Based on the UPSC Geography Curriculum

The Anatomy of a Region

Decoding the Classification of Space in Regional Planning

NotebookLM

Regions are tools, not just locations.

Regions are classified based on selected criteria and a specific purpose. Geographers use these classifications to reduce the complexity of the real world into understandable segments.

Naïve.

The Subjective View.
Mental constructs & feelings.

Instituted.

The Administrative View.
Political boundaries & authority.

Denoted.

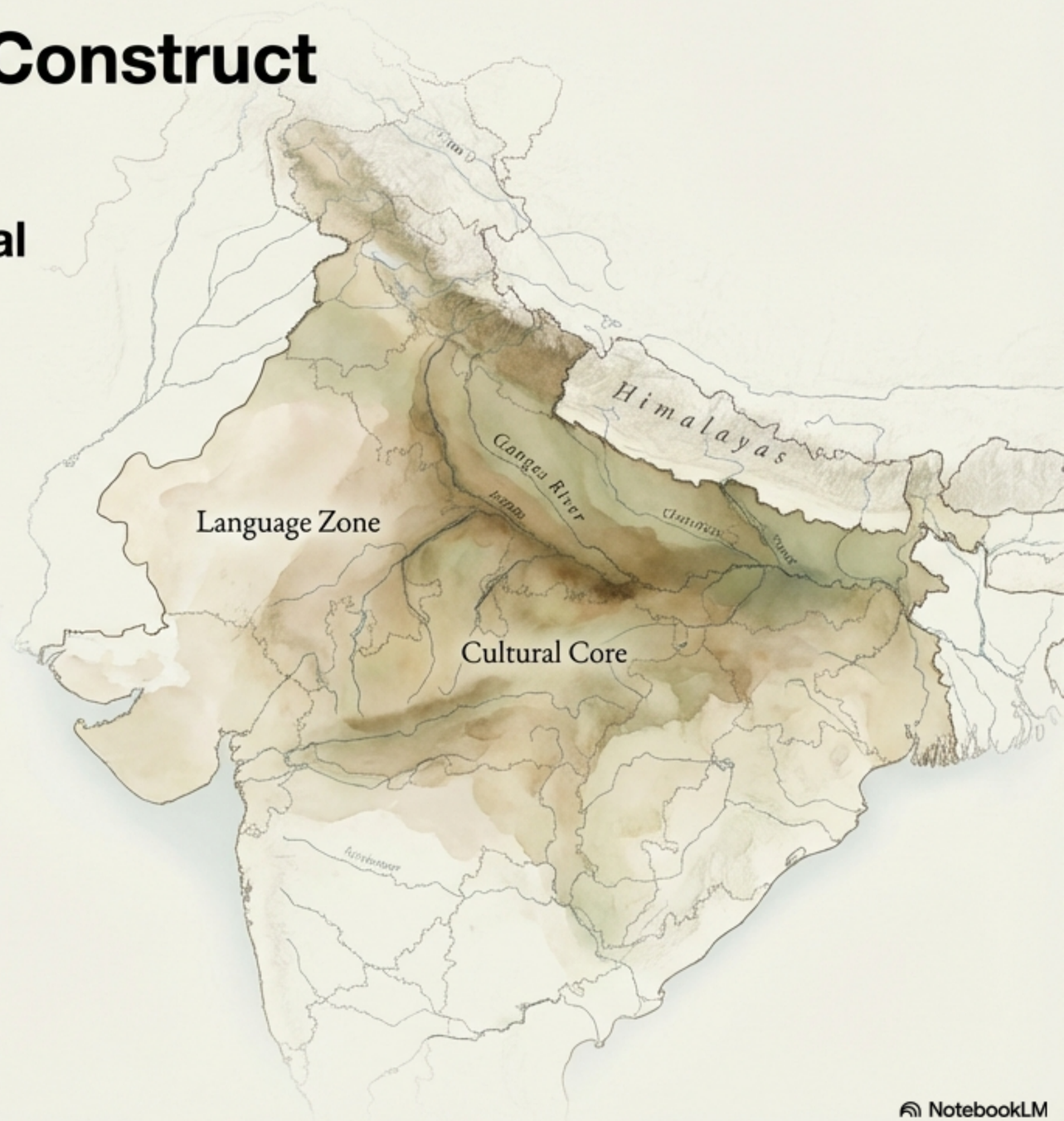
The Analytical View.
Pedagogical tools & planning.

NotebookLM

The Naïve Region: A Mental Construct

Characteristics: Metaphysical & Transitional

These regions are perceived sections of space, often idealistic or hypothetical. They have ill-defined boundaries or exist as transitional zones with no sharp edges. Examples include concepts like the ‘Backward Region’ or cultural zones like ‘Mithila’ or ‘Avadh’. Because culture is fluid (e.g., marriage rituals vary even within the same region), these boundaries remain abstract and ‘fanciful’.

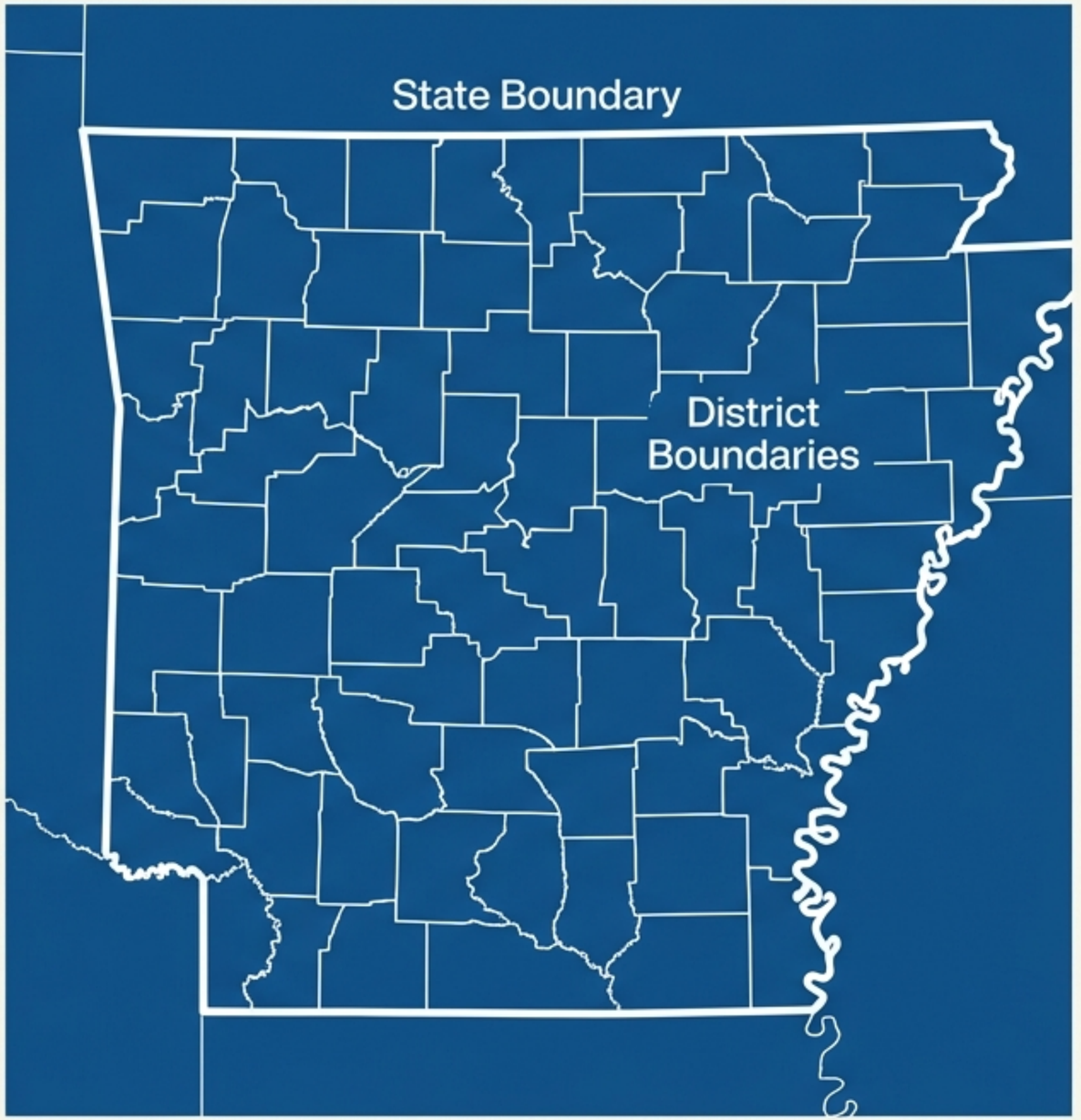


NotebookLM

The Instituted Region: The Grid of Authority

Characteristics: Bounded & Hierarchical

Created by authorities (national/state governments) to administer activity—collecting revenue, assembling data, or planning. Unlike Naïve regions, these are based on quantifiable, concise criteria and carry legal sanctions. sanctions. They often nest within one another (State > District > Block).



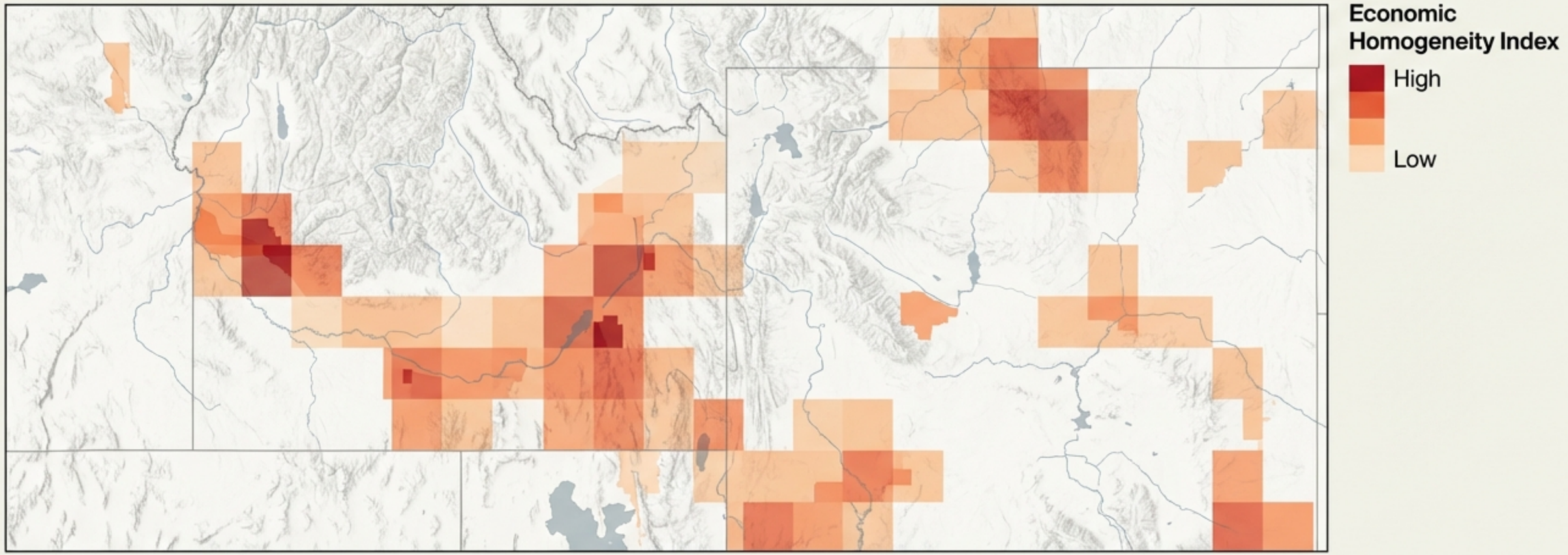
NotebookLM

The Denoted Region: The Planner's Canvas

Also known as Planning Regions or Pedagogical Regions.

Created by scholars and geographers to reduce reality's complexity. They have no independent existence outside the study but serve to reveal underlying patterns.

Function: A distinct unit large enough to support life/resources, but small enough to understand unique local problems. Used for targeted economic decisions (e.g., desert development).

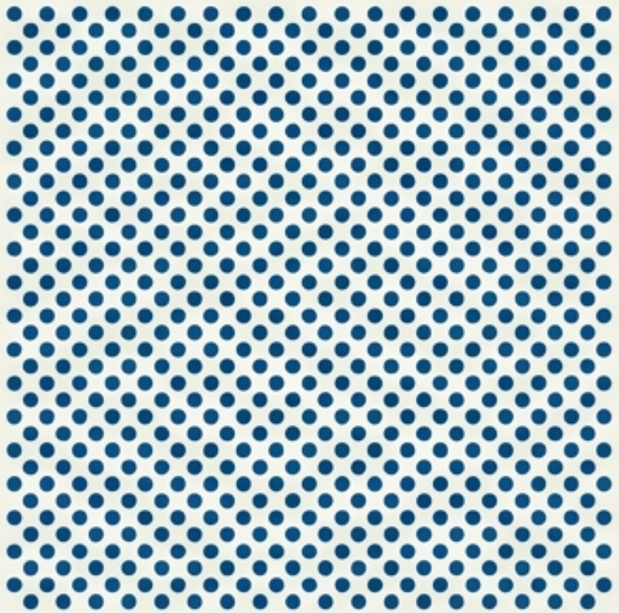


NotebookLM

The Great Divide: Formal vs. Functional

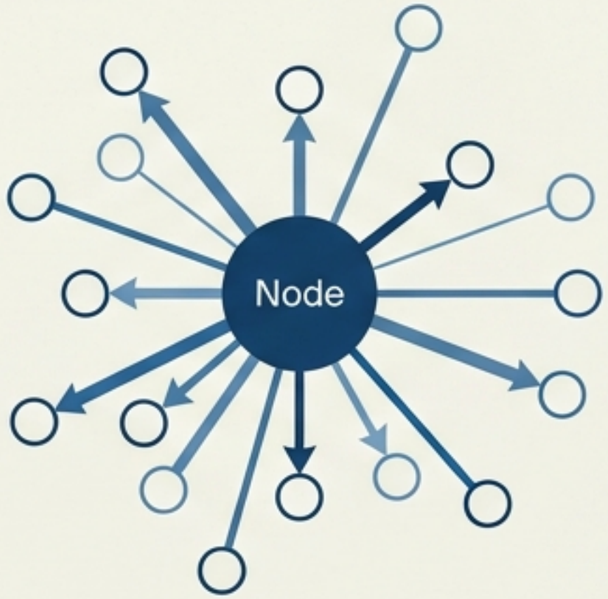
Uniform (Formal)

Defined by Homogeneity. The area is “the same” throughout based on specific phenomena (Soil, Climate, Language).



Nodal (Functional)

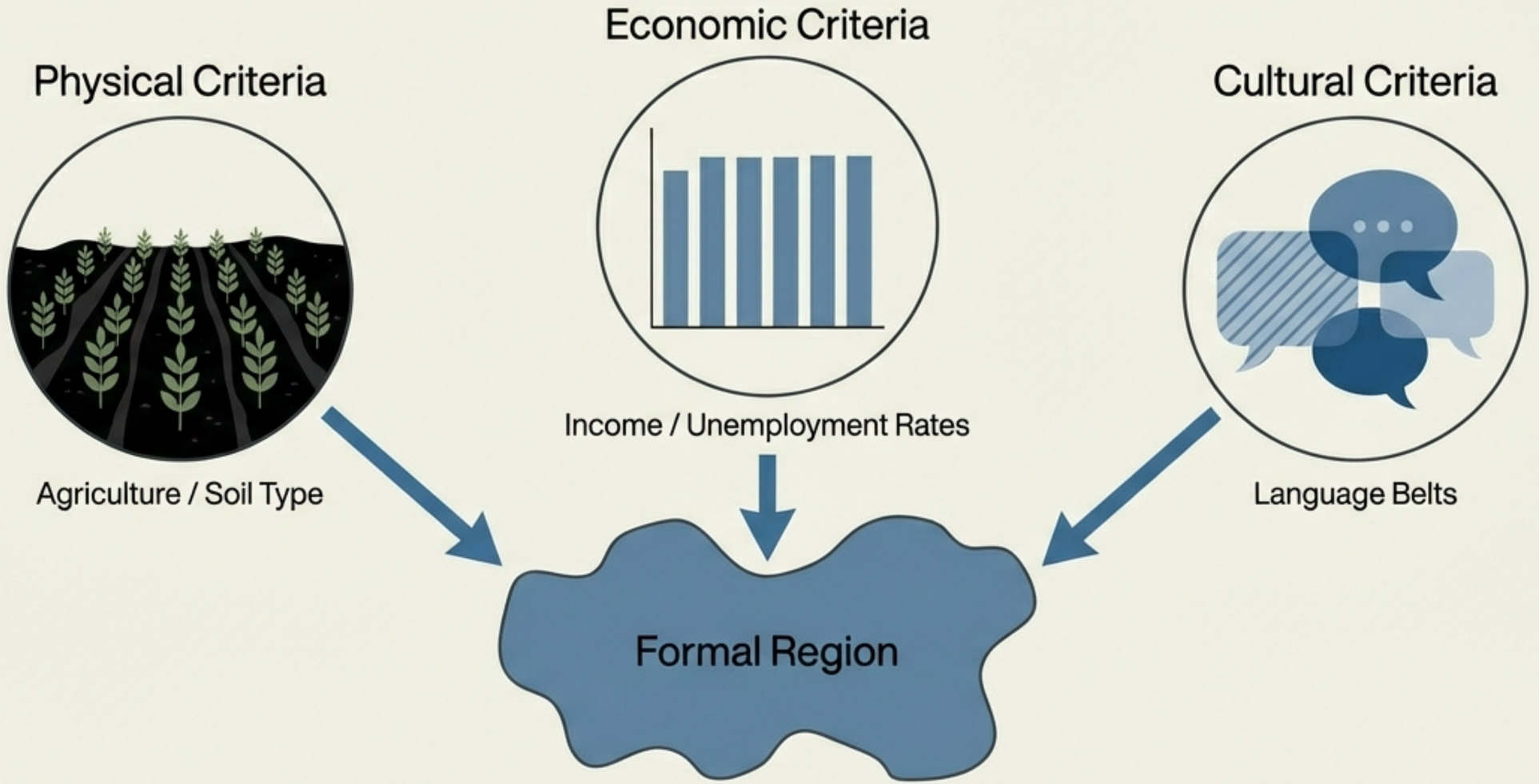
Defined by Interdependence. The area is tied together by “flows” of people, goods, or information to a central hub.



NotebookLM

Formal Regions: The Power of Homogeneity

Fixed, static regions identifiable by the composition or assemblage of a specific phenomenon. Defined by what is present inside the boundary.



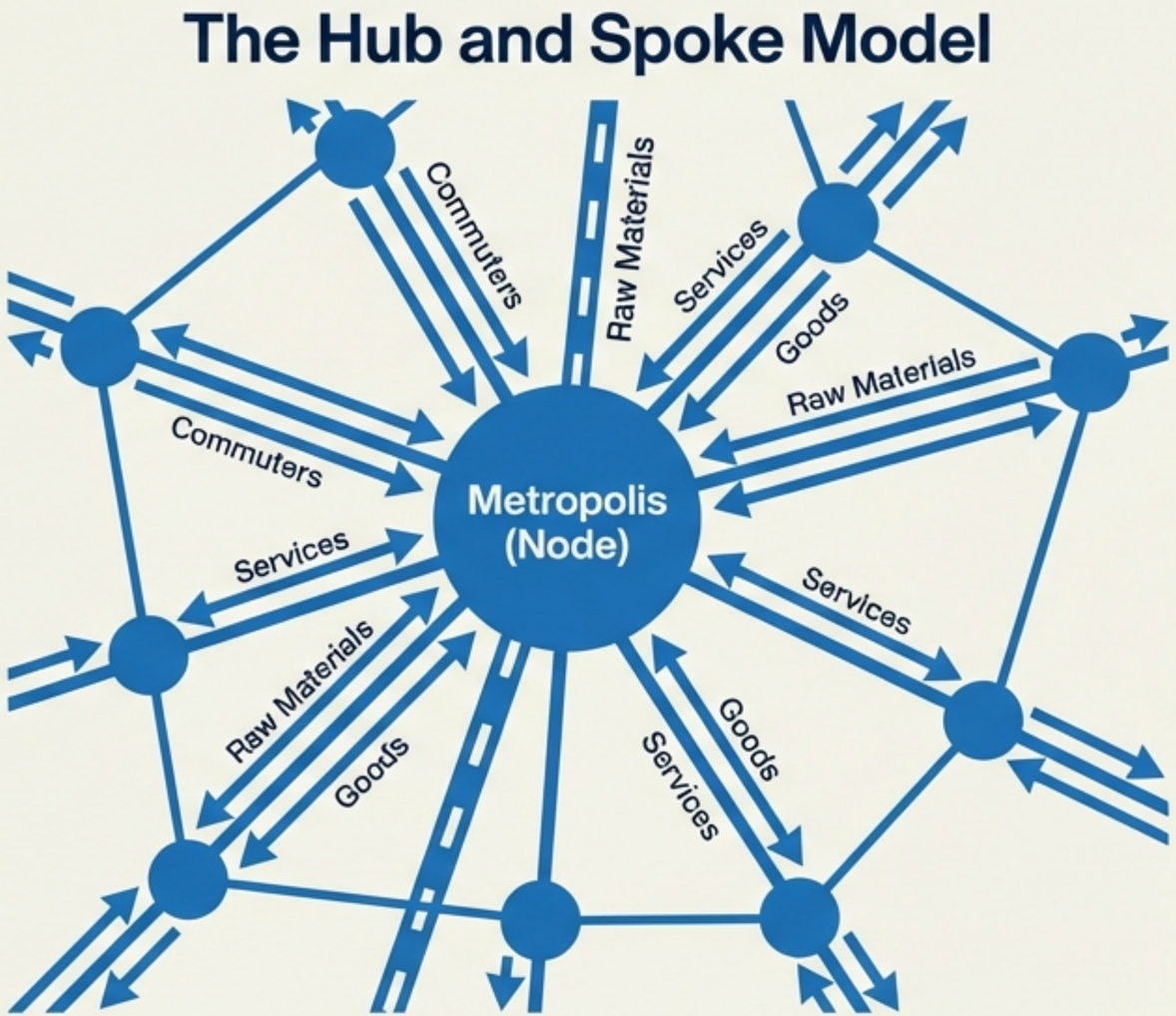
NotebookLM

Functional Regions: Coherence through Flow

A geographical area displaying functional coherence—the interdependence of parts.

Composed of heterogeneous units (towns, cities, villages) working as a system.

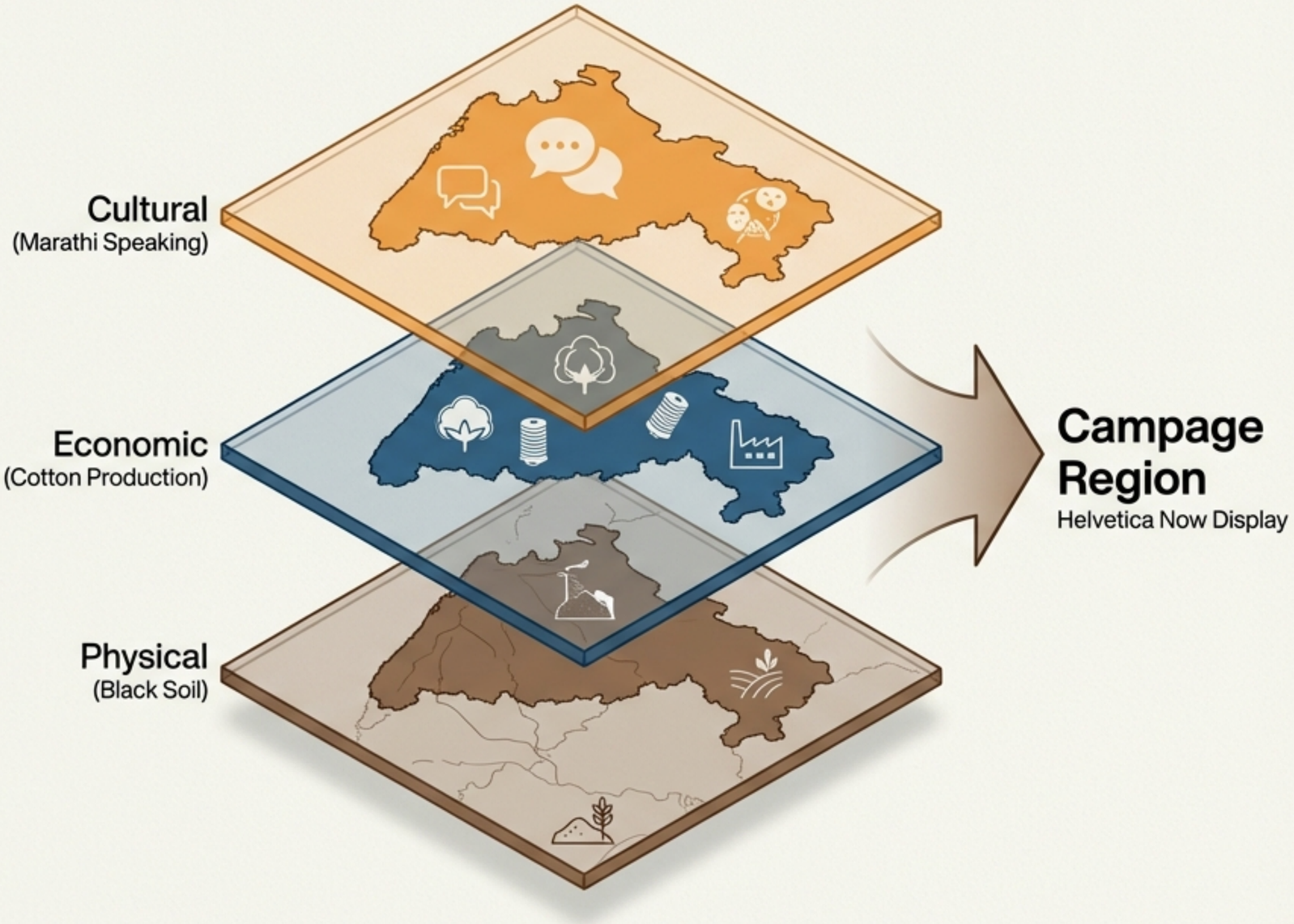
Defined by ‘Journey-to-work’, goods transport, and communication.



NotebookLM

Beyond Single Features: The ‘Campage’

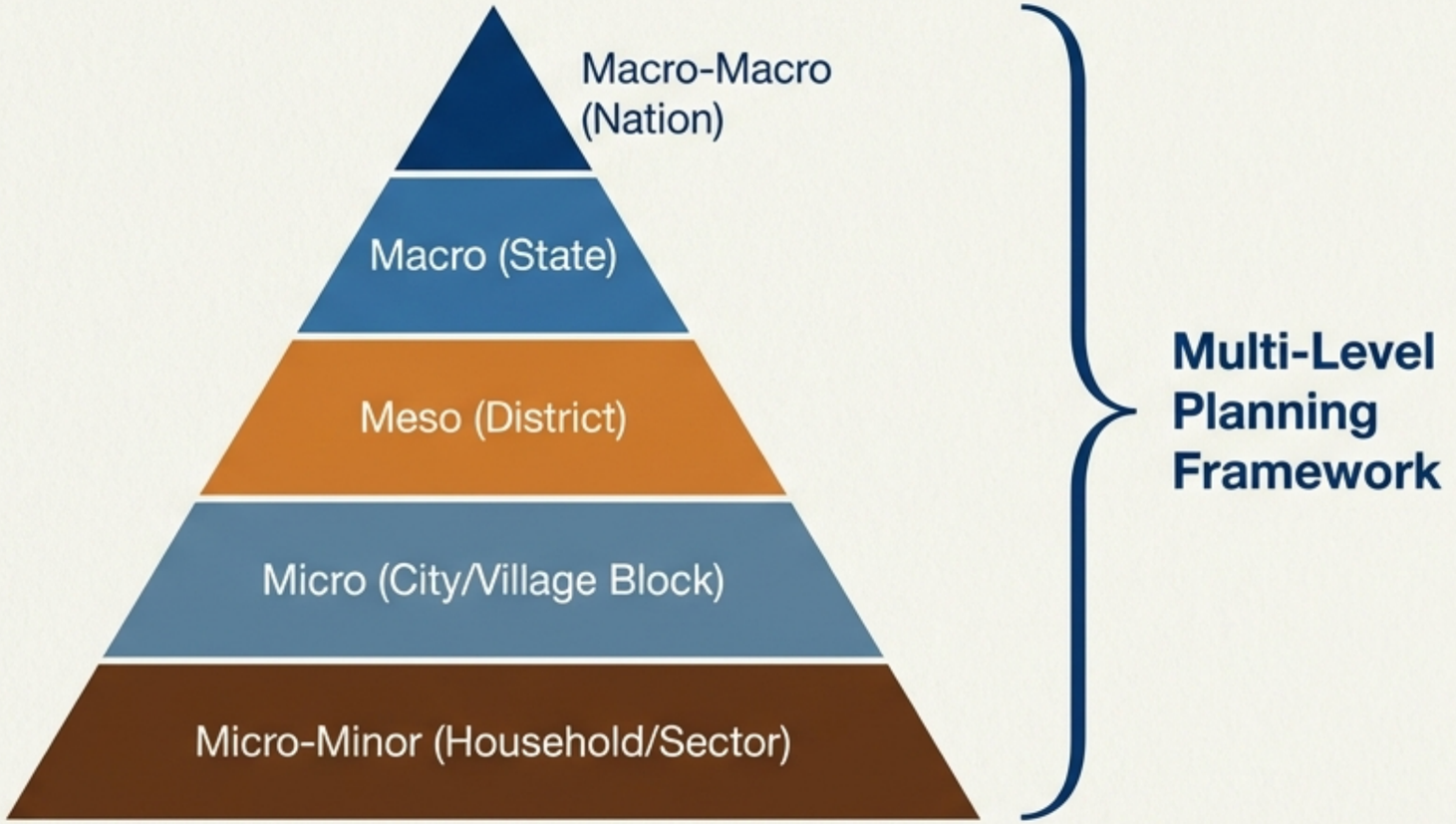
Most formal regions are Single Aspect (e.g., just soil). A “Campage” region is defined by Multiple Aspects showing areal homogeneity across several selected features.



NotebookLM

The Hierarchy of Scale

Regions are classified by scale for Multi-Level Planning decisions. Effective planning requires alignment between these levels.



NotebookLM

Linkage-Based Classifications

Nodal

One dominant urban center with smaller dependents.

Axial

Regions developing along a corridor performing a special function (e.g., DMIC).

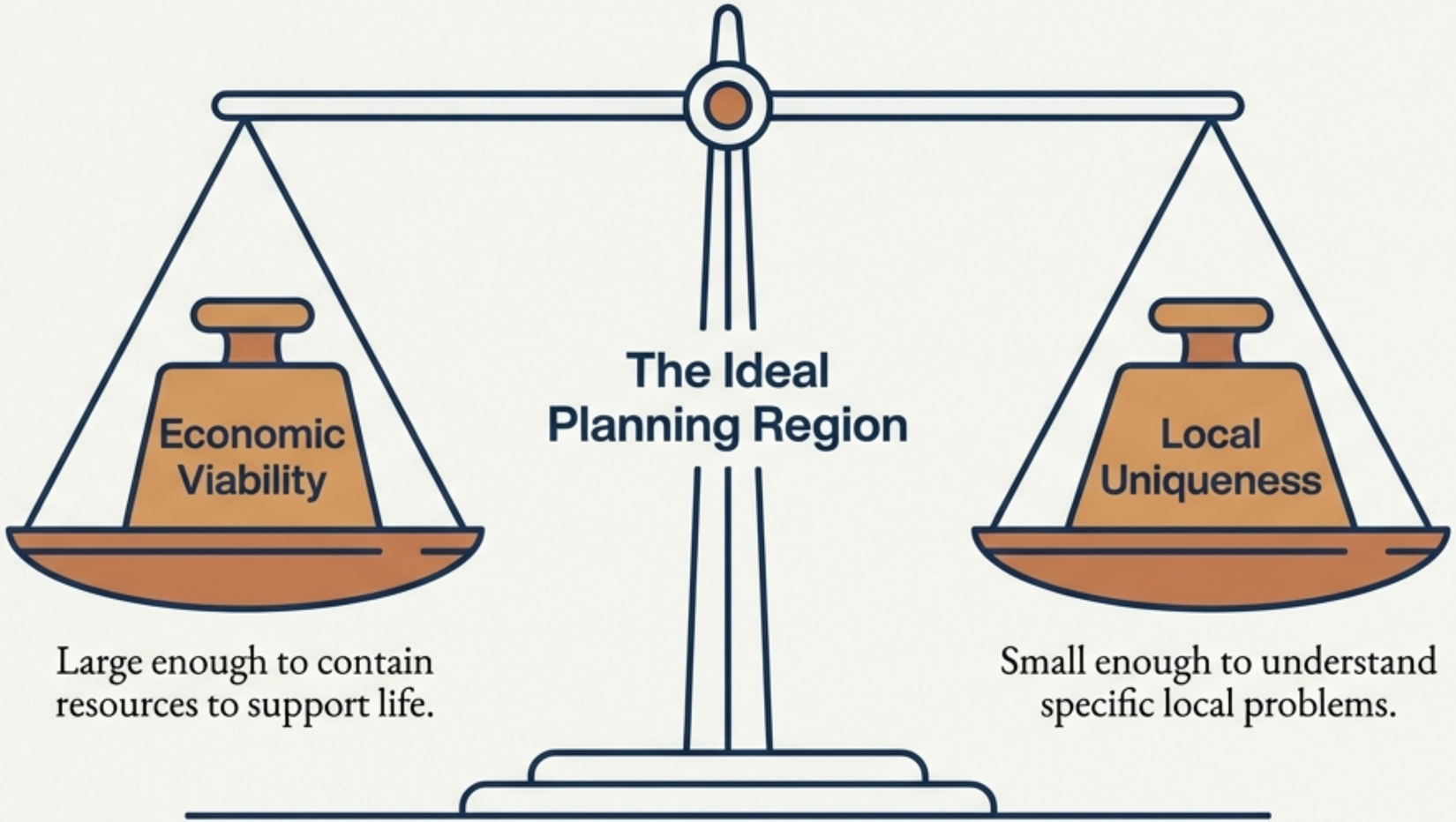
Adhoc

Transitional, non-permanent regions created for a specific purpose (e.g., disaster relief).

NotebookLM

The Blueprint for Perfection

Criteria by C.R. Pathak & Amitabh Kundu



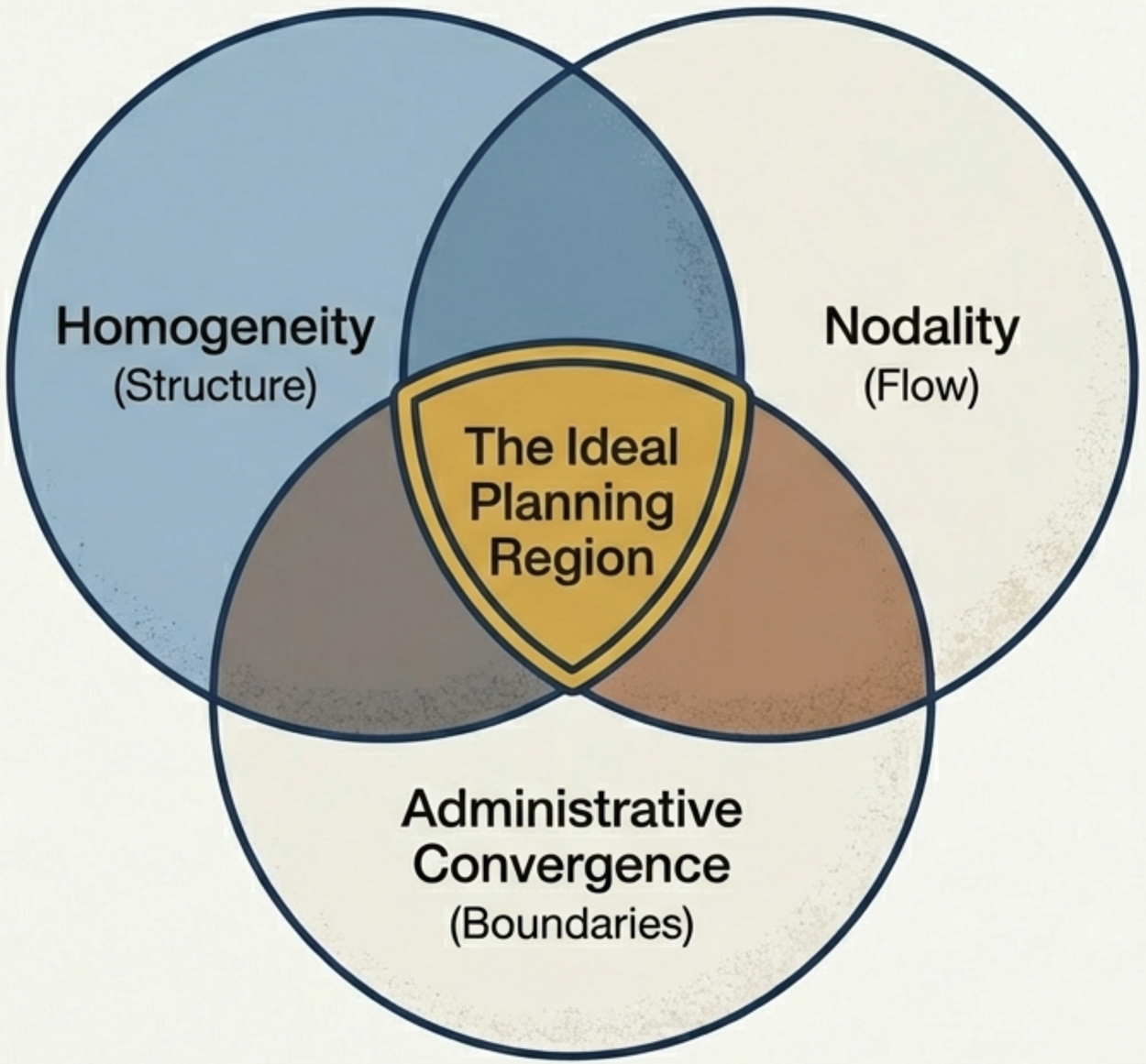
Large enough to contain resources to support life.

Small enough to understand specific local problems.

NotebookLM

Cohesion and Convergence

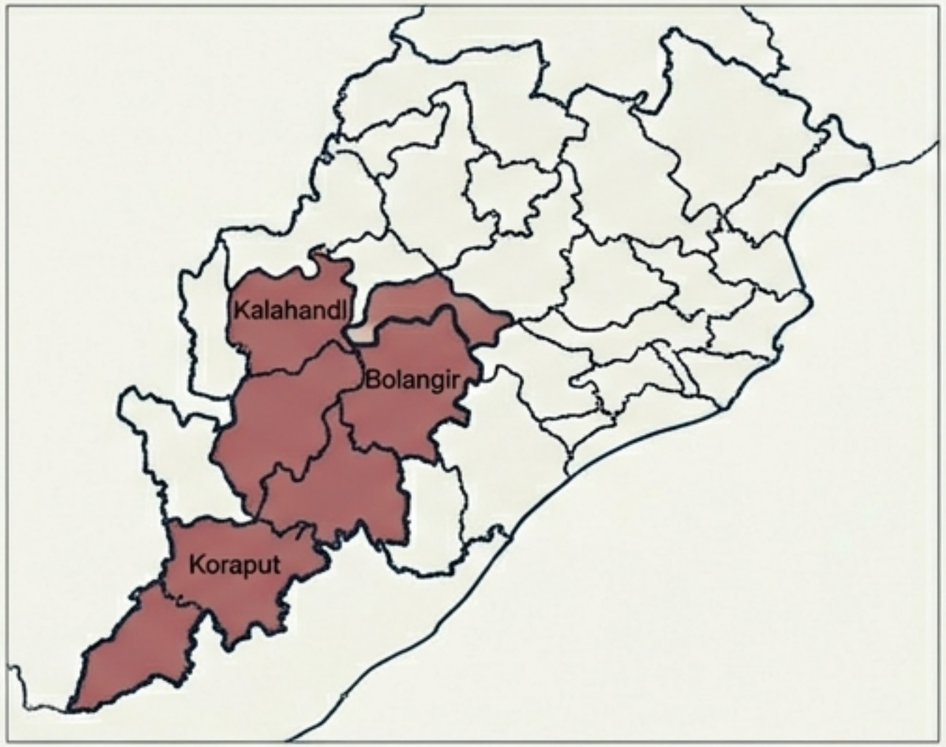
According to Pathak & Kundu, a region must be internally cohesive. It requires self-sufficiency in resources and a satisfactory level of product combination.



NotebookLM

Theory in Practice: Indian Contexts

The Depressed Region: KBK



Defined by Socio-cultural & Topographical Homogeneity. Goal: Backward Area Planning.

The Axial Region: DMIC

Defined by Corridor Development. Goal: Industrial Growth Axis.

NotebookLM

From Perception to Development

Naïve
(Mental)

Instituted
(Administrative)

Denoted
(Planning)

Effective regional planning requires moving beyond 'lines on a map' to identify regions based on Functional Flows and Formal Homogeneity. This is how we solve real-world problems.

NotebookLM