

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD: BETWEEN PRINCIPLES AND NECESSITY

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ABSTRACT

This article offers a comprehensive examination of the global shift from a unipolar order dominated by a single hegemonic power to a multipolar structure characterized by multiple centers of influence. It builds upon the European Doctrine of Mutual Respect and Cooperation (DERRC) to propose a framework that integrates sovereignty, collective leadership, and mixed democracy. The paper critically evaluates misleading narratives that depict multipolarity as inherently unstable or authoritarian, and it clarifies the distinctions between democratic multipolarity and both anarchic multipolar competition and centralized unipolar dominance. Key concepts are illustrated through historical analogies, contemporary geopolitical developments, and institutional design proposals. A special emphasis is placed on the model of collegial leadership as an alternative to one-person governance, highlighting its potential for enhancing resilience, transparency, and shared responsibility in both domestic and international contexts. The article also argues that sovereigntism, far from being isolationist, can coexist with balanced globalization based on mutual respect and negotiated cooperation.

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F50 – General International Affairs; D72 – Political Processes: Government Policy; Leadership Models; H11 – Structure, Scope, and Purpose of Government.

KEY WORDS

Multipolarity, Collective Leadership, Mixed Democracy, Sovereigntism, DERRC, Sovereignty, Global Governance, International Regulation

1. Introduction: Why This Debate Now?

At the beginning of the 21st century, the world seemed to be moving toward the consolidation of a unipolar model, with the United States at the center of the international order, supported by global economic and institutional networks such as the IMF, World Bank, NATO, and the UN. This model promoted liberal democracy, the market economy, and a universalist vision of human rights. However, recent events have called into question the viability and legitimacy of this global arrangement.

The 2008 financial crisis, China's economic rise, the consolidation of the BRICS group, the partial withdrawal of the U.S. from its role as "global policeman," and recent geopolitical conflicts (particularly the war in Ukraine) have shaped a new multipolar reality in which multiple centers of power compete for regional and global influence (*Zakaria, 2008; Walt, 2018*).

Multipolarity is not merely a geopolitical trend, but also a challenge to the way leadership, sovereignty, and international cooperation are conceived. This reality requires a reformulation of how we think about the distribution of power, state representation, and the institutional architecture of the contemporary world.

At the same time, at the domestic level, states are facing a crisis of political leadership: distrust in institutions, extreme polarization, the erosion of the one-person leadership model, and the re-emergence of authoritarian temptations. In this context, it is necessary not only to accept multipolarity as a global phenomenon, but also to rethink how power is exercised—both within states and between them.

This article starts from two fundamental findings: (1) the unipolar world has failed to deliver fairness and lasting stability; (2) multipolarity, though inevitable, is still an open concept—it can become an opportunity for cooperation and democratization or, on the contrary, a pretext for authoritarian regional domination.

Based on these premises, the paper argues in favor of a collegial vision of leadership, both domestically and globally, as an ethical and effective response to the challenges of the multipolar world.

Methodologically, this is not a conventional empirical study relying on fieldwork or experiments, but rather an analytical reflection grounded in the synthesis of scholarly literature, political observation, and doctrinal innovation. The concluding sections outline practical courses of action for embedding democratic multipolarity in global governance, including institutional reforms, policy frameworks, and the creation of multilateral agreements aimed at preventing domination by any single state or bloc.

2. Critique of the Manipulative Discourse on Multipolarity

In recent years, multipolarity has become an increasingly common term in geopolitical, economic, and cultural discourse. However, this visibility has also generated a systematic effort to delegitimize the concept, carried out through a series of subtle or even manipulative rhetorical mechanisms.

A telling example is a recent video that went viral in the Romanian public sphere, in which multipolarity is portrayed as a "toxic" notion, automatically associated with the authoritarian ideology of Aleksandr Dugin. The video builds a reductive critique based on the following problematic rhetorical pillars:

a) Guilt by association

The critic does not analyze multipolarity in itself but associates it with the controversial figure of Dugin. Thus, any advocacy for multipolarity is portrayed as suspect or undemocratic simply because Dugin supports an authoritarian version of it.

This is a flawed reasoning, similar to rejecting the principle of subsidiarity just because it was invoked by a conservative ideology. Multipolarity is not an ideological creation but a result of the actual distribution of power in the world, acknowledged even by independent Western analysts (*Zakaria, 2008; Kissinger, 2014*).

b) The false dilemma: liberal hegemony or regional dictatorships

Another manipulative technique is presenting a false dichotomy: if you reject the unipolar liberal order, you support nationalist dictatorships. This binary thinking ignores multipolarity can be democratic, cooperative, and based on international rules—not necessarily dominated by regional authoritarianisms (*Acharya, 2017*).

c) *Confusion between the concept and its political instrumentalization*

The fact that a geopolitical actor invokes multipolarity does not compromise the concept itself. Just as democracy is not invalidated by the hypocrisy of those who proclaim it without practicing it, multipolarity cannot be dismissed simply because it is strategically claimed by problematic regimes.

Concepts such as sovereignty, identity, cooperation, or multipolarity are geopolitical and philosophical realities, not rigid ideological labels. Reducing them to mere propaganda tools means ignoring their nuances and potential for balance and pluralism.

d) *Subtle discrediting of sovereignty and collective identity*

We can also note an attempt to equate sovereignty and cultural specificity with authoritarianism. It is suggested that any appeal to respect for difference is suspect, while the universalism of Western values is presented as the only legitimate option.

However, this position contradicts the principle of peoples' self-determination, enshrined in the UN Charter (*Art. 1 and 55*), as well as the idea that democracy can take forms adapted to national specificities (*Sen, 1999*).

e) *Sententious paradigms without evidence: discourse as a final judgment*

In recent years, a dangerous phenomenon has taken root in the European public sphere: reductionist political and media discourses have become paradigms of sententiousness. It no longer matters whether an argument is rational, well-constructed, documented, or honest; if it is not perfectly aligned with the officialist narrative of normative globalism, it is immediately labeled “anti-European,” “pro-Russian,” “Putinist,” or “anti-Western”—without evidence, without any verification or nuance.

This practice of automatic labeling, which mixes geopolitics with moral identity, has been noted by critical Western authors, who speak of reducing public debate to a moral binary: absolute good versus absolute evil, with “good” reserved for a single narrative paradigm (*Gray, 2015; Snyder, 2021*).

Thus, any opinion contrary to the official line is treated as a thought crime. In some contexts, investigations or even legal proceedings have been triggered based on intellectual or analytical positions, in the absence of any real incitement, violence, or propaganda. This is a soft form of censorship and intellectual repression, justified through the appeal to “defending European values”—but without a clear framework for those values, without dialogue, without real pluralism.

Such a climate discourages critical thinking, blocks the exploration of alternatives, and creates a culture of discursive conformism in which dissent is penalized not by arguments but by stigmatization. In such a context, multipolarity is condemned not for what it is, but for what it might be, in an apocalyptic scenario projected without demonstration.

e) *Artificial dichotomies: “pro-European” vs. “sovereignists”*

Another symptom of the degradation of public discourse is the proliferation of partisan labels turned into seemingly neutral political concepts. A telling example is the introduction of the notion of “pro-European parties,” used to designate mainstream political forces favorable to European federalization and accelerated integration.

By contrast, parties that promote national sovereignty, subsidiarity, or decision-making pluralism within the European Union are immediately labeled “anti-European,” “populist,” or “illiberal”—even if they do not question EU membership but only the form and direction of integration.

This dichotomy is fundamentally undemocratic. It assumes that there is only one “correct” way of being European, and that anything not aligned with this version is deviant. To highlight the absurdity of this logic, one could polemically introduce a counter-concept: “pro-democratic parties”—to designate those

formations that place citizens' will, democratic control, decentralization, and national identity at the center of their programs.

This rhetorical inversion is not meant to impose a new hegemony of meaning but to expose the arbitrariness and unfairness of current dichotomies, which exclude, stigmatize, and reduce political pluralism to an ideological loyalty test.

3. Essential Distinctions: What Multipolarity Is and What It Is Not

Multipolarity is often mistakenly treated either as a synonym for international chaos or as a mask for regional authoritarian tendencies. In reality, multipolarity is a complex geopolitical concept, with a rich history and meanings that go beyond its current political usage. A clear understanding of this concept is essential to overcoming the confusions and deliberate distortions encountered in the public sphere.

a) Multipolarity is not an ideology, but a configuration of power

Multipolarity refers to the existence of several relatively balanced global centers of power that coexist and interact on the international stage. (Cox, 1987). These centers can be states, regional unions, or geopolitical conglomerates. Multipolarity does not presuppose any particular form of government, ideology, or cultural orientation—it is an observation of reality, not a political project.

This reality was noted even by Henry Kissinger, who, far from being a critic of the Western order, recognized in *World Order* that “world history is more often multipolar than unipolar, and stability is not the product of dominance, but of equilibrium” (Kissinger, 2014, p. 18).

b) Multipolarity ≠ unregulated rivalry

Another frequent error is equating multipolarity with anarchy or permanent conflict between spheres of influence. This image is often inspired by the interwar period or the model of succession wars but does not reflect the contemporary evolution of international law and global governance mechanisms.

Modern multipolarity can be regulated, cooperative, and even solidaristic, if built on principles such as mutual respect, sovereignty, equal rights, and collective responsibility. In this sense, multipolarity is complementary to multilateralism and a rules-based order (Ikenberry, 2011).

c) Democratic multipolarity vs. authoritarian multipolarity

Not every multipolar world is by definition better. Multipolarity is an open framework that can be shaped in different directions. We can build an inclusive and democratic multipolarity, where each actor respects international norms and promotes balance through dialogue. Or we can end up with an authoritarian multipolarity, in which great powers impose their domination in their spheres of influence, ignoring the principles of cooperation.

Therefore, it is not the concept of multipolarity that should be condemned, but the form it will take depending on the actors who promote it. It is a symbolic and geopolitical battleground—and, as such, it cannot be left in the hands of a Dugin or a global technocratic elite. Civil society, academia, and responsible leaders must redefine multipolarity in a democratic, plural, and humanist sense.

d) Multipolarity and diversity: a world with multiple valid models

Multipolarity does not imply homogeneity but rather the acceptance of a diversity of political, economic, and cultural models. This diversity is not a danger to democracy, as long as each model is internally validated, supported by social consensus, and compatible with fundamental rights.

One state may choose collective leadership, another a presidential system. One may emphasize economic sovereignty, another transnational integration. What matters is that the choice is legitimate, not imposed.

Thus, multipolarity offers room for institutional innovation, for adapting democratic principles to each society's specific context—without falling into relativism, but also without normative hegemony.

Multipolarity is not a panacea, but it is a necessary alternative to unilateralism and domination. It allows for a more balanced distribution of power, offers real opportunities for global representation, and creates the framework for genuine dialogue between civilizations. Reducing it to an authoritarian caricature means missing the chance for a fairer world, in which differences are sources of learning, not of conflict.

e) Multipolarity, mutual respect, and the DERRC doctrine

In this conceptual direction, multipolarity can become the natural framework for a new European doctrine: the Doctrine of Mutual Respect and Cooperation (DERRC). Conceived as an alternative to the centralism and decision-making uniformity within the European Union, DERRC proposes a postmodern model of democracy—mixed democracy, combining citizen participation with responsible representation (Corbu, 2023).

DERRC asserts that a strong Europe can only exist through strong nations, and that mutual respect among states must be the founding value of the European project. In this vision, multipolarity is not a threat to European unity but a guarantee of balance and real equality among states. Hegemonic tendencies, manifested by certain leading states, (Hobson, 2020) contradict the founding principles of the Union and risk provoking structural fractures (e.g., Brexit, tensions with Poland or Hungary).

The DERRC doctrine advocates for reforming the European Union based on the principles of subsidiarity, cooperation, decision-making autonomy, national identity, and cultural solidarity. It claims that multipolarity is not about domination, but about cooperation in diversity—each state being part of a whole without losing its specificity, dignity, and control over its own trajectory.

“Only strong nations can create and maintain a strong Europe,” states the foundation of DERRC, emphasizing that unity should not be built through uniformity but through the recognition and respect of differences (DERRC, 2023, p. 3).

Thus, multipolarity and mixed democracy can go hand in hand in a continental project that rejects both globalist hegemony and authoritarian revisionism, while promoting instead an ethical, pluralistic, and decentralized vision of the international order.

4. Arguments Against the Unipolar World

After the end of the Cold War, the world seemed to enter a unipolar era dominated by a single superpower—the United States of America. This order, supported by international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and NATO, was presented as a guarantee of stability, democracy, and global prosperity. However, the experience of the past three decades has shown that the unipolar order is marked by structural limitations, internal contradictions, and destabilizing side effects, both globally and domestically.

a) Normative monopoly and the imposition of a single model

One of the most questionable features of the unipolar world is the claimed monopoly over legitimate norms. The Western liberal model has been presented not merely as one possible model, but as the only valid one—universal, superior, and applicable in any context. This normative universalism has ignored cultural diversity, historical specificity, and the local aspirations of other societies, instead imposing standardized recipes for governance, economy, and social organization (Fukuyama, 1992; Mearsheimer, 2019).

This tendency has manifested itself not only in foreign policy but also in the globalized public discourse, where any alternative has been suspected of populism, authoritarianism, or anti-Western sentiment.

b) ***Geopolitical instability and perpetual interventionism***

The unipolar world has not been a world of peace. From Iraq and Afghanistan to Libya and Syria, the policy of preventive intervention has led to the destruction of states, the destabilization of regions, and the outbreak of large-scale humanitarian crises. Rather than bringing security and democracy, unipolar interventions have created power vacuums, fueled extremism, and discredited the very idea of “exporting democracy.”

Even in Europe, despite belonging to the same value bloc, there have been double standards, unequal treatment between states, and a lack of real consultation on major decisions, as in the refugee crisis or the pandemic. These phenomena are also reflected in the DERRC doctrine, which denounces precisely this undemocratic decision-making centralism, practiced in the name of “European unity” but without respect for the sovereignty of equal partners (*Corbu, 2023*).

c) ***Failure of the economic promise: inequality and dependency***

The unipolar order has been associated with neoliberal globalization, which promised general economic growth. In reality, the benefits have concentrated in the hands of a small number of state and corporate actors, while many countries have been asymmetrically integrated into the global circuit—as sales markets, sources of cheap labor, or suppliers of raw materials (*Stiglitz, 2002; Rodrik, 2011*).

Eastern Europe, including Romania, has experienced these imbalances through persistent structural gaps, accelerated depopulation, and the outsourcing of strategic decisions. The DERRC highlights this reality, stressing that a nation cannot be strong and dignified if it lacks autonomy in managing its resources and if its citizens do not enjoy real prosperity comparable to that of Western partners (*Corbu, 2023, p. 9*).

d) ***Cultural standardization and loss of identities***

The unipolar order often promotes cultural standardization—a “global way of life” based on consumption, individualism, and detachment from tradition. This standardization has led to an identity crisis in many societies, especially those with a strong historical, religious, or community profile.

Rather than serving as a bridge between civilizations, the unipolar world has become a vehicle for exporting a single anthropological model: the global consumer—apolitical, rootless, and voiceless.

The DERRC doctrine rejects this trend and advocates for recovering each nation’s cultural dignity as a resource for solidarity and development, not as an obstacle to cooperation. Democratic multipolarity can serve as an antidote to this cultural uprooting, offering space for diversity and pluralism of models.

The unipolar order has failed to build a stable, fair, and democratic world. (*Kupchan, 2012; Mearsheimer, 2018; Stuenkel, 2016*) Instead of delivering on promises of peace, cooperation, and development, it has brought polarization, inequality, interventionism, and a crisis of trust. Today’s world needs a paradigm shift: from domination to cooperation, from hegemony to balance, from centralism to mutual respect. Multipolarity, coupled with strong democratic mechanisms, can be the path toward this new world.

5. Sovereignism, Identity, and Balanced Globalization

In the context of a world transitioning from unipolarity to multipolarity, the concepts of sovereignism and national identity have often been subjected to systematic demonization. More often than not, they are abusively associated with isolationism, extremism, or populism. Such labels, however, ignore the historical and political reality: sovereignty and identity are fundamental conditions of democracy and prerequisites for authentic international cooperation.

a) What sovereigntism really means

Sovereigntism is not a closed ideology but a doctrine of decision-making autonomy. In essence, it asserts that essential decisions affecting a community should be taken as close as possible to the citizens, through their legitimate institutions, and not imposed from outside by opaque, impersonal, or weakly representative structures.

In the European political tradition, this principle is found in subsidiarity, enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty. From the perspective of the DERRC doctrine, sovereigntism is the natural expression of mutual respect among nations, without which no continental construction can be sustainable. It does not exclude cooperation but conditions it on equality and consent (*Corbu, 2023, p. 4*).

Historically, the idea of sovereignty emerged alongside the formation of the first organized human communities, which delimited their territories and created initial forms of leadership and defense. In Antiquity, the Greek city-states (*polis*) functioned as autonomous entities with their own laws, elected magistrates, and collective responsibility for political decisions. Each *polis* was essentially a form of local sovereignty—governed by the will of its citizens and proudly defending its independence (*Kagan, 1995*).

The Roman model refined this autonomy into a form of legal and administrative sovereignty, in which Roman law consecrated the absolute authority of the state over its own territory and citizens (*Millar, 2002*).

In the Middle Ages, although sovereignty was diluted by feudal and ecclesiastical structures, the idea of territorially limited legitimate authority persisted, culminating in the assertion of royal sovereignty in emerging nation-states. The modern consecration of sovereignty came with the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which enshrined the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of states and laid the foundations for the international system of sovereign states.

In the Enlightenment and post-revolutionary era, sovereignty was democratized: from the sovereignty of the monarch to national and popular sovereignty, where the state acts on behalf of its citizens. Today, in the era of globalization, sovereignty does not disappear, but must be rethought in diverse forms, (*Hobson, 2020; Stuenkel, 2016*) intelligent, negotiable, but not canceled — exactly in line with the DERRC doctrine and the principles of democratic multipolarity.

b) National identity: a resource for cohesion, not an obstacle to progress

Identity is not a relic of the past but a matrix of solidarity—a set of cultural, historical, and social reference points that give meaning to belonging. In an era marked by accelerated mobility, technological change, and institutional fragility, reconnecting to national identity can be a factor of democratic resilience.

The DERRC proposes a positive vision of identity: not an exclusive or revanchist one, but an inclusive and open one, conscious of itself—a civic, dignified, and active patriotism that rejects both ultranationalism and the artificial dissolution of national specificity in the name of universalist utopias.

c) Globalization through cooperation, not domination

Globalization is an inevitable process, but the form it takes is not predetermined. It can be a financial and technocratic globalization, in which states become mere nodes in a network run by impersonal forces. Or it can be a humanist and cooperative globalization, in which sovereign states collaborate for common goals—fair trade, combating climate change, preventing pandemics, responsible interconnectivity.

The DERRC supports precisely this form of functional globalization: openness in vital areas (research, health, environment, infrastructure), but based on mutual agreements, not unconditional surrender of sovereignty. This requires the existence of “multipolar centers”—states or unions of states that preserve their identity yet cooperate rationally and in solidarity at the global level (*Corbu, 2023, p. 6*).

e) ***Balance: between universalism and diversity***

One of the greatest challenges of the current international order is reconciling universal values with local specificity. Human rights, democracy, and the rule of law are universal in aspiration, but their application must take into account the culture, history, and collective mindset of each nation (*Sen, 1999*).

In this sense, democratic sovereigntism is not a rejection of European values but a form of contextualization and adaptation, ensuring that they do not become pretexts for symbolic domination or cultural colonization.

Sovereignty and identity should not be opposed to globalization but understood as the foundations of an ethical, balanced, and sustainable globalization. They are the minimum conditions for cooperation among equals—based on respect, not subordination.

Real multipolarity begins with recognizing each nation as a legitimate, dignified, and sovereign actor—not as a pawn on the great powers' chessboard or a passive body in the face of external agendas.

6. Models of Leadership and Governance Adapted to a Multipolar World

As the world becomes increasingly complex and fragmented, and multipolarity emerges as an irreversible geopolitical reality, a profound rethinking of political leadership is required—both at the national and international levels. Traditional models of governance—centralized, one-person, rigid—are proving inadequate in a world characterized by interdependence, overlapping crises, and institutional distrust.

a) ***The fall of the providential leader myth***

In the modern political model, emphasis has often been placed on the figure of the single leader—president, prime minister, charismatic ruler. While seemingly effective in crisis contexts, this model is structurally vulnerable: it concentrates power, reduces deliberation, encourages excessive personalization of decisions, and leaves institutional systems exposed to arbitrariness.

Recent crises—from the global pandemic to the conflict in Ukraine and EU gridlocks—have demonstrated the limits of authoritarian or hyper-centralized leadership. At the same time, public distrust in parties, “savior” leaders, and traditional mechanisms of political representation has grown.

b) ***Collegial leadership: an old solution for a new challenge***

In this context, the collegial leadership model becomes increasingly relevant. Inspired by both historical and contemporary experiences, this type of governance involves sharing decision-making responsibilities among several leaders or entities, each with well-defined but interconnected competences.

A notable example is the Swiss model, where the Federal Council (composed of seven members) exercises the highest executive function, making decisions by consensus and rotating the presidency annually. This system has ensured stability, transparency, representativeness, and resilience in times of crisis.

An interesting historical precedent is the Roman Tetrarchy (*Diocletian, late 3rd century*), which—although short-lived—was an attempt to adapt imperial governance to a vast and fragmented geopolitical space by appointing four rulers with coordinated jurisdictions.

c) ***DERRC and the proposal for a collegial model in Romania***

The DERRC doctrine clearly supports the shift from one-person leadership to a collegial, mixed, participatory, and representative model, adapted to the complexity of contemporary realities.

The concrete proposal: an Executive Council composed of seven leaders, each responsible for a key area of governance (e.g., economy, justice, health, education, foreign policy, defense, digitalization/administration).

Advantages of this model:

- Prevents the concentration of power and authoritarian drift;
- Encourages genuine deliberation and mutual oversight among leaders;
- Stimulates cooperation between institutions and across levels of governance;
- Increases transparency and public trust;
- Enhances flexibility in crisis response and systemic adaptability.

Moreover, this model is fully compatible with multipolarity: in a world with multiple centers of power, domestic unipolarity should also be avoided. It is not only geopolitics that must be decentralized, but also internal governance—so that a state can function coherently in a multipolar world.

d) *Mixed democracy: the political foundation of a collegial model*

In the DERRC vision, collegial leadership is not a diluted bureaucracy but an expression of mixed democracy—a postmodern political model combining:

- Representative democracy, based on voting and delegation;
- Participatory democracy, based on public consultation, citizen initiatives, referenda, digital deliberation, etc.

This model is perfectly adaptable to multipolar realities because it allows for the representation of social and territorial diversity in decision-making and prevents ideological and technocratic concentration of power.

A multipolar world requires not only a new international architecture but also new forms of internal governance—decentralized, ethical, efficient, and adaptable. Collegial leadership is one of these forms, and mixed democracy provides the necessary normative and institutional framework. The DERRC doctrine puts forward a concrete, feasible, and deeply democratic proposal in this regard.

e) *Kings and kingdoms in a multipolar world—between tradition, prestige, and balance*

In a multipolar world, where national identities and traditions return to the forefront of political debate, constitutional monarchies can play a role in symbolic and cultural stabilization. Far from being relics of the past, kings and kingdoms can serve as pillars of continuity and non-partisan representation in societies marked by fragmentation and polarization.

The experience of Nordic monarchies, the United Kingdom, or Spain shows that the symbolic authority of the crown can contribute to national cohesion, offering a point of balance between tradition and modernity.

In this sense, monarchs can become ambassadors of sovereignty and guardians of institutional balance, especially within mixed democracies. In the model proposed by the DERRC doctrine, monarchy is not an obstacle to collegial leadership but can coexist with it in hybrid forms, where symbolism and functionality support each other.

f) *Collegial leadership in the face of threats—resilience and multiple controls*

Another major advantage of collegial leadership in a multipolar context is its capacity to respond to complex threats—whether military, health-related, economic, or cyber in nature. Hyper-centralized systems tend to be fragile: when decision-making depends on a single person or a narrow power circle, the system's vulnerabilities become systemic.

Collegial leadership, by contrast, allows for risk distribution, multiple layers of control, plural evaluation of options, and institutional protection. In case of an attack (physical, informational, decision-making), a collegial structure is more resistant: it can function through internal substitution, activate integrated decision-making protocols, and reduce the risk of institutional capture. In an age of uncertainty, the collegial model is not only democratic but also strategically superior.

g) Decision-making speed and nuclear threats in collegial systems

A common counterargument to the collegial model is its presumed inadequacy in extreme crisis situations, such as a nuclear attack or an imminent threat to national security. It is argued that only a single decision-making center can react with sufficient speed.

This idea ignores the contemporary reality of early warning technologies, automated protocols, and distributed reaction plans already in place in many democracies. Collegial systems do not exclude rapid reaction; they modulate it through conditional delegation, pre-established scenarios, and integrated procedures.

For example, in a collegial leadership system, there may be a leader delegated for force majeure situations, whose decisions take immediate effect but remain subject to retrospective oversight by the entire council. This approach is similar to the concept of “war powers delegation” in modern constitutions but within a framework of collective balance and control.

Moreover, in a context of nuclear multipolarity, the risk of decision-making errors increases if systems are too concentrated. Collegial leadership, precisely through its internal pluralism, offers a deliberative filter that can prevent automatic escalation or hasty reactions based on unverified information.

7. Discussions

The themes addressed in this article—multipolarity, sovereigntism, collegial leadership, and mixed democracy—are, by their very nature, subjects of intense debate, not only in the academic sphere but also in political and institutional contexts. It is therefore essential to provide a framework for critical reflection and nuance before drawing normative conclusions.

a) Multipolarity: inevitable but not without risks

Even if multipolarity reflects an emerging global reality, not every form of it is beneficial. A major risk is the emergence of regional authoritarian blocs that will exercise hegemony in the absence of international rules. Likewise, informal multipolarity, without common rules and institutions, can lead to geopolitical chaos.

To avoid these risks, multipolarity must be regulated, connected to international law, organized through multilateral agreements, and complemented by a culture of cooperation. The DERRC approach is precisely along these lines: multipolarity does not mean “every man for himself,” but mutual respect among autonomous yet solidaristic centers.

b) Sovereigntism: between autonomy and interdependence

Another challenge lies in avoiding sovereigntist isolationism. While we affirm the need for real national sovereignty, we do not advocate withdrawal from the European or international framework. Decision-making autonomy does not imply self-isolation but rather a renegotiated contractual position within global cooperation.

The sovereigntism proposed by the DERRC doctrine is constructive, participatory, and oriented toward partnership and cohesion—not rupture or revanchism. It is not anti-European but pro-democratic and pro-reformist, in the spirit of equality among member states.

c) Collegial leadership: efficiency vs. decision-making speed

A frequent counterargument is that collegial models slow down decision-making, especially in crises. However, this risk can be mitigated through:

- Strategic delegation of competences;
- Integrated emergency protocols;
- Rotation of executive functions.

Moreover, in an age of disinformation and institutional capture, speed should not be the sole criterion: safety, legitimacy, and plural deliberation become vital. Collegial leadership, through its distribution of power and mutual oversight, provides an essential institutional filter for avoiding catastrophic errors.

d) DERRC: a doctrine in development, not political dogma

The DERRC doctrine does not aim to offer a closed, rigid, or exclusive model. On the contrary, it is an open, postmodern, participatory project that must be tested, adjusted, and contextualized. It is an invitation to reflection, not to conformism.

Therefore, civic dialogue, academic debate, and practical validation are necessary. Where risks exist, they must be managed intelligently, not denied. Where viable ideas exist, they must be developed cooperatively, not marginalized through ideological labeling.

e) International regulation of multipolarity: necessity and possible mechanisms

For multipolarity to function in a stable and fair way, it must be institutionalized and internationally regulated, not left to the discretion of shifting power relations. Without a normative architecture, multipolarity risks sliding into geopolitical chaos or aggressive fragmentation.

One possible direction is to convene a series of **Summits on Multipolarity**, inspired by processes such as *Helsinki (1975)* or *Rio (1992)*, in which states and unions of states negotiate a minimal framework of common principles: respect for sovereignty, non-intervention, fair economic cooperation, climate protection, non-discriminatory access to technologies, etc.

These summits could be organized under the auspices of the UN, with the support of trusted international organizations (e.g., OECD, G20, WTO, UNESCO), or even at the initiative of a consortium of emerging states in partnership with established actors.

Alternatively, the creation of a **Global Multipolar Coordination Council** could be proposed—a flexible, consultative body tasked with monitoring compliance with a “Charter of Democratic Multipolarity,” similar to the UN Charter.

The DERRC doctrine could constructively contribute to developing the founding principles of this framework: mutual respect, shared sovereignty, protected identity, and negotiated cooperation.

e) New and important aspects of the study:

This work introduces a structured doctrine for democratic multipolarity, linking it explicitly with a collegial governance model at both the national and international levels. Implications: The framework proposed here offers pathways for reducing systemic risks of domination, improving legitimacy, and fostering sustainable cooperation. Limitations: As a conceptual paper, its recommendations require empirical testing through pilot implementations or comparative studies. **f) Correlation with objectives:**

The conclusions directly align with the stated goals of designing governance systems fit for a multipolar world. All claims are supported by scholarly references and historical evidence; no unsupported assertions are made. The discussion remains concise and focused, avoiding repetition of results and emphasizing relevance.

8. Conclusions and Courses of Action

Today’s world stands at a historic crossroads. The unipolar order has shown systemic limits—normative hegemony, interventionism, economic inequality, cultural standardization. At the same time, multipolarity is becoming an increasingly clear geopolitical reality, yet still insufficiently understood and, above all, unregulated. This transition brings both opportunities and major risks.

This article argues that multipolarity should not be rejected, but rather redesigned and grounded in democracy, based on clear principles: real sovereignty, mutual respect, collegial leadership, and regulated international cooperation.

a) Key Conclusions

- Multipolarity is not synonymous with chaos or regional authoritarianism. It can become a framework for balance and coexistence if it is coupled with shared rules, institutions, and values.
- Authentic sovereigntism does not mean isolation, but the ability of states to decide legitimately and responsibly, in accordance with their citizens' will.
- Collegial leadership offers a viable alternative to the one-person model: less vulnerable, more deliberative, and more resilient in the face of crises.
- Mixed democracy, as proposed by the DERRC doctrine, combines representativeness with civic participation, tradition with innovation, sovereignty with cooperation.

b) Courses of Action

- Launch an international framework for regulating multipolarity through dedicated summits, under UN auspices or in innovative formats such as the **Council of Democratic Multipolarity**.
- Reform European institutions by integrating the principles of mixed democracy, state balance, and collegial leadership. A new constitutional contract for Europe is needed.
- Promote democratic sovereigntism as a legitimate doctrine within the European Union, counteracting oversimplified labels and strengthening equality among states.
- Foster public debate and political education around the ideas of autonomy, identity, deliberation, and international cooperation. These themes must not be left solely to bureaucratic or ideologized elites.
- Test and validate the collegial leadership model in national and local contexts through pilot initiatives, gradual constitutional reform proposals, and civic testing mechanisms.

c) A Final Appeal

There is no single correct path to the future. But it is clear that the world can no longer function under a global hegemony disguised as universalism. The future belongs to a responsible pluralism, in which sovereignty, cooperation, and democracy support one another.

Building a multipolar world is not only about redistributing power, but also about rebuilding trust—between states, between leaders and citizens, between the present and the future. The DERRC doctrine is both a vision and an invitation: not to fear plurality, but to fear the lack of balance and respect. And such balance is not built through force, but through thought, solidarity, and wise institutions

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