia (+3.87), Iran (+3.70) and China (+3.42), characterized by a strong projection capacity based on a more fragile internal base.

Conversely, Switzerland (−2.69) and Germany (−0.64) exhibit high internal stability associated with a more limited projection.

The United States (+1.25) and Israel (+1.50) are in an intermediate zone, reflecting a significant projection capability based on a generally solid internal base.

Turkey (+2.04) illustrates a situation of significant positive imbalance at the regional level.

Complementarity with graphical representation

The imbalance indicator is an analytical extension of the two-dimensional representation presented in the previous chapter.

While the graph allows a visual reading of relative positions, the G − TSI indicator provides a quantitative translation, facilitating the comparison and ranking of national situations.

The combined use of these two tools makes it possible to combine visual perception and analytical measurement.

Graphical representation plays a crucial role in the interpretation of the model.

It allows:

- to immediately visualize the relative positions of the countries
- to highlight significant differences
- to facilitate comparison between national situations

In this sense, the graph is not a simple illustration, but a true analytical tool, complementary to tables and aggregated indicators.

Summary of results

Reading together the M, T, TSI and G indicators makes it possible to identify the main lines of force of the national systems.

The structures appear broadly stable, while tensions reflect short-term shifts. The lack of systematic alignment between internal stability and geopolitical power is a key finding.

The observed imbalances reveal differentiated configurations, reflecting structural constraints specific to each country.

To illustrate concretely the rating process used to produce the indicators, two detailed examples of the construction of elementary ratings are presented in the appendix.

These examples help to make the following explicit:

- the sources used

- the trade-offs made
- the translation of qualitative information into quantitative scores

They complement the current methodology by providing operational insights into its implementation.

Statistical validation of the model structure (Principal component analysis)

Subject of the analysis

To verify the consistency of the model's structure, principal component analysis (PCA) was performed using the elementary scores.
This approach identifies the data's main explanatory dimensions and tests their correspondence with the model's axes, particularly the distinction between TSI and geopolitical power.
PCA thus constitutes a validation tool, allowing us to assess the robustness of the chosen structure.

Principle of the method

Principal component analysis involves transforming a set of correlated variables into a reduced number of independent dimensions, called principal components, which concentrate most of the observed variance.
Applied to the elementary scores, this method reveals the dominant axes structuring the data without imposing a predetermined organization.
The results are analyzed in particular from the projection of the criteria into the plane formed by the first two components, as well as from the circle of correlations.

Main results

The analysis highlights the existence of two main dimensions, which concentrate the bulk of the information contained in the data.
The first component mainly groups together the criteria related to TSI, reflecting the consistency of the dimensions associated with maturity and internal tensions. It thus corresponds to the TSI axis (TSI) constructed in the model.
The second component is primarily structured by geopolitical criteria, reflecting the ability of states to project power within the international system. It corresponds to the geopolitical power axis (G).
The following components appear to be of secondary importance and do not call into question this main structure.
Interpretation of the criteria projections

Projecting the criteria onto the plane of the first two components highlights a clear separation between variables associated with internal dimensions and those relating to the geopolitical sphere.

The criteria related to maturity and internal tensions are grouped together in the same area of the factor space, reflecting their coherence. Conversely, the geopolitical criteria are located in a distinct area, confirming their specificity.
This structure validates the relevance of the distinction made between internal and external dimensions in the construction of the model

Reading the correlation circle

The correlation circle confirms this organization by highlighting the respective contribution of the different criteria to the main axes.
Variables associated with TSI show high contributions to the first component, while geopolitical variables contribute mainly to the second.
The limited dispersion of the other variables confirms the secondary nature of the complementary dimensions, which do not call into question the overall structure.

Scope and limitations of the analysis

The PCA confirms the consistency of the model structure, empirically validating the existence of two principal dimensions corresponding to the axes defined upstream.
However, it does not constitute an exhaustive demonstration, but a complementary validation tool, the results of which should be interpreted with caution.
In particular, the method relies on available data and cannot by itself capture the full complexity of national systems.

Validation conclusion

The results of the principal component analysis confirm the relevance of structuring the model around two main axes: TSI and geopolitical power.
This statistical validation reinforces the robustness of the approach chosen and supports the use of aggregate indicators in the analysis of national systems.

Methodology for the political rating of states

Composition of Elementary Scores

Global political rating is based on a set of basic criteria aimed at translating complex realities into comparable indicators.

These criteria are constructed from a combination of sources:

- quantitative data (international indicators)

- qualitative analyses (specialized reports)
- expert assessments

Artificial intelligence is used to support:

- structure the criteria
- harmonize their definition
- arbitrate between conflicting sources

For example, the assessment of internal tensions (T) combines objective indicators (violence, instability) with more diffuse dimensions (social divisions, polarization). The trade-off involves combining these approaches to obtain a coherent and comparable measure.

The ratings thus result from a structured arbitration, and not from a mechanical process.

Two detailed examples of score construction are presented in the appendix to illustrate the approach concretely.

Model Structuring (PIPE)

The model is based on a four-level logic:

- **Parameters: Elementary Scores**
- **Indicators: M (maturity) and T (tensions)**
- **Composite: TSI (internal stability)**
- **Extension: G (geopolitical power) and CMP (composite indicator)**

This structure allows the basic data to be directly linked to the indicators analyzed in Part 1, ensuring continuity between construction and interpretation.

Construction of indicators

The indicators are obtained by aggregation:

- **M (maturity): average of structural criteria**
- **T (tensions): average of short-term criteria**
- **TSI (internal stability): average of M and T**
- **G (geopolitical power): average of geopolitical criteria**
- **CMP (composite indicator): average of TSI and G**

The use of simple averages aims to avoid any arbitrary weighting and to guarantee the readability of the results.

Construction and Role of Tables

The central table (M, T, TSI, G, CMP) forms the pivot of the model.

The following are directly derived from this table:

- comparative rankings
- temporal analyses (gaps)
- asymmetry analyses (G – TSI)

All the developments in Part 1 stem directly from this structure.

Time analysis

The dynamics of national systems are understood from the differences between periods.

The observed differences in M (maturity) remain limited, confirming the strong inertia of political structures.
On the other hand, the differences in T (tensions) account for the majority of the variations, which directly impacts TSI (internal stability).

This dissociation between structure and tensions constitutes a central result of the model.

Validation by principal component analysis (PCA)

PCA is used as a model validation tool.

It highlights two main areas:

- an internal axis structured by M and T (TSI)
- an external axis structured by G

These results directly corroborate the empirical observations of Part 1, in particular the dissociation between internal stability (TSI) and geopolitical power (G).

The structure of the model is thus empirically confirmed.

Scope selection (10 countries)

The model is applied to a deliberately limited sample of ten countries.

This choice allows:

- to guarantee data quality
- to maintain the readability of tables and graphs
- to allow for a thorough comparative analysis

A limited scope prioritizes analytical relevance over exhaustiveness.

Limitations of the model

The model has certain limitations:

- dependence on available sources
- element of appreciation in certain criteria
- simplification inherent in any aggregation

These limitations do not affect the internal consistency of the model, but must be taken into account when interpreting the results.

Respective roles of artificial intelligence and the author

The author is the original creator:

- project design
- of the definition of its architecture
- the choice of analytical dimensions

Artificial intelligence is used to support:

- structure the criteria
- ensure data consistency
- contribute to the formalization of the model

Artificial intelligence is a tool to assist in structuring and formalizing, without replacing the intellectual design of the model.

Methodological conclusion

The methodology integrates analytical decomposition with synthesis.
By structuring national systems around explicit, consistent criteria, it produces comparable indicators while preserving the complexity of the realities under study.

The distinction among structural, short-term, and geopolitical components forms the basis of the approach and supports a multidimensional assessment of political systems.

The transparency of methodological choices and the simplicity of aggregation rules contribute to the robustness and reproducibility of the model.

The measured differences are not marginal: they reveal significant structural imbalances between projection capacity and TSI.
These imbalances constitute a central element in understanding national trajectories.

The model thus highlights an essential reality:
the power of a state does not guarantee its stability, any more than stability implies influence.

3.1.2 Conclusion of the State Measurement Sequence

The analysis highlights the need for a multidimensional approach that integrates internal structures, short-term dynamics, and projection capacity.

The proposed model allows for the following connections:

- the maturity and strength of institutions;
- internal tensions;
- overall stability;
- geopolitical power.

The results show that these dimensions follow distinct logics and that their combination produces contrasting national configurations. A state's power does not guarantee either its internal stability or the maturity of its institutions; conversely, stability does not automatically generate international influence.

The model makes it possible in particular to distinguish and quantify two fundamental dimensions of a State's situation: its internal stability, measured by the TSI, and its geopolitical projection capacity, measured by G.

The gap between G and TSI highlights the potential asymmetry between available power and the internal strength that supports it. When power significantly exceeds political and institutional stability, the state presents a power that overwhelms its own foundations, potentially exacerbating tensions or fostering uses that are difficult to control. When TSI reaches or surpasses G, the power projection capability appears more aligned with the country's actual capacity to sustain it over the long term.

This adequacy does not, in itself, constitute an exhaustive measure of political wisdom. However, it represents an observable condition: the capacity of a State to proportion its power to the maturity of its structures, to contain its destructive uses and to direct it toward sustainable ends, both for itself and for the international order.

This section establishes the initial analytical tool and presents its preliminary findings. The foresight approach extends the analysis by examining the consequences of gaps among power, stability, and political maturity, as well as the conditions under which states—and, beyond them, humanity—might transform accumulated power into a path toward genuine political wisdom.

3.1.3 Technical annexes for the measurement of states

Appendix 1 — List of rating criteria

List of criteria for scoring by heuristic block assignment			
Code	Criterion name	Short definition	Block
C1	Democratic level	Degree of political representation and effective electoral participation	Maturity
C5	Universal values	Adherence to universal principles (equality, dignity, human rights)	Maturity
C6	Fundamental freedoms	Level of protection of individual freedoms (expression, press, association)	Maturity
C7	Rigidity of conviction	Degree of ideological closure and resistance to compromise	Maturity
C8	rule of law	Judicial independence and respect for legal rules	Maturity
C9b	Religious tolerance	Capacity for coexistence between religious groups	Maturity
A1	Electoral dynamics	Vitality, regularity and competitiveness of elections	Maturity
A2	Government stability	Ability to maintain functioning governments over time	Maturity
C2	Extreme ideologies	Presence and influence of radical ideologies in society	Tension
C3	Demographic transformation	Impact of demographic changes on social and political equilibrium	Tension
C4	social divisions	Intensity of economic, cultural, or identity-based divisions	Tension

C10	Belligerent character	A tendency to resort to confrontation or political violence	Tension
C9	Political violence	Level of internal violence (riots, terrorism, civil conflicts)	Tension
A3	Internal crises	Frequency and intensity of political or institutional crises	Tension
AL1	Antisemitism	Level of hostility or discrimination toward Jewish populations	Tension
AL2	Narco-structures	Influence of criminal or mafia networks on the State	Tension
G1	Sovereignty	Ability to exercise autonomous control over its territory and its decisions	Geopolitics
G2	Strategic autonomy	Independence from external powers	Geopolitics
G10	External dependence	Level of economic, energy or strategic dependence	Geopolitics
G3	Military power	Conventional military capability and force projection	Geopolitics
G4	Nuclear deterrence	Possession and credibility of a nuclear arsenal	Geopolitics
G5	Economic power	Overall economic weight and capacity for economic influence	Geopolitics
G6	Hegemonic tendency	A desire to extend one's influence or dominate other actors	Geopolitics
G7	Access to resources	Availability and control of strategic resources	Geopolitics
G11	Alliances	Ability to forge and maintain structuring alliances	Geopolitics
G12	Geopolitical Exhibition	Level of exposure to international tensions or conflicts	Geopolitics
G13	Resilience	Capacity to absorb shocks (economic, political, military)	Geopolitics
G14	Informational influence	Ability to influence perceptions (media, information, soft power)	Geopolitics

Appendix 2 — Results Tables

This appendix contains all the tables used in the analysis:

- Central panel (M, T, TSI, G, CMP)
- Rankings by indicator
- Trend tables (deviations)
- Asymmetry tables (G – TSI)
- Composite Table (CMP)

These tables form the basis of the analyses presented in Part 1.

T2 — 06/06/2026

Maturity

Country	C1	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9b	A1	A2
Swiss	9	9	9	4	9	9	8	9
USA	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6
China	2	3	2	9	3	3	1	7
Israel	7	7	7	7	7	6	8	6
France	7	7	7	6	7	7	6	5
Iran	1	2	1	9	2	2	1	6
Russia	2	3	2	8	3	4	2	7
India	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	6
Germany	8	8	8	5	8	8	7	7
Türkiye	4	4	4	8	4	5	5	6

Tension

Country	C2	C3	C4	C10	C9	A3	AL1	AL2
Swiss	8	3	7	8	8	8	8	9
USA	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	7
China	3	6	5	3	5	6	8	6
Israel	4	6	3	3	4	4	5	8
France	4	6	4	6	5	4	4	6
Iran	2	7	4	2	3	3	4	5
Russia	3	6	4	1	3	4	6	4
India	4	7	3	4	4	4	6	7
Germany	6	4	5	7	7	6	7	8

Country	C2	C3	C4	C10	C9	A3	AL1	AL2
Türkiye	3	7	4	2	3	3	5	5

Geopolitics

Country	G1	G2	G10	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G11	G12	G13	G14
Swiss	9	8	7	3	0	8	1	1	9	2	9	6
USA	8	6	5	9	9	10	7	6	9	5	7	9
China	9	8	6	8	7	9	9	8	6	6	8	8
Israel	8	7	4	8	8	8	8	6	8	9	7	7
France	7	6	4	6	8	8	5	4	8	5	6	7
Iran	8	7	5	7	6	5	9	9	5	9	9	6
Russia	9	7	6	8	9	6	9	9	6	8	8	8
India	7	6	4	7	6	7	5	5	8	7	6	7
Germany	8	7	6	5	7	8	3	2	9	3	8	7
Türkiye	7	6	5	7	5	6	7	7	7	8	7	7

T1 — 31/12/2025

Maturity (same structure)

(Same values as T2 — structural inertia)

Tension

Country	C2	C3	C4	C10	C9	A3	AL1	AL2
Swiss	8	3	7	8	8	8	8	9
USA	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	7
China	3	6	5	3	5	6	8	6
Israel	4	6	3	2	4	4	5	8
France	4	6	4	6	5	5	4	6
Iran	2	7	4	2	3	3	4	5
Russia	3	6	4	1	3	4	6	4
India	4	7	3	4	4	4	6	7
Germany	6	4	5	7	7	6	7	8
Türkiye	3	7	4	2	3	4	5	5

Geopolitics

Identical T2

T0 — 01/06/2025
Maturity

(identical — structural consistency)

Tension

Country	C2	C3	C4	C10	C9	A3	AL1	AL2
Swiss	8	3	7	8	8	8	8	9
USA	6	5	6	5	5	6	6	7
China	3	6	5	3	5	6	8	6
Israel	4	6	3	1	4	4	5	8
France	4	6	5	6	5	5	4	6
Iran	2	7	4	2	3	3	4	5
Russia	3	6	4	1	3	4	6	4
India	5	7	4	4	4	5	6	7
Germany	6	4	5	7	7	6	7	8
Türkiye	3	7	5	2	3	4	5	5

Appendix 3 — Examples of Score Construction

Example 1 — Internal tensions (T)

The assessment of internal tensions is based on several dimensions:

- level of political violence
- intensity of social divisions
- frequency of institutional crises

The sources used include:

- quantitative data (incidents, indices)
- qualitative analyses (country reports)

Arbitration consists of:

- cross-reference information
- implicitly weigh their importance

- produce a coherent composite score

Example 2 — Geopolitical Power (G)

The assessment of geopolitical power is based on:

- military capability
- economic weight
- strategic alliances
- international influence

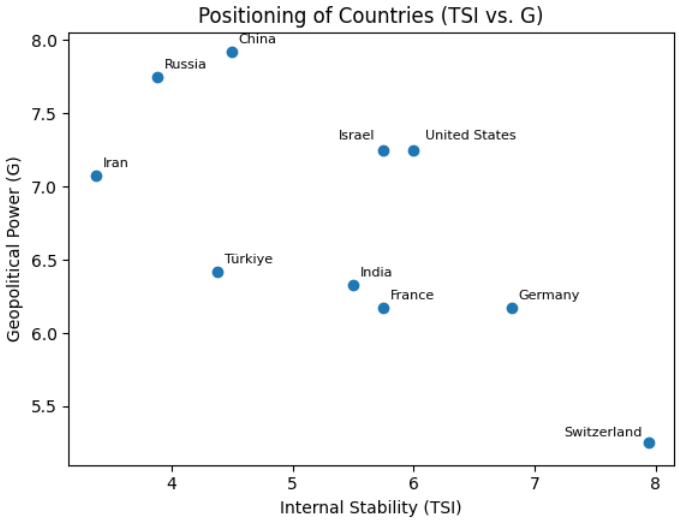
The sources used include:

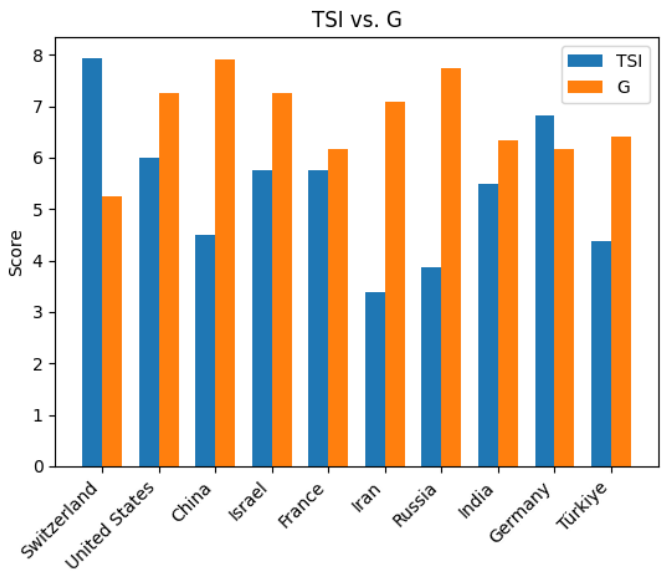
- economic indicators
- military rankings
- geopolitical analyses

The rating is a composite designed to reflect actual projection capacity.

Graphs

the graph is not a simple illustration, but a true analytical tool, complementary to tables and aggregated indicators.




TSI vs. G
TSI
G
Score
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
Switzerland
United States
China
Israel
France
Iran
Russia
India
Germany
Türkiye

3.2 From measurement to foresight

3.2.1 Sequence II-B — The PRA Foresight Method

Part I established the general framework: humanity now possesses planetary power, but the political wisdom capable of guiding this power remains fragmented. It demonstrated that this imbalance no longer concerns only states, but all the actors, infrastructures, technologies, resources, narratives, and dependencies that structure the world order.

Part II changes tone.

It no longer seeks to establish a philosophical, historical, or anthropological diagnosis of power. It presents the method that allows this diagnosis to be transformed into a foresight tool.

The challenge is simple: how to move from a general intuition — the world is traversed by a growing gap between power and wisdom — to a mapping of actors, variables, clusters and scenarios?

This step is essential. Without it, the scenarios risk appearing as authorial narratives, perhaps interesting, but insufficiently controllable. With it, they become conditional trajectories: debatable, revisable, but linked to an explicit method.

The PRA foresight method follows a six-step sequence:

identify the actors;
describe them using common variables;
project them into a factor space;
identify clusters;
apply future hypotheses to that space; and
produce narrative scenarios from the resulting shifts.

This channel does not claim to eliminate uncertainty. It does not transform the future into a calculation. It does not replace political judgment. It seeks to make this judgment more visible, more structured, and more open to criticism.

Foresight begins when the map becomes dynamic.

Actors and scope of analysis

The first methodological decision of the PRA foresight concerns the scope of the actors. The initial measurement sequence focused on a limited set of countries. This choice was consistent with its objective: to measure the internal stability, political maturity, and geopolitical power of clearly identifiable states. The foresight exercise pursues a different ambition. It is no longer simply a matter of comparing states, but of understanding the possible trajectories of the world order.

However, the contemporary world order is no longer structured solely by states.

States remain central. They retain sovereignty, borders, law, taxation, the military, diplomacy, police, war capabilities, and direct political responsibility toward a population. But they are no longer the sole producers of systemic effects.

Technology companies can transform the conditions of information, work, surveillance, warfare, and artificial intelligence. Platforms can alter the cognitive landscape of entire societies. Financial actors can influence capital flows, monetary stability, and access to payments. Energy and mining companies can determine the physical security of entire regions. Logistics infrastructures can become obligatory transit points or instruments of strangulation. Ideological movements can cross borders and polarize multiple societies simultaneously. Non-state armed groups can destabilize states, internationalize conflicts, or serve as proxies for larger powers.

An actor is not just a state

In PRA, an actor is defined by its capacity to produce a significant effect on the world order or one of its subsystems.

This capability can be military, economic, technological, financial, energy-related, informational, normative, ideological, logistical, institutional, or coercive.

An actor can therefore be:

a state;
an alliance;
an international organization;
a supranational entity;
a technology company;
a digital platform;
an industrial group;
a financial actor;
an energy actor;
a critical infrastructure;
an armed group;
an ideological network;
a criminal network;
a strategic diaspora;
an NGO or a normative network;
a private ecosystem with systemic influence capabilities.

This definition is functional. It is not based on the legal nature of the actor, but on its possible effect within the system.

A state and a corporation are not comparable as institutions. However, they can be partially comparable as producers of power, dependence, influence, or vulnerability. An alliance and a platform do not fall under the same legal order. But both can structure collective behavior. An armed group and a financial actor have nothing in common in their form, but each can, depending on the circumstances, trigger a systemic crisis.

The comparison therefore does not concern their entire nature. It concerns certain observable dimensions of their action.

Compare without confusing

The risk of such an expansion would be to put everything on the same level.

It must be avoided.

PRA is not saying that a state, a company, an alliance, a platform, an NGO, an armed group, or a diaspora are equivalent. They are not. They do not have the same legitimacy, the same responsibilities, the same resources, the same constraints, or the same historical depth.

But they can produce effects that converge in the same global space.

A company can create a strategic dependency.
A state can exert military coercion.
A platform can amplify ideological polarization.
An alliance can contain a war.
An international organization can maintain a normative language.
An armed group can trigger a regional crisis.
Infrastructure can become a bottleneck.
A diaspora can carry memory, influence, a network, or a resource.

The method therefore does not compare the actors in their essence. It compares some of their functions.

This distinction is central. It allows us to broaden the scope of analysis without dissolving the difference between the actors.

The choice of a scope of 100 actors

The foresight method covers approximately 100 actors.

This number is not intended to be definitive. It represents a compromise between two conflicting requirements: comprehensiveness and readability.

Too narrow a scope would have left out essential actors: platforms, infrastructures, private powers, coercive groups, exposed states, critical resources, alliances and transnational organizations.

Too broad a scope would have made the method unreadable and diluted the analysis into an accumulation of examples.

The 100 selected actors should therefore be understood as a structuring strategic sample. They do not represent all the world's actors, but they allow us to grasp the main power families that participate in shaping the world order.

The perimeter combines several categories.

Major systemic powers: United States, China, Russia, India, and regional powers capable of power projection.
Regional or intermediary powers: Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt, Brazil, Nigeria, Vietnam, Algeria, Azerbaijan, and other pivotal actors.
Alliances and institutions: European Union, NATO, UN, BRICS+, and other frameworks for cooperation or contestation.
Exposed or dependent states: Ukraine, Belarus, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Serbia, and Ethiopia.
Critical infrastructure and capital actors: technology, energy, financial, logistics, industrial, and raw materials companies.
Techno-informational powers: digital platforms, AI actors, cloud computing, data, media, satellites, and cognitive systems.
Non-state coercive actors: armed groups, violent ideological networks, proxies, cyber actors, and criminal networks.
Cooperative or normative actors: institutions, stabilizing states, NGOs, diasporas, human rights or climate networks.

This scope is not neutral in the sense of an absence of choice. On the contrary, it results from an explicit choice: to include the actors who, by their power, their vulnerability, their influence or their function, can contribute to one of the three scenarios studied.

Central Actors, Pivot Actors, Exposed Actors

Not all actors within the scope play the same role.

Some are central because they possess a systemic projection capability. Their actions can alter the entire global balance. Major powers, certain platforms, some AI actors, or critical infrastructure providers belong to this category.

Others are pivotal. They do not dominate the system, but their position allows them to shift certain configurations. They can serve as bridges, relays, counterweights, or transactional opportunities. Middle powers, certain alliances, certain countries located at

the junction of several zones, and certain industrial or military groups fall under this logic.

Others, finally, are exposed. Their fragility, their location, their dependencies, or their internal tensions make them susceptible to the strategies of others. They are not necessarily passive. But their trajectory depends heavily on external constraints: security, debt, energy, resources, alliances, borders, conflicts, or ideological pressures.

In a reasonableness scenario, central actors can help maintain bridges between blocs.
In a wisdom scenario, cooperative actors can become more structuring.
In chaos, exposed actors can become the arenas where systemic rivalries materialize.

Systemic private powers

The integration of private actors is one of the most important choices of the method.

This is not about giving in to a fascination with technology or large corporations. It is about recognizing that certain private actors now control functions upon which states themselves depend.

Cloud, satellites, semiconductors, AI models, social platforms, data, payment systems, maritime transport, port infrastructure, energy, minerals, industrial chains, insurance, finance: these areas do not all fall directly under public authority, but they condition the ability of societies to function.

Private power becomes systemic when it ceases to be merely economic and becomes structural.

This power should not be demonized. It generates innovation, investment capacity, speed, expertise, technical solutions, and sometimes efficiency. But it must be considered politically, because its reach often extends beyond the scope of its legitimacy.

The question is not: are private actors legitimate or illegitimate?
The question is: how to integrate their power into a map of the world order?

Foresight cannot consider war, AI, cognitive fragmentation, critical resources, or strategic dependencies without them.

The ideological-coercive actors

The scope also includes ideological-coercive actors: radical movements, armed organizations, transnational networks, conspiracy groups, supremacist currents or religious political structures when they acquire a strategic scope.

Their presence does not mean that they are comparable to states in material power. It means that they can produce disproportionate effects: violence, polarization,

radicalization, destabilization, attacks, proxy wars, identity mobilization, symbolic blackmail, or cognitive fragmentation.

These actors reveal an essential dimension of the era: power is not measured only by the ability to build, but also by the ability to harm, block, destabilize, contaminate or divert.

Their role will be particularly important in the analysis of chaos. But they should not be reduced to this single scenario. In a reasonableness scenario, they can be contained or marginalized. In a wisdom scenario, their influence can be reduced through institutions, educational policies, frameworks for cooperation, and better governance of the information space.

The perimeter as an instrument, not as a closed truth.

The chosen perimeter is not a definitive snapshot of the world.

It constitutes a working tool.

Other actors could be added. Some could be removed. Groupings could be refined. Actors currently considered secondary could become central. Actors currently considered central could fragment or lose their influence.

The PRA method must therefore remain revisable.

This capacity for revision is not a weakness; it is a condition of rigor. A foresight model that could not be corrected would quickly become dogmatic. Foresight must remain open to surprises, disruptions, and changes in the environment.

It allows us to move on to the next step: describing these actors according to common variables.

3.2.2 Variables, Criteria, and Scores

Once the actors have been identified, they need to be described.

The difficulty is obvious: how to apply a common language to actors as different as a state, an alliance, a technology company, an ideological network, a critical infrastructure, an international organization or an armed group?

The PRA response is based on the distinction between nature and variable.

The actors are not of the same nature. But certain variables can be observed in all of them, to varying degrees: power, autonomy, dependence, coercion, informational influence, cooperative orientation, ideological pressure, personalization of decision-making, control of resources, hegemonic will.

The variable does not erase the difference between the actors. It allows us to grasp what they may have in common within the global system.

Illustrative variables and active variables

The method distinguishes between two types of variables.

The first ones are illustrative variables: TSI* and G*.

TSI* adopts the concept of internal strength or maturity-stability developed in the state measurement sequence, but adapts it to foresight. For a state, this notion can refer to institutional maturity, political stability, or the capacity to absorb crises. For a company, an alliance, or an organization, it becomes a broader measure of organizational strength, internal coherence, and resilience.

G* takes up the idea of power or projection capability. For a state, it refers to military, economic, diplomatic, or strategic projection. For a company, it can refer to the capacity for influence, control of infrastructure, access to markets, technological diffusion, or the structuring of a dependency.

These two variables are considered illustrative because they extend the initial measurement work and help to interpret the actors. But the main dynamic of foresight rests on ten active variables.

These ten active variables are the true drivers of the typology and scenarios:

H1 — Hegemonic propensity;
H2 — Restorationist narrative;
ER1 — Economic interests / critical resources;
C1 — Available or deployed coercion;
A1 — Strategic autonomy;
D1 — Asymmetric dependence experienced;
P1 — Personalization of decision-making;
I1 — Informational / cognitive power;
I2 — Polarizing ideological pressure; and
M1 — Cooperative / multilateral orientation.

These variables constitute the central vocabulary of PRA foresight.

H1 — Hegemonic propensity

H1 measures the willingness of an actor to impose its norms, interests, narratives, dependencies or rules beyond its natural perimeter.

Hegemonic tendencies are not limited to territorial conquest. They can take multiple forms: military domination, normative influence, economic pressure, legal

extraterritoriality, technological control, imposition of standards, market capture, civilizational narrative, informational dependence, or ambitions for regional reshaping.

An actor can be powerful without being hegemonic. It can possess significant capabilities while primarily using them for self-protection, trade, stabilization, or cooperation. Conversely, a medium-power actor can have strong hegemonic tendencies if it seeks to dominate its regional, religious, ideological, technological, or economic environment.

H1 therefore does not only measure the available power. It measures the expansive orientation of this power.

H2 — Restorationist Narrative

H2 measures the presence of a restorationist narrative: nostalgia for grandeur, a sense of diminished status, a historical or civilizational mission, or a desire to regain a lost position.

This variable reflects an idea developed in Part I: actors are not guided solely by their material interests. They are also guided by the narratives they tell themselves about themselves.

A vision of restoration can be mobilizing without necessarily being destructive. It can support national reconstruction, cultural ambition, a regained dignity, or a development project. But it becomes dangerous when it transforms a glorified past into a right to dominate others.

It indicates that power can be directed by an injury, real or reconstructed, by a lost greatness or by a promise of return.

ER1 — Economic interest / critical resources

ER1 measures an actor's interest in controlling critical resources, markets, flows, infrastructure, or chains of dependency.

This variable is essential in a world where the economy has once again become geopolitical. Energy resources, minerals, semiconductors, ports, cables, shipping routes, payment systems, cloud computing, data, batteries, industrial capacity, or food infrastructure can all become instruments of power.

ER1 does not only refer to wealth. It refers to an actor's position within the materiality of the global system.

An actor can have a high ER1 because it possesses resources.
It can also have it because it controls infrastructure.
Or because it depends on a critical supply chain that it seeks to secure.
Or because it has an interest in transforming a resource into a strategic lever.

C1 — Coercion that can be mobilized or used

C1 measures the capacity or propensity to mobilize a military, economic, digital, legal or informational constraint.

Coercion is not limited to armed violence. It can take the form of sanctions, energy blackmail, logistical blockades, cyberattacks, financial pressure, the instrumentalization of migration, disinformation, judicial intimidation, data capture, technological monopolies, or threats of supply disruptions.

In an interdependent world, it is not necessary to invade territory to exert significant pressure. Sometimes it is enough to cut off access, block a road, withdraw insurance, shut down a platform, suspend a technology, brandish a threat, or amplify a cognitive crisis.

C1 measures power as a constraint capacity.

A1 — Strategic autonomy

A1 measures an actor's ability to act without excessive dependence on a protector, supplier, market, regulator, technology or infrastructure controlled by others.

Strategic autonomy does not mean autarky. No contemporary actor can be entirely autonomous. It means a relative capacity to choose, resist, absorb, substitute, diversify, and maintain sufficient freedom of action.

This variable is crucial in a world where dependencies are turning into vulnerabilities.

An actor with strong autonomy can resist sanctions, redirect its flows, develop its industrial capabilities, secure its resources, diversify its alliances or maintain its strategy despite external pressure.

An actor with limited autonomy can be coerced without being directly attacked.

A1 therefore measures the capacity of an actor not to be entirely subject to the order produced by others.

D1 — Asymmetric dependence suffered

D1 measures the vulnerability of one actor to another actor in terms of its security, technology, resources, debt, infrastructure, markets, or supplies.

D1 is the complement of A1, but the two variables are not simply inverses. An actor may have a certain degree of autonomy in some areas and remain dependent in others. A major power may be vulnerable to semiconductors, a financial power to digital infrastructure, a military state to energy or debt, a global corporation to regulation or a market.

Asymmetric dependency becomes politically decisive when it can be activated as a constraint.

Dependence is not always about being subjected to something. Interdependence can be stabilizing when it is reciprocal and structured. But dependence becomes a risk when it is unilateral, critical, opaque, or difficult to replace.

P1 — Personalization of the decision

P1 measures the concentration of power around a leader, founder, party, family, regime, religious leader, apparatus or small core.

This variable does not only concern authoritarian states. It can apply to companies dominated by a founder, to ideological networks structured around a figure, to locked political apparatuses, to hierarchical armed organizations or to regimes in which decision-making is synonymous with the will of a restricted center.

Personalization can produce speed and consistency. But it also increases the risk of blindness, stubbornness, confusion between personal and collective interest, reckless escalation, or miscalculation.

In foresight, P1 is a volatility variable.

The more concentrated the decision, the more an actor's evolution can depend on psychology, obsession, survival calculation, or a prestige injury.

I1 — Informational/cognitive power

I1 measures the ability to shape perceptions, attention, narratives, data, algorithms, or information dissemination.

This variable is central in a world where cognitive space has become strategic.

Information power can belong to a state, a platform, a global media outlet, an AI company, a social network, an ideological organization, a disinformation power, a technological ecosystem, or a combination of these actors.

It acts upstream of the decision. It does not only determine what individuals think. It influences what they see, what they fear, what they believe is possible, what they consider a priority, what they regard as true or false, friend or foe, legitimate or illegitimate.

I2 — Polarizing ideological pressure

I2 measures the intensity of ideologies that reduce compromise, designate an enemy, absolutize a cause, or reinforce rigid convictions.

This variable does not target convictions as such. A society without convictions would be empty. It targets the forms of ideological closure that transform disagreement into a threat, the opponent into a traitor, nuance into weakness, and compromise into capitulation.

I2 can be supported by radical religious, nationalist, supremacist, conspiratorial, revolutionary, counter-revolutionary, identitarian or totalitarian ideologies.

It is one of the most sensitive variables for scenarios, as it indicates an actor's ability to produce or amplify polarization.

In chaos, I2 is strengthened.
In reason, I2 is contained.
In wisdom, I2 must be marginalized by institutions, a culture of compromise, education in complexity, and information governance.

M1 — Cooperative/Multilateral Orientation

M1 measures an actor's propensity to respect rules, cooperate, accept interdependence, and contribute to the common good.

This variable should not be understood naively. An actor may cooperate out of virtue, but also out of self-interest, prudence, necessity, dependence, or calculation. Political cooperation is rarely pure. It is often intertwined with values, constraints, and anticipated benefits.

M1 therefore measures the general orientation of an actor in the face of the possibility of a common order.

A high M1 means that the actor tends to preserve rules, seek compromises, maintain institutions, contribute to regulations, respect certain principles, or accept forms of interdependence.

A low M1 indicates a more unilateral, coercive, predatory, indifferent or hostile orientation toward common goods.

M1 is the variable most directly related to the question of political wisdom.

Rating as a structured assessment

Each variable is rated on a comparable scale.

The rating does not claim to measure a physical reality. It reflects a structured assessment based on available information, public data, geopolitical knowledge, qualitative indicators, comparisons and trade-offs.

Therefore, two misunderstandings must be avoided.

The first mistake would be to believe that the rating says everything. It does not say everything. It summarizes.

The second mistake would be to believe that a grade is meaningless simply because it contains an element of personal opinion. This would confuse acknowledged subjectivity with arbitrariness. A grade can be debatable without being arbitrary. It becomes useful when it is explicit, comparable, revisable, and linked to specific criteria.

The role of PRA is precisely to make this transition visible: from a qualitative analysis to a comparable structure.

Limits, Prudence, and Revision

The ratings must remain limited, cautious and revisable.

Bounded, because no variable should become absolute. Even a highly coercive actor can face limits. Even a highly cooperative actor can have vested interests. Even a major informational power can lose influence. The scoring system therefore avoids unnecessary extremes.

Caution is advised because some actors are heterogeneous or opaque. A company may have multiple decision-making processes. An alliance may bring together divergent members. An international organization may uphold lofty principles while possessing limited resources. An ideological movement may be diffuse, fragmented, and lack a single leader.

Subject to revision, because foresight works on a changing world. A crisis, a war, an innovation, an election, a disruption of the supply chain or an institutional reform can modify the profile of an actor.

From Scoring to Mapping

Once the actors have been rated according to the variables, the method can move on to the next step: factor mapping.

Variables allow for comparison.
PCA allows for structuring.
Clusters allow for interpretation.
The Hypothesis Impact Matrix will then allow for shifting.

The method, therefore, does not consist of adding up scores to produce a single ranking. It consists of using the scores to reveal similarities, families, and tensions within the global space.

This is the subject of the next chapter.

3.2.3 PCA, classification and seven clusters

The variables describe the actors, but a list of scores is still not enough to understand the system.

It is necessary to understand how the actors are distributed in relation to each other. It is necessary to identify proximities, distances, oppositions, families, and areas of tension.

This is the function of principal component analysis and classification.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) constructs the map.
Classification identifies families.
Clusters provide a political interpretation of the map.

PCA as a reference map

Principal component analysis projects the actors into a factor space constructed from the active variables.

It does not begin with a preconceived judgment about the world's blocs. It does not predetermine: here are the good guys, the bad guys, the democracies, the authoritarian regimes, the powers, the victims, the corporations, or the ideologies. It observes the relative positions produced by the variables.

It allows us to see which actors are coming together because they share certain traits: strong autonomy, strong coercion, cooperative orientation, high dependence, informational power, control of resources, ideological pressure or hegemonic propensity.

The value of this method lies in not reducing actors to their legal category. A company can be considered similar to a state if it produces comparable effects on certain variables. An ideological network can appear similar to a coercive actor. A middle power can be considered similar to a pivotal actor. An institution can be considered similar to stabilizing states.

The PCA does not yet predict the future. It organizes the initial state of the system.

It constitutes the reference map on which the scenarios will then produce movements.

A fixed PCA for the scenarios

An important methodological principle must be stated: the reference PCA is fixed.

This means that the scenarios do not recalculate a new PCA for each hypothesis. They start from the same initial map. The hypotheses adjust the variables, and then the actors are reprojected into the reference space.

If each scenario recalculated its own map, it would be difficult to determine whether a shift resulted from an assumption or from changing reference points. By keeping the factor space fixed, PRA can compare relative shifts: an actor moves closer to a cluster, a cluster shifts toward greater coercion, an actor group loses its cooperative orientation, or an area of the map becomes more central.

The map remains stable.
It is the actors and clusters that are moving.

The principal components

In the reference configuration, the first components concentrate the bulk of the information.

The first component expresses the greatest degree of differentiation between the actors. The second adds a complementary structuring dimension. The third, and subsequent components, refine the interpretation.

Each axis should not be overinterpreted as if it mechanically corresponded to a single, simple idea. In principal component analysis (PCA), an axis results from a combination of variables. It can express several tensions simultaneously: autonomy versus dependence, coercion versus cooperation, informational power versus cognitive weakness, hegemonic orientation versus institutional stabilization.

The components are not slogans. They are statistical dimensions to be translated into political terms.

This translation requires returning to the variables that contribute to the observed positions. An actor is not located on the map by chance. They are placed there because their scores on H1, H2, ER1, C1, A1, D1, P1, I1, I2, and M1 produce a relative configuration.

The classification

Once the actors are projected, the classification allows us to group those who have similar profiles.

These groupings are the clusters.

A cluster is not an alliance.
It is not a moral family.

It is not a prediction.
It is not an official political bloc.

It is an analytical grouping based on the similarity of profiles.

Two actors within the same cluster can be adversaries. They may never cooperate. They may belong to different civilizations, regimes, or regions. Their proximity simply means that they share certain structuring properties within the space of variables.

For example, placing several hegemonic projection actors within the same analytical framework does not mean they are allies. It means they share a capacity or a willingness to act beyond their immediate sphere of influence. Similarly, grouping ideological and coercive actors together does not mean they share the same ideology. It means they have a comparable capacity to polarize, coerce, or radicalize.

Clusters therefore help to read the structure of the system, not to simplify the world into fixed camps.

The seven reference clusters

The chosen classification reveals seven reference clusters.

These clusters constitute the foresight method's baseline. Subsequent scenarios do not invent them; they examine how the clusters shift, strengthen, weaken, or change in relative influence.

Cluster 1 — Autonomous hegemonic projection

The first cluster brings together actors with a strong projection capacity, high strategic autonomy and a significant capacity to impose constraints, narratives, norms or dependencies.

It includes: United States, China, Russia, India, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Musk ecosystem.

This cluster is one of the most crucial in the system. Its actors do not all pursue the same objectives. Some are rivals, others allies, and still others oscillate between cooperation and competition. But all possess a capacity for initiative that compels other actors to take their choices into account.

They are producers of systemic constraints.

The United States retains significant military, financial, technological, diplomatic, and informational capabilities. China combines industrial power, strategic ambition, technological control, and a project of centrality. Russia possesses significant military, energy, nuclear, and disruption capabilities. India is becoming a demographic,

technological, and strategic hub. Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel each exert strong regional influence, with varying power projection capabilities. The Musk ecosystem illustrates a new form: a private, technological, space, informational, and industrial power capable of impacting public systems.

This cluster is not politically homogeneous. It is functionally homogeneous: it brings together actors capable of acting beyond themselves.

Cluster 2 — Ideological-coercive polarization

The second cluster comprises actors whose main strength lies in ideological polarization, coercion, radicalism, or the ability to make compromise difficult.

It includes: Pakistan, North Korea, Hezbollah, Houthis, Hamas / Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Salafist-jihadist networks, Muslim Brotherhood / political Islam, transnational supremacist far right, conspiracy / anti-Semitic networks.

These actors are very different. Some are states. Others are armed groups, ideological networks, or transnational movements. They should not be confused. But they share a capacity to generate tension, reduce the space for compromise, mobilize narratives of threat or salvation, and sometimes transform violence into a political instrument.

This cluster is not necessarily the most powerful in terms of hardware. But its effects can be disproportionate.

It can weaken societies, fuel regional conflicts, amplify mistrust, produce asymmetric violence, divert crises, radicalize populations or provide relays for larger powers.

In a scenario of chaos, this cluster gains centrality. In a scenario of reason, it remains active but contained. In a scenario of wisdom, it becomes one of the main objectives of a global policy for preventing radicalization, protecting cognitive space, and rebuilding compromise.

Cluster 3 — Strategic Dependence / Exposure

The third cluster brings together actors who are exposed, dependent or weakened by their geographical, political, security or economic position.

It includes: Ethiopia, Ukraine, Belarus, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Serbia.

These actors are not simply weak. Some possess resources, large populations, major geographical positions, or considerable historical depth. But they are located in areas where the strategies of other actors become particularly visible.

They are exposed to neighborhood pressures, military dependencies, interference, debts, energy routes, internal tensions, sectarian fractures, bloc rivalries, or frozen conflicts.

Their importance for foresight lies in their role as indicators.

In these spaces, the major imbalances of the global system materialize: war, influence, dependence, migration, debt, proxy, resources, borders, corridors, military bases, sanctions or institutional fragmentation.

In chaos, these actors become arenas of confrontation.
In a climate of reasonableness, they can be partially stabilized through regional arrangements.
In a climate of wisdom, they become priorities for systemic prevention.

Cluster 4 — Critical infrastructure & capital

The fourth cluster brings together the actors that constitute the material, industrial, financial, energy, logistical and technological backbone of the world order.

It includes: Apple, Nvidia, BlackRock / Vanguard / State Street, Visa / Mastercard, BYD / CATL, SMIC, COSCO / State Grid, Tata Group, ASML, Airbus, Shell / BP / TotalEnergies, Saudi Aramco, Saudi PIF, ADNOC / Mubadala / ADIA, DP World, Samsung / SK Hynix, TSMC, Toyota / Mitsubishi / SoftBank, Maersk / MSC, Glencore / Trafigura / Vitol, Cargill / ADM.

This cluster serves as a reminder of one essential point: globalization is not just an idea. It is an infrastructure.

It relies on ports, cables, semiconductors, ships, electrical grids, payment systems, raw materials, clouds, industrial chains, financial markets, insurance, batteries, shipping routes and food flows.

These actors can maintain interdependence or become the points of strangulation in the system.

In a reasonable world, they remain functional supports of resilience.
In a wise world, they are gradually integrated into the governance of critical resources.
In chaos, they become weapons: cuts, sanctions, export controls, dependencies, shortages, blackmail, industrial blocs.

This cluster shows that contemporary power often resides in the ability to make the daily functioning of the world possible or impossible.

Cluster 5 — Institutional/Multilateral Cooperation

The fifth cluster brings together actors whose main orientation is institutional, cooperative, normative or stabilizing.

It includes: European Union, UN, Germany, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Kenya, Singapore, Poland, Morocco, Greece, human rights/climate NGOs, transnational strategic diasporas.

These actors are not all equally powerful. They do not share the same interests. Some are states, others institutions, others networks. But they participate in preserving a common language: law, cooperation, development, climate, mediation, norms, defensive alliances, common goods, pluralism, stability.

It does not guarantee wisdom. It can be weak, divided, slow, powerless, or overly prescriptive. But it retains the instruments through which a global society can still talk about something other than coercion and domination.

In a reasonable state, this cluster regains minimal utility.
In a trajectory of wisdom, it becomes central.
In chaos, it becomes defensive, overwhelmed, and sometimes instrumentalized.

Cluster 6 — Intermediate Powers / Pivots

The sixth cluster includes actors who do not dominate the system alone, but can modify its balances.

It includes: NATO, France, United Kingdom, Brazil, Egypt, Nigeria, Vietnam, Algeria, Azerbaijan, BRICS+, Lockheed / RTX / Northrop, Adani Group, Rosatom / Gazprom / Rosneft, Baykar, IAI / Rafael / Elbit, NSO / private offensive cyber, transnational narco-criminal cartels.

This cluster is particularly heterogeneous. That is precisely what makes it interesting.

It brings together middle powers, alliances, military, industrial, energy, technological or criminal actors capable of influencing certain areas of the system.

These actors are not always central in themselves. They become so through their position.

They can supply weapons, control technology, exert influence in a region, arbitrate between blocs, strengthen an alliance, exploit a rivalry, secure a route, circumvent a sanction, shift an industrial chain, or weaken a society.

In a reasonableness scenario, they can maintain bridges.
In chaos, they can make order more transactional.

In a wisdom scenario, they can be integrated into functional coalitions around security, climate, AI, resources, or infrastructure.

This cluster is the one for the switchover.

Cluster 7 — Information Technology & Platforms

The seventh cluster brings together actors whose power comes mainly from information, data, platforms, the cloud, artificial intelligence, media, digital infrastructure or cognitive intermediation.

It includes in particular: United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Microsoft / OpenAI, Alphabet / YouTube / DeepMind, Amazon / AWS / Blue Origin, Meta, Palantir / Anduril, ByteDance / TikTok, Huawei, Tencent / WeChat, Alibaba / Ant, Reliance / Jio, QatarEnergy / QIA / Al Jazeera, G42.

This cluster illustrates the newest dimension of power.

It is not just about communicating. It is about organizing attention, storing data, providing AI models, hosting digital infrastructure, producing narratives, analyzing behaviors, monitoring, predicting, recommending, filtering, amplifying, or directing.

Techno-informational power acts on the very conditions of perception.

It can support knowledge, scientific cooperation, administrative efficiency, medicine, education, and crisis prevention. But it can also amplify manipulation, polarization, surveillance, dependency, and cognitive fragmentation.

In chaos, this cluster becomes an accelerator of disorder or a tool of blocs.
In a rational context, it is partially regulated by states and alliances.
In a wise context, it must become one of the central objects of global governance of cognitive and algorithmic risks.

Clusters as a reference structure

These seven clusters are not final conclusions. They constitute a reference structure.

They describe how the system is organized before future assumptions are introduced. They show where hegemonic, coercive, dependent, infrastructural, cooperative, pivotal, and techno-informational forces are located.

Once the clusters have been identified, it becomes possible to ask the crucial questions:

Which cluster strengthens if technological blocs harden?
Which cluster weakens if multilateralism recedes?
Which cluster becomes central if critical resources are militarized?

Which cluster stabilizes the system if cooperation progresses?
Which cluster accelerates chaos if polarizing ideologies gain influence?
Which cluster becomes indispensable if AI imposes a new institutional shift in scale?

These questions introduce the next chapter: the questionnaire and the Hypothesis Impact Matrix.

3.2.4 Questionnaire and Hypothesis Impact Matrix

The initial mapping is not sufficient to produce a scenario.

It describes a structure.
It does not yet say how this structure might evolve.

To move from the map to the scenario, PRA uses a hypothesis questionnaire and a Hypothesis Impact Matrix.

The questionnaire defines possible directions for the world.
The matrix translates these directions into effects on variables.
The adjusted variables shift actors and clusters.
These shifts fuel the narrative.

The role of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is not intended to predict the future.

It forces a structured reflection on the main assumptions that can guide global trajectories: economic globalization, technological blocs, critical resources, artificial intelligence, private platforms, multilateralism, ideological polarization, radicalism, anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories, restorative nationalisms, private powers, economic or legal coercion, climate, migrations, health, liberal democracies, authoritarian regimes and military conflict.

Each question offers a range of answers generally from -2 to +2.

These values should not be understood as simple moral judgments. They indicate an orientation in relation to a reference continuum.

A response can mean intensification, retreat, stabilization, fragmentation, coordination, hardening, regulation or tipping point depending on the question asked.

The important point is that each active response subsequently produces methodological effects.

It does not remain an isolated opinion. It enters into the Hypothesis Impact Matrix.

The answers 0 and continuity

Answer 0 occupies a special place.

It should not always be interpreted as an average or lukewarm response. Within the chosen methodological framework, it primarily corresponds to the absence of any additional change compared to the baseline situation.

In other words: 0 does not mean that nothing happens in the world.
It means that the trend trajectory already contained in Scenario Zero remains unchanged.

Scenario Zero is not a static world. It already contains the tensions, dependencies, vulnerabilities, powers, and movements observable in the initial situation. Therefore, answering 0 means maintaining this foundation without adding any specific acceleration or correction.

The codes NSP, NP and PO

The questionnaire should also allow for the option of not answering.

The technical codes NSP, NP and PO serve this function.

They are never treated as numerical values. They are not equal to +97, +98 or +99. They indicate that a question is not retained, that it is not relevant in the scenario under consideration or that it calls for a particular reservation.

First, it avoids the illusion of forced exhaustiveness. Not all scenarios necessarily have to activate all assumptions.

Secondly, it protects the reader or user against the “clockwork” effect: mechanically filling in all the boxes to obtain a result that would only reformulate what they already thought.

The questionnaire should therefore be a tool for reflection, not an automated system.

The comment column plays a complementary role here. It allows for explaining why an answer was chosen, nuanced, or neutralized. It preserves a record of the decision-making process.

The Hypothesis Impact Matrix

The Hypothesis Impact Matrix links the questionnaire responses to the active variables.

Its principle is simple.

Each hypothesis can affect several variables. For example, a hardening of technological blocs can alter strategic autonomy, dependencies, informational power, critical resources, and cooperative orientation. A rise in radical ideologies can strengthen ideological pressure, coercion, the personalization of power, or the weakening of multilateralism. AI regulation can limit certain informational risks while strengthening institutional actors.

The matrix therefore assigns impact coefficients between the hypotheses and the variables.

These coefficients are preliminary, debatable, and subject to revision. But they have an essential function: to make explicit what would otherwise remain intuitive.

Instead of saying, “this hypothesis makes the world more dangerous,” the matrix requires us to specify:

Which variables are affected?
In what way?
With what intensity?
Which clusters are sensitive?
Which types of actors will be strengthened or weakened?

The matrix thus transforms a qualitative hypothesis into an analytical movement.

The treatment of the effects

The processing chain can be described in several stages.

First step: the questionnaire produces a vector of active responses. NSP, NP and PO responses are neutralized.

Second step: the active responses are multiplied by the coefficients of the Hypothesis Impact Matrix. This gives us global variations on the variables: H1, H2, ER1, C1, A1, D1, P1, I1, I2, M1.

Third step: these variations do not apply mechanically and identically to all actors. Actors and clusters have different sensitivities. A hypothesis about critical resources will more strongly affect infrastructure, dependent states, or energy powers. A hypothesis about platforms will more significantly impact information technology actors. A hypothesis about radical ideologies will particularly affect ideological and coercive actors and societies vulnerable to polarization.

Fourth step: adjusted scores are capped within an interpretable range. An actor cannot exceed the rating system's limits indefinitely. This constraint prevents artificial, unbounded effects.

Fifth step: the adjusted actors are reprojected into the reference factor space. The PCA is not recalculated. The actors move within the existing map.

Sixth step: the centroids of the clusters are recalculated in order to observe their direction, their intensity of movement, their density and any possible rapprochements or distancing between families of actors.

Seventh step: the narrative is written based on these movements.

The complete chain can therefore be formulated as follows:

questionnaire responses → Hypothesis Impact Matrix → adjusted variables → displaced actors → displaced clusters → narrative scenario.

Why this chain is important

The first risk is free fiction.

An author can always imagine a seductive, unsettling, or spectacular future. But if this future is not linked to explicit assumptions, it becomes difficult to discuss. The reader may like it or reject it, but they cannot easily understand its construction.

The second risk is mute technicality.

Conversely, an accumulation of variables, matrices, and coordinates can become unreadable. It gives an impression of rigor, but does not necessarily produce political understanding.

PRA seeks to maintain the balance.

The method must constrain the narrative.
The narrative must make the method intelligible.

The spectacular should come from the staging of the consequences, not from the exaggeration of the hypotheses.

Sensitive clusters

Each hypothesis does not affect all clusters in the same way.

Economic globalization particularly affects critical infrastructure, dependent actors, hegemonic powers, pivots, and cooperative actors.
Technological blocs affect information technology, critical infrastructure, hegemonic actors, dependent actors, and cooperative actors.
Critical resources strongly affect infrastructure, energy powers, dependent states, regional powers, and pivot actors.

AI affects platforms, information powers, states capable of regulation or coercion, digital infrastructure, and vulnerable societies.
Multilateralism directly affects cooperative actors, institutions, alliances, and exposed states.
Radical ideologies affect ideological-coercive actors, weakened democracies, exposed states, and the information space.
Military conflicts affect hegemonic powers, pivots, exposed states, alliances, and coercive actors.

This differentiated sensitivity helps to avoid a common mistake: assuming that a global hypothesis produces the same effect everywhere.

The world is not homogeneous. Shocks spread differently depending on the vulnerabilities, resources, and capabilities of the actors involved.

The role of the reader

The questionnaire can also become a tool for reader appropriation.

A reader can accept the authorial scenarios, discuss them, or create their own. They can modify certain answers, neutralize certain questions, comment on their choices, and observe how the overall direction of the world changes.

PRA does not claim to impose a closed vision of the future. It proposes a method for thinking about the future in a structured way.

The reader can thus move from the narrative to the hypotheses, then from the hypotheses to the variables, and finally from the variables to the clusters. They can understand why a scenario produces a particular effect, why a particular cluster strengthens, why a certain type of alliance becomes more likely, and why a particular risk of war increases or decreases.

This reverse engineering is one of the main protections against arbitrary action.

The limitations of the Hypothesis Impact Matrix

The matrix is not an oracle.

Its coefficients are based on interpretive choices. They can be improved, corrected, documented, or discussed. Some interactions between variables may be more complex than a linear matrix suggests. Some effects may be non-immediate, indirect, cumulative, or contradictory.

A hypothesis can strengthen a variable in the short term and weaken it in the long term.
An actor can react to a shock unexpectedly.
A cluster can fragment.

A crisis can produce cooperation rather than escalation.
A technology can simultaneously increase coercion and prevention.
Dependency can become constraint or, conversely, a stabilizing interdependence.

The matrix should therefore be understood as an instrument of discipline, not as a truth machine.

From questionnaire to scenario

The scenario arises when the answers to the questionnaire produce a readable distortion of the map.

In a scenario of reasonableness, some variables of conflict are contained, the cooperative orientation is maintained or slightly strengthened, the pivotal actors play a stabilizing role, and the most coercive clusters remain active without becoming dominant.

In a wisdom-based scenario, the variables of cooperation, governance, responsibility, and the commons become more structuring. Institutional, cooperative, and regulatory actors gain centrality. Private powers are integrated into accountability frameworks. AI, climate, resources, health, and information become areas of convergence.

In a chaotic scenario, the variables of coercion, asymmetric dependence, ideological pressure, informational fragmentation, and technological rivalry are reinforced. Exposed actors become arenas of confrontation. Infrastructures become points of strangulation. Pivots become transactional. Institutions lose their capacity for guidance.

The questionnaire provides the initial impetus.
The matrix produces the movement.
The map reveals the structure.
The narrative gives meaning.

3.2.5 Scenario Zero: Trend Continuity

Before writing the three authorial scenarios, a basis for comparison must be established.

This basis is Scenario Zero.

Scenario Zero should not be confused with a neutral, happy, or static scenario. It does not say that nothing happens. It does not say that the world remains stable. It simply says that no additional changes are introduced by the questionnaire.

All active responses are therefore set to 0.

This means that the actors retain their initial position in the reference map. The clusters do not undergo any further shifts. The tensions already observable remain, but they are neither exacerbated nor corrected by any particular forward-looking assumption.

Scenario zero is the baseline.

Why Scenario Zero?

A scenario only makes sense by comparison.

To say that chaos increases presupposes knowing in relation to what.
To say that wisdom progresses presupposes identifying what is shifting.
To say that reason stabilizes presupposes knowing the situation it stabilizes.

Scenario Zero serves this purpose.

It distinguishes what already belongs to the system's baseline from what results from a future hypothesis.

Without a Scenario Zero, everything could be attributed to the scenario. With it, the method can say: this tension already exists; this other one is reinforced by the hypothesis; this cluster was already central; this other one becomes so; this actor was already exposed; this event exposes them further.

It prevents the scenarios from being artificially dramatized by attributing to them realities already present in the database.

The world of Scenario Zero

The world of Scenario Zero is one of trend continuity.

The major powers remain active. Rivalries persist. Interdependencies continue. Institutions continue to function partially. Platforms and technologies remain powerful. Critical resources remain strategic. Ideological and coercive actors retain their capacity to cause harm. Exposed states remain vulnerable. Cooperative actors maintain an institutional discourse, but without any certainty of being able to influence the balance of power.

This world is not at peace.

It is governable at times, unstable in some areas, fragmented in some sectors, and contradictory in its developments.

It already contains all three possibilities.

Reasonableness exists there in the form of prudence, crisis fatigue, deterrence, partial cooperation, and cost awareness.
Wisdom exists there in embryonic form: institutions, norms, rights, climate, technological regulation, common goods, reflections on AI, and risk governance.

Chaos also exists: wars, bloc rivalries, dependencies, radicalization, disinformation, cognitive fragmentation, economic coercion, critical resources, and exposed states.

Scenario Zero does not yet make a choice. It shows that the three trajectories are already present as potentialities.

Cluster 1 in Scenario Zero

In Scenario Zero, the autonomous hegemonic projection cluster retains a high capacity for initiative.

The United States, China, Russia, India, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the Musk ecosystem do not form a bloc. They do not share a common strategy. Some are adversaries, competitors, or circumstantial partners. But all possess the capacity to generate constraints that extend beyond their immediate sphere of influence.

They remain producers of systemic movements.

Scenario Zero does not assume that they will automatically escalate. It simply observes that their power, autonomy, and capacity for initiative make them decisive actors.

The future trajectory will depend on the direction given to this power: cautious cooperation, institutionalization, contained competition, coercion or chaos.

Cluster 2 in Scenario Zero

The cluster of ideological-coercive polarization retains a disproportionate influence.

Pakistan, North Korea, Hezbollah, Houthis, Hamas/Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Salafist-jihadist networks, Muslim Brotherhood/political Islam, transnational supremacist far right, and conspiracy/anti-Semitic networks do not govern the world order. But they reveal its flaws.

They mobilize fear, rigidity, asymmetric violence, resentment, closed-mindedness, or symbolic blackmail.

In Scenario Zero, they remain contained in some places, active elsewhere, dangerous due to their contagion and amplification effects.

They are not enough on their own to produce global chaos. But they constitute one of its raw materials.

Cluster 3 in Scenario Zero

The cluster of dependence and strategic exposure remains an area of concern.

Ethiopia, Ukraine, Belarus, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Serbia remain exposed to external pressures, dependencies, conflicts, competing influences or internal fragilities.

These actors are not simply victims. They can resist, negotiate, pivot, exploit their position, or become stabilizing points. But their room for maneuver is more severely constrained than that of major powers or autonomous actors.

In Scenario Zero, they indicate the places where system tensions may become visible.

Cluster 4 in Scenario Zero

The critical infrastructure & capital cluster maintains the materiality of the world order.

Apple, Nvidia, major asset managers, payment systems, battery manufacturers, semiconductor companies, ports, energy companies, sovereign wealth funds, shipping companies, commodity traders, construction companies, and food producers are not just businesses. They form the functional backbone of interdependence.

In Scenario Zero, their power remains primarily functional.

They allow the system to continue functioning. But they already carry within them an ambiguity: what enables interdependence can become an instrument of constraint if the blocs harden.

Scenario Zero therefore shows their dual role: sources of resilience or potential chokepoints.

Cluster 5 in Scenario Zero

The institutional/multilateral cooperation cluster maintains the language of the common order.

The European Union, the UN, Germany, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Kenya, Singapore, Poland, Morocco, Greece, human rights/climate NGOs and transnational strategic diasporas continue to carry logics of law, norms, cooperation, development, stabilization or common goods.

In Scenario Zero, this cluster is not dominant.

It is indispensable, but often overwhelmed. It maintains spaces for dialogue and cooperation, but it does not always have the necessary strength to impose its principles on the most coercive or hegemonic actors.

Its central question is therefore this: will it remain a language of consolation, or will it once again become an architecture of power?

Cluster 6 in Scenario Zero

The cluster of middle and pivot powers arbitrates between blocs, crises and interests.

NATO, France, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Egypt, Nigeria, Vietnam, Algeria, Azerbaijan, BRICS+, major defense contractors, energy and technology groups, cyber actors, and criminal networks are not all of the same nature. But they share a function: they can alter certain balances without dominating the entire system.

In Scenario Zero, they retain the capacity to swing between alignments.

They can stabilize, militarize, circumvent, supply, block, protect, arbitrate, or exploit rivalries. Their importance increases in a world where great powers can no longer directly control everything.

This cluster heralds a major characteristic of the 21st century: order is becoming more transactional.

Cluster 7 in Scenario Zero

The techno-informational & platforms cluster structures the cognitive, digital and algorithmic layer of the world.

United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Microsoft / OpenAI, Alphabet / YouTube / DeepMind, Amazon / AWS / Blue Origin, Meta, Palantir / Anduril, ByteDance / TikTok, Huawei, Tencent / WeChat, Alibaba / Ant, Reliance / Jio, QatarEnergy / QIA / Al Jazeera and G42 are involved in the production, storage, dissemination or interpretation of digital data, narratives, models, platforms and infrastructures.

In Scenario Zero, this cluster is already central.

It does not dominate everything, but it influences the conditions of perception, organization, communication, and decision-making.

Its future will depend heavily on the regulation or lack of regulation of AI, platforms, data, cloud, surveillance, disinformation and digital infrastructure.

In a reasonable context, it is controlled.
In a wise context, it is integrated into a governance of cognitive risks.
In chaos, it becomes an accelerator of fragmentation.

Scenario Zero as Active Expectation

It does not say that the world continues peacefully.
It says that the world continues along its current tensions, without any major additional shifts.

This continuity is already burdensome.

It contains rivalries, dependencies, fragilities, innovations, conflicts, weak institutions, powerful actors, narratives of revenge, technological risks, and opportunities for cooperation.

The foresight question then becomes: What can tip the system from this baseline?

An AI crisis?
A regional war?
An energy breakdown?
A fragmentation of platforms?
A collapse of democratic trust?
An escalation between major powers?
A global agreement on existential risks?
A coalition of cautious powers?
A shock severe enough to make new institutions acceptable?

Scenario zero provides the map before the move.

Transition to auteur scenarios

The three original scenarios will be based on this foundation.

Reasonableness will explore the hypothesis of imperfect stabilization: the world does not become wise, but it contains certain excesses because the cost of chaos becomes too visible.

Wisdom will explore a high trajectory: humanity, faced with existential risks, agrees to build convergence institutions commensurate with its power.

Chaos will explore failure: power continues to grow, but institutions can no longer direct it; dependencies become weapons, blocs harden, platforms fragment, ideologies radicalize, exposed states become theaters of confrontation.

These scenarios will not be predictions. They will be conditional distortions of Scenario Zero.

Their credibility will depend on their traceability.

For each one, it will be necessary to be able to go back up:

from narrative to actors;
from actors to clusters;
from clusters to variables;

from variables to the Hypothesis Impact Matrix;
from the matrix to questionnaire responses.

It is this chain that distinguishes a structured foresight exercise from a free-flowing narrative.

Part II has therefore accomplished its function: it has built the instrument. Part III can now use it.

The map is laid out.
The variables are defined.
The clusters are identified.
Scenario Zero establishes the basis.

The stories of their journeys still need to be told.

4 Part III — Three Authorial Scenarios

The first two parts built the instrument.

Part I laid out the diagnosis: humanity possesses a power that has become planetary, but the political wisdom capable of guiding this power remains fragmented.

Part II presented the method: actors, variables, PCA, clusters, questionnaire, Hypothesis Impact Matrix and Scenario Zero.

Part III now engages in narrative foresight.

The three scenarios that follow are not predictions. They do not claim to say what will happen. They explore what could happen if certain assumptions were strengthened, if certain clusters gained centrality, if certain variables shifted, and if certain deep-seated forces gained the upper hand.

These scenarios are authorial and therefore involve interpretation. But that interpretation is not arbitrary: it is grounded in the questionnaire, the selected assumptions, the Hypothesis Impact Matrix, the clusters, and Scenario Zero.

Their function is not to close off the future. It is to make three trajectories legible.

The first is reasonableness: the world does not become wise, but it contains some of its excesses out of fear of the worst.

The second is wisdom: humanity, confronted with existential risks produced by its own power, agrees to build convergence institutions commensurate with those risks.

The third is chaos: power continues to grow without a common guiding principle; the world does not necessarily collapse, but it becomes increasingly difficult to govern.

These three scenarios are not of equal value as aspirations. Reasonableness is an imperfect stabilization. Wisdom is a regulatory utopia. Chaos is the failure that this work seeks to make conceivable in order to better anticipate its logic.

They are not describing three different humanities. They are describing three ways of amplifying already present potentialities.

4.1 The restraint trajectory

4.1.1 Reasonableness 2030-2035: The unstable equilibrium, or cooperation out of fear of the worst

The scenario of reasonableness is not a scenario of harmony.

It does not assume that great powers become altruistic, that authoritarian regimes transform, that democracies suddenly regain their balance, that platforms spontaneously renounce their power, that ideological conflicts disappear, or that states renounce their interests.

It assumes something more modest, but perhaps more plausible: the main actors gradually realize that the cost of chaos becomes greater than the benefits of escalation.

Reasonableness is not wisdom.
It is the minimal prudence that arises when the abyss becomes visible.

In this scenario, the world does not heal from its rivalries. It only learns not to push them all to the breaking point. The actors remain competitors, often distrustful, sometimes cynical. But they reintroduce boundaries, channels, arrangements, partial coordination, and forms of restraint.

The central formula could be the following:

The world is not becoming wise; it is becoming temporarily less mad.

Scenario Status

Reasonableness is an imperfect stabilization trajectory.

It corresponds neither to the optimistic scenario of wisdom, nor to the dark scenario of chaos. It describes a world in which the forces of disorder remain active, but fail to drag the entire system into irreversible fragmentation.

The most destabilizing variables do not disappear. Coercion persists. Dependencies remain numerous. Polarizing ideologies continue to exist. Private powers retain considerable influence. Regional conflicts do not cease. Liberal democracies remain fragile. Authoritarian regimes do not relinquish their instruments of control.

But some restraint mechanisms are being re-established.

Cooperation is progressing less out of conviction than out of necessity. The actors do not like each other more; they fear each other more. They understand that the simultaneous escalation of crises—technological, military, economic, climatic, informational, and energy-related—could render the system ungovernable for everyone.

It is not the entry into a just order. It is the belated rejection of a disorder that is too costly.

Methodological reading

In the logic of the Hypothesis Impact Matrix, the reasonableness scenario is based on moderate responses.

Economic globalization is not collapsing, but it is slowing down. Technological blocs are not merging, but they are accepting certain forms of coordination. Critical resources remain sources of occasional tension, but are not becoming weapons everywhere. AI remains ambivalent, but is subject to partial regulation. Private platforms are not being abolished or entirely subjugated; they are entering into forms of shared governance.

Multilateralism is not fully revived. It is stagnating, sometimes disappointing, sometimes useful. Liberal democracies continue to erode slowly, but without widespread collapse. Authoritarian regimes are gaining relative effectiveness, but without imposing a universal model. Military conflict is increasing regionally, but without direct global upheaval.

The overall effect is one of stabilization through limitation of excesses.

The variables of coercion, dependence, ideological pressure, and informational power do not collapse, but they are partially contained. The cooperative orientation variable progresses moderately. The most destabilizing clusters remain, but do not become the sole centers of gravity.

The map of Scenario Zero does not radically transform. It contracts around an unstable equilibrium.

Hegemonic actors remain powerful, but are relearning certain red lines. Ideological and coercive actors remain dangerous, but are more contained. Critical infrastructures remain strategic, but are subject to security mechanisms. Cooperative actors are regaining practical utility. Intermediaries play a role in mediation, arbitration, or transactional stabilization. Platforms are entering into incomplete, but real, regulation.

Reasonableness is therefore a slight but decisive distortion of Scenario Zero: it does not change the nature of the world, but prevents it from spiraling out of control.

The United States and China: a contained rivalry

The heart of reason lies in the relationship between the United States and China.

In this scenario, the Sino-American rivalry remains a defining factor. It encompasses technology, the Indo-Pacific, semiconductors, industrial supply chains, currency, standards, AI, data, maritime security, alliances, and prestige. Neither actor relinquishes its ambition for power.

But direct confrontation is avoided.

The United States understands that total containment of China would be too costly, too difficult, and too dangerous. China understands that open confrontation with the United States and its allies could jeopardize its growth, stability, and access to critical technologies. Each side remains wary, but each identifies the areas where escalation would be detrimental.

The relationship becomes a disciplined competition.

Technological blocs remain distinct, but certain minimum standards are negotiated. Critical supply chains are partially redundant, but not entirely disrupted. Export controls remain, but are calibrated to prevent a collapse in trade. Tensions surrounding Taiwan, the South China Sea, and regional alliances persist, but military and diplomatic channels are strengthened.

It is not trust that produces restraint. It is understanding of the cost.

Neither power becomes wise. But each learns to distinguish the adversary from the abyss.

Russia: a contained disruptive power

In the reasonable scenario, Russia remains a difficult, revisionist actor with a strong capacity for disruption. It does not disappear as a power. It retains military, nuclear, energy, informational, and diplomatic tools.

But its capacity for systemic training is limited.

Europe and NATO maintain a high level of deterrence. Sanctions, military costs, economic constraints, and increasing dependence on certain partners reduce Russia's freedom of action. Russia continues to exploit divisions, gray areas, information, and energy or military dependencies, but it fails to trigger a global realignment to its advantage.

Reasonableness does not imply a Russian conversion to the liberal order. It implies stabilization through constraint.

The open or frozen conflict between France and its European neighbors remains a major point of tension. However, it is gradually being contained through a strategy of deterrence, containment, and indirect negotiation. Red lines are becoming more explicit. The risks of nuclear or conventional escalation persist, but they are better managed.

Russia remains dangerous.
It is becoming less free to make the world ungovernable.

Europe: a normative power bound by the obligation of reality

In this scenario, Europe does not miraculously become a unified power. It remains slow, divided, riddled with national interests, democratic weaknesses, industrial dependencies, and internal tensions.

But Europe understands more than this: normative power is no longer sufficient.

War, critical resources, energy, migration, AI, platforms, semiconductors, the defense industry and strategic dependence are forcing Europe to strengthen certain instruments of sovereignty.

It does not renounce its legal and normative vocation. It attempts to complement it with a capacity for protection.

In a spirit of reason, the European Union is becoming less naive without becoming imperial. It is agreeing to secure its critical supply chains, invest in defense, regulate platforms, participate in AI governance, strengthen its alliances, and treat certain dependencies as security issues.

Its role is essential, not because it dominates the system, but because it maintains a language of law, regulation and compromise.

Europe often falls short. But it remains one of the places where power can still be conceived in terms of limits.

In a reasonable world, this function becomes valuable.

The Middle East: Partial stabilization and persistent fragility

In this scenario, the Middle East remains a region of high tension.

Iran retains regional influence, armed proxies, strategic depth, and a desire to project power. Israel maintains significant military, technological, informational, and strategic power, but remains vulnerable to asymmetric conflicts, regional pressure, and its own internal tensions. The Gulf monarchies pursue policies of diversification, influence, mediation, and economic power. Turkey continues to pursue an independent strategy, navigating alliances, regional interests, and its own ambitions.

But some actors understand that the ongoing escalation threatens their own objectives. The Gulf States seek to preserve their economic transformations. Israel seeks to restore its security and legitimacy. External powers want to avoid a widespread conflagration. Iran can be contained, deterred, or forced into partial agreements without disappearing as a regional actor.

Armed and ideological-coercive groups remain active. They still constitute tipping points. But their capacity to draw the entire region into a general conflagration is partially limited by mechanisms of deterrence, mediation, economic pressure, and strategic fatigue.

Peace has not been achieved.
Widespread conflagration has been averted.

It is a meager peace, but it is still peace.

AI: Regulated Ambivalence

Artificial intelligence remains one of the main sources of uncertainty.

In the scenario of reasonableness, it is neither abandoned to the sole logic of the market, nor confined to strong global governance. It is regulated piecemeal.

Major powers understand that a totally uncontrolled development of AI could produce systemic risks: massive disinformation, automated cyberattacks, surveillance, loss of control in certain critical systems, job instability, cognitive dependence, accelerated militarization.

They do not lead to complete institutional wisdom. But they do accept minimum standards.

These standards cover the security of the most powerful models, the traceability of certain uses, the protection of critical infrastructures, the prohibition of certain lethal autonomies, limited scientific cooperation, the fight against massive manipulations and the regulation of the most structuring platforms.

AI companies retain considerable influence. They continue to innovate, compete, seek markets, and exert pressure on governments. But they also understand that a major accident could provoke a harsh political reaction. They therefore accept certain forms of shared governance.

AI remains ambivalent.
It remains powerful.
But it is beginning to be treated as a common risk.

This development is sufficient to prevent, in this scenario, AI from immediately becoming the main accelerator of chaos.

Platforms: constrained responsibility

Digital platforms remain powerful. They continue to shape attention, information, advertising, sociability, narratives, and sometimes polarization.

But their impunity is diminishing.

States, jurisdictions, public opinion and certain international coalitions are gradually imposing more rules: partial algorithmic transparency, combating coordinated campaigns, responsibility for manipulative content, electoral cooperation, protection of minors, traceability of AI-generated content, and regulation of sensitive data.

This regulation is incomplete. Platforms retain the capacity to circumvent regulations, exert influence, lobby, and innovate rapidly. Authoritarian regimes also use regulation as an instrument of political control. Democracies themselves waver between freedom of expression and the protection of public space.

But one idea is gaining ground: cognitive space is a democratic infrastructure.

Leaving it entirely to the logic of engagement, anger, virality and attention-grabbing is tantamount to weakening societies.

In a reasonableness scenario, platforms do not become wise. They become sufficiently regulated so that their fragmentation power is partially reduced.

Critical resources: tensions without a general breakdown

Critical resources remain at the heart of rivalries.

Energy, minerals, semiconductors, batteries, water, electrical infrastructure, shipping routes, refining capacity, food chains and logistics systems remain strategic assets.

But the reasonable scenario avoids their widespread militarization.

States are diversifying their sources of funding. Businesses are strengthening their supply chains. Industrial alliances are multiplying. Middle powers are seeking to leverage their positions without completely disrupting trade. Financial institutions are supporting certain resilience investments.

Tensions are numerous: competition for minerals, industrial rivalries, targeted sanctions, export controls, securing corridors, and pressure on producers. But the stakeholders understand that turning all critical resources into weapons would cause systemic instability that would be too costly.

Interdependence is becoming less naive.
It is becoming more cautious, more redundant, more regionalized, but it is not disappearing.

The world is entering a slower, monitored, partially segmented, but not destroyed, globalization.

Exposed states and pivot powers

Within reason, exposed states remain vulnerable, but they are not abandoned to the sole logic of rivalries.

Some benefit from security guarantees, mediation mechanisms, financial aid, regional agreements, or neutrality arrangements. Others continue to experience significant tensions, but major powers avoid systematically turning them into theaters of direct confrontation.

Pivot powers play a crucial role.

They do not always seek a just order. They often seek to preserve their interests. But, precisely because they are situated between several poles, they can maintain open channels.

India, Turkey, Gulf countries, Brazil, Indonesia, Vietnam, South Africa, Egypt or other intermediate powers can serve as relays, mediators, counterweights or negotiation platforms.

In chaos, their opportunism could accelerate fragmentation. In a rational environment, their transactional prudence becomes a stabilizing factor.

They do not produce wisdom.
They sometimes prevent the complete locking of blocks.

Induced effects on clusters

The reasonableness scenario produces a moderate distortion of the map.

The autonomous hegemonic cluster remains central, but its dynamics are more contained. The major actors are learning to maintain competitive margins without crossing certain red lines.

The ideological-coercive cluster remains dangerous, but its capacity to influence is reduced. It remains active in the margins, fragile zones, digital spaces, and local conflicts, without managing to impose its logic on the entire system.

The cluster of exposed actors remains vulnerable, but benefits in some places from stabilization mechanisms.

The critical infrastructure & capital cluster is gaining importance, but more as a support for resilience than as an instrument of widespread strangulation.

The cooperative/multilateral cluster is regaining its usefulness. It does not dominate, but it is becoming necessary again.

The cluster of pivot powers is gaining in centrality, as stability depends more on pragmatic arrangements than on grand universal treaties.

The techno-informational cluster remains powerful, but is subject to partial regulation which limits its most disruptive effects.

The general trend is therefore that of a world which remains conflictual, but avoids becoming totally uncontrollable.

Risk of world war

In this scenario, the risk of world war is **moderate**.

It is not weak. Regional conflicts persist. Military, cyber, maritime, space, or information incidents remain possible. Miscalculations remain. Ideological and coercive actors can trigger crises. Exposed states remain vulnerable. Tensions over resources, AI, platforms, or alliances can cause shocks.

But the system retains sufficient restraining mechanisms.

The major powers understand that direct escalation would be too costly. Alliances maintain a credible deterrent. Diplomatic channels function to some extent. Institutions, however weak, still serve as venues and mediators. Pivot powers maintain spaces for negotiation.

In this scenario, a 21st-century world war remains possible but not dominant. It remains a monitored risk, not a state of the system.

Likely alliances

Alliances of reason are alliances of prudence.

They are not based on a deep convergence of values. They are based on the need to contain the costs of fragmentation.

NATO remains a structuring force, particularly in the face of direct military threats. The European Union is strengthening its instruments of sovereignty, without becoming a fully unified power. Indo-Pacific partnerships are consolidating, but are seeking to avoid being drawn into a full-blown bloc war. The BRICS+ remain a forum for dissent and diversification, but are not becoming a homogeneous bloc. The powers of the Global South are pursuing a variety of balancing strategies.

Functional alliances are emerging around AI, critical resources, shipping routes, health, cybersecurity and infrastructure.

The dominant logic is not unity.
It is arrangement.

In reason, the world does not reconcile itself. It learns to negotiate its own weariness.

Scenario Conclusion

Reasonableness is a scenario without apparent grandeur.

It promises neither lasting peace, nor universal justice, nor successful global governance. It allows rivalries, selfishness, injustices, manipulations, conflicts, dependencies, and democratic fragilities to persist.

But it has one essential virtue: it prevents the worst from becoming the norm.

Wisdom does not triumph.
Unreason recedes just enough for the world to remain governable.

This scenario may disappoint those expecting profound transformation. It may seem insufficient in light of the existential risks. But in a world saturated with power, inadequacy can already be a temporary victory.

Reasonableness is not the ultimate goal.
It is perhaps the minimum threshold without which wisdom can never arise.

4.2 The elevation trajectory

4.2.1 Wisdom 2035-2050

The 21st century will be profoundly marked by wisdom, philosophy, and poetry, or it will not be

The wisdom scenario assumes its special status.

It is not the most likely scenario. It is not a trend projection. It is not a prediction. It is a regulatory utopia: a horizon for considering what would need to be built so that human power does not turn against humanity itself.

Wisdom here is not a moral reverie. It is a political function.

It refers to the collective capacity to direct power toward sustainable ends, to contain its destructive uses, to integrate technologies into institutions, to protect common goods, to think long-term and to make power habitable.

This scenario is based on a strong assumption: between 2035 and 2050, humanity faces a sufficiently profound upheaval to understand that inherited institutions are no longer sufficient.

This upheaval does not necessarily destroy the world. But it does change the perception of risks.

Humanity then understands that the question is no longer just about producing more power, but about whether it can still govern what it produces.

The central formula of this scenario is therefore:

Wisdom does not triumph; it becomes a discipline of survival.

Scenario Status

Wisdom is not presented as a certainty.

It does not assume that people become better, renounce their interests, dissolve states, or abolish conflict.

It assumes that a historical threshold has been crossed: the main actors understand that certain risks can no longer be dealt with by the ordinary competition of sovereignties.

Advanced AI, climate change, critical resources, pandemics, digital infrastructure, cognitive fragmentation, nuclear risks, information manipulation, and the power of systemic private powers are becoming dangerous enough to necessitate a new architecture of responsibility.

In this scenario, wisdom is not a universal moral conversion.

It is the result of learning under constraint.

Humanity is not becoming angelic. It is becoming more aware of its limitations.

The triggering upheaval

Major institutional changes of scale rarely arise from the comfort of the existing order.

History has shown that new political forms often emerge when old structures fail to contain new crises. 1945 was one such moment. Total war, extermination, nuclear weapons, and the moral collapse of technological modernity made a broader institutional order conceivable.

The wisdom scenario is based on the assumption that a new upheaval, between 2035 and 2050, plays a role comparable in scope, even if it is different in nature.

This upheaval could be linked to advanced artificial intelligence: partial loss of control over critical systems, massive crisis in cognitive employment, widespread information manipulation, automation of war, dependence of states on private AI infrastructures, inability of democracies to distinguish truth from falsehood in the public sphere.

It could be linked to the climate: major migrations, food tensions, water conflicts, extreme events, instability of insurance, territorial fractures, crisis of legitimacy of governments unable to protect their populations.

It could be linked to a narrowly averted military or nuclear crisis.

It could be linked to a pandemic, a breakdown of critical supply chains, a systemic financial crisis, or a combination of these factors.

The key point here is not to choose a single event. The key point is to consider the threshold: the moment when humanity understands that its risks have become greater than its institutions.

In chaos, this threshold is crossed without response.
In wisdom, it becomes foundational.

The Two Foresight Principles

This scenario is based on two foresight principles.

The first is the principle of foundational upheavals: major changes in political scale become possible when existing structures are challenged by a crisis serious enough to make the old balance untenable.

Humanity does not spontaneously adopt new institutions out of abstract love for the universal. It often accepts them because the alternative appears more dangerous.

The second is the principle of progressive expansion of the circle of cooperation: human history shows a recurring, albeit irregular, capacity to organize larger groups when the problems to be solved exceed the previous framework.

Families, clans, cities, kingdoms, empires, states, alliances, international organizations: every expansion has been imperfect, often violent, sometimes unjust. But it reveals a human potential: to cooperate with strangers when rules, institutions, narratives, and shared interests make this cooperation possible.

The wisdom scenario combines these two principles.

A cataclysmic upheaval reveals the inadequacy of the existing order.
Humanity's long memory allows us to envision a new circle of cooperation.
Power, now global, compels wisdom to scale up.

AI as an anthropological threshold

Artificial intelligence plays a central role in this scenario.

It is not just another technology. It touches on decision-making, language, knowledge, creation, work, war, education, surveillance, science, administration and perhaps one day on humanity's very ability to remain master of its own systems.

AI raises a question that previous technologies did not pose with the same intensity: what becomes of the human when it produces systems capable of executing, combining, predicting, optimizing and perhaps surpassing certain human cognitive functions?

The risk is not only economic. It is anthropological.

A humanity that progressively delegates vital decisions to systems it no longer understands well enough could undergo a profound functional displacement: not the physical disappearance of human beings, but their removal from the center of decision-making.

The question then becomes:

Who decides?
Who understands?
Who sets limits?
Who responds?
Who preserves the human purpose of the systems?

In the wisdom scenario, this question triggers a global awakening.

States understand that AI cannot be governed solely by the market, by military competition alone, by a few corporations, or by scattered national regulations. Businesses understand that their legitimacy will depend on their integration into frameworks of accountability. Societies understand that efficiency is insufficient if it destroys human autonomy.

AI then becomes the place where power forces wisdom to become institutionalized.

Convergence institutions

The core of the wisdom scenario is the building of convergence institutions.

These institutions do not constitute a single world government. The scenario does not envision the disappearance of states, the erasure of cultures, or the bureaucratic unification of humanity.

Rather, it presupposes the creation of bodies capable of governing risks that transcend isolated sovereignties.

A global AI authority could establish rules on the most powerful models, security, military uses, traceability, audits, access to critical infrastructure, minimum prohibitions, and emergency shutdown mechanisms.

An Existential Risk Council could bring together states, scientists, jurists, philosophers, representatives of civil societies, international institutions and systemic private powers in order to identify thresholds of common danger: AI, nuclear, climate, pandemics, biotechnologies, vital infrastructures, information space.

A Charter of Common Strategic Goods could define the areas that can no longer be left to the sole logic of blocs: climate, oceans, atmosphere, global health, critical data, knowledge systems, security infrastructure, vital resources.

Strengthened jurisdictions could punish certain forms of systemic destruction: massive cognitive manipulation, deliberate ecocide, uncontrolled use of autonomous systems, instrumentalization of pandemics, attacks against the vital infrastructure of civilian populations.

Advisory councils of experienced thinkers—philosophers, poets, scientists, jurists, educators, and representatives of future generations—could be integrated into decision-making processes, not to govern in place of the people, but to preserve the question of purpose within institutions.

These institutions would not be perfect. They would be contested, slow, incomplete, and vulnerable to capture. But they would introduce a crucial idea: certain global powers demand global accountability.

The United States, China, and the responsibility of the giants

In this scenario, the United States and China remain rivals. Wisdom does not dictate their merger into a harmonious order.

But a change is taking place: the two powers understand that their competition over AI, resources, space, data and critical infrastructure could become suicidal if it is not regulated.

The United States accepts that its technological lead cannot be sustainably legitimate if it appears as a Western privatization of humanity's future. China accepts that total technological control and systemic surveillance can produce internal power, but also global distrust that makes any shared governance impossible.

Each party retains its interests. But each discovers that certain risks cannot be monopolized.

Limitation agreements are emerging on autonomous systems, military uses of AI, cyberattacks against vital infrastructure, traceability of the most powerful models, crisis protocols and verification systems.

These agreements remain imperfect. But they reintroduce a logic comparable to arms control: not trust, but recognition of the common risk.

Wisdom, here, does not arise from friendship. It arises from lucidity.

Europe: A laboratory of institutional wisdom

In the wisdom scenario, Europe regains a historical function.

It does not necessarily become the leading military or technological power. But it can become one of the laboratories for the institutionalization of limits.

Its experience with shared sovereignty, law, regulation, data protection, institutional compromise, the memory of war, and multilateralism gives Europe a particular strength: the ability to transform fear of power into legal architecture.

Europe remains imperfect. It remains slow, divided, sometimes overly prescriptive, sometimes insufficiently strategic. But it carries a crucial insight: power must be bound by rules to become habitable.

In this scenario, Europe contributes to structuring the governance of AI, platforms, climate, critical resources, digital rights, the responsibility of systemic companies and the protection of public space.

It does not dominate the world. It helps to set limits for it.

Russia, India, regional powers and the non-Western world

Wisdom cannot be a Western project imposed on the rest of the world.

If it were, it would fail.

In this scenario, one of the major challenges is the integration of non-Western powers into convergence institutions.

Russia, even weakened or contained, must be integrated into existential security mechanisms, particularly nuclear, cyber, and energy-related ones. India plays a central role as a demographic, technological, and democratically significant power—imperfect but multifaceted—capable of engaging with multiple worlds. The Gulf states are contributing to the energy transition, transformative capital, and data infrastructure. Turkey, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa, Nigeria, Mexico, Vietnam, Kenya, Morocco,

Egypt, and other middle powers are becoming indispensable to the legitimacy of broader governance.

Wisdom cannot be the generalization of a single civilization. It must become an architecture of plurality.

This implies a transformation of multilateralism.

Institutions can no longer simply reflect the order born in 1945 or the unipolarity of the post-1991 era. They must recognize the plurality of powers, cultures, vulnerabilities and interests, while maintaining common principles.

The difficulty is considerable. But without this inclusion, global risk governance would be perceived as disguised domination.

Wisdom therefore requires a dual loyalty: to the common goods of humanity and to the diversity of peoples.

Relative decline of radicalism

In the wisdom scenario, radical ideologies do not disappear. No institution can abolish fanaticism, hatred, conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism, supremacism, political messianism, or purity narratives.

But their centrality is diminishing.

Several factors contribute to this: better governance of platforms, education in complexity, international cooperation against violent networks, reduction of certain geopolitical humiliations, more serious treatment of social fractures, fight against information manipulation, strengthening of democratic institutions, integration of certain marginalized populations, religious or cultural mediations, empowerment of political actors.

The decline is neither uniform nor definitive.

But the ideological and coercive actors lose some of their influence. They do not disappear; they become less capable of structuring the entire system.

Political wisdom is not about believing that the forces of hatred will extinguish themselves. It is about depriving them of their most effective means of amplification.

Open but governed globalization

In this scenario, globalization is neither abandoned nor naively restored.

Globalization becomes more selective, more responsible, and more aware of its dependencies.

Critical resources, food supply chains, digital infrastructure, medicines, semiconductors, energy systems, data, AI models, and shipping routes are no longer treated solely as commodities. They are becoming strategic assets whose governance must integrate security, equity, resilience, and sustainability.

The logic is not that of widespread closure. Total closure would produce poverty, rivalries, and inefficiency. The logic is that of a governed opening.

Interdependencies are accepted, but made more transparent. Critical dependencies are diversified. Vital resources are subject to mechanisms for sharing, storage, financing, and preventing blackmail. Producing states are given a more prominent place in value chains. Systemically important companies are subject to new responsibilities.

Globalization is becoming less rapid, but more manageable.

Democracy Refounded

The scenario of wisdom also requires a democratic overhaul.

Liberal democracies cannot simply return to their previous state. They have been weakened by polarization, distrust, perceived inequalities, media fragmentation, platforms, information manipulation, short-term electoral politics, and apparent powerlessness in the face of systemic crises.

Wisdom cannot rest on exhausted democracies.

It therefore requires several transformations: protection of public space, transparency of algorithms, education in complexity, institutions capable of thinking long-term, representation of future generations, citizen participation better linked to expertise, fight against cognitive corruption, rehabilitation of compromise, better social protection in the face of technological disruptions, clearer decision-making capacity in crises.

A democracy of wisdom is not a democracy without conflict. That would be impossible and dangerous.

It is a democracy capable of maintaining disagreement without destroying the common world.

It accepts plurality, but rejects the complete dissolution of shared reality. It protects freedom of expression, but understands that the industrial manipulation of attention can render this freedom uninhabitable. It respects the alternation of power, but protects certain institutions from destructive short-termism.

Democracy must learn to govern the age of AI, platforms, and systemic risks.

The role of sages, philosophers, and poets

The formula may be surprising:

The 21st century will be profoundly marked by wisdom, philosophy, and poetry, or it will not be.

It does not mean that poets should replace governments, nor that philosophers should administer budgets, nor that sages should decree public policies.

It means something else.

Modern power requires engineers, scientists, military personnel, economists, lawyers, and managers. But it cannot be governed by them alone.

Humanity needs those who ask the question of ends.

What is the purpose of what we can do?
What should we refuse to do, even if we can?
What constitutes a habitable human life?
What should we pass on?
What place do we want to give to freedom, vulnerability, beauty, childhood, slowness, memory, and dignity?
What limits make human power still human?

Philosophy reminds us that efficiency is not the ultimate goal.
Wisdom reminds us that the limit is not the failure of power, but its human condition.
Poetry reminds us that the world is not merely a system to be optimized, but a dwelling to be inhabited.

In the wisdom scenario, these functions become institutional. They enter into councils, charters, assemblies, deliberation processes, leadership training, technology assessment protocols, schools, media, and public cultures.

Wisdom becomes a symbolic infrastructure.

Induced effects on clusters

The wisdom scenario produces the deepest distortion of the map.

The autonomous hegemonic cluster remains powerful, but its centrality is framed by convergence institutions. Great powers do not disappear, but they accept certain limits regarding existential risks.

The ideological-coercive cluster is losing relative influence. It persists, but education, information governance, mediation, and security mechanisms are reducing its capacity for amplification.

The cluster of exposed actors is becoming a priority. These states are no longer just areas of competition, but spaces for systemic prevention.

The critical infrastructure and capital cluster is integrated into the governance of strategic assets. Systemic companies and funds remain powerful, but must meet obligations commensurate with their reach.

The cooperative/multilateral cluster is becoming central. Institutions, stabilizing states, NGOs, diasporas and normative networks are participating in the structuring of a more responsible order.

The cluster of pivot powers gains legitimacy when it contributes to coalitions of common goods rather than purely transactional strategies.

The technology and information cluster is undergoing profound transformation. Its power is not diminished in itself; it is framed by rules of security, transparency, auditing, accountability, and human purpose.

The map therefore moves toward M1: cooperative orientation, governance, common goods, limitation of excesses.

Risk of world war

In this scenario, the risk of world war becomes **low to moderate**.

It does not disappear. War remains possible. Rivalries persist. Accidents, miscalculations, regional crises, radicalism, and resource conflicts are not abolished.

But several mechanisms reduce systemic risk: crisis protocols, governance of military AI, limitation of cyberattacks against vital infrastructure, strengthening of international law, inclusion of non-Western powers, better protection of exposed states, regulation of platforms, cooperation on critical resources, recognition of existential risks.

World war ceases to be a likely dynamic of the system. It becomes once again a danger to be contained collectively.

Likely alliances

Alliances of wisdom are not only military.

They become anthropological, technological, climatic, health-related, educational, informational, and institutional.

Coalitions are forming around safe AI, critical infrastructure, food security, energy transition, oceans, pandemics, cognitive space, protection of democracies, nuclear prevention, and future generations.

These alliances do not replace traditional alliances. NATO, regional partnerships, security agreements, and military balances remain. But they are complemented by alliances based on shared resources.

In wisdom, alliance is no longer defined solely against an enemy.
It is also defined to preserve a common condition of survival.

This is a qualitative change.

Scenario Conclusion

Wisdom is the most demanding scenario.

It may seem improbable. Perhaps it is. But its improbability does not render it useless. Societies need horizons that are not merely extensions of the present or descriptions of the worst.

A regulatory utopia is not an illusion. It is a direction.

It allows us to judge the present based on what it should make possible.

The wisdom scenario does not say that humanity will become wise. It says that, if it wants to survive its own power, it will have to build institutions capable of making wisdom less exceptional.

Wisdom does not triumph.
It becomes a discipline.
It becomes an architecture.
It becomes a condition of survival.

The 21st century will be profoundly marked by wisdom, philosophy, and poetry, or it will not be.

4.3 The Trajectory of Disorder

4.3.1 Chaos 2030-2035

The war of dependencies, or the world that has become ungovernable without collapsing

Chaos is not the absence of power.

It is power without a common guiding principle.

In this scenario, the world does not necessarily collapse. States continue to exist. Markets continue to function, but in blocs, through rent-seeking, sanctions, and dependencies. Technologies advance. Platforms remain active. Businesses produce. Alliances strengthen. Armies prepare. Institutions endure.

But the whole thing is becoming less and less governable.

Power circulates, fragments, is privatized, militarized, technologized, and radicalized. The actors no longer share enough rules, trust, language, or institutions to transform their rivalries into order.

Chaos, therefore, is not emptiness.

It is the overflow.

Too many actors.
Too many dependencies.
Too many incompatible narratives.
Too many ungoverned technologies.
Too many readily available humiliations.
Too many coercions.
Too many vulnerabilities.
Too much power without wisdom.

Scenario Status

The chaos scenario explores failure.

Not an immediate apocalypse. Not the end of all society. Not the uniform collapse of the world.

It explores a world in which mechanisms of restraint are no longer sufficient.

The variables of coercion, asymmetric dependence, ideological pressure, disorganizing informational power, personalization of power, restorationist imaginaries, and hegemonic

tendencies are reinforced. The cooperative orientation is declining. The most destabilizing clusters are gaining centrality. Exposed actors are becoming arenas of confrontation. Critical infrastructures are becoming instruments of blackmail. Platforms are fragmenting cognitive space. Alliances are becoming more rigid, more transactional, and more defensive.

The world continues to function, but it functions less as an order than as a succession of interconnected crises.

Chaos is a system without a center sufficiently legitimate to direct power.

Methodological reading

In the logic of the Hypothesis Impact Matrix, chaos corresponds to a strong shift in destabilizing variables.

Economic globalization is fragmenting. Technological blocs are hardening. Critical resources are becoming instruments of pressure. AI is partially escaping regulation. Platforms are being captured by the logic of blocs, audiences, surveillance, and manipulation. Multilateralism is receding or becoming merely decorative. Polarizing ideologies are gaining ground. Antisemitism, conspiracy theories, supremacism, and hate narratives are spreading from the margins and then contaminating certain centers. Restorative nationalisms are becoming programs of action. Private powers cooperate with states when compelled to do so, but also serve their own interests. Economic, legal, digital, and informational coercion is becoming commonplace. Liberal democracies are eroding. Authoritarian regimes are gaining relative effectiveness. Military conflict is increasing.

The movement of the card is clear.

The ideological-coercive cluster gains influence. The autonomous hegemonic cluster becomes more aggressive. The cluster of exposed states becomes more central because it becomes the arena for confrontations. Critical infrastructures shift from interdependence to strangulation. The pivots become more opportunistic. Information technologies accelerate fragmentation. The cooperative cluster defends itself, but loses its ability to lead.

Chaos is therefore a distortion of Scenario Zero in which the forces present cease to be contained.

Great powers: rivalry without architecture

In chaos, major powers do not necessarily wage immediate total war.

But they cease to share a sufficient architecture of restraint.

The United States, China, and Russia operate in an environment of deep mistrust. Each suspects the other of seeking a decisive advantage. Doctrines are becoming more aggressive. Red lines are less clear. Communication channels still exist, but they are weakened, manipulated, or ignored in times of crisis.

China is accelerating its pursuit of technological autonomy, securing its trade routes, tightening its internal controls, and strengthening its regional influence. The United States seeks to maintain its technological, financial, and military superiority but is weakened by internal polarization and the proliferation of conflicts. Russia exploits gray areas, energy, weapons, nuclear capabilities, information, and opportunistic alliances to compensate for its economic limitations.

No single actor truly controls the whole package.

The rivalry is becoming less stable than during the Cold War. Bipolarity at least had a certain clarity. Contemporary chaos combines multiple rivalries, multiple technologies, multiple private actors, multiple battlegrounds, and multiple exposed zones.

Fear no longer produces enough restraint.
It produces preemption.

The war of dependencies

Chaos first manifests itself as a war of dependencies.

Actors do not always seek to conquer directly. They seek to make the other vulnerable.

They control semiconductors, minerals, cables, ports, data, energy routes, payment systems, insurance, the cloud, batteries, medicines, grains, platforms, standards, industrial software, satellites.

Dependency becomes a weapon.

We do not always bomb.
We cut.
We block.
We sanction.
We slow down.
We prohibit.
We disrupt.
We infiltrate.
We create uncertainty.

Markets do not disappear. They become strategic. Supply chains do not collapse everywhere. They become militarized, regionalized, duplicated, and politicized.

Companies must choose blocs, circumvent sanctions, negotiate with states, secure their raw materials, and accept sovereignty constraints.

Globalization is not dying. It is becoming suspicious.

Every flow can become a threat.
Every dependency can become a lever.
Every infrastructure can become a target.

That is why this scenario can be called: the war of dependencies.

Platforms and cognitive fragmentation

In the chaos, the information space becomes one of the main battlegrounds.

Platforms are no longer just communication companies. They are becoming battlegrounds for cognitive warfare, identity mobilization, manipulation, surveillance, propaganda, amplification of anger, and fragmentation of reality.

Societies are not only losing faith in their governments. They are losing faith in the very possibility of a shared world.

Each group has its sources, its images, its victims, its enemies, its evidence, its martyrs, its conspiracies, its stories.

Truth does not disappear. But it becomes politically powerless when societies no longer share the minimum conditions necessary to recognize it.

AI-generated manipulations accelerate this dynamic. Deepfakes, synthetic content, coordinated campaigns, emotional microtargeting, fake digital witnesses, chatbots, narrative factories, image manipulation, and viral stories saturate the public space.

Democracy becomes more difficult not because citizens are incapable of understanding, but because the informational environment exhausts, divides, and confines them.

In the chaos, the battle is no longer just about opinions.
It is about reality itself.

Polarizing ideologies

Chaos amplifies ideologies of closure.

When societies are anxious, humiliated, fragmented, or saturated with uncertainty, simple narratives gain power.

An enemy is identified.
Purity is promised.
Past grandeur is invoked.
A conspiracy is revealed.
Revenge is demanded.
Allegiance becomes absolute.
Violence becomes defensive.

Polarizing ideologies are not identical. Radical political Islam, jihadist networks, supremacism, anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories, restorationist nationalisms, political messianisms, identity-based radicalisms, and purification ideologies have different histories, doctrines, and actors.

But they share a systemic function: they reduce the space for compromise.

They transform the adversary into an existential threat. They make nuance suspect. They present democracy as weakness, law as cunning, plurality as corruption, and common humanity as an illusion.

In the chaos, these narratives do not remain marginal. They contaminate the centers, infiltrate electoral campaigns, orient platforms, justify violence, fuel public policies, serve foreign powers, and paralyze institutions.

Rigidity of conviction becomes a political resource.

Exposed States as Theaters of the System

Exposed states become the places where chaos materializes.

Ukraine, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Philippines, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Serbia, Ethiopia, Laos, Cambodia and other fragile or strategic spaces are becoming points of application of global rivalries.

They face multiple pressures: security, economic, informational, migratory, energy, military, ideological, financial.

They are not simply victims. Some governments exploit rivalries. Some internal groups call for protectors. Some elites exploit dependencies. Some societies resist. But their room for maneuver is shrinking.

In chaos, major powers often prefer to confront each other indirectly.

Exposed states then become testing grounds: testing weapons, testing sanctions, testing drones, testing military AI, testing information campaigns, testing alliances, testing the resilience of institutions.

The center sometimes avoids direct war by exporting conflict to the peripheries.

But as these peripheries multiply and connect, the distinction between center and margin becomes more fragile.

Pivot Powers: Transaction Without a Common Principle

Pivot powers play an ambiguous role.

In a reasonable context, they could maintain bridges. In chaos, they often become transactional.

They negotiate with multiple blocs. They sell weapons, resources, ports, technologies, diplomatic votes, roads, access, data, and mediation services. They exploit rivalries to increase their autonomy.

This strategy may be rational from the point of view of each individual actor. But it can disrupt the whole system.

When all actors seek to maximize their margin in a system without a common principle, order becomes a permanent market of dependencies.

Alliances lose their depth. Commitments become conditional. Standards become negotiable. Sanctions become circumventable. Mediations become instruments of influence.

The world is becoming less structured by clear ideological blocs than by a multitude of unstable arrangements.

This is one of the characteristics of chaos: it does not always produce a binary confrontation. It produces a generalized transactional instability.

Private powers in chaos

In chaos, systemic private powers do not disappear. They become even more important.

But their role is changing.

Some are captured by states. Others negotiate their autonomy. Others become indispensable to military operations, information campaigns, digital infrastructure, supply chains, AI, payments, satellites, or surveillance.

Their global reach is becoming a national security issue.

Technology companies must choose between markets, regulations, blocs, and strategic imperatives. Platforms become spaces for censorship, propaganda, or dissent, depending

on the regime. AI actors are subject to military and political pressure. Payment systems become instruments of sanction. Cloud operators become critical infrastructure. Logistics actors become targets or levers of power.

The distinction between public and private is becoming blurred.

States need businesses. Businesses need states. But democratic accountability remains insufficient.

In chaos, private power is not free. It is militarized, captured, circumvented, or instrumentalized.

AI as an accelerator of disorder

In this scenario, artificial intelligence becomes an accelerator of disorder.

It amplifies cyberattacks, disinformation, surveillance, automated propaganda production, target identification, drone warfare, market manipulation, coercive optimization, predictive repression, and cognitive addiction.

The most authoritarian states use it to control their societies. Platforms use it to capture attention. Criminal groups use it to defraud, manipulate, or infiltrate. Ideological groups use it to produce narratives, images, fake news, sermons, manifestos, and campaigns. The military uses it to expedite decision-making.

The central problem becomes speed.

Human institutions deliberate slowly.
Automated systems act quickly.
Information crises spread before they are understood.
Mistakes propagate before they are corrected.
Military decisions can be made in augmented fog.

In chaos, AI does not replace humanity. It amplifies humanity's worst impulses.

Cognitive power becomes available before institutional wisdom is built.

Liberal democracies under pressure

Liberal democracies are particularly vulnerable in this scenario.

They are open, pluralistic, and dependent on trust, information, public debate, political alternation, and procedural legitimacy. These qualities also become points of attack when the information space is fragmented.

Polarization is intensifying. Institutions are accused of treason. Elections are contested. The media are discredited. The judiciary is politicized. Experts are viewed with suspicion. Minorities are scapegoated. Social media amplifies anger. Foreign powers exploit the divisions.

Democracies do not necessarily collapse. But they govern in a state of exhaustion.

They become less capable of long-term thinking, making unpopular decisions, protecting common goods, maintaining a security consensus, or resisting manipulation.

Authoritarian regimes then present their efficiency as an advantage.

But this effectiveness is itself fragile: it often relies on coercion, surveillance, fear, propaganda, and the personalization of power. It can be swift, but indiscriminate. Strong, but rigid. Stable, but brittle.

Chaos spares no regime. It affects democracies and authoritarian regimes differently.

Decorative international institutions

International institutions do not disappear in chaos.

They continue to hold meetings, produce resolutions, publish reports, organize forums, send missions, maintain agencies, and formulate principles.

But their ability to orient themselves is decreasing.

Major powers exploit, block, or circumvent these agreements. Medium-sized states use them as negotiation platforms. Private actors defend their interests within them. Authoritarian regimes invoke sovereignty to avoid constraints. Democracies invoke principles, but sometimes apply them selectively.

Common language still exists, but it is losing its strength.

The law is not abolished. It is challenged by force, sanctions, data, dependence, narratives, algorithms, and facts on the ground.

In this scenario, the UN, financial institutions, climate frameworks, non-proliferation mechanisms and technological regulations remain present, but insufficient.

They resemble dikes being maintained while the sea rises faster than the construction work.

Induced effects on clusters

Chaos produces a strong distortion of the map.

The autonomous hegemonic cluster is becoming more offensive. Major powers and regional powers are seeking to secure their areas, control their dependencies, impose their narratives, and test their margins.

The ideological-coercive cluster is gaining centrality. It fuels polarization, proxy wars, asymmetric violence, hate narratives, and cognitive fragmentation.

The cluster of exposed actors becomes one of the centers of the system, not by its own power, but because it concentrates the pressures of others.

The critical infrastructure & capital cluster is becoming a silent battleground: sanctions, disruptions, controls, shortages, partial nationalizations, cyberattacks, strategic corridors.

The cooperative/multilateral cluster is receding. It persists, but defensively, often overwhelmed.

The cluster of pivots becomes transactional. It can stabilize locally, but often contributes to global fragmentation.

The techno-informational cluster becomes an accelerator: platforms, AI, data, cloud, media, satellites and cognitive systems amplify the speed of disorder.

The general trend is toward a world where the groups of actors most capable of coercing, manipulating, blocking or exploiting dependencies gain the advantage over those capable of cooperating.

Risk of world war

In this scenario, the risk of world war is **high**.

But we need to clarify what that means.

The world war of the 21st century does not necessarily take the form of a single declaration, a global front, or a total conventional confrontation comparable to 1914 or 1939.

It can become a state of the system.

It can combine multiple regional wars, massive cyberattacks, infrastructure disruptions, extreme sanctions, maritime attacks, space operations, information manipulation, energy crises, resource conflicts, proxy wars, limited clashes between great powers, and a permanent nuclear threat.

The world war then becomes less an event than a strategic atmosphere.

We no longer know exactly when it starts, because it does not always have a single trigger.

It develops through accumulation.

Every crisis remains officially contained. But every crisis raises the overall temperature of the system. The actors prepare, arm themselves, become suspicious, impose sanctions, retaliate, test, and circumvent. Alliances harden. Public opinion becomes accustomed to hostility. Technology accelerates escalation.

The world is not necessarily entering a declared third world war. It is entering a globalization of conflict.

It may be even more difficult to govern.

Likely alliances

Alliances of chaos are alliances of fear, dependence, and opportunity.

The blocs are hardening, but remain imperfect. NATO is strengthening itself in the face of direct threats, but must manage its internal divisions. The Indo-Pacific alliances are becoming increasingly militarized. The BRICS+ are becoming a space for contestation, but not a coherent bloc. Regional powers are negotiating their positions. Authoritarian regimes are cooperating out of self-interest, without deep trust. Democracies are drawing closer, but their internal polarization limits their cohesion.

Economic alliances are superimposed on military alliances. Technological alliances are becoming essential. Energy alliances are once again becoming strategic. Information alliances are forming around digital platforms, media, narratives, and standards.

The world of chaos is not simply divided into two camps.

It is fractured into constellations.

Some alliances are public. Others are discreet. Some are based on fear. Others on blackmail. Others on contracts. Others on ideology. Others on an unbreakable dependency.

This multiplicity makes the order illegible.

Scenario Conclusion

Chaos is the scenario of power abandoned to its own excesses.

It does not assume that everything collapses. It assumes that no one can steer the system as a whole effectively enough.

States defend themselves. Businesses adapt. Platforms thrive. Ideologies mobilize. Armies modernize. Institutions speak out. Markets continue. Technologies advance.

But wisdom does not follow.

Power becomes faster than deliberation.
Dependence becomes stronger than trust.
Fear becomes more motivating than law.
Manipulation becomes more effective than truth.
Coercion becomes more readily available than compromise.
Fragmentation becomes more dynamic than cooperation.

The world is not becoming empty.
It is becoming too full.

Too much power for too little wisdom.

That is why chaos is not just a worst-case scenario. It is a methodical warning.

It shows what can happen when humanity's destructive potential has the best amplification tools at its disposal, while restraining institutions remain too weak.

Chaos is not destiny.
It is what happens when power is no longer governed.

5 Part IV — Comparison and Lessons Learned

The three authorial scenarios explored three possible trajectories of the world order.

Reasonableness describes a world that does not become wise, but manages to contain some of its excesses through prudence, weariness of crises and fear of the worst.

Wisdom describes a higher, less probable but politically necessary trajectory: humanity agrees to build institutions commensurate with the power it has produced.

Chaos describes failure: power continues to grow, but institutions, rules, shared narratives, and mechanisms of restraint are no longer able to guide it.

These scenarios are not three competing predictions. They are three conditional readings of the same world. They start from the same Scenario Zero, the same actors, the same variables, the same clusters and the same central question: what becomes of a planetary power when political wisdom remains fragmented?

Part IV therefore does not seek to mechanically choose the most probable scenario. It seeks to draw lessons from their comparison.

Two questions need to be examined with particular attention.

The first concerns world war. In an interdependent, fragmented, technologically accelerated world traversed by multiple actors, should world war still be thought of as an event comparable to those of 1914 or 1939, or as a possible state of the system?

The second concerns alliances. Will they form out of fear, prudence, or convergence? Will they be military, technological, energy-related, informational, ideological, or anthropological? Will they serve to contain chaos or to organize a shared wisdom?

These two questions lead to the general conclusion: humanity will only be able to govern its power if it succeeds, at least partially, in globalizing its wisdom.

5.1 Compare the trajectories

5.1.1 Comparison of the three scenarios

Comparing the three scenarios does not mean simply juxtaposing them.

We need to identify what really distinguishes them: their relationship to power, institutions, private actors, ideologies, technologies, resources, war and alliances.

All three scenarios start from the same diagnosis: power has become planetary, while political wisdom remains fragmented. But they differ in how this gap is addressed.

In reasonableness, the gap is contained.
In wisdom, it is institutionalized and reduced.
In chaos, it widens until it becomes structural.

Three responses to the same imbalance

Reasonableness is a minimal response.

It does not fundamentally transform the structure of the world. States remain sovereign, great powers rivals, platforms influential, resources strategic, ideologies active, and institutions limited. But actors understand that certain excesses are becoming too costly. They are reintroducing channels, limits, arrangements, partial regulations, crisis mechanisms, and forms of cautious cooperation.

Wisdom is an institutional response.

It assumes that humanity recognizes the existence of common risks serious enough to justify a change of scale: advanced AI, climate change, pandemics, critical resources, vital infrastructure, cognitive fragmentation, nuclear or near-nuclear risks. Institutions no longer simply comment on risks; they begin to govern them. Power is not abolished, but it is more constrained by rules, objectives, and responsibilities.

Chaos is the absence of a sufficient response.

The risks are known, but they do not produce proportionate institutions. The actors pursue their immediate gains, their narratives, their dependencies, their blocking strategies, their ambitions, or their fears. Power continues to grow, but the checks and balances are deteriorating. The system still functions, but less and less as a coherent order.

Reason limits the damage.
Wisdom seeks to change the level of response.
Chaos allows power to overwhelm institutions.

The decisive variables

All variables in the PRA method play a role. However, comparing scenarios reveals some decisive variables.

The first is **M1 — cooperative / multilateral orientation**.

In a trajectory of reasonableness, M1 makes modest progress. Actors cooperate because they understand that chaos would be too costly. In a trajectory of wisdom, M1 becomes a structuring variable. Cooperation is no longer merely defensive; it is organized around common goods. In a state of chaos, M1 recedes. Institutions persist, but they lose their capacity for direction.

The second is **C1 — coercion that can be mobilized or used**.

In a reasonable state, coercion remains, but it is more tightly controlled. In a wise state, it is not eliminated, but subjected to stricter rules, particularly in the military, digital, economic, and informational spheres. In chaos, it becomes commonplace: sanctions, blockades, cyberattacks, energy blackmail, cognitive manipulation, technological controls, and military pressure become ordinary tools.

The third is **D1 — asymmetric dependence suffered**.

Under reasonableness, dependencies are recognized and diversified. Under wisdom, they are partly governed as shared vulnerabilities. Under chaos, they become weapons. This is why chaos can be defined as a war of dependencies.

The fourth is **I1 — informational/cognitive power**.

In a reasonable state, it is partially regulated. In a wise state, it becomes a central focus of global responsibility. In a chaotic state, it fragments the public sphere, accelerates disinformation, polarizes societies, and makes democratic deliberation more difficult.

The fifth is **I2 — polarizing ideological pressure**.

In a climate of reasonableness, polarizing ideologies remain active but contained. In a climate of wisdom, their capacity for amplification diminishes. In chaos, they become engines of isolationism, hatred, conspiracy, fanaticism, and violence.

Finally, H1, H2, and P1—hegemonic propensity, restorationist narrative, and personalization of decision-making—play a particular role in risk trajectories. When these variables reinforce one another, power is more likely to be directed toward domination, revenge, or miscalculation.

Political wisdom lies precisely in preventing these variables from becoming the main drivers of the world order.

The clusters in the three scenarios

Comparing the clusters confirms this interpretation.

The autonomous hegemonic projection cluster remains central in all three scenarios. It never disappears. The question is not whether great powers will cease to exist, but how their power will be directed.

In a reasonable state, they remain rivals but restrained.
In a wise state, they accept certain rules of convergence regarding existential risks.
In chaos, they become more offensive, more distrustful, and more inclined to test the system's limits.

The ideological-coercive cluster is one of the best indicators of chaotic drift.

In the realm of reason, it remains dangerous but peripheral.
In the realm of wisdom, it is countered by education, information regulation, the prevention of radicalization, and the rebuilding of compromise.
In chaos, it gains centrality and contaminates ordinary political spaces.

The cluster of exposed actors reveals the degree of responsibility of the system.

In a reasonable state, these actors are partially stabilized.
In a wise state, they become priorities for prevention.
In a chaotic state, they become arenas of confrontation.

The critical infrastructure & capital cluster shows the possible transformation of interdependence.

In rationality, it serves resilience.
In wisdom, it is integrated into the governance of strategic assets.
In chaos, it becomes a silent battlefield.

The cooperative/multilateral cluster is at the heart of the difference between the scenarios.

In reason, it becomes useful again.
In wisdom, it becomes structuring.
In chaos, it survives, but defensively.

The cluster of pivot powers is ambivalent.

In a reasonableness scenario, it maintains bridges.
In a wisdom scenario, it participates in functional coalitions.
In chaos, it becomes transactional and can exacerbate fragmentation.

The techno-information cluster is perhaps the most revealing of the era.

In reason, it is framed.
In wisdom, it is subject to systemic responsibility.
In chaos, it becomes an accelerator of disorder.

Thus, the scenarios are not distinguished only by their narratives. They are distinguished by the way in which clusters gain or lose centrality.

Three regimes of time

The three scenarios also have a different relationship to time.

Reasonableness is the scenario of a controlled short- and medium-term future. The actors are not yet truly thinking about the long term, but they are seeking to avoid immediate escalation. They react to crises, correct certain excesses, restore channels, and limit the most visible risks.

Wisdom is the long-term perspective. It presupposes that institutions learn to protect future generations, the commons, ecological balance, human dignity, cognitive autonomy, and the conditions for collective life. It introduces into global politics a memory of catastrophes and an anticipation of irreversible risks.

Chaos is the scenario of acceleration. Actors are swept up by urgency, retaliation, preemption, audience pressure, market pressures, virality, public opinion, simultaneous crises, and rapid technological advancements. Political time becomes shorter than the time needed for wisdom.

A planetary power governed by short-term thinking becomes dangerous.
A planetary power governed by long-term thinking can become habitable.

Three Relationships to Truth

The scenarios also differ in their relationship to the truth.

Within reason, truth remains contested, but societies retain enough shared reality to negotiate, decide, debate, and correct. Platforms remain problematic, but their power to fragment is partially limited.

In wisdom, cognitive space is recognized as a democratic common good. The fight against industrial manipulation of attention, mass disinformation, deepfakes, coordinated campaigns, and cognitive corruption becomes an institutional priority.

In chaos, truth becomes politically powerless. Not because it disappears, but because societies no longer share enough trust to acknowledge it. Each group lives within its own narrative, its own images, its own evidence, its own victims, its own enemies.

No political wisdom can be built in a world where common reality is destroyed.

Three forms of imperfection

No scenario is perfect.

Reasonableness is imperfect because it does not go far enough. It avoids the worst, but does not transform the system's underlying structure. It can become merely a temporary measure for managing recurring crises.

Wisdom is imperfect because it is difficult, slow, contestable, and susceptible to technocratic risk. Global institutions of convergence could be captured, bureaucratized, instrumentalized, or rejected if they appeared to negate sovereignties and cultures.

Chaos is imperfect in the tragic sense: it does not offer an alternative order. It reveals what happens when the mechanisms of cooperation become weaker than the instruments of power.

The comparison therefore does not lead to a simplistic opposition between good and evil.

It shows three levels of response to the same question: what to do with power?

Reasonableness responds: contain it.
Wisdom responds: guide it.
Chaos responds, by default: let it disperse, harden, and turn against the common world.

The Main Lesson

The main lesson from this comparison can be formulated as follows:

The political future of the world will depend less on the existence of power than on the ability of institutions to limit, guide and hold responsible its uses.

Power will not disappear.
Rivalries will not disappear.
States will not disappear.
Interests will not disappear.
Technologies will not spontaneously slow down.
Ideologies will not die out on their own.

The question is not whether the world will become pure, peaceful, or unified.

The question is whether the available power will be sufficiently governed so as not to destroy the very conditions of political life.

5.2 World War and Alliances

5.2.1 World War: Event or State of the System?

The concept of world war belongs primarily to the history of the 20th century.

It evokes 1914, 1939, multiple fronts, general mobilizations, formal alliances, war economies, millions of soldiers, exposed civilian populations, industrial warfare, empires, ideologies, armistices, treaties, victors, and vanquished.

Thinking about world war in the 21st century requires not forgetting this history, but also not getting trapped in it.

The world has changed. Conflict has changed. Interdependencies have changed. Technologies have changed. The actors have changed. The boundaries between war and peace have become more blurred.

The central question then becomes: would the future world war necessarily take the form of an identifiable event, or could it become a state of the system?

World War as an Event

The initial design remains classic.

A world war would be a major event, triggered by an identifiable crisis: military attack, invasion, confrontation between great powers, crisis over a strategic territory, nuclear escalation, collapse of an alliance, miscalculation, general mobilization.

Some points of tension could still produce a direct escalation: Taiwan, South China Sea, Eastern Europe, Middle East, Korean Peninsula, cyberspace, underwater infrastructure, nuclear crises, attacks against allied forces or the breaking of a poorly understood red line.

From this perspective, the main risk is escalation.

A local incident becomes regional.
A regional conflict brings allies.
A limited response provokes a counter-response.
A cyberattack is interpreted as an act of war.
A strike on critical infrastructure triggers a disproportionate response.
A maritime crisis disrupts essential trade.
A power believes it can test a limit without triggering the entire system.

This world war, as an event, remains a possibility.

Deterrence, alliances, diplomatic channels and crisis mechanisms are precisely designed to prevent it.

In a reasonable situation, these mechanisms function adequately.
In a wise situation, they are strengthened by risk governance.
In chaos, they become fragile.

World war as a state of the system

But the 21st century requires us to consider a second approach.

World war might not begin with a single event. It could gradually establish itself as a state of the system.

In this scenario, the world does not suddenly descend into a declared total war. It enters a generalized, distributed, permanent, hybrid conflict, in which several forms of war coexist and reinforce each other.

Regional wars.
Proxy wars.
Cyberattacks.
Extreme sanctions.
Infrastructure disruptions.
Partial blockades.
Information manipulation.
Militarization of space.
Attacks against cables, ports, or satellites.
Dependencies weaponized.
AI-generated disinformation.
Resource conflicts.
Manipulated migration pressures.
Targeted assassinations.
Industrial sabotage.

Monetary competition.
Autonomous arms race.

None of these elements is necessarily sufficient on its own to define a world war. But their accumulation can produce a state of diffuse war.

The world war would no longer be a unique event.
It would be a temperature reading of the system.

This is one of the most important lessons from the chaos scenario.

The grey area between peace and war

The contemporary world is increasingly marked by grey areas.

The actors seek to cause harm without triggering open warfare. They use ambiguous instruments: unclaimed cyberattacks, proxies, militias, information campaigns, economic pressure, legal sanctions, technological controls, manipulation of migration flows, special operations, disinformation, energy blackmail.

But it has a profound danger: it makes the escalation less visible.

When war is not named, thresholds become blurred. When thresholds are blurred, calculation errors multiply. When calculation errors multiply, restraint becomes more fragile.

Conventional warfare had its horrors, but it sometimes took identifiable forms. Gray warfare makes order more uncertain.

Who is attacking?
What response is proportionate?
Is a cyberattack against a hospital an act of war?
Does an election manipulation campaign call for a military, legal, digital, or diplomatic response?
Is a cut in an undersea cable an accident, sabotage, economic warfare, or war itself?
Is an AI model used to produce massive disinformation a weapon?

Law, doctrines and institutions are struggling to keep up with the speed of these ambiguities.

This is why a world war as a state of the system might be more difficult to prevent than a world war as an event.

The role of AI and automation

Artificial intelligence adds a new dimension to the risk of war.

It can improve prevention, alert, simulation, logistics, defense, medicine, translation, anomaly detection and crisis understanding.

But it can also accelerate the decision beyond the human timescale of prudence.

In a crisis context, automated systems can recommend responses, identify targets, detect threats, classify behaviors, produce images, interpret signals, or amplify narratives.

The danger is not only that an AI will decide on its own. The danger is that humans will decide in an environment saturated with signals produced, filtered, or accelerated by systems they do not always understand.

War then becomes faster than diplomacy.

A deepfake can cause panic before being debunked.
A false alert can be misinterpreted as an attack.
An automated campaign can saturate the public sphere.
A targeting system can lower the threshold for using force.
A human decision can be made under algorithmic pressure.

In a reasonable course of action, these risks are partially regulated.
In a wise course of action, they become a central focus of global governance.
In a chaotic course, they accelerate systemic drift.

Deterrence in a fragmented world

Nuclear deterrence played a major role during the Cold War. It rested on a form of tragic rationality: using ultimate power risked destroying those who used it.

But deterrence becomes more complex in a fragmented world.

There are more actors. Doctrines are more diverse. Hybrid technologies blur the lines. Cyberattacks can target command systems. Non-state actors can provoke crises without the same deterrents as a state. Individual leaders can take more risks. Public opinion can be manipulated. Alliances may be less transparent.

Deterrence remains essential, but it is no longer sufficient.

We also need communication channels, cybernetic protocols, rules on autonomous systems, transparency mechanisms, verification devices, institutions capable of acting quickly in crisis situations and a culture of restraint.

Deterrence sometimes prevents the use of ultimate power.
Political wisdom must prevent the entire system from approaching that threshold too often.

The three scenarios in the face of world war

Within reason, the risk of world war is moderate.

Rivalries remain. Regional conflicts persist. But the actors retain enough memory of the danger, enough channels, enough economic constraints, enough deterrence and enough caution to avoid a general escalation.

World war remains a risk, not a state.

With wisdom, the risk becomes low to moderate.

War is not abolished, but systemic risks are better governed. Military uses of AI, cyberattacks against critical infrastructure, nuclear crises, massive information manipulation, and resource conflicts are subject to stronger regulations. Exposed states benefit from preventative mechanisms. Convergence institutions reduce the risks of escalation.

World war once again becomes a common danger, and therefore a common object of responsibility.

In chaos, the risk becomes high.

Not because an actor necessarily decides to start a total war, but because crises connect, thresholds blur, dependencies become weapons, ideologies polarize, AI accelerates, institutions retreat, and exposed actors multiply as theaters of confrontation.

The world war becomes less an event than a diffuse state of the system.

How can we prevent a state of world war?

Prevention can no longer be limited to traditional military treaties.

They remain necessary, but insufficient.

Regional wars must be prevented.
Critical infrastructure must be protected.
Cyber weapons must be regulated.
Military AI must be controlled.
Mass cognitive manipulation must be limited.
Critical dependencies must be diversified.
Channels of communication between adversaries must be maintained.
International institutions must be strengthened.
Pivot powers must be given an incentive to maintain stability.
Potential humiliations must be addressed before they become agendas for revenge.

Ideological and coercive actors must be prevented from acquiring the most effective tools for amplification.

The prevention of world war thus becomes a systemic policy.

It is no longer just a matter for military staffs and diplomats. It also concerns platforms, technology companies, infrastructure, banks, universities, education systems, the media, international organizations, civil societies and citizens.

The world war of the 21st century would be systemic.
Its prevention must also be systemic.

Central Lesson

World war should no longer be thought of solely as the ultimate failure of diplomacy.

It must be thought of as the possible result of an accumulation of failures: failure of institutions, failure of information, failure of restraint, failure of infrastructure, failure of technological regulation, failure of trust, failure of memory.

That is why political wisdom is not a luxury.

It is a policy of preventing the irreversible.

The 20th century learned to fear total war.
The 21st century must learn to recognize states of diffuse warfare before they become irreversible.

5.2.2 Major Alliances: Fear, Prudence, or Convergence

Alliances are one of the oldest forms of international politics.

They allow us to protect ourselves, deter, attack, contain an opponent, share resources, structure dependencies, gain time, or strengthen a position.

But in the contemporary world, alliances are changing in nature.

They are no longer just military. They are becoming technological, energy-related, industrial, financial, informational, climatic, health-related, ideological, normative or anthropological.

The question is therefore no longer simply: who will fight with whom?

It becomes: who will depend on whom, for what, against what, and in the name of what?

Alliances of fear

In chaos, alliances are formed primarily out of fear.

The actors come together because they fear a threat, a break, an invasion, a sanction, a shortage, a dependency, or a demotion.

These alliances can be effective in the short term. They strengthen blocs, reinforce deterrence, secure certain flows, protect certain borders, and concentrate resources.

But they have a danger: they can lock the world into a logic of camps.

When an alliance is based solely on fear, it tends to oversimplify reality. It designates a primary adversary. It reduces room for compromise. It makes defection suspect. It transforms intermediate zones into diplomatic battlegrounds. It forces exposed actors to choose, sometimes against their deepest interests.

Alliances of fear are not always avoidable. When a threat is real, not forming an alliance would be naive. But an alliance of fear becomes dangerous when it ceases to be a tool for protection and becomes a logic of escalation.

Fear can contain.
It can also imprison.

Alliances of prudence

In the context of reason, alliances are primarily alliances of prudence.

They are not based on a deep convergence of human goals, but on the understanding that certain excesses must be avoided.

The actors cooperate because they know that a complete breakdown would be costly. They create arrangements, flexible formats, sectoral partnerships, crisis mechanisms, minimum standards, and frameworks for dialogue.

These alliances can be military, but also technological, industrial, health-related, maritime, cybernetic, or energy-related.

They are not necessarily seeking to transform the world. They are seeking to prevent it from tipping over.

Their virtue is their realism. Their limitation is their modesty.

They can stabilize without rebuilding.
They can contain without directing.
They can avoid the abyss without constructing the horizon.

Reasonableness largely depends on these alliances of caution. They allow actors to cooperate without fully trusting each other.

Convergence alliances

In wisdom, another form of alliance becomes possible: the alliance of convergence.

It is not defined solely by its opposition to an enemy, nor solely by its aim to reduce an immediate risk. It is defined by its focus on the common good: safe AI, climate, global health, vital resources, critical infrastructure, cognitive stability, nuclear prevention, oceans, biodiversity, human dignity, and the protection of future generations.

The convergence alliance does not eliminate national interests. It does not deny cultural differences. It does not replace traditional military alliances. But it introduces a higher logic: certain areas can no longer be governed by competition alone.

It requires institutions, rules, funding mechanisms, checks, shared responsibilities, broader representation of vulnerabilities and minimal acceptance of the limit.

It also presupposes a common moral language.

Not a uniform language. Not the imposition of one civilization on all others. But a recognition: certain conditions of survival, dignity, and habitability concern all of humanity.

In this context, the alliance is no longer just a form of protection. It becomes a construct.

Military alliances and functional alliances

Military alliances will remain necessary.

A wise world would not be a world disarmed by decree. Security remains a condition of freedom. Aggressive, coercive, or revisionist actors will not disappear. Deterrence will remain necessary as long as the threat exists.

But military alliances are no longer enough.

21st-century security also depends on energy, data, semiconductors, cables, water, grain, satellites, cloud computing, payment systems, AI, vaccines, minerals, electrical grids, platforms, and port infrastructure.

Functional alliances therefore become essential.

A semiconductor alliance can be as valuable as a naval alliance.
A cyber alliance can protect a democracy.
An energy alliance can prevent blackmail.

A health alliance can prevent a pandemic.
An information alliance can protect the public sphere.
A climate alliance can prevent mass migration.
An education alliance can reduce radicalization.

Since power is no longer solely military, the alliance can no longer be solely military.

Alliances and sovereignty

Alliances always raise the question of sovereignty.

To form an alliance is to accept not being alone. It sometimes means accepting constraints. It means recognizing that absolute autonomy is impossible or too costly.

But the alliance can also strengthen sovereignty.

An isolated state may be formally sovereign but practically vulnerable. An allied state may accept certain obligations, but increase its actual capacity to protect its population, secure its supplies, defend its public spaces, and have leverage in negotiations.

Contemporary sovereignty is therefore not merely independence. It is effective capacity.

Cooperating on AI, climate, pandemics, critical resources, or infrastructure does not necessarily mean relinquishing sovereignty. It can mean recognizing that isolated sovereignty is powerless in the face of systemic risks.

The real question is not: alliance or sovereignty?
It is: which alliances make sovereignty more real, and which ones transform it into dependence?

Central actors and flexible alliances

Pivot powers will play an increasing role.

They will not always allow themselves to be confined to fixed blocks. They will seek to maximize their margins, diversify their partners, avoid excessive dependence, profit from rivalries, and secure their own trajectories.

In a reasonableness scenario, pivots maintain bridges. They prevent the complete closure of the system. They create flexible formats, mediations, economic or diplomatic gateways.

In the chaos, pivots become transactional. They sell their position, circumvent regulations, monetize their access, exploit sanctions, and fuel rivalries.

In a wise approach, central actors become essential to the legitimacy of convergence institutions. Without them, global risk governance would appear as a project of a few dominant powers.

The alliances of tomorrow will therefore not be shaped solely by the major powers. They will also depend on intermediary actors capable of connecting or fragmenting.

Ideological alliances

Ideological alliances must also be taken into account.

They are not always formalized. They can cross borders, linking movements, networks, media, religious groups, nationalist currents, supremacists, conspiracy theorists, anti-system movements or digital communities.

These alliances function through stories, emotions, images, fears, resentments, and identifications.

They can be very powerful because they do not always require a hierarchical organization. They circulate through imitation, contagion, translation, virality, and emotion.

In chaos, they accelerate fragmentation.
In reason, they are monitored and contained.
In wisdom, they are combated not only by security, but by education, the rebuilding of compromise, the regulation of cognitive space, and the reduction of exploitable humiliations.

Ideological alliances remind us that the world is not structured solely by treaties. It is also structured by imaginaries.

Techno-political alliances

Techno-political alliances will be one of the major challenges of the 21st century.

AI, semiconductors, cloud computing, data, satellites, cybersecurity, autonomous systems, platforms, digital standards, 6G or its successors, biotechnology and quantum infrastructure will form spaces for alliance.

These alliances can be open or closed.

When open, they can produce common standards, security, interoperability, shared research, audits, protections and collective benefits.

Closed off, they can produce incompatible technological blocks, increased surveillance, a standards war, irreversible dependencies and a militarization of innovation.

Technology is therefore not just an area of alliance. It is becoming one of the matrices of the world order.

Whoever controls standards controls a part of the future.
Whoever controls data controls a part of reality.
Whoever controls AI controls a part of decision-making.
Whoever controls infrastructure controls a part of the sovereignty of others.

Techno-political alliances must therefore be one of the privileged places of wisdom.

Toward a hierarchy of alliances

Not all alliances are created equal.

Some protect.
Some dominate.
Some stabilize.
Some confine.
Some open spaces for cooperation.
Some create dependencies.
Some defend common goods.
Some merely shift the risk.

Political wisdom would consist of prioritizing alliances according to their contribution to the governability of the world.

An alliance is superior when it protects without humiliating, deters without unnecessarily provoking, cooperates without dissolving sovereignties, organizes common goods without abusively concentrating power, reduces asymmetric dependencies, and maintains channels with those who do not belong to it.

An alliance becomes dangerous when it absolutizes the enemy, destroys bridges, transforms dependents into vassals, instrumentalizes fears, locks societies into narratives of war, and makes escalation more likely than restraint.

The contemporary challenge is therefore not only to form alliances. It is to form alliances that do not preclude the future.

Central Lesson

Alliances will be inevitable.

No single actor can govern the risks of the 21st century alone. No state, no company, no institution, no traditional military alliance will suffice on its own.

But alliances can lead to three different worlds.

Out of fear, they may harden their positions.
Out of caution, they may contain crises.
Through convergence, they may organize the commons.

The decisive question will therefore be the following:

Will 21st-century alliances be merely machines of protection against the other, or will they also become instruments of responsibility toward all?

5.3 Globalizing Wisdom

5.3.1 General conclusion: globalizing wisdom

The journey of this work began with a simple question: can we describe the political state of the world with enough rigor to better understand the trajectories to which it might lead?

The measurement sequence proposed a method applicable to states. It showed that a state's geopolitical power does not necessarily coincide with its internal stability. Some states possess a strong capacity for power projection while resting on fragile balances. Others are more stable but less influential. Power and political maturity do not always progress together.
The foresight analysis extends this distinction.

It poses the central question: What becomes of a humanity whose power has become planetary while its political wisdom remains fragmented?

As the analysis progressed, this question broadened. It no longer concerns only states. It concerns platforms, technology companies, infrastructures, resources, financial systems, alliances, ideological movements, coercive actors, international organizations, diasporas, civil societies and individuals capable of influencing entire systems.

Power is no longer just territorial.
It is technological, informational, cognitive, financial, energy-related, logistical, algorithmic, biological, normative, and military.

That is why wisdom can no longer be solely individual. It must become political, institutional, and global.

The central formula

The central formula of the work can now be taken up in its full scope:

Humanity has globalized its power before it has globalized its wisdom.

This statement does not mean that humanity is devoid of wisdom. It means that the available wisdom is not yet organized on a scale commensurate with the available powers.

Fragments of wisdom already exist: constitutions, fundamental rights, international institutions, sciences, memories of catastrophes, philosophical traditions, religions open to the universal, democratic cultures, diplomacies, NGOs, jurisdictions, climate agreements, health conventions, technological regulations, citizen initiatives, defensive alliances, schools, works, poems, gestures of courage and lucidity.

But these fragments remain scattered.

Facing them, power has rapidly globalized: weapons, markets, data, platforms, AI, finance, energy, climate, infrastructure, narratives, images, flows, migrations, pandemics, industrial chains, critical resources.

The gap between the two constitutes the major political problem of the century.

Wisdom as a political function

Wisdom should not be understood as a moral supplement intended to embellish politics.

It is a function.

It consists of measuring the consequences, thinking long-term, accepting limits, protecting common goods, maintaining a space of shared truth, containing destructive uses of power, organizing responsibility, preserving human dignity and preventing means from devouring ends.

Political wisdom does not require people to become perfect.

It demands that institutions take their imperfections into account.

Human beings can be generous, insightful, courageous, and creative. They can also be domineering, envious, fanatical, fearful, narcissistic, or violent. Institutions do not eliminate this ambivalence. They choose which aspects they amplify.

A wise institution fosters cooperation rather than predation,
restraint rather than impulsiveness, responsibility rather than impunity,
truth rather than manipulation,
long-term thinking rather than constant urgency,
limits rather than omnipotence,
and dignity rather than mere utility.

Globalizing Wisdom therefore means building institutions capable of amplifying the best human potential on the scale where power now operates.

What PRA attempted to do

PRA does not claim to possess the political truth of the world; it seeks to make judgment clearer, therefore more debatable.

PRA proposes a method.

This method seeks to make political assessments explicit, comparable, reasoned, and revisable. It begins with elementary scores, constructs indicators, identifies gaps, projects actors into a factor space, identifies clusters, applies hypotheses to those clusters, and then produces narrative scenarios.

This method does not eliminate subjectivity. It makes it visible.

It does not replace judgment. It structures it.

It does not predict the future. It allows us to discuss possible trajectories.

Its purpose is both educational and analytical. It aims to enable the reader to understand not only what is being proposed, but also how it was constructed.

The reader can accept the authorial scenarios, discuss them, modify them, or construct their own. They can work backward from the narrative to the hypotheses, from the hypotheses to the variables, from the variables to the clusters, and from the clusters to the actors.

The method does not confine readers; it gives them a tool.

The three lessons of the scenarios

The three scenarios produce three lessons.

Reasonableness teaches us that the world can avoid the worst without becoming just. This scenario is modest, sometimes disappointing, but valuable. It reminds us that prudence, crisis fatigue, and fear of the abyss can produce mechanisms of restraint. In a dangerous world, even a meager wisdom can save us from chaos.

Wisdom teaches us that humanity will sooner or later have to build institutions commensurate with its risks. This scenario may seem improbable, but it provides the horizon. Without a horizon of wisdom, reason risks becoming mere crisis management, and chaos risks remaining the only future we can truly imagine.

Chaos teaches us that the world can become ungovernable without collapsing. This is perhaps the most disturbing lesson. Societies can continue to function, markets to trade, technologies to advance, institutions to speak, states to govern, all while gradually losing the capacity to steer the whole.

Chaos is not emptiness.
It is power without a common purpose.

The Rejection of Two Easy Answers

This work rejects two easy solutions.

The first would be spectacular pessimism: announcing disaster as if it were already written in stone. This stance may seem lucid, but it sometimes avoids considering the conditions for an alternative path.

The second would be abstract optimism: believing that reason, progress, commerce, technology or morality will mechanically end up producing a wiser world.

Neither disaster nor wisdom is automatic.

The future will depend on institutions, decisions, crises, narratives, technologies, alliances, resistance, education, regulations, and upheavals to come.

History guarantees nothing. But it shows that humanity has already been able to change scale when the existing system became insufficient.

The question is whether humanity will be able to do so soon enough.

Globalizing Wisdom without abolishing politics

Globalizing Wisdom does not mean abolishing nations, cultures, disagreements, interests, or sovereignties.

A world without pluralism would be uninhabitable.
A world without conflict would likely be a world without freedom.
A world without states might be left at the mercy of even less responsible powers.
A world governed by a single authority without checks and balances could become dangerous.

Wisdom, therefore, is not about abolishing politics.

It consists of preventing politics from being destroyed by an excess of ungoverned power.

The aim is to articulate the levels:

the local for matters close to home;
the national for matters of democratic sovereignty;
the regional for matters requiring neighborhood or security cooperation;
the global for matters threatening the common conditions of humanity.

This articulation will be difficult. It will be contested. It will be imperfect. But it is more reasonable than the two opposing illusions: believing that each state can control everything alone, or believing that a uniform world government could replace human plurality.

Global wisdom must be an architecture of plurality, not uniformity.

The role of AI in the work and in the era

It would be impossible to conclude without returning to artificial intelligence.

It traverses this work on two levels.

As an object of analysis, it represents one of the major thresholds of the 21st century. It can amplify knowledge, medicine, education, coordination, research, and prevention. But it can also amplify surveillance, manipulation, war, cognitive dependence, disinformation, and human dispossession.

It therefore forces humanity to ask itself what should remain human in a world of increasingly powerful machines.

But AI also comes into play as a working tool.

AI contributed to structuring, formalizing, testing, reformulating, checking, and enriching the PRA approach. It helped process a considerable volume of documentation, generate scores, organize variables, formulate scenarios, and clarify complex connections.

This assistance does not replace the author.

The intuition, the project, the criteria, the architecture, the arbitrations, the validations, the corrections, the concerns, the orientations and the final responsibility are all the responsibility of the author.

But it would be contrary to the spirit of this work to conceal the role of a tool which itself constitutes one of the central issues of the century.

The use of AI in this work therefore illustrates, on a small scale, the general question: how to use a new power without giving up human responsibility?

Wisdom, philosophy and poetry

The conclusion of this work cannot be purely methodological.

Method is necessary. It protects against impressionism. It makes assumptions debatable. It gives the reader a tool. It imposes discipline.

But the method is not enough.

We also need direction.

The world does not just need to calculate its risks. It needs to ask itself what it wants to preserve.

This is where wisdom, philosophy, and poetry find their place again.

Wisdom reminds us that not everything that is possible should be done.
Philosophy reminds us that efficiency is not an end in itself.
Poetry reminds us that the world is not merely a system to be optimized, but a home to be inhabited.

Without wisdom, power becomes intoxication.
Without philosophy, politics becomes the management of resources.
Without poetry, humanity risks forgetting why it wants to survive.

The 21st century will be profoundly marked by wisdom, philosophy, and poetry, or it will not be.

Final Formulation

Humanity is not doomed to chaos.

Humanity is not destined for wisdom.

Humanity faces a new responsibility: learning to govern a power whose effects now transcend borders, generations, cultures, and sometimes even the immediate understanding of those who wield it.

The question is no longer simply: who will be the most powerful?

The question becomes: who will be able to make power habitable?

PRA attempted to offer a tool to shed light on this question, without claiming to resolve it.

The work has measured.
It has questioned.
The scenarios have opened up three trajectories.
The conclusion calls for a task: to globalize wisdom before power globalizes chaos.

It is not about dreaming of a perfect world.

The goal is to prevent human imperfection, amplified by planetary instruments, from becoming irreversible.

Wisdom is no longer a moral luxury.
It has become a political condition for survival.

6 Methodological and technical annexes

A vision of the world order between reason, wisdom and chaos

Technical document of annexes — harmonized version v1.5

6.1 Function of the methodological and technical annexes

The methodological and technical appendices make the framework of the authorial scenarios visible: the list of actors, variables, scores, PCA, clusters, questionnaire, Hypothesis Impact Matrix, Scenario Zero, Run 1 bis graphs, rules for processing hypotheses, technical reservations, and the respective roles of the author and artificial intelligence.

They complement the main text without replacing it. The main body of the work maintains narrative continuity; the appendices provide the reader with elements for verification, discussion, and reconstruction of the model.

6.2 Appendix II-1 — Reference Variables

Technical source: Variables sheet from the Run 1 bis file.

Code	Name	Definition	Run Status 1	Meaning of the high note
TSI*	Internal strength	Internal strength / maturity-stability of the actor	Composite	High internal strength/maturity
G*	Power	Power / strategic projection capability	Composite	High projection/power
H1	Hegemonic tendency	Hegemonic tendency	Semi-elementary	A stronger desire to impose influence, standards, or dependencies
H2	Imaginary of restoration	Imaginary of restoration / nostalgia for grandeur	Semi-elementary	A narrative of lost grandeur/a more structured restoration
ER1	Economic interest and control of resources	Economic interest and control of critical resources/infrastructure	Semi-elementary	Greater interest in/control over critical resources, markets, or infrastructure
C1	Coercion that can be mobilized or has already been used	Coercion that can be mobilized or has already been used	Semi-elementary	higher capacity or use of coercion
A1	Strategic autonomy	Strategic autonomy	Semi-elementary	Stronger strategic autonomy
D1	Asymmetrical dependence suffered	Asymmetrical dependence suffered	Semi-elementary	Stronger asymmetrical dependence
P1	Customizing the decision	Customizing the decision	Semi-elementary	More focused/personalized decision-making
I1	Informational power	Informational/cognitive power	Semi-elementary	Stronger influence on data, attention, narratives, or algorithms
I2	Polarizing ideological pressure	Polarizing ideological pressure	Semi-elementary	More structuring ideological polarization
M1	Cooperative orientation	Cooperative/multilateral orientation	Semi-elementary	A more cooperative/multilateral orientation

6.3 Appendix II-2 — PCA Results of Run 1 bis

The first five components explain approximately 91.97% of the variance. The results serve here as a basis for the technical analysis of Run 1 bis and to support the interpretation of the clusters.

6.3.1 Explained and cumulative variance

Component	Variance explained	Cumulative variance
CP1	0.436	0.436
CP2	0.3094	0.7454
CP3	0.0924	0.8377
CP4	0.0499	0.8877
CP5	0.0321	0.9197
CP6	0.0296	0.9493

6.3.2 Contributions/coordinates of variables on the principal components

Variable	CP1	CP2	CP3	CP4	CP5	CP6
TSI*	0.9545	0.1375	0.1027	0.059	0.096	0.0695
G*	0.5646	0.7616	0.0214	-0.0628	0.0139	0.2517
H1	-0.2979	0.8945	-0.19	-0.0321	-0.1446	0.0237
H2	-0.8029	0.4147	0.0605	0.1937	0.2071	-0.1085
ER1	0.6642	0.4622	-0.4655	-0.0965	0.107	0.2048
C1	-0.6811	0.4171	0.1109	0.4887	0.0106	0.2735
A1	0.2963	0.895	0.0772	0.143	-0.1408	-0.1982
D1	-0.7055	-0.5735	0.0039	-0.1841	0.004	0.329
P1	-0.6642	0.3262	-0.4994	-0.1538	0.369	-0.1137
I1	-0.0674	0.6645	0.5858	-0.433	0.0909	0.0177
I2	-0.8695	0.2153	0.3587	-0.0653	0.0445	0.027
M1	0.7935	-0.2594	0.3355	0.2036	0.3708	0.0022

6.4 Annex II-3 — Technical Clusters of Run 1 bis

6.4.1 Qualitative analysis of the seven technical clusters

Cluster	Provisional name	n	Provisional reading	Exemplary actors
1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital	21	Actors with a strong material, industrial, energy, financial or logistical base; low average ideologization, high importance of resources and infrastructure.	Apple, Nvidia, BlackRock / Vanguard / State Street, Visa / Mastercard, Lockheed / RTX / Northrop, BYD / CATL, SMIC, COSCO / State Grid…
2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors	9	Actors whose ideology, coercion and polarization strongly structure the projection; weak cooperative orientation.	Iran, North Korea, Hezbollah, Houthis, Hamas / Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Salafist-jihadist networks, Muslim Brotherhood / political Islam, transnational supremacist far right…
3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion	13	Hybrid or intermediary actors: regional power, sectoral coercion or strategic assets without full systemic status.	Egypt, Pakistan, Nigeria, Vietnam, Algeria, Azerbaijan, BRICS+, Adani Group…
4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states	14	States or areas marked by high dependence, internal fragilities and exposure to external influences.	Mexico, Ethiopia, Ukraine, Belarus, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar…
5	Hegemonic systemic poles	8	Actors with strong projection, strong autonomy, strong hegemonic tendencies and significant coercive or informational capacity.	United States, China, Russia, India, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Musk Ecosystem
6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors	19	Actors with relatively high stability, cooperative orientation, institutional integration and weak to moderate hegemony.	European Union, NATO, UN, Germany, Japan, Brazil, Indonesia, South Korea…
7	Techno-informational & powers of influence	16	Powers whose influence is primarily exerted through information, the cloud, platforms, data, AI, media, or strategic intermediation.	France, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Microsoft / OpenAI, Alphabet / YouTube / DeepMind, Amazon / AWS / Blue Origin, Meta…

6.4.2 Average cluster profiles on the variables

Cluster	Provisional cluster name	n	TSI*	G*	H1	H2	ER1	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1
1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital	21	7.34	6.86	4.19	1.24	8.04	1.4	6.14	3.83	3.88	4.05	2.81	5.5
2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors	9	2.81	4.58	6.17	7.39	3.17	6.61	5.83	6.56	6.61	6.28	9.11	1.03
3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion	13	4.72	5.32	4.27	3.77	6.28	4.73	5.58	4.69	6.27	4.31	5.46	3.77
4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states	14	3.98	3.73	2.46	3.75	4.38	3.64	3.11	6.96	6.36	3.61	6.25	4.36
5	Hegemonic systemic poles	8	5.69	7.85	6.71	6.62	7.69	6.58	8	3.31	7.46	7.12	6.94	4.56
6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors	19	6.93	5.46	2.47	2.08	5.5	2.76	5.2	4.38	2.71	4.68	4.55	7.71
7	Techno-informational & powers of influence	16	6.7	6.88	4.78	2.72	6.94	2.74	6.39	3.8	5.41	7.31	5.28	5.28

6.5 Appendix II-4 — Concordance between narrative clusters and technical clusters

The main body of the work uses a narrative order designed to guide the reading. Run 1 bis retains a technical numbering system derived from statistical processing. The following table avoids any confusion between these two orders.

Narrative Order Volume II	Narrative title retained	Technical Cluster Run 1 bis	Technical name Run 1 bis	N
1	Autonomous hegemonic projection	5	Hegemonic systemic poles	8
2	Ideological-coercive polarization	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors	9
3	Dependence / Strategic Exposure	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states	14
4	Critical infrastructure & capital	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital	21
5	Institutional/multilateral cooperation	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors	19
6	Intermediate power / pivots	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion	13
7	Information technology & platforms	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence	16

6.6 Appendix II-5 — Complete list of actors by narrative cluster

Narrative order	Narrative title	Technical Cluster	Actors
1	Autonomous hegemonic projection	5	United States; China; Russia; India; Türkiye; Saudi Arabia; Israel; Musk Ecosystem
2	Ideological-coercive polarization	2	Iran; North Korea; Hezbollah; Houthis; Hamas/Palestinian Islamic Jihad; Salafist-jihadist networks; Muslim Brotherhood/political Islam; Transnational supremacist far right; Conspiracy/anti-Semitic networks
3	Dependence / Strategic Exposure	4	Mexico; Ethiopia; Ukraine; Belarus; Philippines; Laos; Cambodia; Myanmar; Kazakhstan; Iraq; Lebanon; Jordan; Serbia; Morocco
4	Critical infrastructure & capital	1	Apple; Nvidia; BlackRock/Vanguard/State Street; Visa/Mastercard; Lockheed/RTX/Northrop; BYD/CATL; minimum wage; COSCO/State Grid; Tata Group; ASML; Shell / BP / TotalEnergies; Saudi Aramco; Saudi PIF; ADNOC/Mubadala/ADIA; DP World; Samsung/SK Hynix; TSMC; Toyota/Mitsubishi/SoftBank; Maersk/MSC; Glencore/Trafigura/Vitol; Cargill / ADM
5	Institutional/multilateral cooperation	6	European Union; NATO; UN; Germany; Japan; Brazil; Indonesia; South Korea; Taiwan; Australia; Canada; South Africa; Kenya; Singapore; Poland; Greece; Airbus; Human rights/climate NGOs; Transnational strategic diasporas
6	Intermediate power / pivots	3	Egypt; Pakistan; Nigeria; Vietnam; Algeria; Azerbaijan; BRICS+; Adani Group; Rosatom/Gazprom/Rosneft; Baykar; IAI/Rafael/Elbit; NSO/Private Cyber Offensive; Transnational Drug Cartels
7	Information technology & platforms	7	France; United Kingdom; United Arab Emirates; Qatar; Microsoft/OpenAI; Alphabet / YouTube / DeepMind; Amazon/AWS/Blue Origin; Meta; Palantir/Anduril; ByteDance/TikTok; Huawei; Tencent/WeChat; Alibaba/Ant Group; Reliance/Jio; QatarEnergy/QIA/Al Jazeera; G42

6.7 Appendix II-6 — Actor Rating Sheet

Condensed table from the Actors_Notations sheet. Columns CP1 to CP5 and the original technical note are retained in the source file, but not reproduced here to preserve the readability of the printed appendix.

Actor	Kind	Area	TSI*	G*	H1	H2	ER1	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1	Cluster	Provisional cluster name
UNITED STATES	State	North America	7	9.8	7.5	6.5	8.5	8	9.5	2	4.5	9.5	7	6.5	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
China	State	East Asia	6.4	9.5	8.5	7.5	9.5	7.8	9	2.5	8.5	8	6.5	4	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
Russia	State	Eurasia	4.4	7.8	8.5	9.5	8	8.8	8.5	4	9.2	7	8.5	2	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
India	State	South Asia	6.2	7.6	6.2	6	7.2	6	8	3.5	6	6	6	5.5	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
European Union	Supranational assembly	Europe	7.8	7.4	3	2	6.5	2.5	6.5	3.5	2	6	5.5	9	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
NATO	Alliance	Transatlantic	7.5	8.4	4	2	5.5	7.5	6.5	3	2.5	5	4.5	8	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
UN	International organization	Overall	6	4.5	1	0.5	2	1	3	6	1.5	4	3	9.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
France	State	Europe	7.2	6.6	4.5	4	5.8	5.5	7.2	3	4	5.5	6	7	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Germany	State	Europe	7.8	6.2	2.5	1.5	6	2.5	5.5	4	2.5	5	5	8.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
United Kingdom	State	Europe	7.3	6.4	4.5	4.5	5.8	5	7	3	3.5	6	5.5	7	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Japan	State	East Asia	8	6.5	2.5	2	6.8	3.5	5.5	4.5	2.5	5.5	3.5	8	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Türkiye	State	Middle East / Europe	5	6.4	7	8	6	6.5	7	3.5	8	5.5	7	4	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
Iran	State	Middle East	3.8	6.1	7.5	7.5	6.5	7.5	7	5.5	8.5	6	8.5	2.5	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Saudi Arabia	State	Gulf	5.3	6.6	5.5	5.5	9	4.5	7	3.5	8.5	5.5	5.5	5	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
United Arab Emirates	State	Gulf	6.5	6	5	3.5	7.5	3.8	7.5	3	7	6	4	6.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Qatar	State	Gulf	6.2	5.2	4	3	7.5	2.5	6.5	3.8	6	7	4	6.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Israel	State	Middle East	6.2	6.7	4.5	5.5	5.8	7.5	7.5	3.5	5.5	7	7	5.5	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
Brazil	State	Latin America	6	5.8	3.5	3	7	3	6.5	3	4	4.5	5.5	7	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Indonesia	State	Southeast Asia	6	5.3	3.5	3	6.5	3	5.5	4	4	4	5	7	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Egypt	State	Middle East / Africa	4.5	5.3	4	5	5.5	4.5	5	5.5	8	5	6	4.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Pakistan	State	South Asia	3.7	5.6	5	6	4.8	6.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	4.5	7	3.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
North Korea	State	East Asia	2.2	4.5	6.5	8.5	3	7	6	7	10	4	9	0.5	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
South Korea	State	East Asia	7.5	6.1	2.5	2.5	6.5	3.5	5	4.5	2.5	5.5	4	8	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Taiwan	Quasi-state / strategic node	East Asia	7.8	5.8	2	2	8	2.5	4.5	6	2	5.5	4.5	7.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Australia	State	Indo-Pacific	8	5.9	2.5	2	7	3.5	5.5	3.8	2	4.5	4	8	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Canada	State	North America	8	5.5	2	1.5	6.2	2	4.8	4	2	4.5	5	8.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Mexico	State	North America	5	4.7	2.5	2.5	5.5	3	3.5	6	4	4	6.5	6	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Nigeria	State	Africa	3.8	4.8	3	3	6	3.5	4.5	5	5	4.5	7	5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
South Africa	State	Africa	5.5	4.7	2.5	2	5.5	2.5	5	4.5	3	4	5.5	6.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or

Actor	Kind	Area	TSI*	G*	H1	H2	ER1	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1	Cluster	Provisional cluster name
																institutional actors
Ethiopia	State	Africa	3.5	4.1	3	4	4.5	4	4	5.5	6	3.5	7	4	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Kenya	State	Africa	5.2	3.8	2	1.5	4.5	2	4	5	3.5	3.5	4.5	6.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Vietnam	State	Southeast Asia	5.8	4.8	3	4	5.8	3.5	5.5	4	7	4	5	6	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Singapore	State	Southeast Asia	8	4.8	1.5	0.5	6.5	1.5	5.5	4	4	4.5	2.5	8.5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Ukraine	State	Eastern Europe	4.5	5	2.5	4.5	4.5	6	3.5	8	4.5	5	6.5	7	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Belarus	State	Eastern Europe	2.8	3.8	3.5	6	3.5	5	2.5	8.5	9	4	7	1.5	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Poland	State	Europe	6.8	5	3	4.5	5	4	5	4.5	3.5	4	6	7	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Philippines	State	Southeast Asia	5	4	2.5	3	4.5	3	3.5	6	5.5	4	6	6	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Laos	State	Southeast Asia	3.8	2.5	1.5	2	3.5	1.5	2	8	6	2.5	4.5	4	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Cambodia	State	Southeast Asia	3.5	2.7	2	2.5	3.8	2	2.5	7.5	7.5	3	5.5	3.5	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Myanmar	Fragmented state	Southeast Asia	1.8	3	3	4	3.5	6.5	2	8	9	3	8.5	1	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Kazakhstan	State	Central Asia	4.8	4.5	2.5	3.5	7	2.5	4	6.5	7	3.5	4.5	5	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Iraq	Fragmented state	Middle East	2.8	3.6	2.5	4	6	5.5	2.5	8	6.5	3.5	8	3	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Lebanon	Fragmented state	Middle East	2.5	3	2	4	3	4.5	2	8	5	4	8	3.5	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Jordan	State	Middle East	5.2	3.5	1.5	2.5	3.5	2.5	3	7	6.5	3	5	6	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Serbia	State	Balkans	5	3.7	3	6	3.5	2.5	4	5.5	6	3.5	6	4.5	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Morocco	State	Maghreb	5.5	4.1	2.5	4	5	2.5	4.5	5	6.5	4	4.5	6	4	Dependent, exposed, or fragmented states
Algeria	State	Maghreb	4.5	4.4	3	5	6.5	3.5	5	4.5	6.5	3.5	5.5	4.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Greece	State	Europe / Mediterranean	7	3.8	2	3	3.5	2.5	4	5	3	3	4.5	8	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Azerbaijan	State	Caucasus	4	4.2	4	6	7	4.5	5	5	8	3.5	5.5	3.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
BRICS+	Together / forum	Transregional	5	6	4.5	4	6.5	2.5	5.5	4	3	4.5	5.5	5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Musk Ecosystem	Private tech ecosystem	United States / global	5	8.4	6	4.5	7.5	3.5	7.5	4	9.5	8.5	8	4	5	Hegemonic systemic poles
Microsoft / OpenAI	AI-cloud ecosystem	United States / global	7.5	8.3	4.5	2.5	7.5	2	7	3.5	5.5	9	5.5	6	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Alphabet / YouTube / DeepMind	Platform / AI	United States / global	7.5	8.5	5	2.5	7.5	2	7	3.5	4.5	9.5	6.5	6	7	Information technology & powers of influence
Amazon / AWS / Blue Origin	Digital infrastructure/logistics	United States / global	7.2	8.1	5	2	8	2	7	3.5	4.5	7.5	4.5	5.5	7	Information technology & powers of influence
Meta	Information platform	United States / global	6.8	7.6	4.5	2	6.5	1.5	6.5	4	5	9	7.5	5	7	Information technology & powers of influence
Apple	Technology / platform	United States / global	8.2	7.6	3.5	1	7	1	7	3	3	6.5	3.5	6	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-

Actor	Kind	Area	TSI*	G*	H1	H2	ER1	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1	Cluster	Provisional cluster name
																financial capital
Nvidia	Semiconductors / AI	United States / global	7.8	8	4	1	8.5	1	7.5	3	3	6.5	3	5.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
BlackRock / Vanguard / State Street	Global Finance	United States / global	8	8	5	1.5	7	2	7.5	3	3	4.5	3	5.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Visa / Mastercard	Payments infrastructure	United States / global	8	7.2	4	0.5	7.5	2	7	3.5	3	4.5	2.5	6	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Palantir / Anduril	Defense-tech / data	United States / global	6.5	6.6	5	3	6	6	6.5	4	6	7.5	6	3.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Lockheed / RTX / Northrop	Military-industrial complex	United States / global	7.5	7.4	4.5	2	6.5	7	6.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3	4.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
ByteDance / TikTok	Information platform	China / global	6	7.2	5.5	2.5	6	2	5.5	5	5	9	8	4	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Huawei	Telecoms / infrastructure	China / global	6.5	7.4	6	3	7	3.5	6	4.5	5.5	6.5	4	4.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Tencent / WeChat	Platform / payments / information	China / global	6.5	7.1	5	2.5	6.5	2	5.5	4.5	5.5	8	6	4.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Alibaba / Ant Group	E-commerce / fintech	China / global	6	6.8	4.5	2	7	1.5	5	4.5	5.5	6	4	4.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
BYD / CATL	Batteries / Electric Vehicles	China / global	7	7	4.5	1.5	8	1	6	3.5	4	4.5	3	5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Minimum wage	Semiconductors	China	6	6.2	4.5	2	8	1	4.5	5.5	4.5	4	3	4	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
COSCO / State Grid	Logistics / infrastructure	China / global	6.5	7	6	2.5	8	2.5	6	4	5.5	4	3.5	4.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Reliance / Jio	Telecoms / energy / data	India	6.5	6.2	4.5	2.5	7	1.5	5.5	4	6.5	6	4.5	4.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
Adani Group	Infrastructure / energy / ports	India	5.5	5.8	5	2.5	7.5	2	5.5	4.5	7	4	4	3.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Tata Group	industrial conglomerate	India / global	7.5	5.8	3	1	6.5	1	5.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2.5	6	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
ASML	Critical semiconductors	Netherlands / global	8.2	7	3	0.5	8.8	0.5	5	5.5	2.5	4.5	2.5	7	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Airbus	Aeronautics / Defense	Europe / global	7.8	6.5	3	1	6.5	3.5	5.5	4	2.5	3.5	2.5	7	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Shell / BP / TotalEnergies	global energy	Europe / global	7	6.8	4.5	1	9	1.5	6.5	3.5	3	3	3.5	5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Saudi Aramco	Energy	Saudi Arabia / global	7	7.2	4.5	2	9.5	1.5	6	3	5	3	2.5	4.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Saudi PIF	Sovereign Wealth Fund	Saudi Arabia / global	6.5	6.8	5	3	8	1	6.5	3	7.5	4	3	4.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
ADNOC / Mubadala / ADIA	Energy / sovereign wealth funds	Emirates / global	7	6.6	4.5	2	8.5	1	7	3	6.5	4	2.5	5.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
DP World	Logistics / ports	Emirates / global	7	6.3	5	1.5	8	1	6.5	3.5	5.5	3.5	3	5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
QatarEnergy / QIA / Al Jazeera	Energy / finance / media	Qatar / global	6.5	6.2	4.5	2.5	8.5	1.5	6	3.5	6	7	4.5	5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence

Actor	Kind	Area	TSI*	G*	H1	H2	ER1	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1	Cluster	Provisional cluster name
Rosatom / Gazprom / Rosneft	Energy / Nuclear / State	Russia / global	5	6.8	6.5	5	9	4	6	4	8	3.5	4.5	2.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Baykar	Drones / defense	Türkiye / global	5.5	5.5	5	4	5.5	6	6	4	7.5	4	4.5	3.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
IAI / Rafael / Elbit	Defense / Cyber	Israel / global	6.5	6.2	4	2.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	4	4.5	5	4	4.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Samsung / SK Hynix	Semiconductors / industry	South Korea / global	8	6.8	3	0.5	8.5	0.5	5	5	3	4	2.5	7	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
TSMC	Critical semiconductors	Taiwan / global	8	7.5	3.5	0.5	9.5	0.5	4.5	6.5	2.5	4.5	2.5	7	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Toyota / Mitsubishi / SoftBank	Industry / tech / finance	Japan / global	8	6.4	3	0.5	7	0.5	5	4	3	4	2.5	7	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Maersk / MSC	Maritime transport	Europe / global	7.5	6.2	3.5	0.5	8	1	6	4	3	3	2	6.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Glencore / Trafigura / Vitol	Raw materials trading	Transnational	6.5	6.5	5.5	0.5	9	1.5	7	3.5	4	3	3	4	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
Cargill / ADM	Agribusiness / Food	Transnational	7	5.8	4	0.5	8	0.5	6.5	3.5	3	3	2.5	5.5	1	Critical infrastructure & industrial-financial capital
G42	AI / data / strategic capital	Emirates / global	6.5	5.8	4.5	1.5	7	1.5	6.5	3.5	6.5	7.5	4	4.5	7	Techno-informational & powers of influence
NSO / Private Cyber Offensive	Cyber / surveillance	Israel / global	4.5	5	4.5	1	5	6.5	5.5	5	5.5	6	6	2.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
Hezbollah	Ideological armed actor	Lebanon / Middle East	3.5	4.8	6.5	7	3.5	8	5.5	7	7.5	6	9	1	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Houthis	Ideological armed actor	Yemen / Red Sea	2.8	4.2	6	6.5	3	7.5	5	7	7	5.5	9	0.8	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Hamas / Palestinian Islamic Jihad	Ideological armed actor	Gaza / Middle East	2.5	4	6	7	3	8	4.5	8	7.5	6.5	9.5	0.5	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Salafist-jihadist networks	Violent ideological network	Transnational	2	5	8	9	2.5	8.5	6.5	7	6.5	7	10	0.2	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Muslim Brotherhood / Political Islam	Transnational ideological network	Transnational	4	4.8	5.5	6.5	3.5	3.5	5.5	5.5	5	6.5	8	2.5	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Transnational supremacist far right	Ideological network	Transnational	2.5	3.8	5	7.5	2	5.5	6	6	4	7	9	0.8	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Conspiracy/anti-Semitic networks	Ideological network	Transnational	2	4	4.5	7	1.5	4	6.5	6	3.5	8	10	0.5	2	Polarizing ideological and coercive actors
Transnational drug cartels	Criminal network	Americas / global	3	4.8	4	1	7	8	7	5	5	4	6.5	0.5	3	Intermediate powers / sectoral coercion
human rights/climate NGOs	Transnational normative network	Overall	6	4	1.5	1	2	0.5	5.5	5	2	6.5	5.5	9	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors
Transnational strategic diasporas	Transnational network	Overall	5	3.8	2.5	4	3	1.5	5.5	5	2.5	6	6	5	6	Cooperative, stable, or institutional actors

6.8 Appendix II-7 — Run 1 bis Graphs

The figures below reproduce the graphs from the Run 1 bis dashboard: simplified outlines of clusters, centroids, factorial planes and average profiles by actor family.

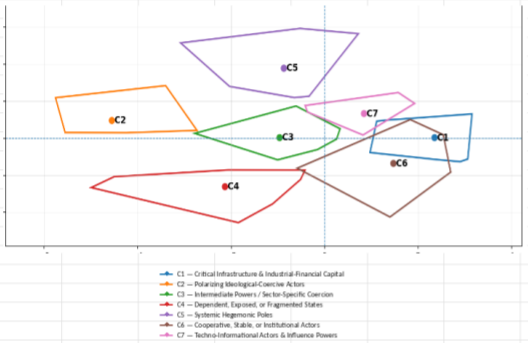
6.9 Figure II-7-A — Dashboard Run 1 bis: Cluster outlines and centroids

PRA Doc2 — Run 1 bis: Visual Interpretation of the Clusters

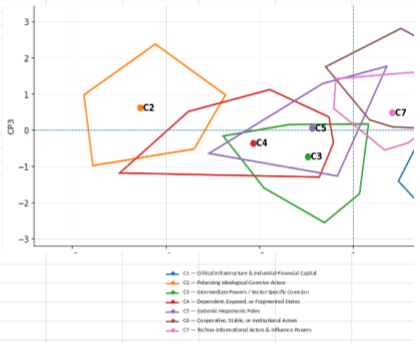
Purpose: supplement the first PCA run with a readable view of the 7 clusters — simplified outlines, centroids, CP1–CP2 / CP1–CP3 planes, and average family profiles. The clusters remain provisional: they are intended to guide interpretation before Run 2.

Cluster	Provisional Name	N	CP1	CP2	CP3	Representatives Near the Centroid
1	Critical Infrastructure & Industrial-Financial Capital	21	2.35	0.04	-0.87	BYD / CATL, Shell / BP / TotalEnergies, Cargill / ADM, Visa / Mastercard
2	Polarizing Ideological-Coercive Actors	9	-4.55	0.98	0.62	Hezbollah, Houthis, Hamas / Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Transnational White Supremacist Far Right
3	Intermediate Powers / Sector-Specific Coercion	13	-0.97	0.05	-0.73	Baykar, Egypt, Transnational Narcotics Cartels, Algeria
4	Dependent, Exposed, or Fragmented States	14	-2.13	-2.60	-0.35	Serbia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Philippines
5	Systemic Hegemonic Poles	8	-0.88	3.80	0.06	Musk Ecosystem, India, Türkiye, Israel
6	Cooperative, Stable, or Institutional Actors	19	1.46	-1.35	0.99	Taiwan, South Korea, Germany, Canada
7	Techno-Informational Actors & Influence Powers	16	0.84	1.34	0.49	Tencent / WeChat, France, G42, Huawei

Simplified Outlines of the 7 Clusters — CP1/CP2 Plane

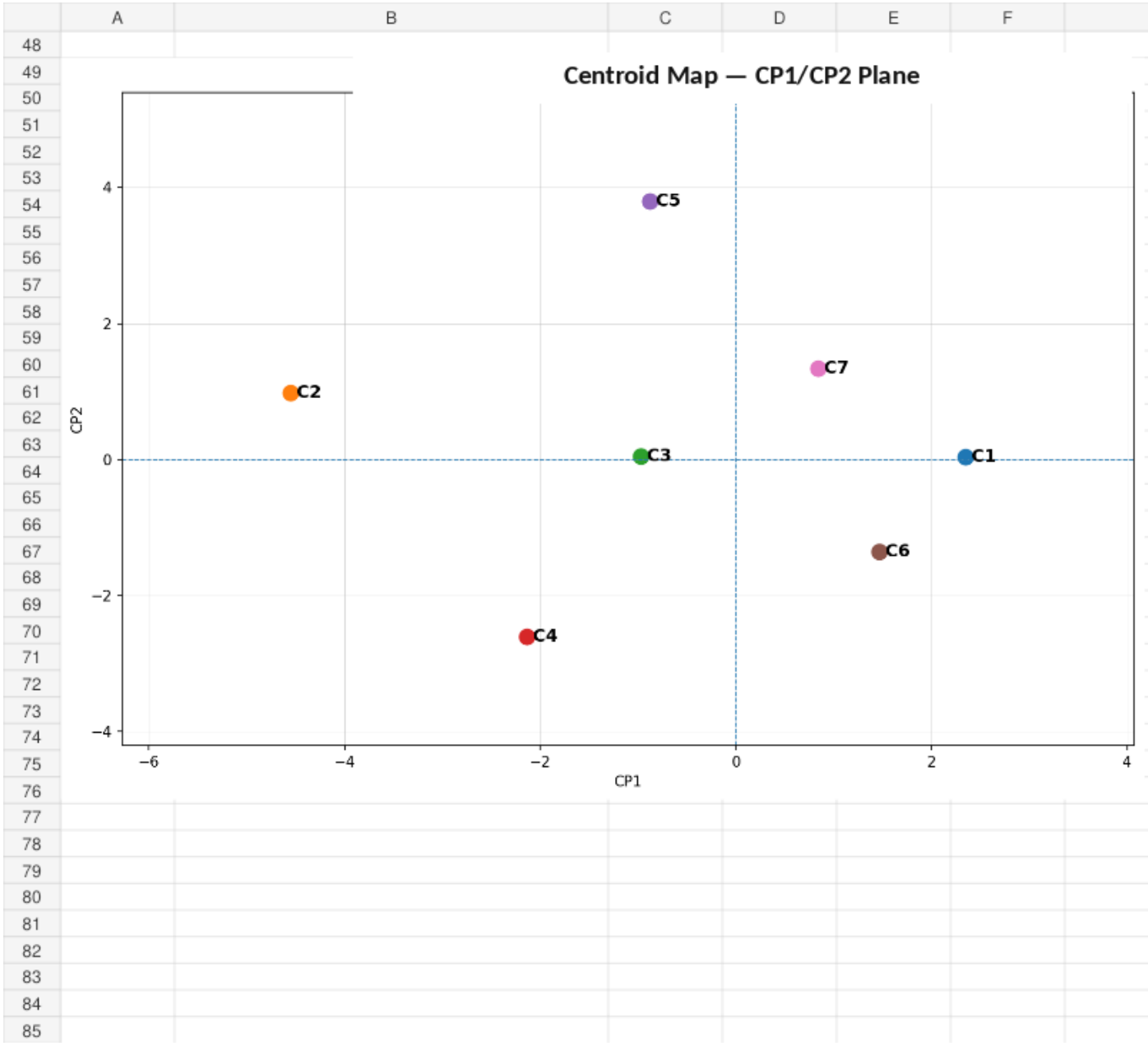


Simplified Outlines of the 7 Clusters — CP1/CP3 Plane



Recommended interpretation: the outlines show only the simplified envelope of each cluster in the factor plane. The centroids summarize the families' average positions. Actors near the boundaries should be reviewed before any definitive typology is adopted.

6.10 Figure II-7-B — Dashboard Run 1 bis: map of centroids



6.11 Appendix II-8 — Baseline Questionnaire and Scenario Zero

Technical source: file Référiel_Clusters_Matrice_ScenarioZero, sheet Questionnaire_Zero.

Q1	**Economic globalization**	**continues its progress**	**stabilizes**	**slows down**	**regresses in blocks**	**it breaks apart abruptly**	**0 — continuity / stability**	**0**	**Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.**
Q2	The technological blocks	remain open	partially coordinate	become regional	close	become hostile	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q3	Critical resources	are subject to cooperative regulation	remain manageable	create occasional tensions	become objects of confrontation	trigger major crises	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q4	AI	It especially strengthens productivity and knowledge	remains ambivalent but regulated	increases asymmetries	strengthens surveillance and manipulation	becomes a factor of systemic destabilization	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q5	Private digital platforms	are heavily regulated	accept shared governance	retain their current power	become virtually sovereign	largely escape public control	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q6	Multilateralism	strengthens	maintains itself selectively	stagnates	weakens noticeably	marginalizes	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q7	Ideological polarization	retreat	remains contained	progresses moderately	strongly structures societies	becomes a central driver of conflicts	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q8	Political/radical Islam	normalizes or regresses	remains regionally contained	is recomposing itself	extends through networks	becomes a major transnational driver	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q9	Antisemitism and conspiracy theories	retreat	remain marginal	progress in the margins	become transversal	structure multiple mobilizations	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q10	The wokism/anti-wokism conflict	calms down	remains culturally contained	polarizes certain spaces	weakens democracies	becomes a strategic factor in fragmentation	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q11	Regional political Shiism	ebbs	remains regionally contained	is recomposing itself	consolidates	becomes a major factor in regional restructuring	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q12	Restoration nationalisms	retreat	remain rhetorical	progress	structure power policies	several regional trajectories dominate	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q13	Private powers	are subject to public rules	cooperate with the States	remain hybrids	compete with the States	assume quasi-sovereign functions	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability

Q1	Economic globalization	continues its progress	stabilizes	slows down	regresses in blocks	it breaks apart abruptly	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
									of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q14	Economic/legal coercion	decreases	remains targeted	becomes commonplace	becomes an ordinary power mode	fracture the world economic order	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q15	Climate, migration and health	promote cooperation	remain manageable	create recurring tensions	disrupt several regions	cause systemic crises	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q16	Liberal democracies	consolidate	resist	erode slowly	polarize strongly	enter a lasting crisis	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q17	Authoritarian regimes	become more flexible	stabilize	gain in relative efficiency	export their methods	become the dominant model of controlled order	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.
Q18	Military conflict	retreat	remains localized	increases regionally	extends between blocks	threatens the world order	0 — continuity / stability	0	Scenario Zero principle: 0 = continuity/stability of the map. Check the harmonization of local labeling if necessary.

6.12 Appendix II-9 — Hypothesis Impact Matrix

Preliminary unit coefficients. They link the questionnaire responses to the active variables; they are intended to remain open to discussion and revision.

Code	Question / engine	Local file response 0	Principle 0 retained	Sensitive clusters	H1	H2	ER I	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1	Impact commentary	Status
Q1	Economic globalization	slows down	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	0.25	0.1	0.25	0.1	0.25	0.3	0.05	0.05	0.05	-0.35	The closer the answer is to +2, the more interdependencies become strategic dependencies and the less cooperation plays its stabilizing role.	Preliminary to be validated
Q2	The technological blocks	become regional	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 3, 4, 5, 7	0.2	0.05	0.3	0.25	0.35	0.3	0.05	0.4	0.15	-0.35	Technological closure reinforces autonomy, cognitive power, and dependence on block infrastructures.	Preliminary to be validated
Q3	Critical resources	create occasional tensions	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 3, 4, 6	0.15	0	0.55	0.25	0.3	0.35	0	0.05	0.1	-0.25	The strain on resources increases ER1, coercion and dependence, especially for exposed infrastructures and actors.	Preliminary to be validated
Q4	AI	increases asymmetries	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 5, 7	0.1	0	0.15	0.3	0.2	0.15	0.15	0.6	0.35	-0.25	Destabilizing AI increases I1, C1 and I2; cooperative AI would have the opposite effect.	Preliminary to be validated
Q5	Private digital platforms	retain their current power	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 3, 5, 7	0.2	0	0.15	0.15	0.25	0.15	0.25	0.55	0.25	-0.35	The near-sovereignty of platforms reinforces I1, private autonomy and asymmetries of public control.	Preliminary to be validated
Q6	Multilateralism	stagnates	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	0.25	0.05	0.1	0.25	0.1	0.2	0	0.05	0.15	-0.6	The decline of multilateralism weakens M1 and reinforces coercion, hegemony and dependencies.	Preliminary to be validated
Q7	Ideological polarization	progresses moderately	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	0.15	0.2	0	0.25	0	0.1	0.1	0.15	0.75	-0.4	Ideological polarization directly strengthens I2 and weakens the capacity for compromise.	Preliminary to be validated
Q8	Political/radical Islam	is recomposing itself	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 3, 5	0.15	0.25	0	0.35	0	0.15	0.15	0.1	0.65	-0.3	Political/radical Islam acts as an ideological and coercive driver, primarily in cluster 2 and exposed areas.	Preliminary to be validated

Code	Question / engine	Local file response 0	Principle 0 retained	Sensitive clusters	H1	H2	ER1	C1	A1	D1	P1	I1	I2	M1	Impact commentary	Status
Q9	Antisemitism and conspiracy theories	progress in the margins	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 5, 7	0.1	0.15	0	0.2	0	0.1	0.05	0.25	0.75	-0.35	Antisemitism and conspiracy theories are treated as cross-cutting amplifiers of polarization and cognitive disintegration.	Preliminary to be validated
Q10	The wokism/anti-wokism conflict	polarizes certain spaces	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	2, 5, 7	0.05	0.1	0	0.1	0	0.05	0.05	0.2	0.6	-0.3	The wokism/anti-wokism pairing is treated as a cultural factor of democratic fragmentation when it is informed.	Preliminary to be validated
Q11	Regional political Shiism	is recomposing itself	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 3, 6	0.2	0.3	0.05	0.3	0.05	0.15	0.15	0.05	0.4	-0.2	Regional political Shiism mainly affects Iran, its proxies, the exposed states of the Middle East and the pivot powers.	Preliminary to be validated
Q12	Restoration nationalisms	progress	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 5, 6	0.35	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.05	0.15	0.1	0.25	-0.35	Restoration nationalisms fuel H2, H1, C1 and reduce the propensity for multilateral compromise.	Preliminary to be validated
Q13	Private powers	remain hybrids	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 4, 5, 7	0.2	0	0.25	0.1	0.25	0.2	0.25	0.45	0.1	-0.25	Private powers increase non-state autonomy and shift some power toward infrastructure.	Preliminary to be validated
Q14	Economic/legal coercion	becomes commonplace	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	0.25	0.05	0.25	0.55	0.1	0.25	0.05	0.05	0.1	-0.35	Economic/legal coercion trivializes the power of constraint outside of open warfare.	Preliminary to be validated
Q15	Climate, migration and health	create recurring tensions	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	2, 3, 5, 6	0.05	0	0.25	0.15	0	0.35	0	0.05	0.2	-0.2	Climate, migration and health become factors of dependence and tension when they go beyond simple management.	Preliminary to be validated
Q16	Liberal democracies	erode slowly	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 5, 7	0.1	0.05	0	0.1	0	0.15	0.05	0.1	0.45	-0.4	The erosion of liberal democracies weakens M1 and increases I2 and D1.	Preliminary to be validated
Q17	Authoritarian regimes	gain in relative efficiency	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 5, 7	0.25	0.15	0.05	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.35	0.25	0.1	-0.35	The effectiveness of authoritarian regimes strengthens C1, P1 and I1, and weakens the cooperative model.	Preliminary to be validated
Q18	Military conflict	increases regionally	0 = no additional inflection / continuity of the basis	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	0.25	0.15	0.1	0.6	0.25	0.25	0.05	0.05	0.15	-0.4	Military conflict directly activates C1, H1, D1 and weakens M1.	Preliminary to be validated

6.13 Appendix II-10 — Effects and Shifts of Scenario Zero

6.13.1 Overall effects on variables — Scenario Zero

Variable	Zero overall effect	Visible formula	Interpretation
H1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Questionnaire_Zero!$I$4:$I$21,Matrice_Impact_Hyp!$F$4:$F$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
H2	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Questionnaire_Zero!$I$4:$I$21,Matrice_Impact_Hyp!$G$4:$G$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
ER1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$H$4:$H$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
C1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$I$4:$I$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
A1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$J$4:$J$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
D1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$K$4:$K$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
P1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$L$4:$L$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
I1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Questionnaire_Zero!$I$4:$I$21,Matrice_Impact_Hyp!$M$4:$M$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
I2	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$N$4:$N$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.
M1	0	=SUMPRODUCT(Zero_Questionnaire!$I$4:$I$21,Hyp_Impact_Matrix!$O$4:$O$21,$B$3)	No additional movement: continuity of the reference map.

6.13.2 Cluster shifts — Scenario Zero

Cluster	Name	CP1 initial	CP2 initial	CP3 initial	ΔCP1	ΔCP2	ΔCP3	Reading the movement	Content enabled	Status
1	Autonomous hegemonic projection	2.638	2.566	0.001	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	It produces strategic competition, defines part of the systemic constraints, and imposes or challenges power architectures.	Base of comparison
2	Ideological-coercive polarization	4.022	-0.839	0.598	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	Widespread polarization, violence, blackmail, symbolic conflicts and crises disproportionate to the material weight.	Base of comparison
3	Dependence / Strategic Exposure	0.779	-3.012	-0.504	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	It reveals the pressure exerted by major actors; it highlights rivalries in vulnerable areas.	Base of comparison
4	Critical infrastructure & capital	-2.035	0.709	-0.803	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	It conditions the material resilience of the system and transforms interdependencies into resources of power.	Base of comparison
5	Institutional/multilateral cooperation	-1.663	-0.956	0.946	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	Supports common language, norms, law, common goods and mediation mechanisms.	Base of comparison
6	Intermediate power / pivots	0.251	0.263	-0.32	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	It can stabilize or accelerate fragmentation depending on its trade-offs, coalitions and opportunities.	Base of comparison
7	Information technology & platforms	-0.062	1.316	0.422	0	0	0	No additional movement: the cluster remains on the reference map.	It reorganizes the perception of reality, digital dependencies, and the boundary between private power and public sovereignty.	Base of comparison

6.14 Appendix II-11 — Technical Narrative of Scenario Zero

This appendix provides the reference narrative used as a basis for comparison prior to the author's scenarios.

Section	Text	Methodological function
Title	PRA Scenario Zero — Tendential Continuity of Fragmented Order	Comparison framework
Methodological status	This scenario is not a prediction. It represents the baseline: all active responses in the questionnaire are set to 0, meaning no further shifts from the reference map. The tensions already present in the initial ratings persist, without any major acceleration or decisive cooperative shift.	Comparison framework
Central hypothesis	The global order remains governable, but imperfectly shared. States, private infrastructures, digital platforms, regional powers, and institutions continue to coexist within an unstable architecture. No single dynamic dominates entirely: hegemonic power, ideological polarization, strategic dependencies, critical infrastructures, and institutional cooperation persist simultaneously.	Comparison framework
General reading of clusters	Scenario Zero does not displace the clusters; it confirms their role as reference points. Cluster 1 retains its hegemonic projection function. Cluster 2 remains a source of polarization and disruption. Cluster 3 remains a space of exposure and dependence. Cluster 4 maintains the materiality of the world order. Cluster 5 preserves the institutional language. Cluster 6 arbitrates between blocs. Cluster 7 structures the techno-informational layer.	Reference narrative
Cluster 1 — Autonomous hegemonic projection	The United States, China, Russia, India, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the Musk ecosystem retain a high capacity for initiative. They do not all pursue the same strategy, but they share one characteristic: they can act beyond their immediate sphere of influence and compel other actors to take their decisions into account. In the scenario-Scenario Zero, these actors remain producers of systemic constraints, without automatically escalating into global conflict.	Reference narrative
Cluster 2 — Ideological-coercive polarization	Pakistan, North Korea, Hezbollah, the Houthis, Hamas/Islamic Jihad, Salafist-jihadist networks, organized political Islam, the transnational supremacist far right, and conspiracy/anti-Semitic networks retain disproportionate influence. Their role is not to	Reference narrative

Section	Text	Methodological function
	govern the world order, but to expose its weaknesses: ideological mobilization, asymmetric violence, symbolic pressure, blackmail, or radicalization.	
Cluster 3 — Strategic Dependence / Exposure	Ethiopia, Ukraine, Belarus, the Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Serbia remain places where the strategies of others become visible. Their fate depends not only on their own will, but also on their security, geographic, economic, and political dependencies. The scenario-Scenario Zero maintains them as areas of alert rather than as primary drivers of change.	Reference narrative
Cluster 4 — Critical infrastructure & capital	Apple, Nvidia, BlackRock/Vanguard/State Street, Visa/Mastercard, BYD/CATL, SMIC, COSCO/State Grid, Tata, ASML, Airbus, energy companies, Gulf funds, ports, shipping companies, commodity traders, and TSMC constitute the material backbone of the world order. In Scenario Zero, their power remains largely functional: it conditions resilience but does not automatically transform into overt political domination.	Reference narrative
Cluster 5 — Institutional/Multilateral Cooperation	The European Union, the UN, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Kenya, Singapore, Poland, Morocco, Greece, normative NGOs, and strategic diasporas maintain the idea of a regulated order. Their weakness lies not in their ineffectiveness, but in the gap between their normative power and their capacity to enforce it. They still make a common language possible, but are not sufficient on their own to contain coercive or private actors.	Reference narrative
Cluster 6 — Intermediate Powers / Pivots	NATO, France, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Egypt, Nigeria, Vietnam, Algeria, Azerbaijan, the BRICS+, certain military-industrial complexes, Russian energy actors, Baykar, Israeli defense industries, private cyber offensive capabilities, and transnational cartels form a heterogeneous group. Their commonality lies less in their nature than in their capacity to influence the balance of power locally or sectorally.	Reference narrative
Cluster 7 — Information Technology & Platforms	The Emirates, Qatar, Microsoft/OpenAI, Alphabet/YouTube/DeepMind, Amazon/AWS, Meta, Palantir/Anduril, ByteDance/TikTok, Huawei, Tencent, Alibaba/Ant, Reliance/Jio, Al Jazeera/QIA/QatarEnergy, and G42 structure the cognitive and digital layer of the system. In Scenario Zero, they do not replace states, but they become indispensable to their actions, their information, and sometimes their effective sovereignty.	Reference narrative
Trend development	In the short term, strategic competition continues without a complete breakdown. In the medium term, material interdependencies remain strong enough to prevent collapse, but insufficient to rebuild shared trust. In the longer term, the risk is not absolute anarchy; it is the lasting establishment of a fragmented order where each group of actors maintains its own logic.	Reference narrative
Weak signals of maintaining Scenario Zero	Trade maintained despite targeted sanctions; multilateral institutions survived despite circumvention; regional crises did not spread; platforms and AI were partially but incompletely regulated; critical dependencies were managed without systemic disruption; liberal democracies were tested but not dislocated; authoritarian powers were effective but not universally attractive.	Reference narrative
Conditions for invalidation	Scenario Zero would be invalidated by a major disruption: systemic war, a global semiconductor or energy crisis, a lasting authoritarian shift in central democracies, successful and cooperative regulation of AI, a strong restoration of multilateralism, or the collapse of a dominant power. It would also be rendered obsolete if several hypotheses in the questionnaire simultaneously deviated from zero.	Reference narrative
Synthetic formula	Scenario Zero describes a world that holds together without reconciling. Power continues to grow, but institutional wisdom progresses more slowly. Cooperation persists, but under constraint. Infrastructure connects, but exposes. Platforms inform, but fragment. Hegemonic actors sometimes impose order, often destabilize. PRA can then measure subsequent scenarios as discernible deviations from this baseline.	Reference narrative

6.15 Appendix II-12 — Reverse Engineering Chain of the PRA Scenario

Stage	Entrance	Treatment	Verifiable output
1. Questionnaire	Answers -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, DK, NP, PO	Neutralize NSP/NP/PO; keep only the active codes -2 to +2	Vector of active responses
2. Hypothesis Impact Matrix	Vector of active responses + coefficients per variable	Multiply answers × coefficients × depreciation	Δ global variables
3. Sensitivity of actors/clusters	Actor families, clusters, types, areas	Apply differentiated sensitivity depending on the actor/family/cluster	Ratings adjusted per actor
4. Projection in PCA	adjusted notes + reference axes	Reproject in the CP1/CP2/CP3 space without recalculating the PCA	Adjusted coordinates
5. Cluster relocation	Initial and adjusted coordinates	Calculate centroids, directions, intensity, density and any potential tipping points	Dynamic map by scenario
6. Narrative	Travel + affected actors + methodological constraints	Writing a narrative constrained by the results	A traceable and open-ended scenario
Cautionary rule	Scenario Zero	All answers to 0	No additional variation; it serves as a baseline.

6.16 Annex II-13 — Addressing Ideologies and Cross-Cutting Phenomena

Object	Treatment proposed in Run 1
Diffuse ideologies	Do not automatically integrate them as lines of actors; treat them first as cross-cutting variables.
Polarizing ideological pressure (I2)	A single active variable measuring the ability to rigidify identities, reduce compromise, designate an enemy, or legitimize coercion.
Radical Islam / Jihadism	Active line only when the network has an operational structure; otherwise, qualitative sub-column of I2.
Antisemitism	This should be treated primarily as a cross-cutting phenomenon and a qualitative sub-column; an active line is only acceptable for identifiable conspiracy/anti-Semitic networks.
Wokism / anti-wokism	To be treated as internal cultural polarization, not as an autonomous actor in the first run.
Methodological risk	Do not confuse the ideology present in a society with the ideology that determines the strategic behavior of the actor.

6.17 Annex II-14 — Technical reservations and limitations of Run 1

Stage	Action
1	Review the list of 100 actors: remove overly diffuse objects, merge or split overly large ecosystems.
2	Documenting sensitive notes: hegemony, restoration, coercion, dependence, ideology, cooperation.
3	Test Run 2: TSI* and G* as illustrative, non-active variables to measure circularity.
4	Testing a Run 3: more elementary variables or sub-indices per block.
5	Stabilize the clusters and only then formulate the typology.
6	Deduce scenarios from the families of actors and their interactions.

This appendix preserves the record of the technical limitations of Run 1 and the resulting trade-offs: removal or merging of overly diffuse objects, documentation of sensitive notes, Run 2 with TSI and G* as illustrative variables, progressive stabilization of clusters.*

6.18 Appendix II-15 — Control Agent Grid

Controlled dimensions	Control question	Expected status
Continuity Volume I / Volume II	Is the transition from measurement to foresight still clear?	To be checked at each insertion
The common thread is power/wisdom	Does the text maintain the central gap between globalized power and fragmented wisdom?	Mandatory
Separation of registers	Do the foundational narrative, the method, the scenarios, and the conclusions remain distinct?	Mandatory
Traceability	Can we work backward from the narrative to the hypotheses, variables, clusters and actors?	Mandatory
Pedagogy	Is the text sufficiently readable for a non-specialist reader without compromising its rigor?	High vigilance
Political sensitivity	Are the sections on ideologies, anti-Semitism, radical Islam, platforms, AI, Europe, Israel, and world war cautious and nuanced?	High vigilance
Author style	Does the text remain compatible with the author's voice after AI assistance?	To be resumed in the final phase
Reverse reading	Can the reader quickly access the scenarios without losing the robustness of the approach?	To be processed after complete drafting

6.19 Appendix II-16 — Role of the author and artificial intelligence

The author assumes full intellectual responsibility for the work: project design, initial intuition, choice of issues, general architecture, validation of criteria, interpretation of results, methodological arbitrations, selection of scenarios, successive corrections and final published version.

Artificial intelligence has been used as a tool to assist in structuring, drafting, reformulating, harmonizing, and checking for consistency. It is neither a sovereign source, nor an autonomous author, nor a final arbiter.

This practice is explicitly described in the present work. It illustrates, on the very scale of the writing, one of the central questions of the book: how to use a new power without relinquishing human responsibility?