

14 GHANA AT 50: Some reasons to celebrate

21 AFRIKANER SIEGE MENTALITY: Two prominent thinkers write for us

# News & Opinion

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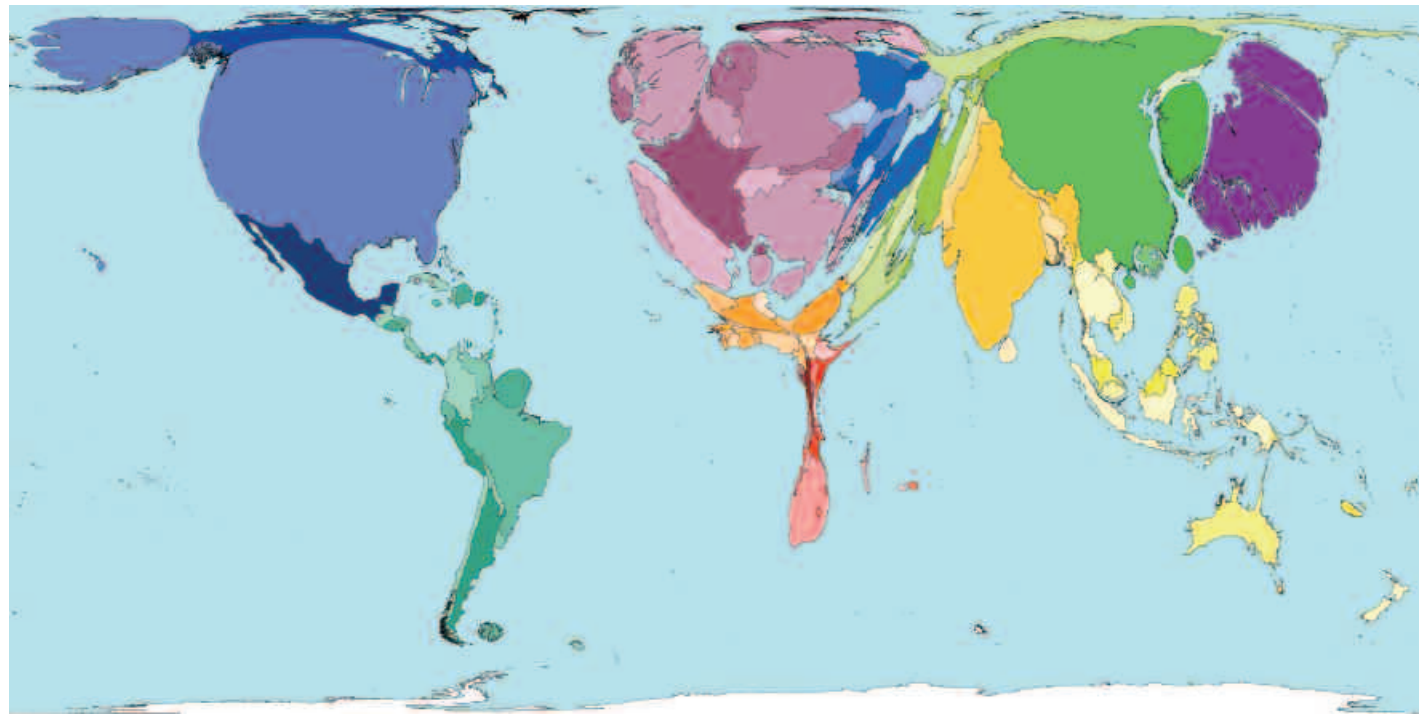


## The world as you've never seen it

At a glance you can see who's got the most of what

HOW IT WORKS: Worldmapper is a collection of world maps created by the University of Sheffield, UK. Each map deals with a subject, such as wealth, crime or HIV. The shape of a country shrinks or swells according to its rate of wealth, crime or violence et cetera. If a country has great wealth, for instance, it will be fat. If it is poor, it will be thin. Figures provided by the United Nations were used. You can see more maps at <http://www.worldmapper.org/index.html>

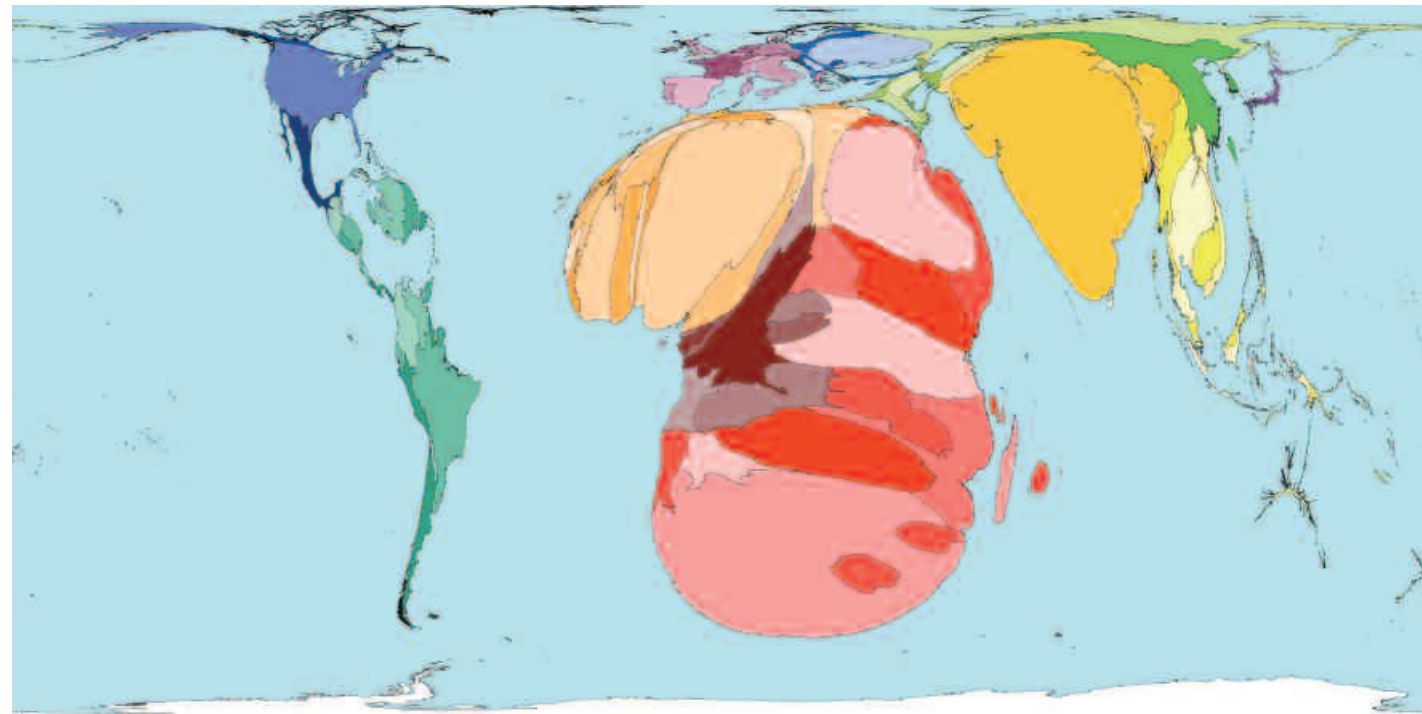
### WEALTH



Purchasing power is measured by what can be bought in the territory in which the money is earned. It is cheaper to live in some places than others. Taking differences in local costs into consideration, this map shows that 46% of world wealth, adjusted for purchasing power, is in

North America and Western Europe. The regions with the most purchasing power per person are North America, Japan and Western Europe. Despite the lower prices found in Central Africa, the people living there still have the lowest purchasing power

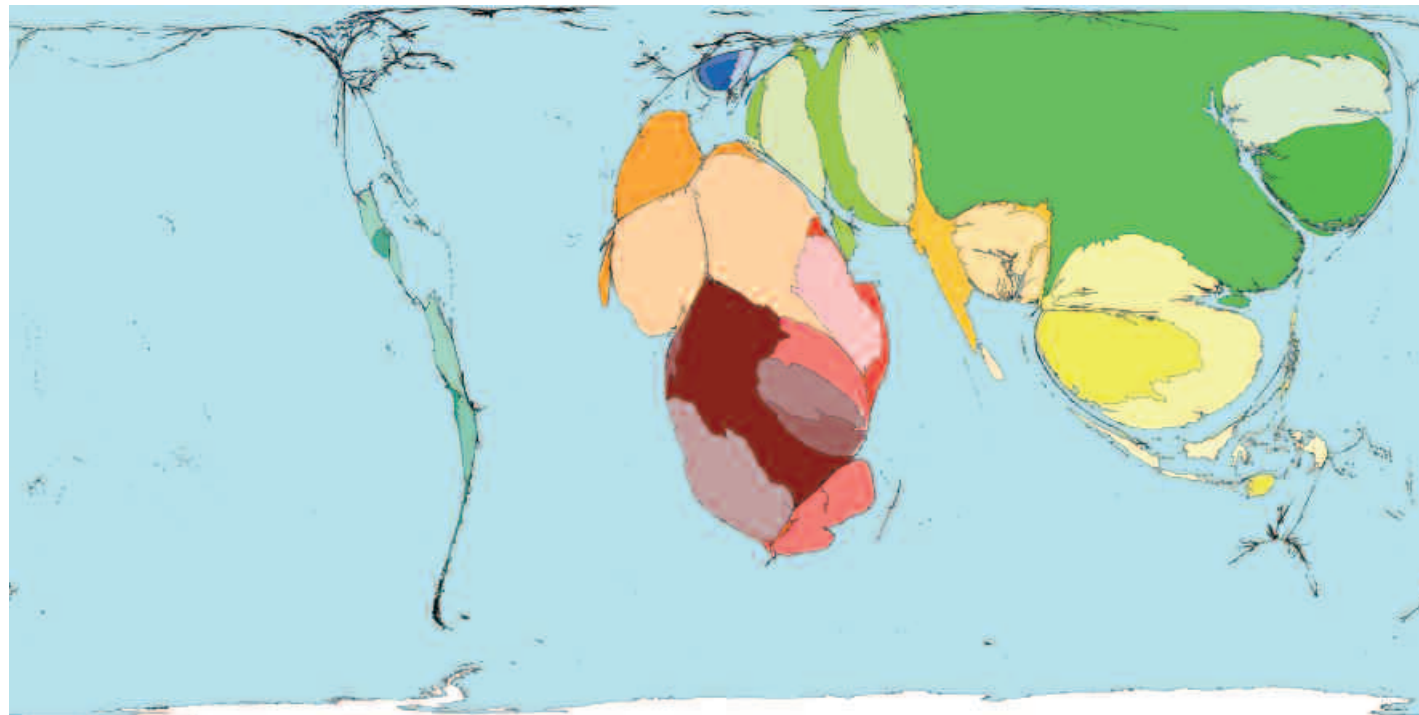
### HIV PREVALENCE



Territory size shows the proportion of all HIV-infected people worldwide aged 15-49 living there. In 2003, the highest prevalence of HIV was in Swaziland, where 38%, or almost four in 10 people, aged 15-49 had the virus. All 10 territories

with the highest HIV prevalences are in Central and Southeastern Africa. Transmission of HIV is through sex and use of infected needles. Infected children are not shown here. HIV/Aids often has an acquired social stigma

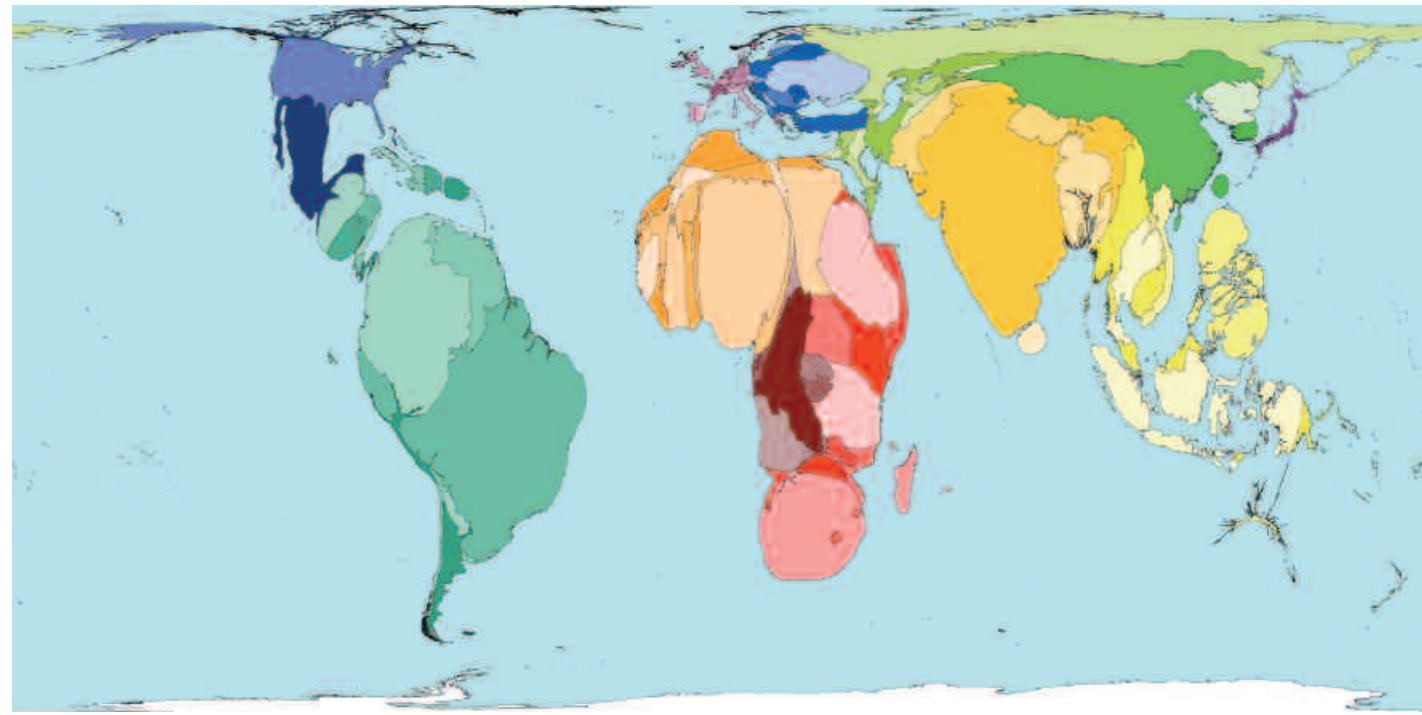
### WAR DEATHS



Territory size showing the proportion of deaths worldwide directly attributed to war and conflict in 2002. There were an estimated 172 000 such deaths that year. Most territories recorded none. All deaths shown here occurred in 80 territories, with the Democratic Republic of Congo suffering 26% of them. Nine territories accounted

for 70% of all the deaths. Burundi had the highest death rate due to war that year: 1.2 people per 1 000. Territories that counted the most deaths in their region as a result of fighting in 2002 were Somalia, Indonesia, Colombia, Sudan, India and the Russian Federation.

### VIOLENT DEATHS



Territory size shows the proportion of violent deaths worldwide that occurred there in 2002. The violent deaths include murder and manslaughter, but exclude deaths due to war. In 2002 more than half a million people died violent deaths. The territories where the highest proportion of people were murdered or killed were Colombia, Sierra

Leone and South Africa. The territories where the most violent deaths occurred were Brazil and India, each with more than 57 000 that year. The region with the most violent deaths was South America, followed by Southeastern Africa and Northern Africa. There were relatively few violent deaths in Japan and Western Europe.

## How the maps were created

ROWAN PHILP

RESEARCHERS have pioneered a new technology that cuts through the complicated data of United Nations reports and allows ordinary people to see the state of the world as it really is.

The free-to-use web cartogram system, launched this month, is a painful dose of reality for Africans, with the continent's share of the good things shrinking, and its share of the world's evils dominating the planet.

The head of the Worldmapper project, British professor Danny Dorling, said: "One look at this new representation of the world and it's clear that — far from this being the African century — Africa is vanishing as a player on the world stage. Most ordinary people see existing world inequalities as far greater than they thought, and the projections show they're just getting worse. Hopefully this system will help as a wake-up call to decision makers in denial about the scale of the gulf."

He added: "But it's equally clear, for instance, that South Africa has world-class rich people, with similar spending power in their own country as the richest 10% of the population in the UK."

Building on a recent invention to measure gas diffusion by a US physicist, Mark Newman, Worldmapper uses complex algorithms to swell and shrink the size of countries according to their

share of global phenomena, while maintaining their boundary shapes and their relative positions to other countries.

Dorling's team, based at Sheffield University's Social and Spatial Inequalities research group, has used data from myriad UN agencies — as well, he admits, as "a few informed estimates where the data are missing".

So, in a world divided up by HIV prevalence, Southern Africa looks more like the prehistoric supercontinent, Gondwanaland.

And in a potential map of murder rates, South Africa — having the third-highest rate, behind Colombia and Sierra Leone — would swell to the size of North America.

However, most sobering are maps of relative world economic wealth. In a projected map of 2015, Southern Africa shrinks into a pathetic strip in a world dominated by the balloon of China.

Said Dorling: "For the 2015 map, we simply took the annual figures between 1990 and 2002 and projected them forward — it may well look quite different, although the trend should be the same."

The system claims to ensure we intuitively understand the cartograms as true world maps by keeping the ocean's proportion to land the same in all maps.

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