



# Collision: Disintegration or Connection

By Parag Khanna

# The Global Connectivity Revolution

Skeletal System

Transportation

Highways, railways, bridges, tunnels, airports, seaports

Vascular System

Energy

Oil & gas pipelines and refineries, electricity grids and power plants

Nervous System

Communication

Internet cables, satellites, data centers



The Infrastructural Matrix: Exoskeleton on the Planetary Body

# The Devolution - Aggregation Dialectic

## 2nd Law of (Geopolitical) Thermodynamics: Maximum Entropy

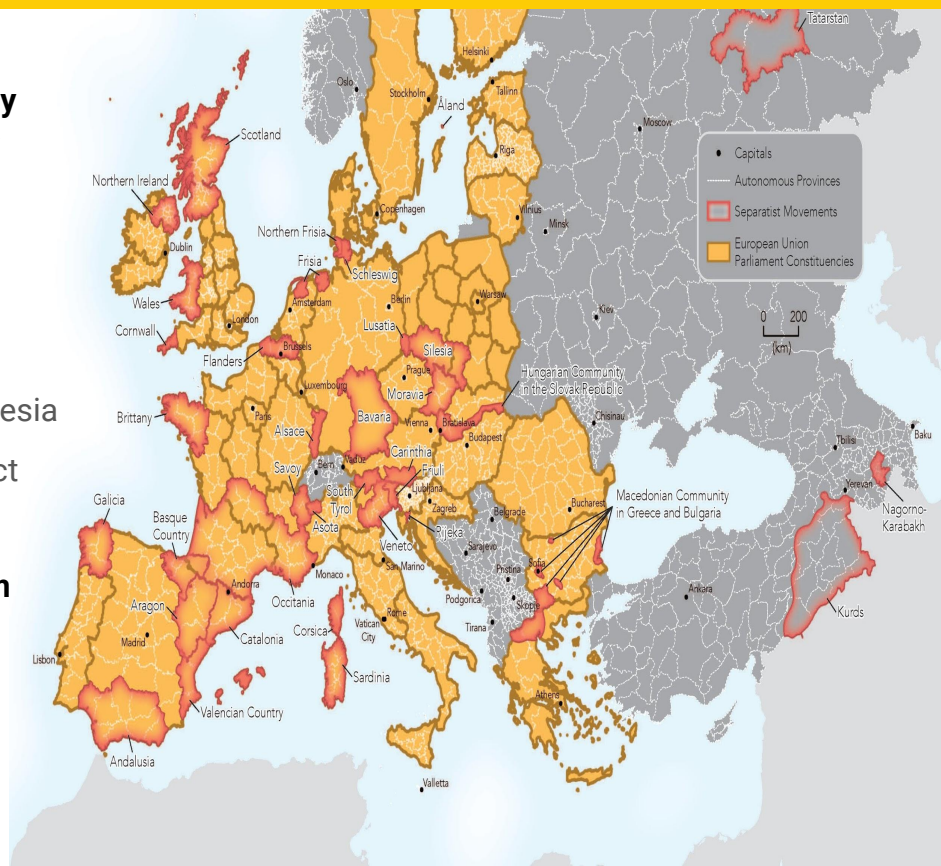
- Get the polity right: Devolution more universal than democracy
- Democracy fuels devolution: Scotland, Catalunya, Veneto
- Wilson meets Big Data: Catalunya, Veneto

## Let the tribes win! Devolution contributes to peace

- Growing apart to stay together: India, Nigeria, Myanmar, Indonesia
- The more borders, the better: The wane of international conflict

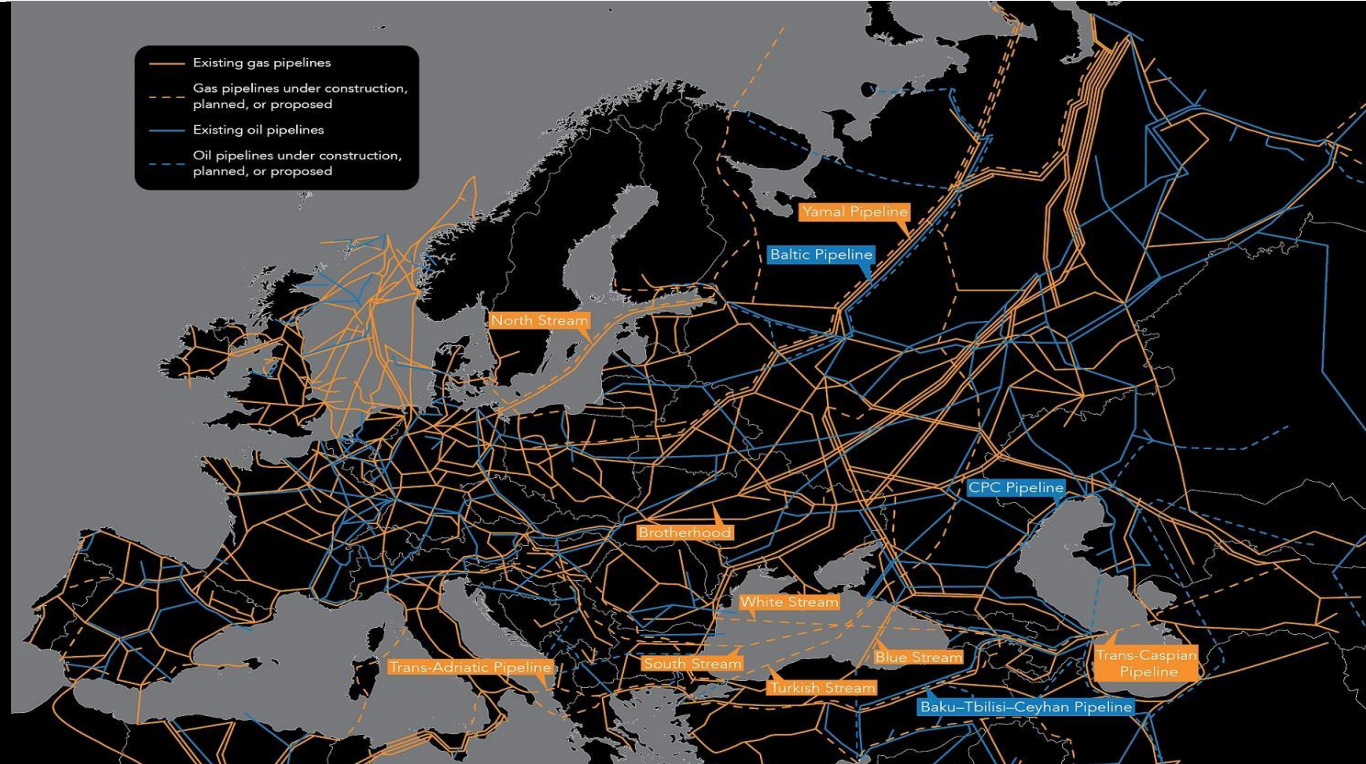
## “Too Small to Survive”: Tribalism as the Path to Globalism

- The virtues of settlement: Exclusive → Inclusive remapping
- Regional commonwealths: EU → *Pax Americana, Indica, Aseana, Africana, Arabia*



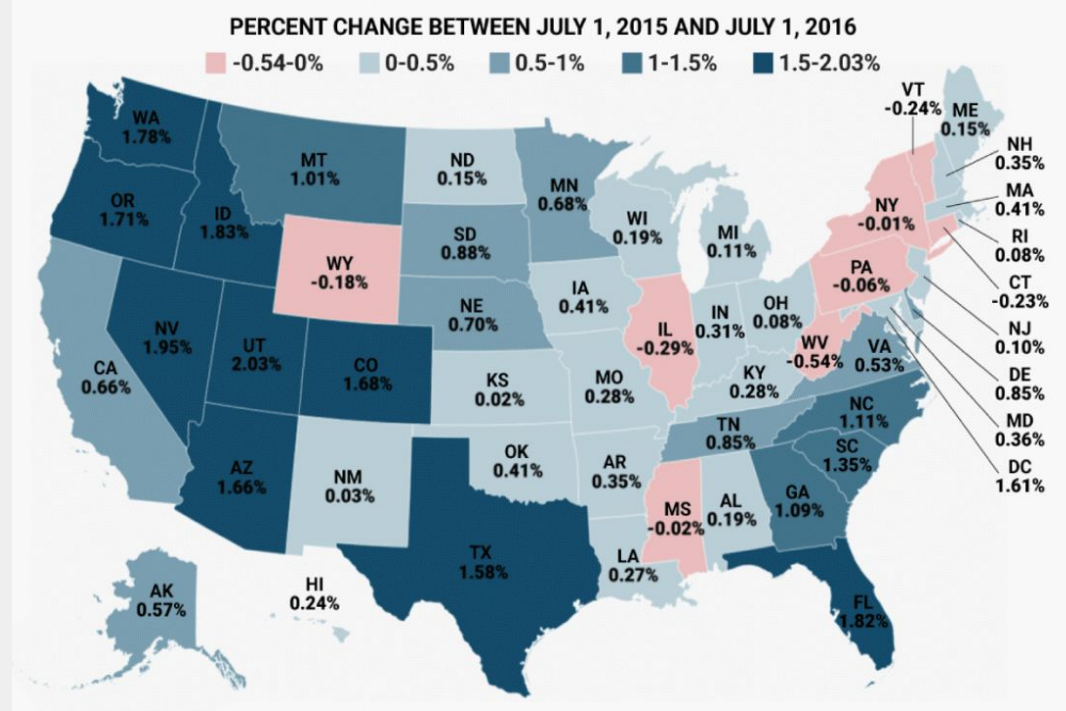
# Infrastructure as Authority: Reshaping Cross-Border Relations

- **Baltic Union:** Shared infrastructure and governance services
- **Hamburg-Copenhagen STRING corridor;** Helsinki - Stockholm Hyperloop
- **European energy grid:** Integrated gas and nuclear power
- **Europe-Russia:** From singular dependence to reverse flows



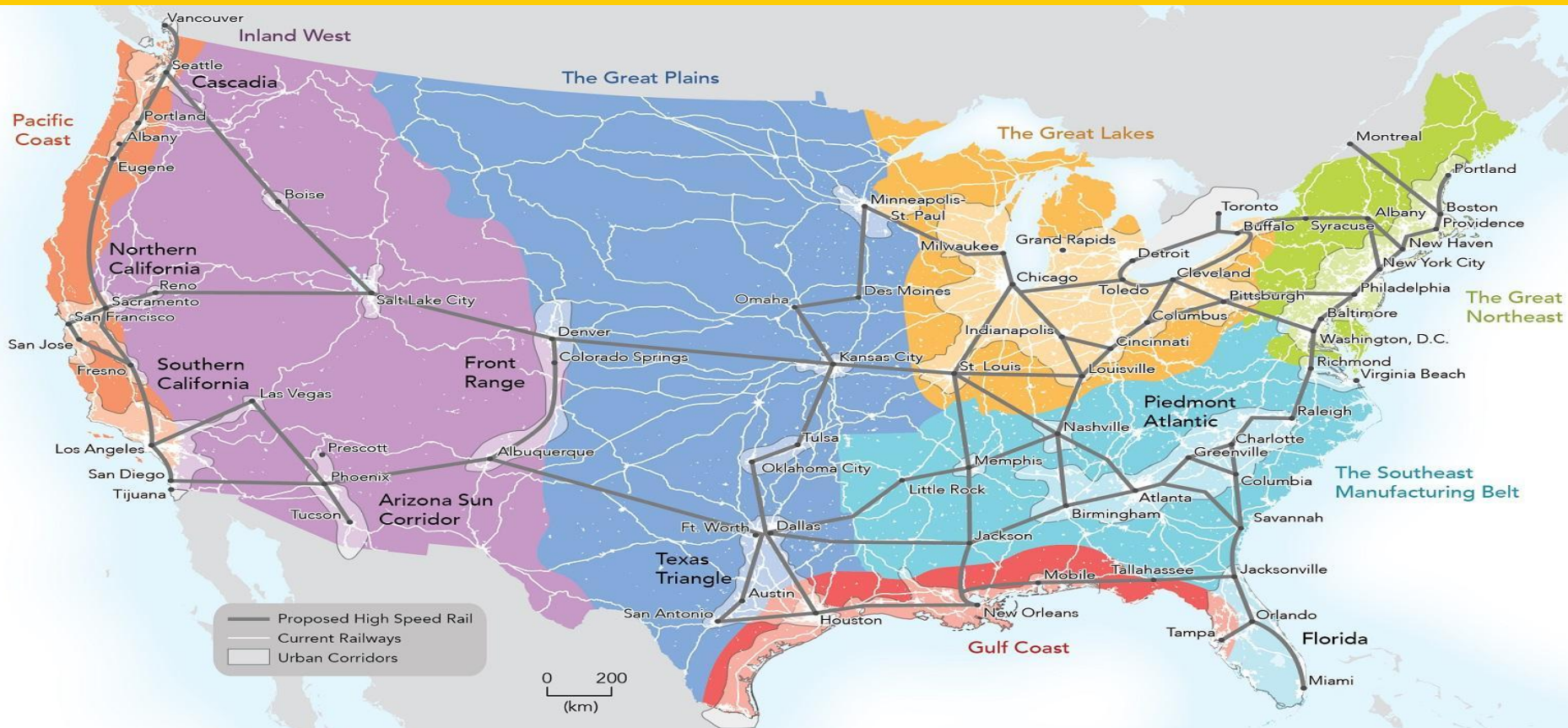
# Beyond Red/Blue: America's New Divides

- Slow urbanization: From red state-blue state to urban/rural
- Sedentary people: Less circulation but some shift to southern and western states
- Eastern ills: Infrastructure and inequality
- Western worries: Sustainability
- Accelerated devolution: Fiscal and legal civil war



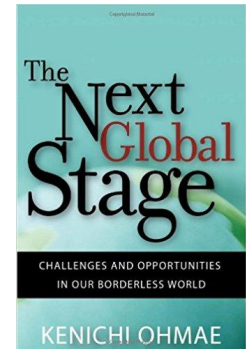
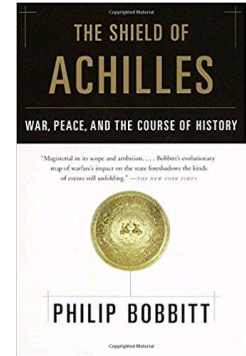
***Loss of faith in politicians....as well as institutions.***

# The United City-States of America



# Evolving Towards the Info-State

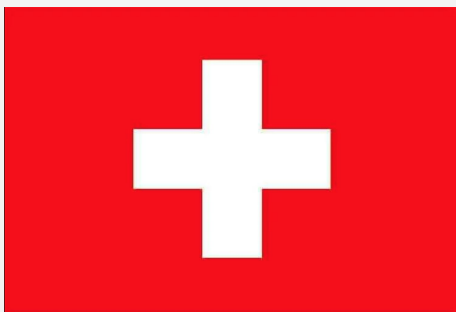
<b>Ideal-type state for each era</b>	Cold War “Garrison state” (Laswell) to globalized “market state” (Bobbit) to industry cluster based “region state” (Ohmae) to.....
<b>Geographic scale</b>	Economic > political geography; city-centric but transcending borders
<b>Technology strategy</b>	Economic master planning focused on innovative technological sectors
<b>Diplomatic style</b>	“Diplomacy”: The investment, security, climate, urbanization
<b>Governance approach</b>	Postmodern policy-making: Data-driven scenario analysis; real-time public consultation; crowdsourcing ideas
<b>Leadership ethos</b>	Executives do the right thing; managers do things the right away



**Regimes must adapt: Info-State as the most evolved governance form for the Information Age**

# Direct Technocracy: Where Top-Down Meets Bottom-Up

## Direct Democracy



Plebiscites, initiatives  
referenda

Part-time parliamentarians

Multi-party Federal  
Executive Council



## Direct Technocracy

Mandatory voting plus frequent  
issue-specific referenda  
(well-informed public)

Feedback loops and data-driven  
policy adjustment; scaling  
successful experiments

Independent management of  
structural priorities and strategic  
investments (e.g. R&D, skills)

Constitutional reform to adapt to  
social and technological change



## Technocracy



Meritocratic civil service

Scenario-planning  
embedded across govt

Constant public  
consultation and digital  
surveys

***How to build the most boring but effective government***



# GETTING CITIES RIGHT

**Supply-led growth:**  
Anticipate housing and  
transport demand in  
polycentric cities



**Fiscal devolution:**  
Ensure sufficient resources  
for second-tier cities



**Connectivity:**  
Internal generativity and  
external linkages to  
complementary city partners



**Administrative alignment:**  
Federal and municipal policy  
coordination on e.g.  
immigration and sustainability



**Economic master planning:**  
Strategic coordination of  
government, Infrastructure,  
industry and academia



***THANK YOU!***

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