Rise of the City-States
By Parag Khanna
Cartographic Evolution

"What we build today will last centuries." - Santiago Calatrava
From Political to Functional Geography

Singapore-Malaysia-Indonesia Growth Triangle (SIJORI)

From nations & borders to infrastructure & supply chains.

Transcending political divides to optimize land, labor and capital.
The Devolution - Aggregation Dialectic

2nd Law of (Geopolitical) Thermodynamics: Maximum Entropy
- Get the polity right: Devolution more universal than democracy
- Democracy fuels devolution: Brexit, Scotland, Northern Ireland
- 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
The Asian Center of Gravity

There are more people living inside this circle than outside of it.

POPULATION: Asia = 4 Billion > Americas (1 Billion) + Europe/Middle East/Africa (2 Billion)
Planetary Urbanization: Megacity Archipelagos Define Humanity
From Nations to Nodes: 50 Mega-Cities or 200 Countries?

2030: Brighter lights, same cities
Megacities up to 10% of global pop. by 2030

Cities need countries more than vice-versa
How cities think: Connectivity over territory
China: Empire of Mega-Cities
What’s the next global city?

Top-ranked cities for flows:
• Goods
• Services
• Capital
• People
• Data
Racial Mingling: Ch-Indians (Singapore), Indi-Pinos (Dubai)

From Nationalism to Civicism: Cumulative not exclusive identities
The Rise of “Diplomacity”

- UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities
- Leading Smart Cities
- HABITAT Global Network on Safer Cities
- C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
- Rockefeller Foundation 100 Resilient Cities
Urban Devolution: Power to the Cities

- Listening to people, not politicians
  - Transparent access to public data for enhanced response to citizen demands; NYC Human Rights Law/Commission

- Building their own energy grids
  - Mapping energy needs to target green investments (e.g. Amsterdam)

- Owning their streets
  - Sidewalk Labs (Google) maps traffic patterns to reduce congestion and plan future CRE investments

- Keeping their money
  - Post-Brexit, London Mayor Sadiq Khan seeking autonomy over taxation, spending, borrowing

- Attracting inward investment
  - Issuing infrastructure bonds and attracting foreign investors into tech (e.g. Glasgow, Tel Aviv)

- Recruiting talented migrants
  - Potential “London visa” for finance sector; foreigners voting in municipal elections (NYC, Hamburg)

- Engaging in “Diplomacity”
  - Int’l collaboration (e.g. C-40); commerce (e.g. London-SG “Fintech” bridge); Shareconomy (Uber, AirBnb)

- Pushing for federal autonomy
  - Autonomous legal and fiscal status (Mexico City, London, Mumbai)
Pax Urbanica: Cities Drive the Global Network Civilization
THANK YOU!

paragkhanna@gmail.com