

THE ACCIDENTAL
SUPER
POWER

THE NEXT GENERATION OF
AMERICAN PREEMINENCE AND
THE COMING GLOBAL DISORDER

PETER ZEIHN



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Twelve
Hachette Book Group
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

www.HachetteBookGroup.com

Printed in the United States of America

RRD-C

First Edition: November 2014

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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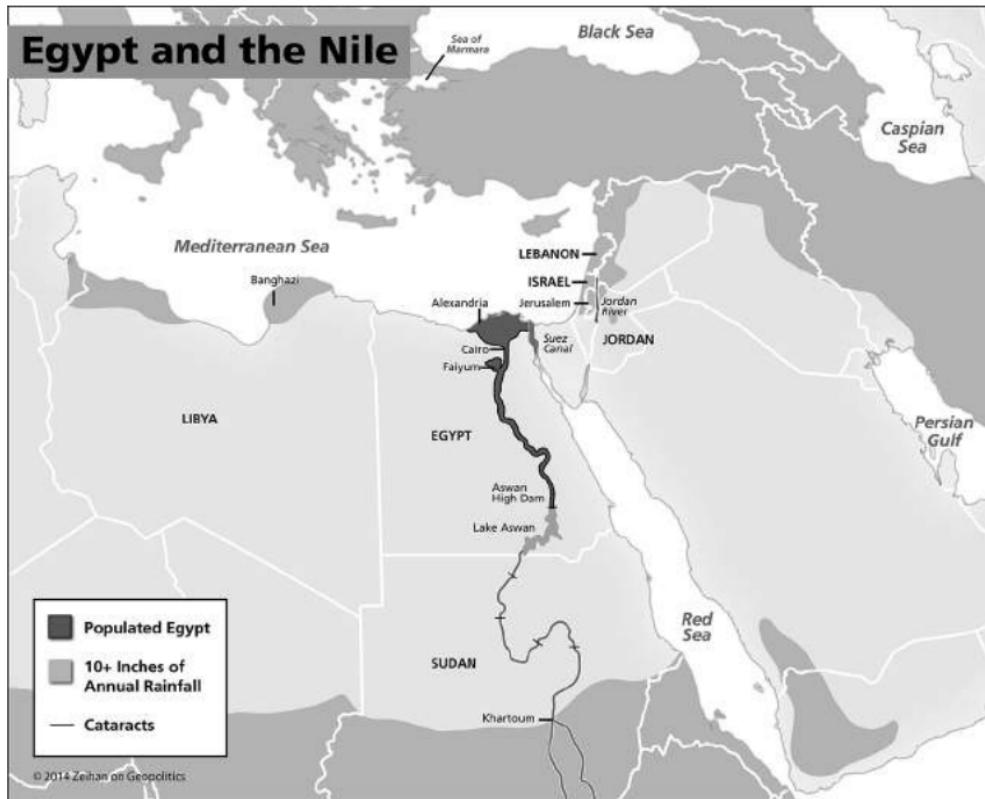
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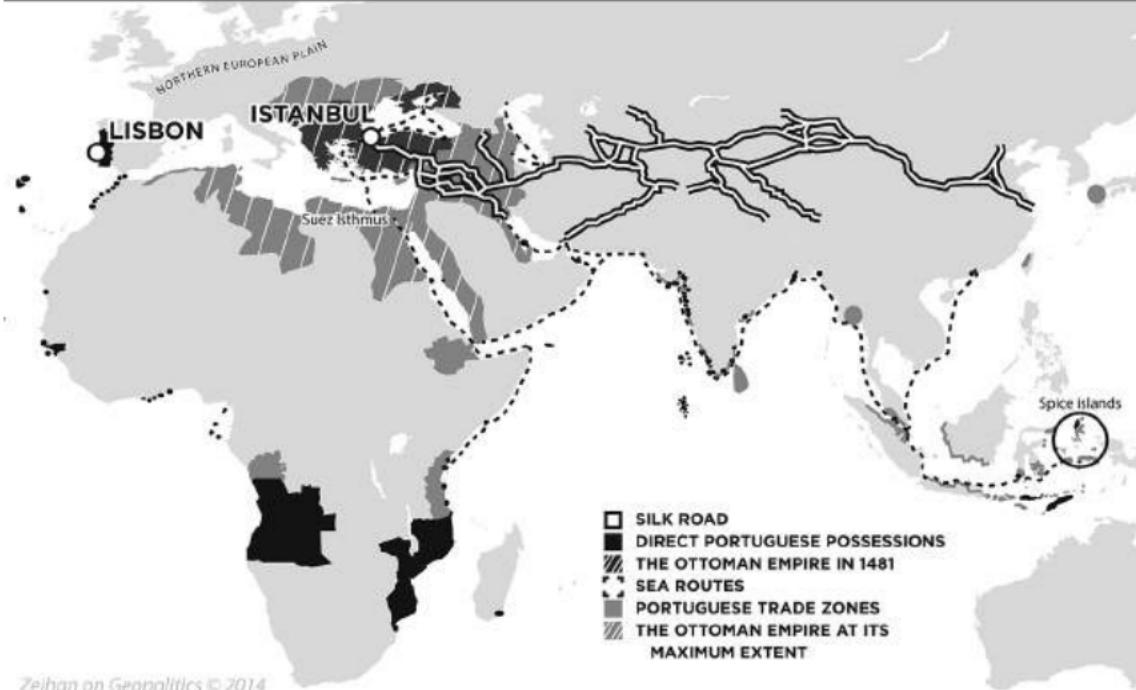
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for.

ISBN: 978-1-4555-8366-9

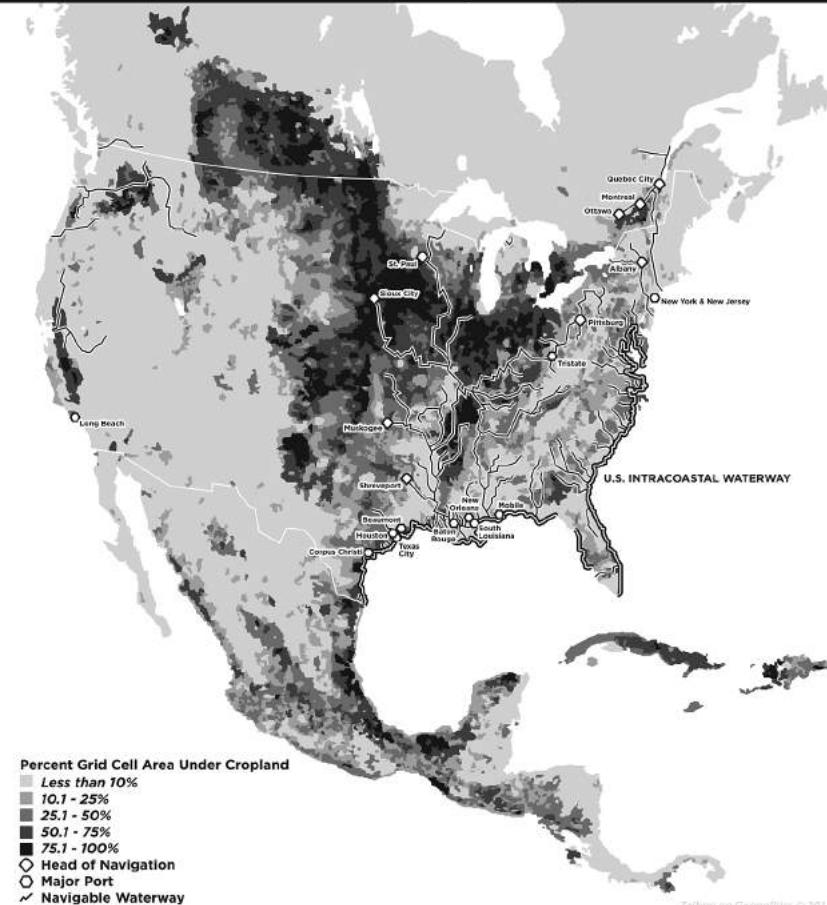
Egypt and the Nile



THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, PORTUGAL, AND THE SILK ROAD

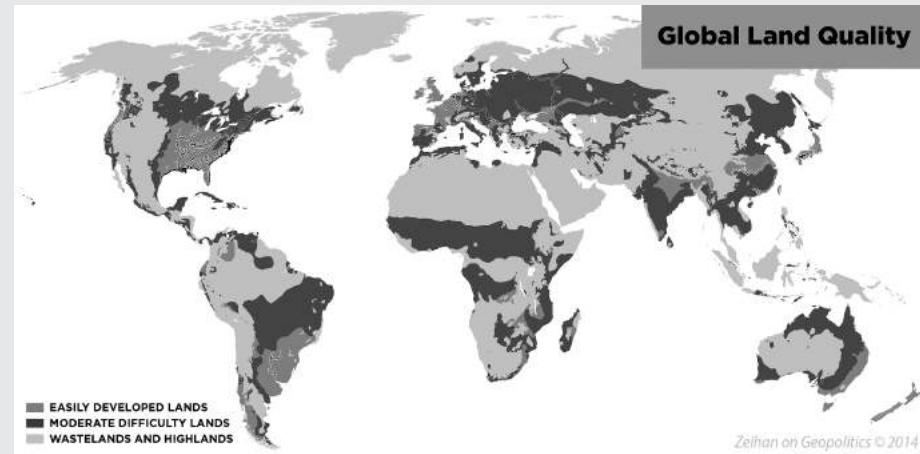


UNITED STATES CROPLANDS, PORTS, AND RIVERS



Global Breadbaskets and Dust Bowls

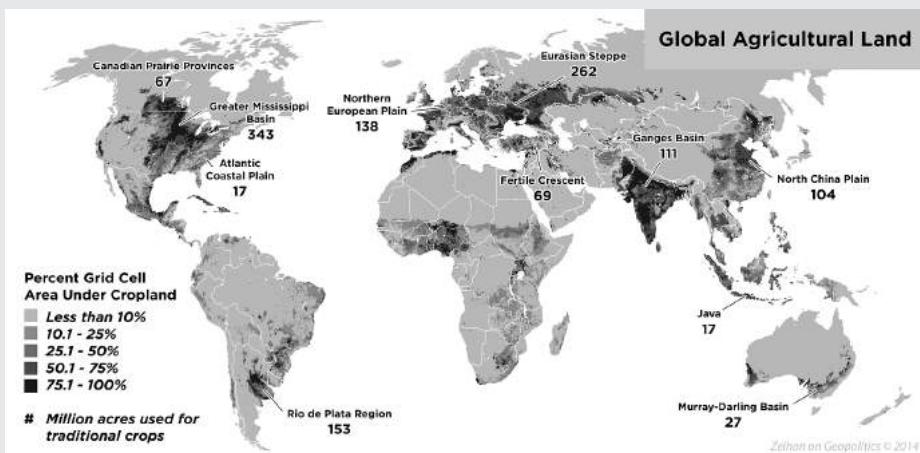
Climate combined with terrain and elevation is an excellent predictor of what nations can potentially do. Elevations over five thousand feet typically mean mountains, which eliminate navigable rivers from possibility. Rail lines also quickly fall into uselessness in the highlands—a slope as little as 0.25 percent reduces the weight a locomotive can lug by half—and the separating nature of mountain ridges means that any infrastructure built in one area does not benefit another. Tropical climates similarly complicate infrastructure and introduce endemic disease into the strategic math. Deserts, tundra, and taiga simply cannot generate large populations or feed them from local sources. Such wastelands and highlands have never generated powers with a global reach. Tropical powers may support larger populations, but they too tend to be sharply circumscribed.



On the other end of the spectrum are the Goldilocks zones with warmth but not oppressive heat and water but not excessive wetness. All of the major powers of the past five hundred years have come from these easily developed, temperate lands. As pure happenstance would have it, the easily developed lands of the United States are not only the largest contiguous piece of such lands in the world, but they are also almost perfectly overlain by the American waterway network.

Between such zones of ruin and perfection lie the transitions lands that can be developed, but only if funded by a large and sustained supply of capital. Much of the economic and political activity of the past sixty years concerns these moderate-difficulty lands.

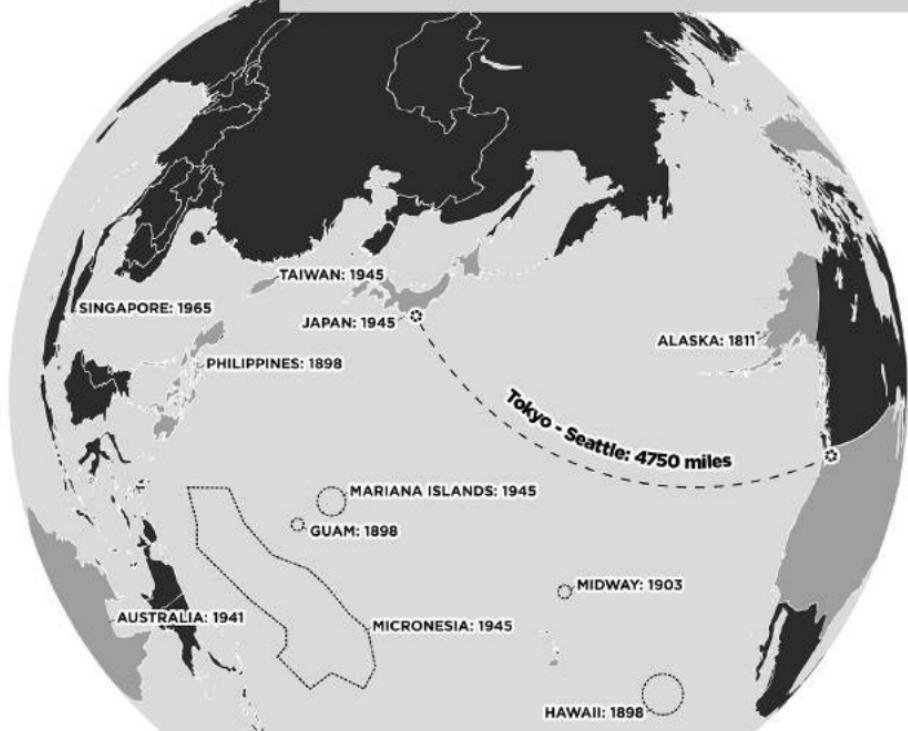
This second map puts geographic theory into practice. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of the world's farmland is located in lands where development is easy.



ATLANTIC SEA APPROACHES TO NORTH AMERICA



PACIFIC SEA APPROACHES TO NORTH AMERICA



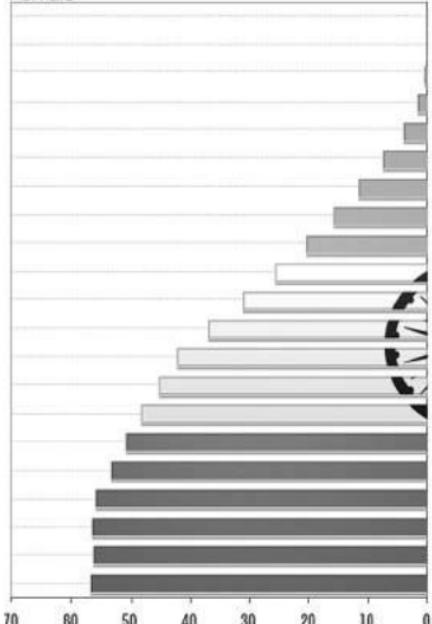
YEAR THE UNITED STATES
GAINED PHYSICAL OR TREATY
ACCESS TO THE TERRITORY

The Bretton Woods World

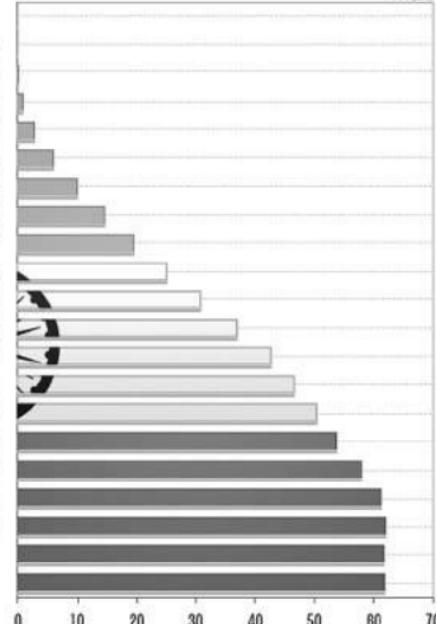


INDIA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

Female

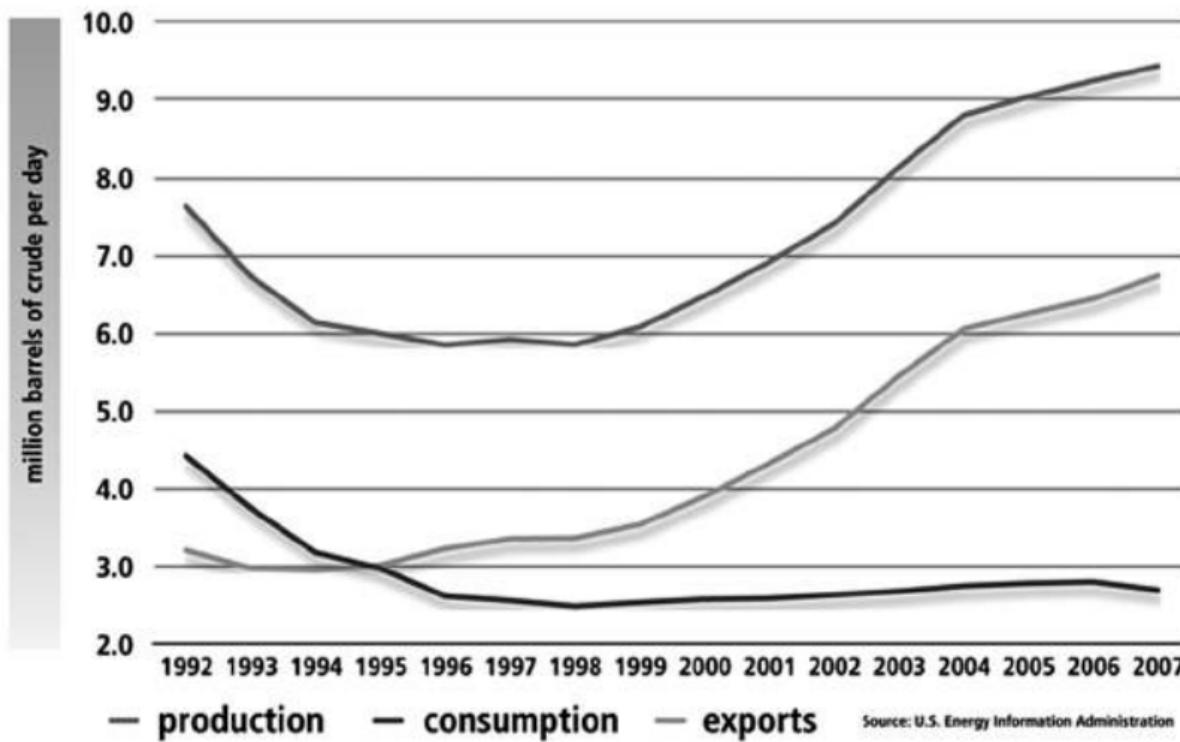


Male

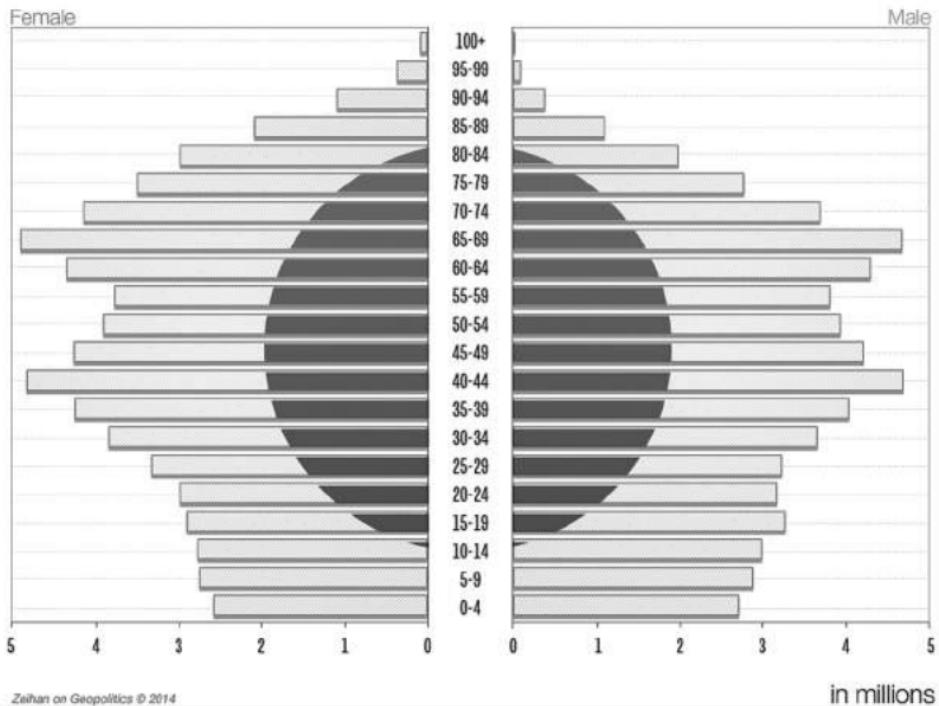


in millions

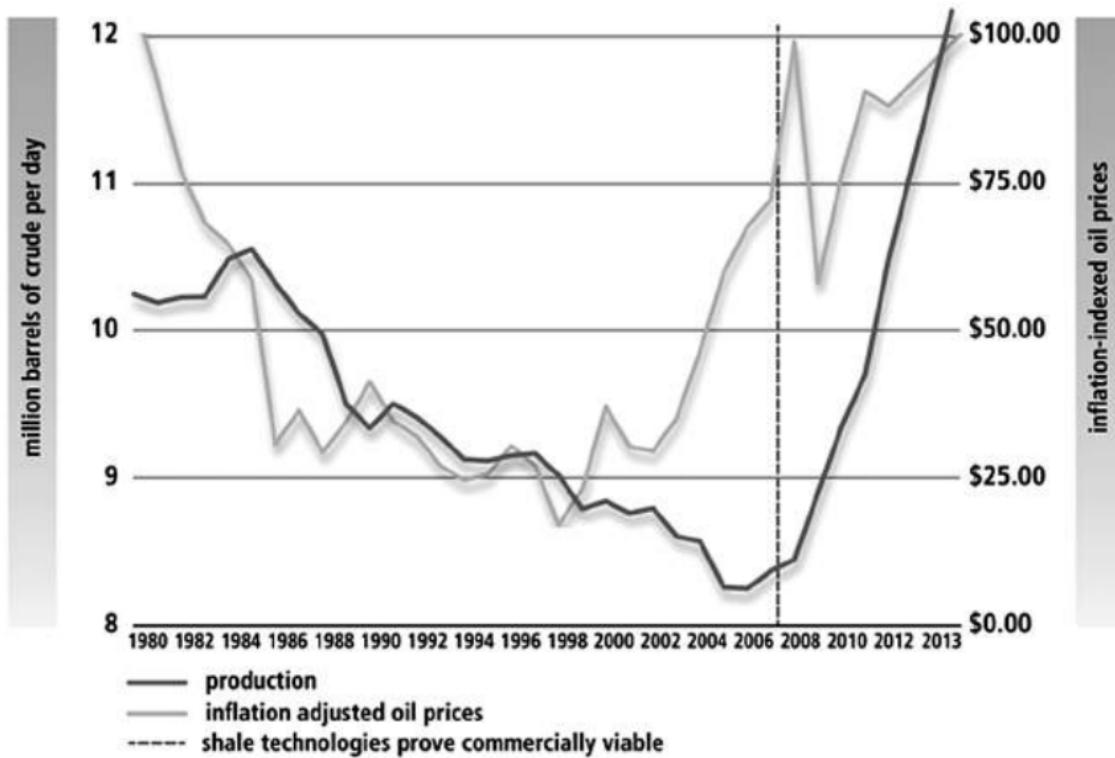
Russian Oil Production, Consumption and Exports



JAPAN DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



United States Oil Production



The World At Night: Conventional Petroleum Basins



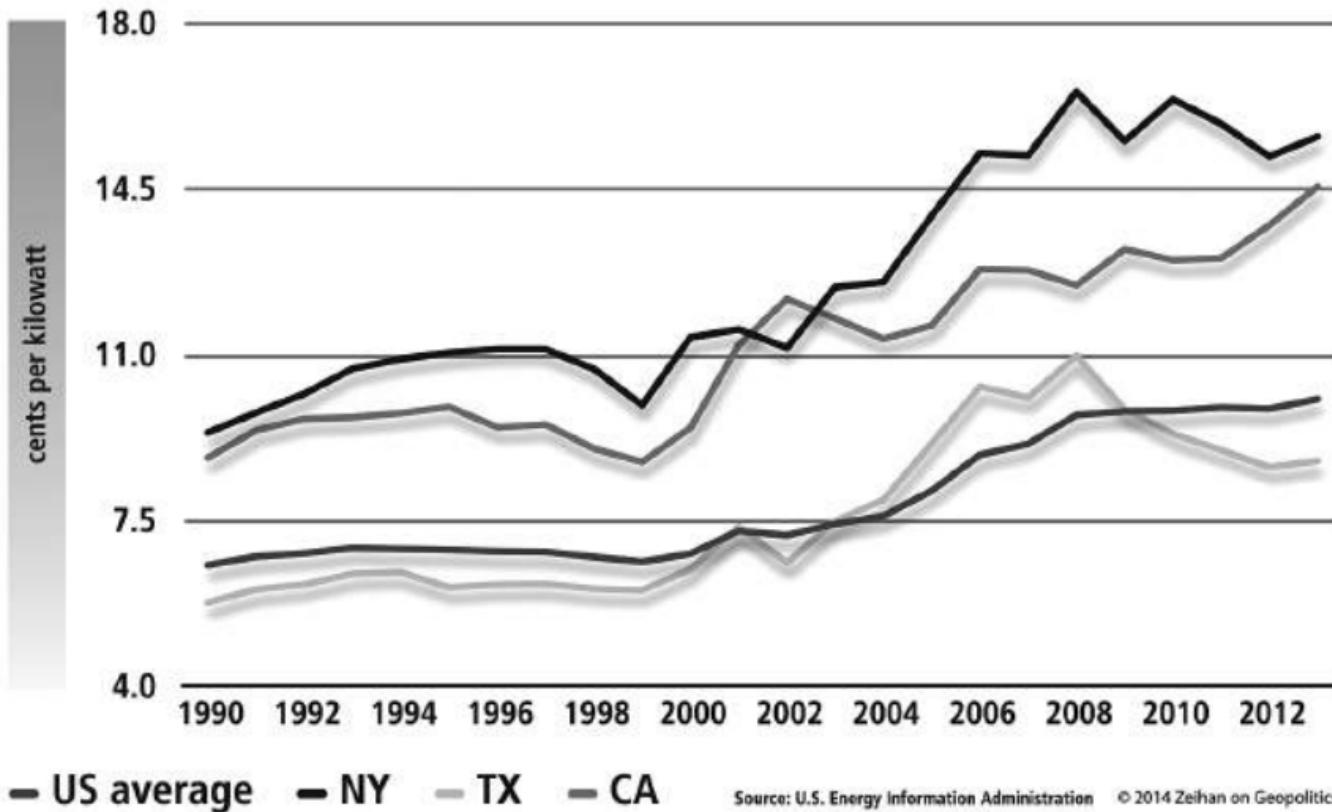
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The World At Night: Shale Petroleum Basins



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U.S. Electricity Prices



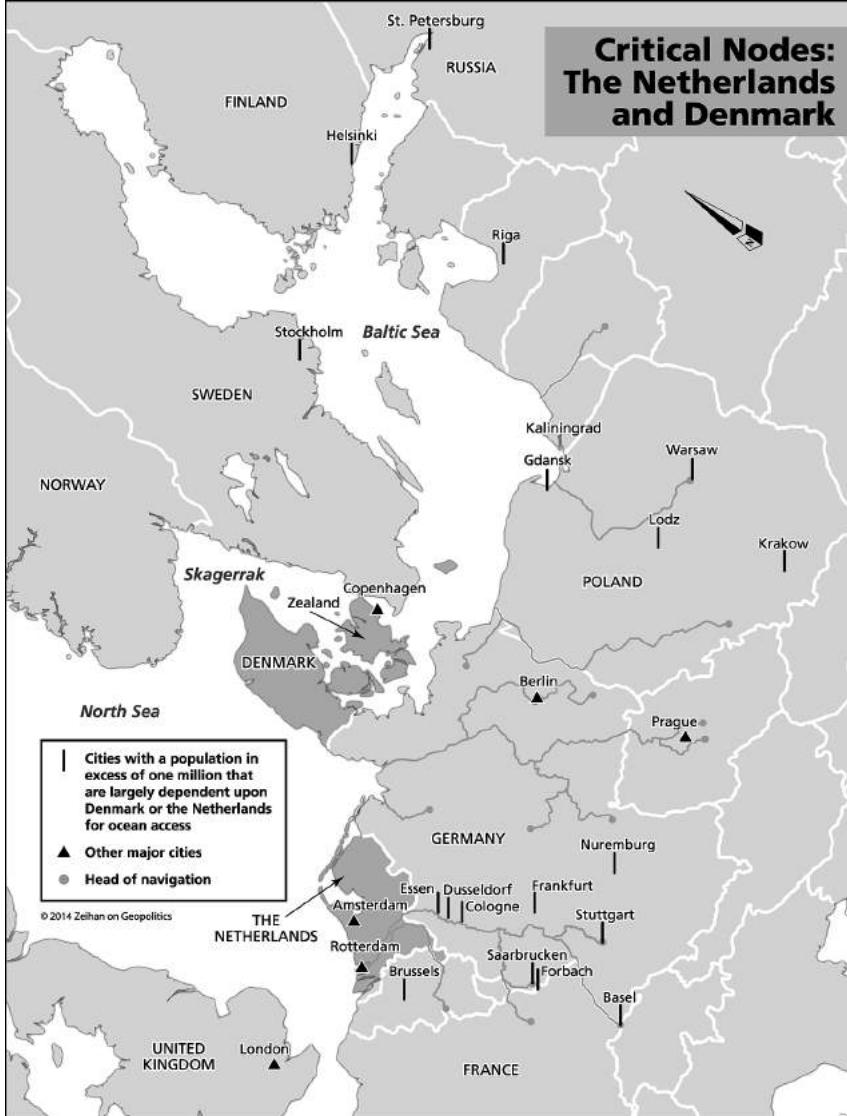
Global Stability Map: 2015-2030



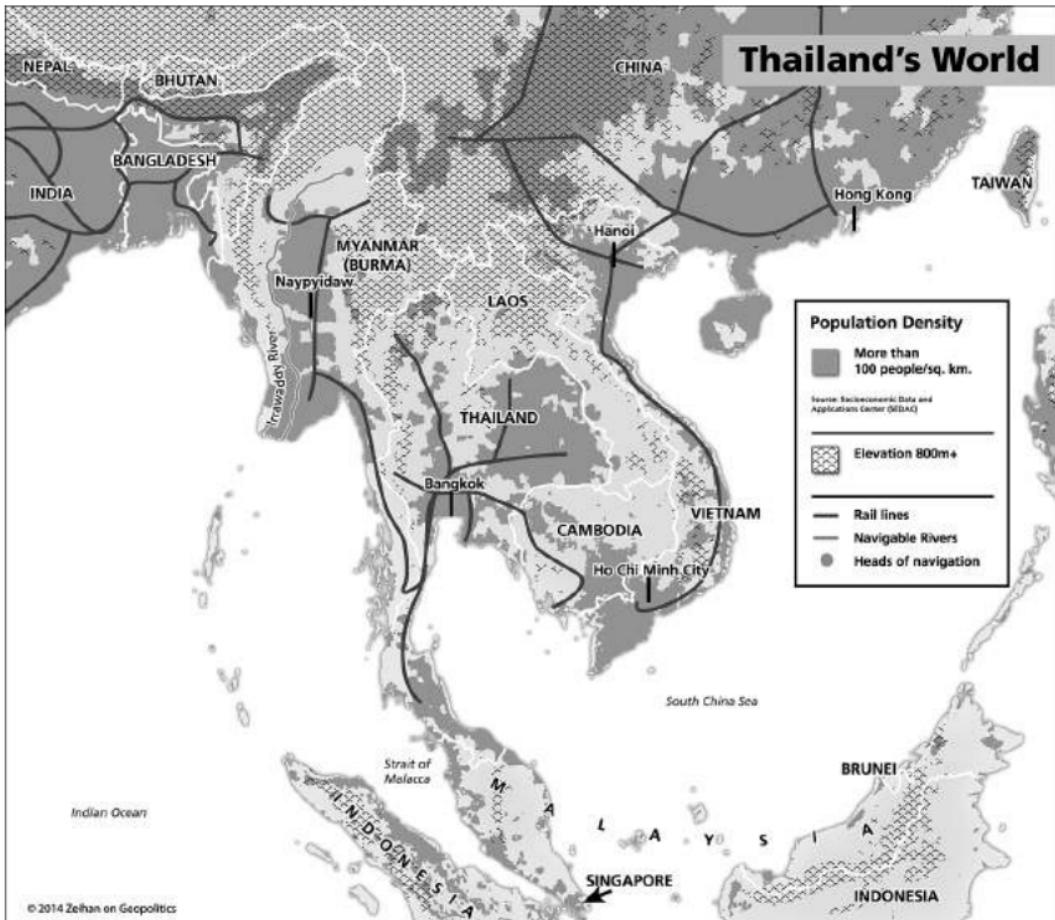
America's Inner Circle



Critical Nodes: The Netherlands and Denmark



Thailand's World



The Strait of Malacca and the Global Oil Trade

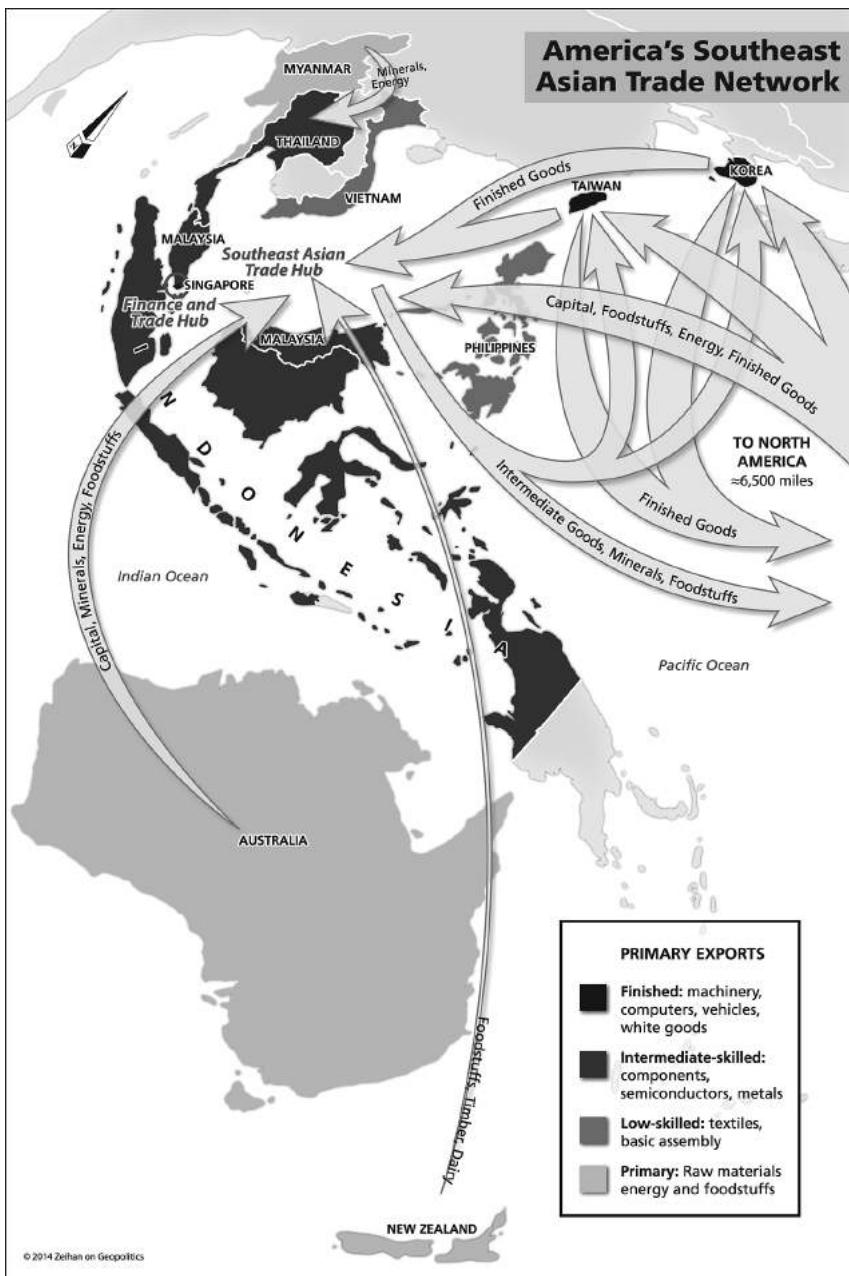
+ OIL IMPORTERS:
IMPORTS IN
MILLION BPD

* OIL EXPORTERS:
EXPORTS IN
MILLION BPD

- * Saudi Arabia: 8.8
- * UAE: 2.6
- * Kuwait: 2.4
- * Iran: 1.9
- * Qatar: 1.4
- * Oman: 0.78



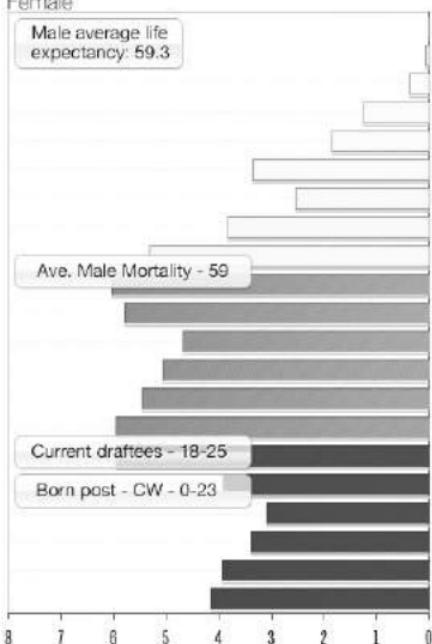
America's Southeast Asian Trade Network



RUSSIA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

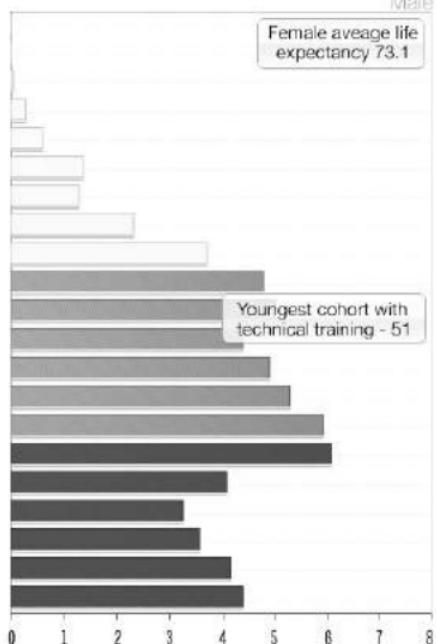
Female

Male average life expectancy: 59.3



Male

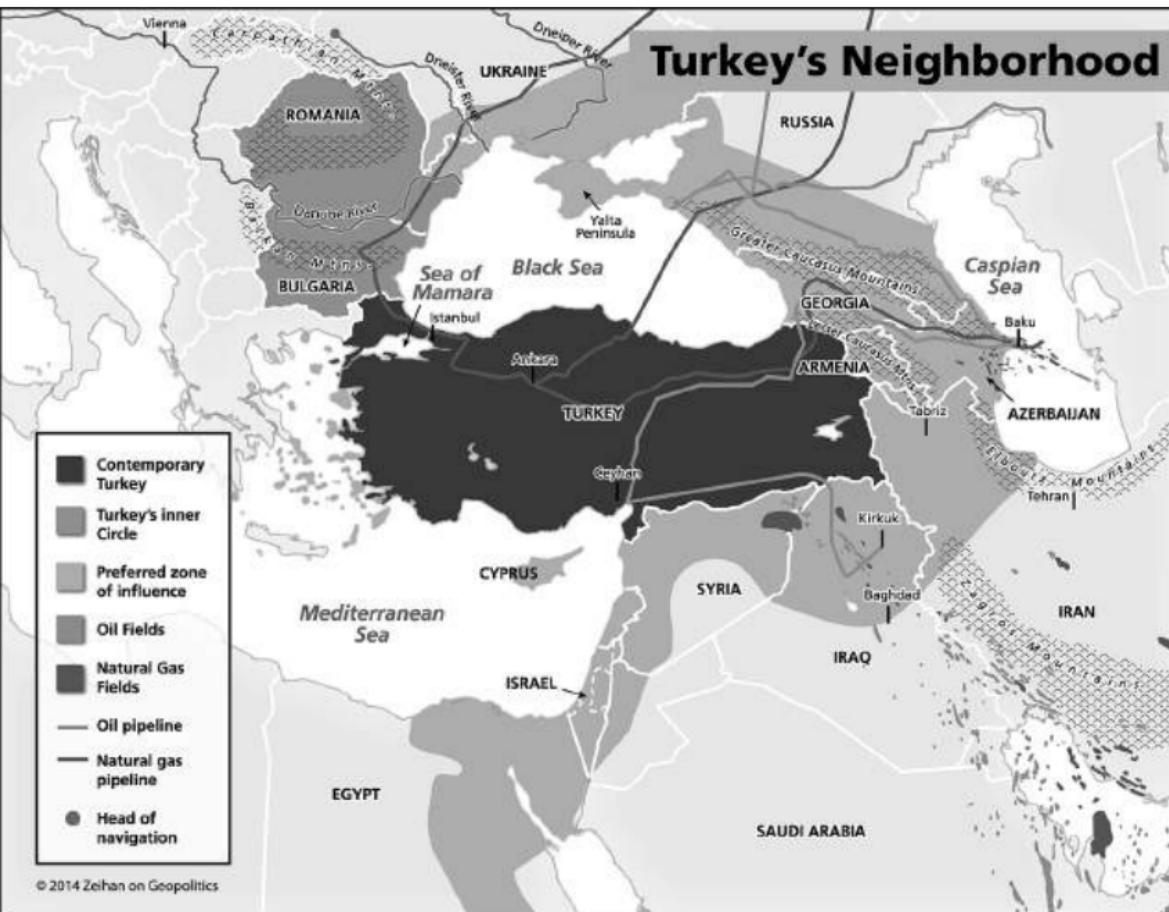
Female average life expectancy 73.1



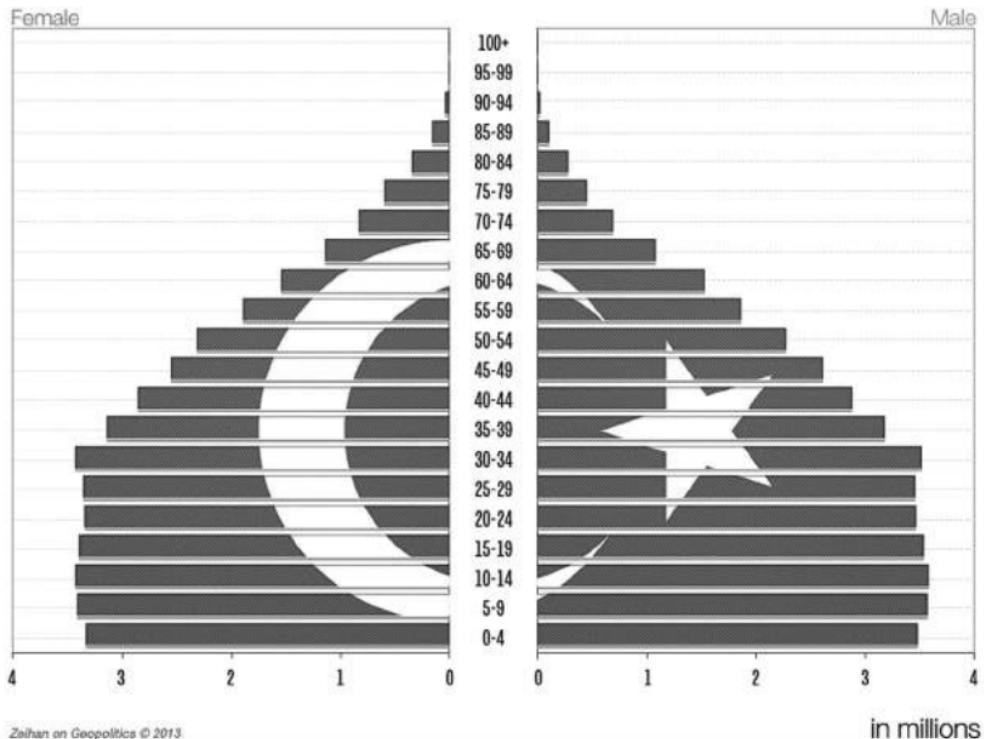
Russia's Western Borderlands



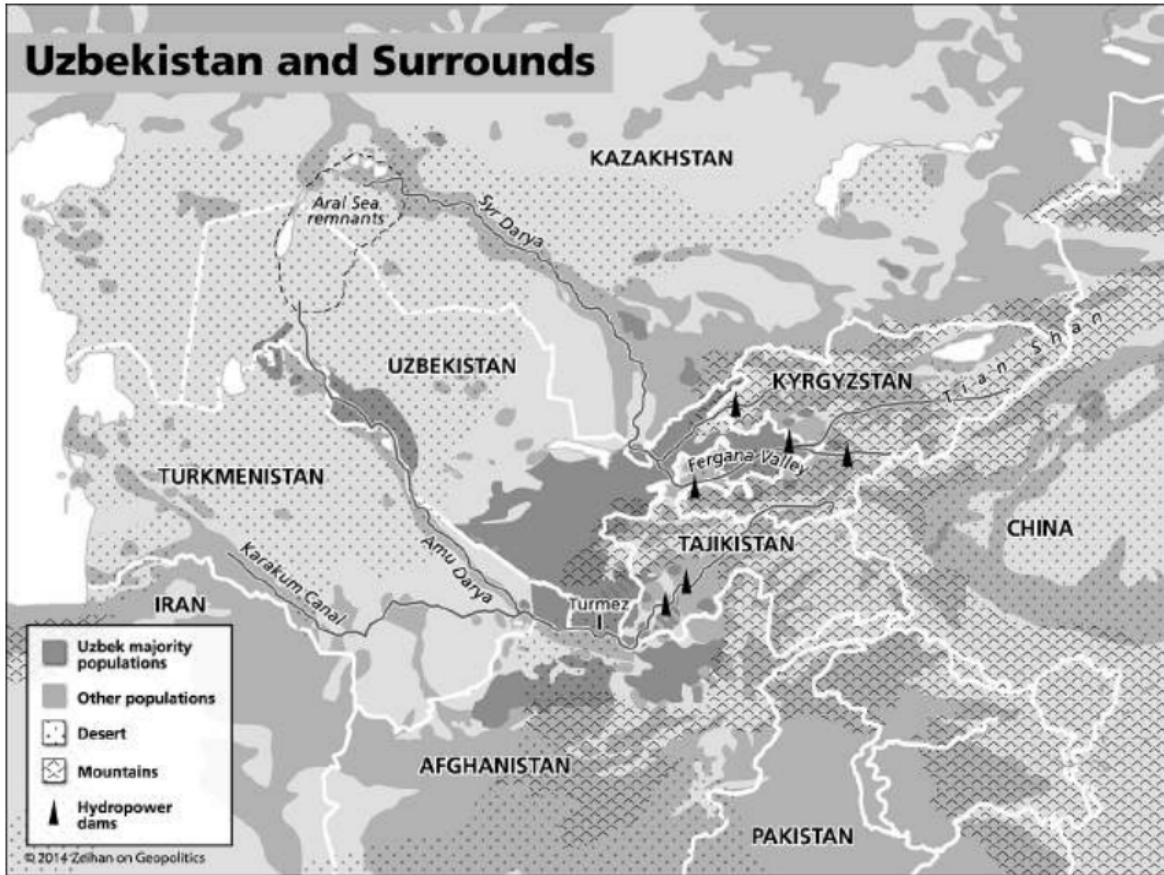
Turkey's Neighborhood



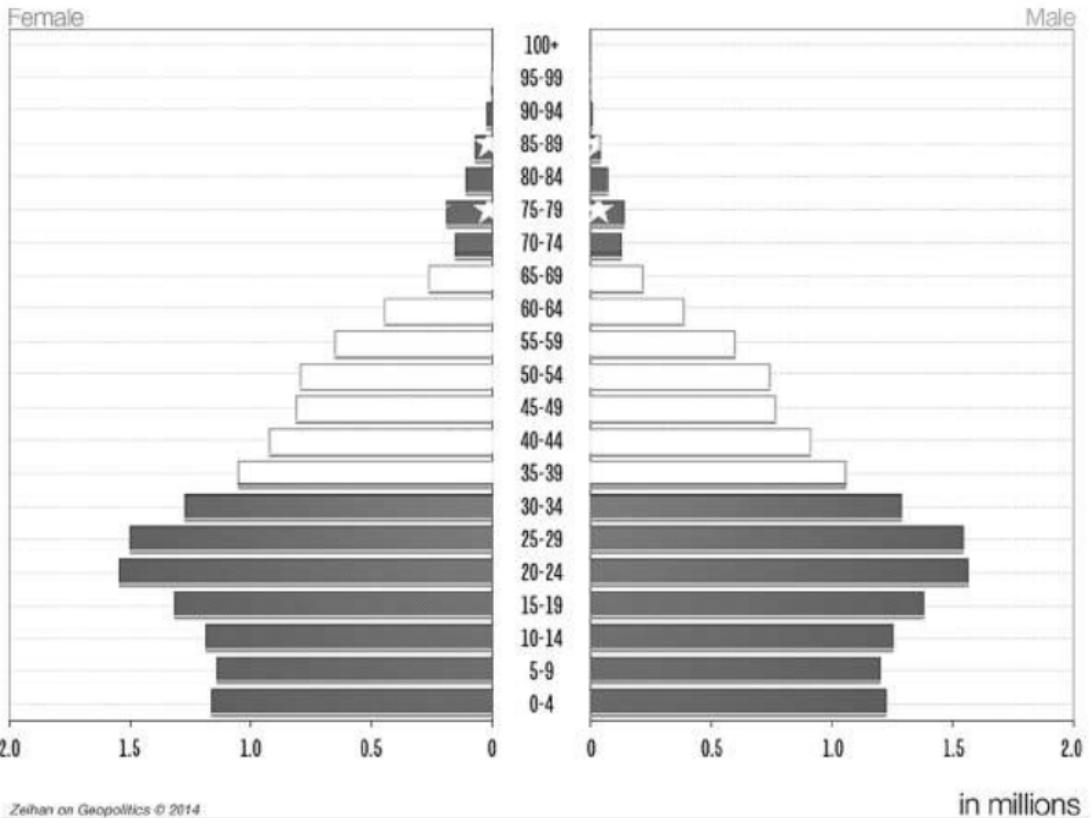
TURKEY DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



Uzbekistan and Surrounds

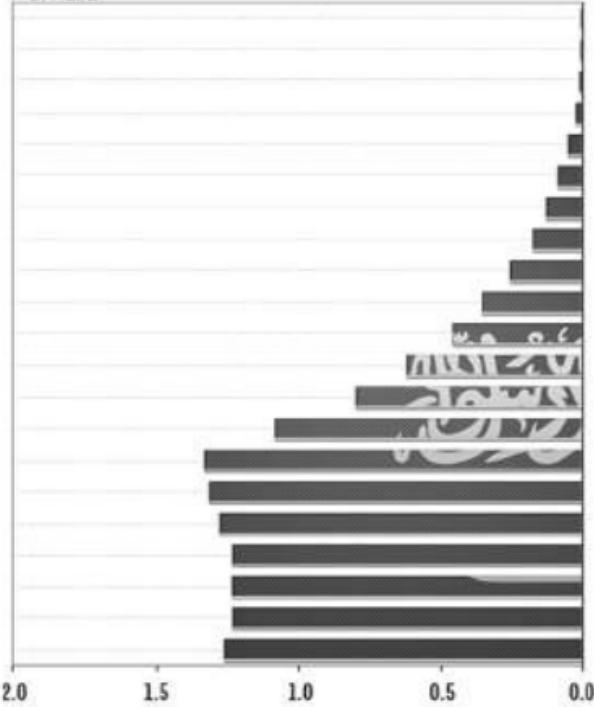


UZBEKISTAN DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

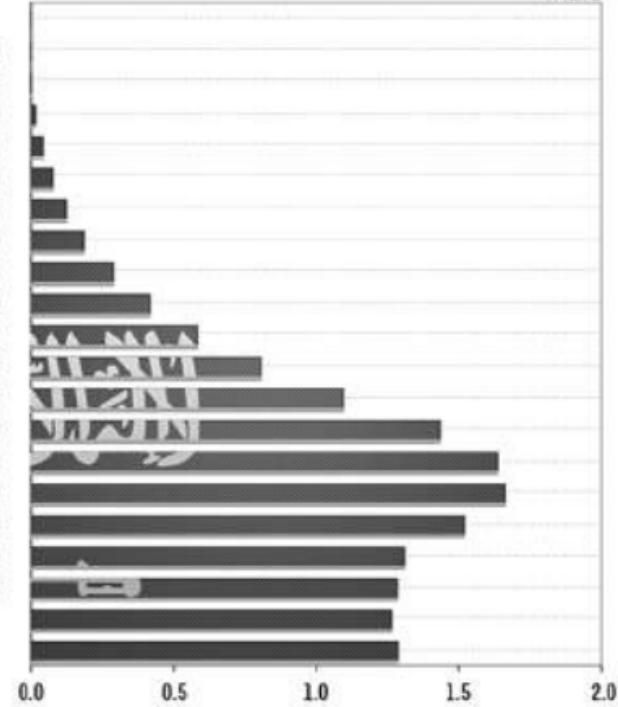


SAUDI ARABIA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

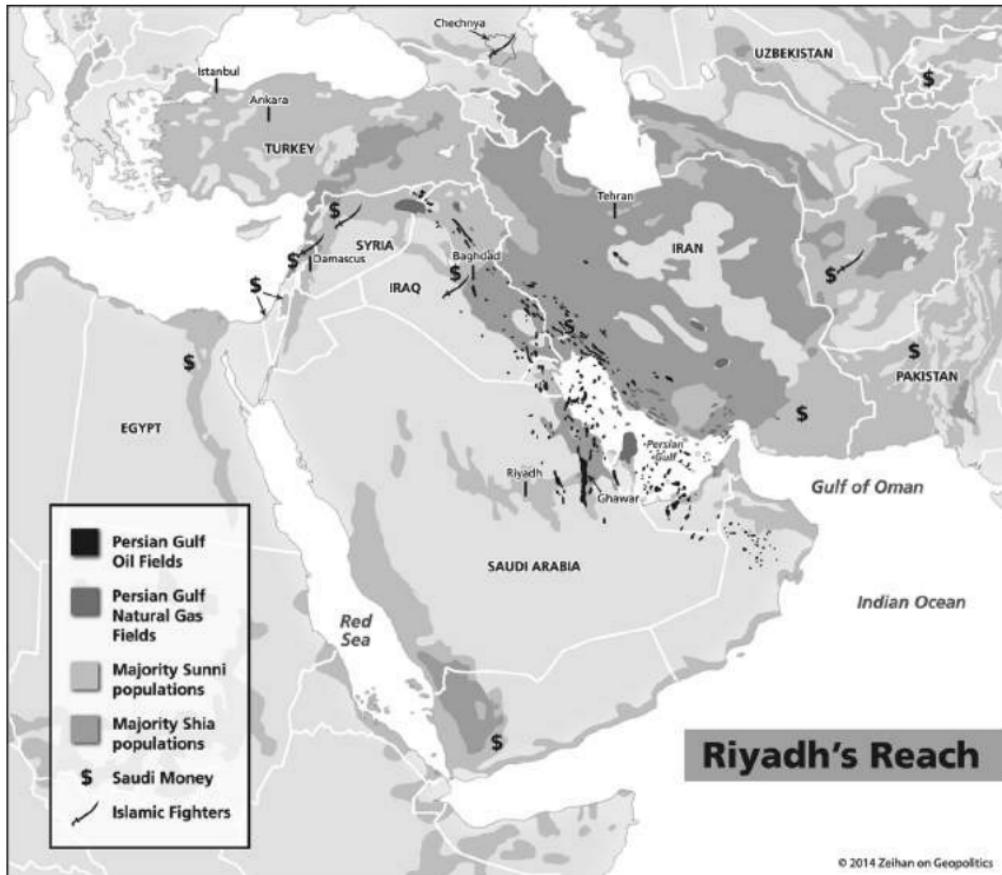
Female



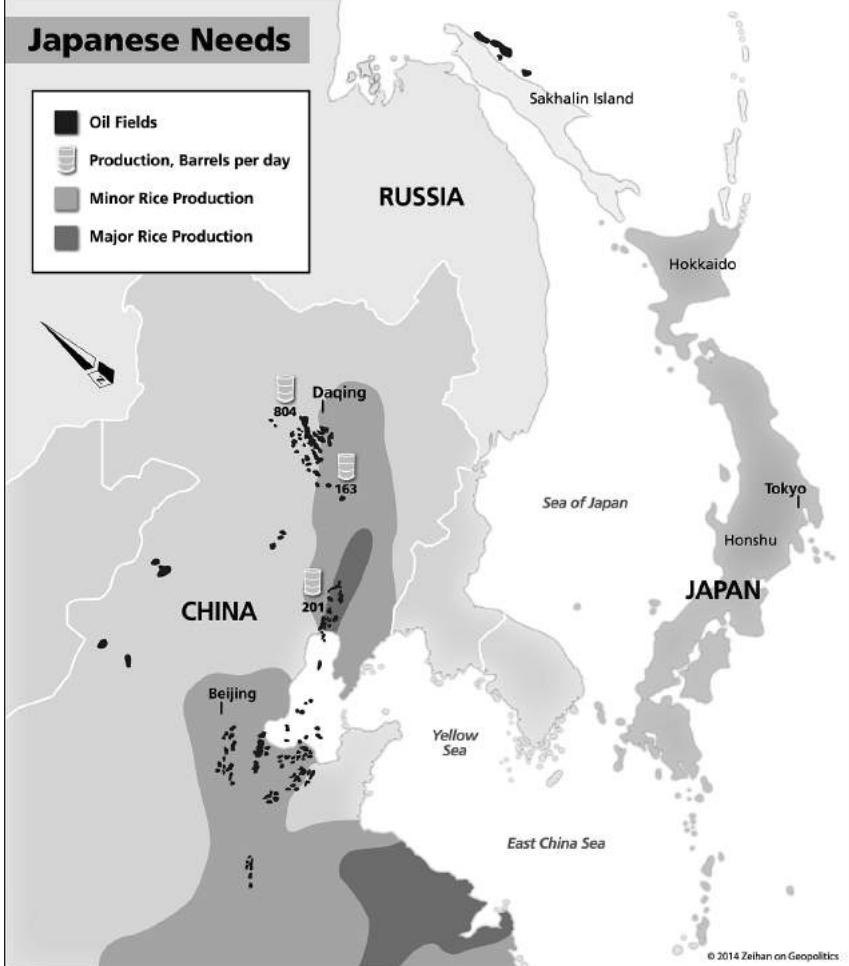
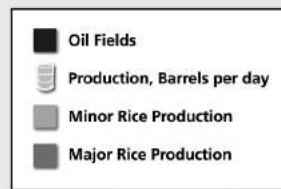
Male



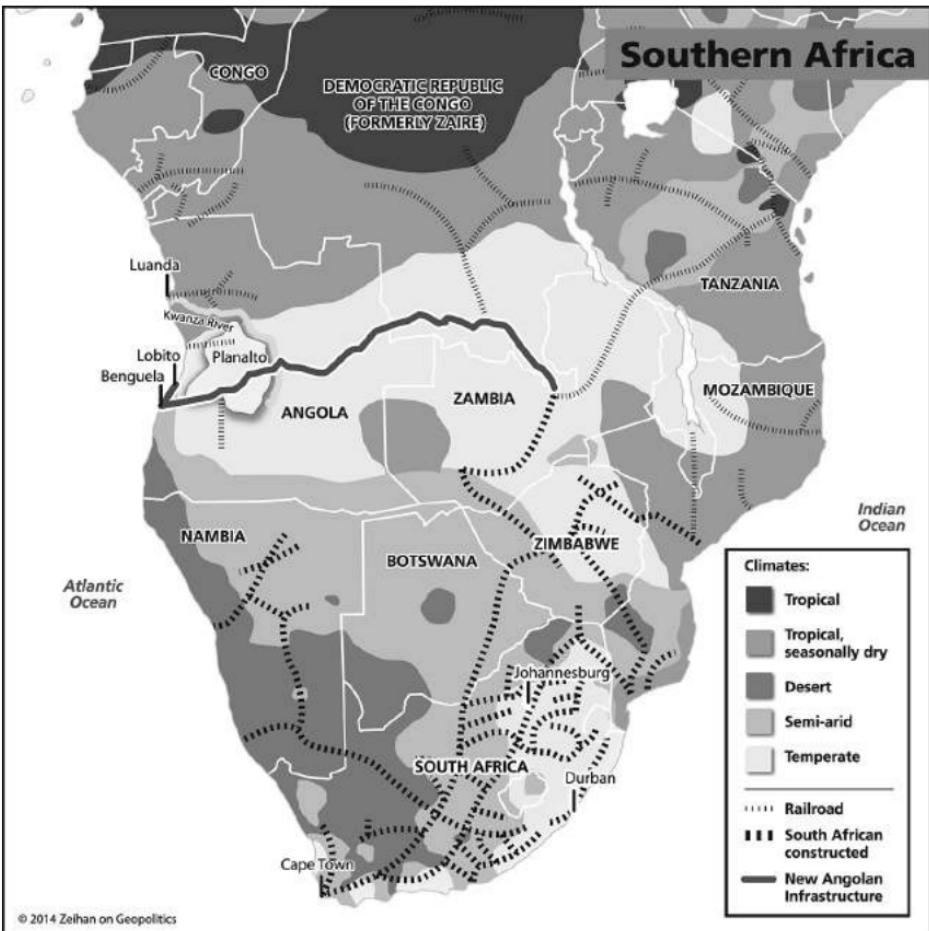
in millions



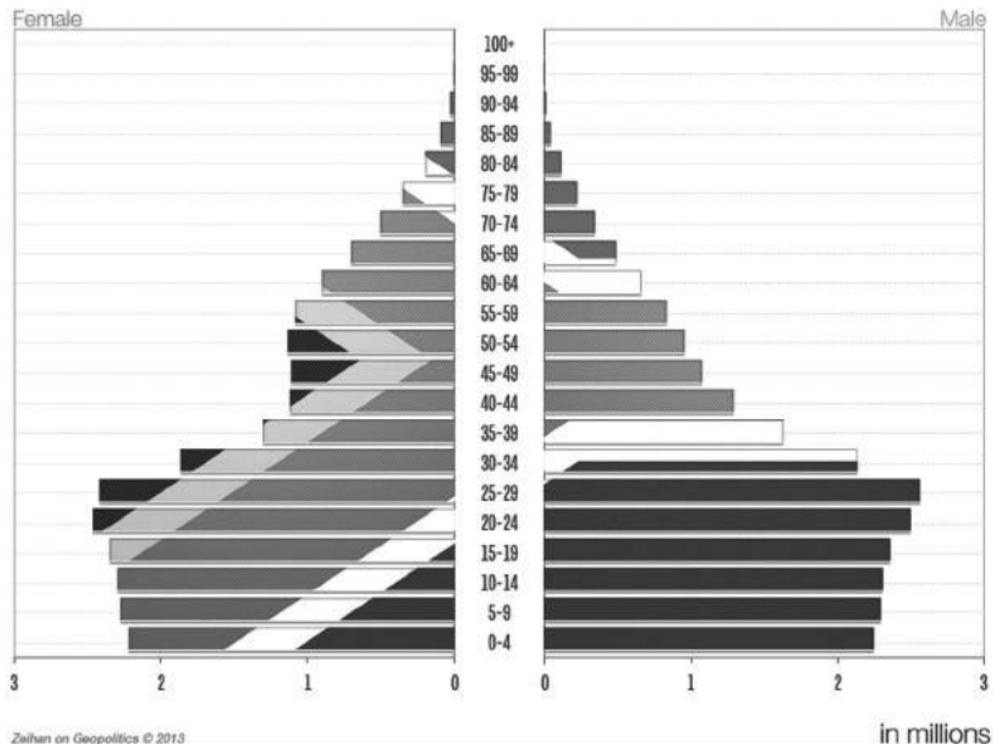
Japanese Needs



Southern Africa



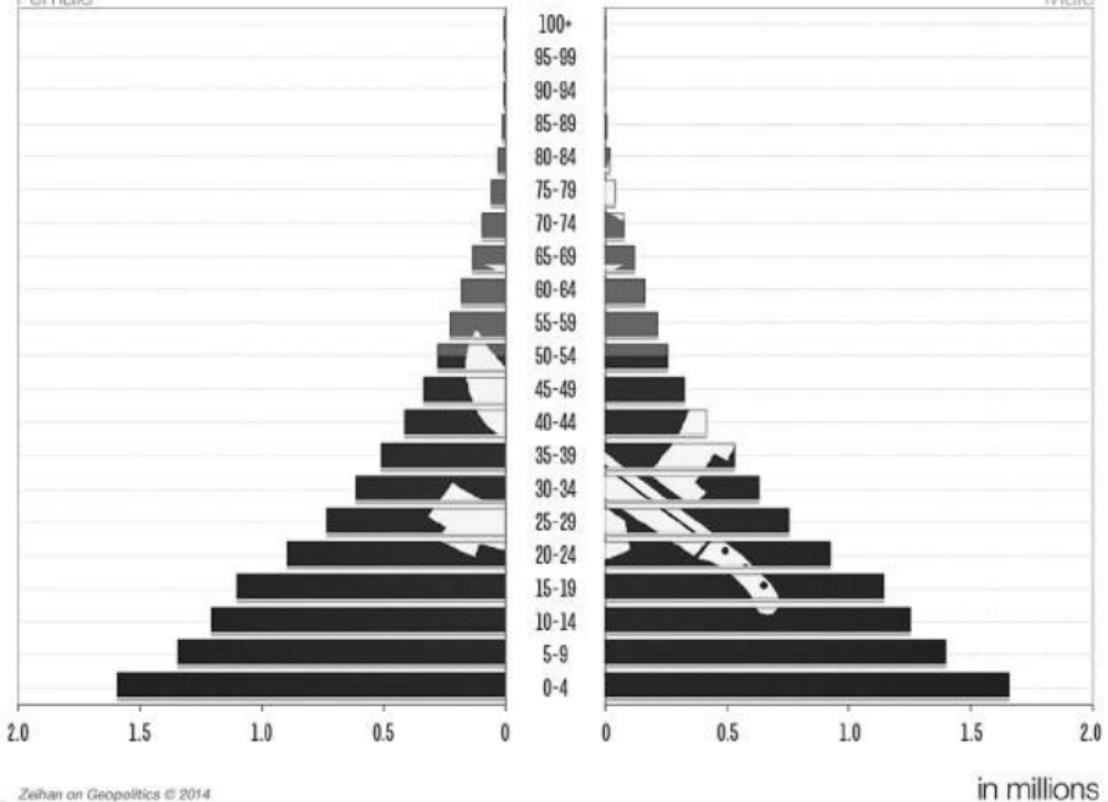
SOUTH AFRICA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



ANGOLA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

Female

Male

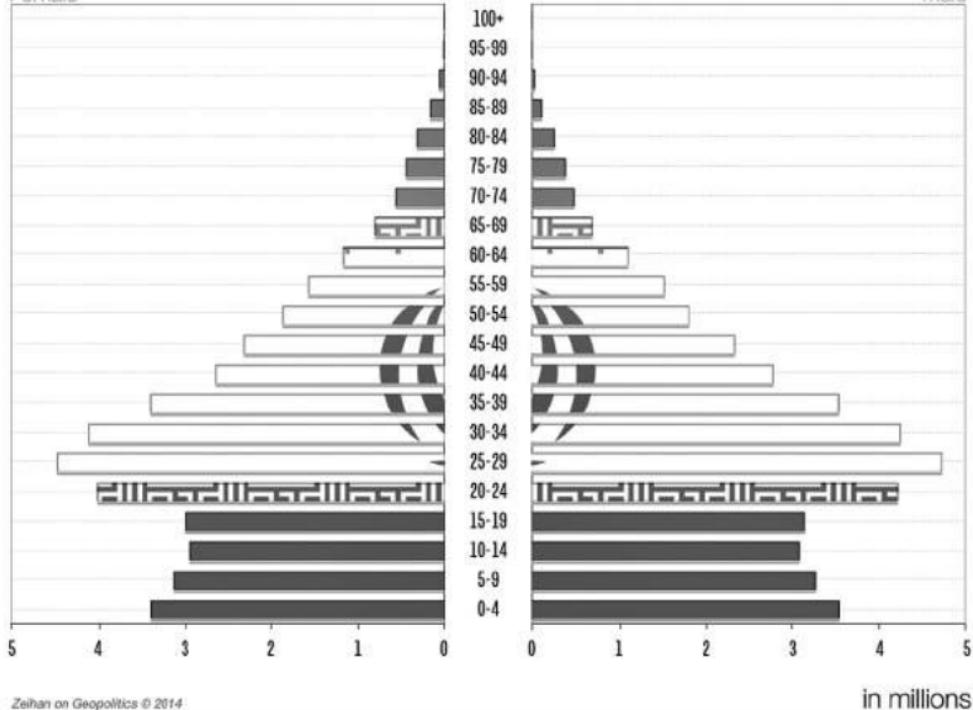




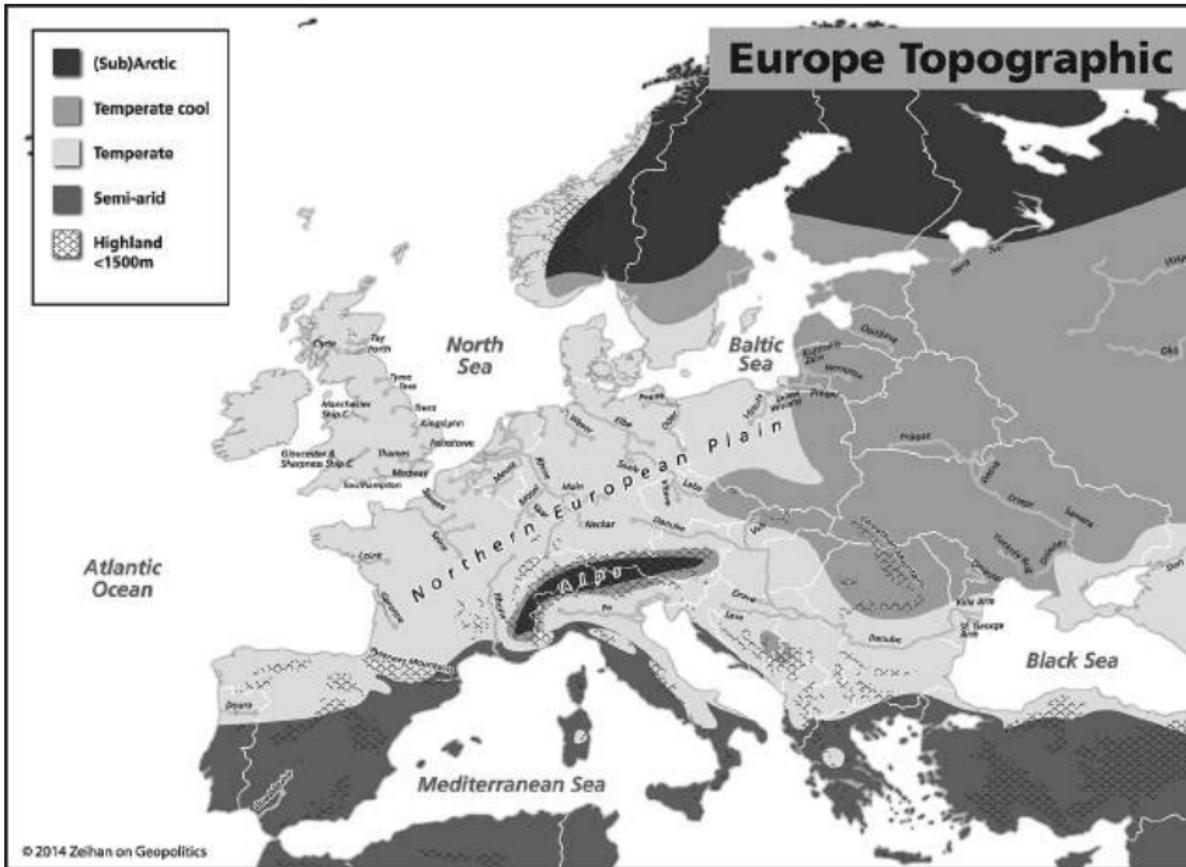
IRAN DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

Female

Male



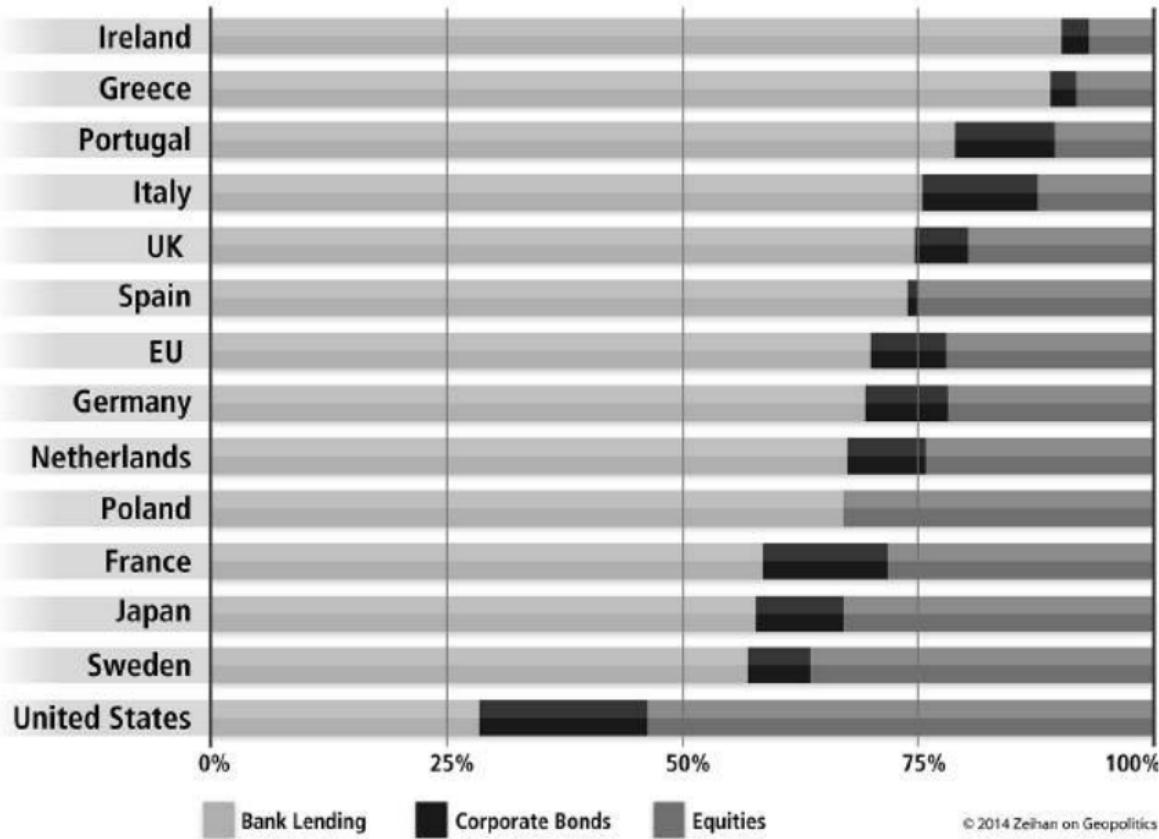
Europe Topographic



Europe Political

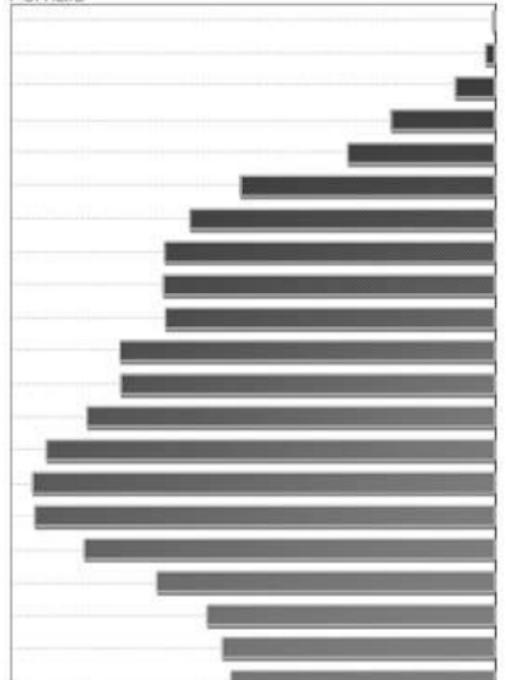


Private Sources of Funding, 2011

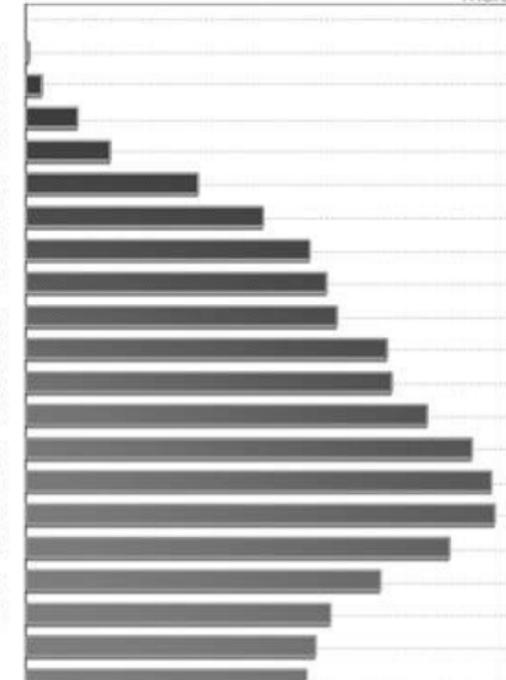


COMBINED DEMOGRAPHY OF PORTUGAL, SPAIN, ITALY AND GREECE: 2000

Female

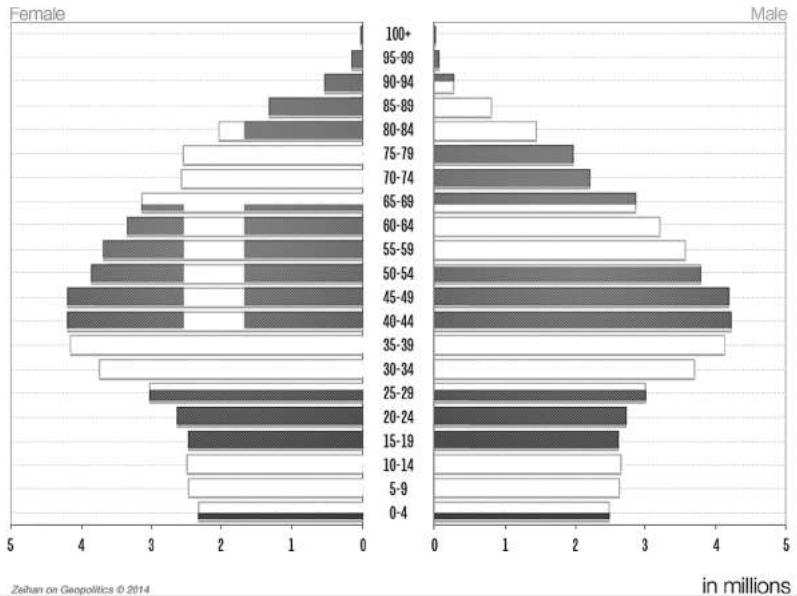


Male

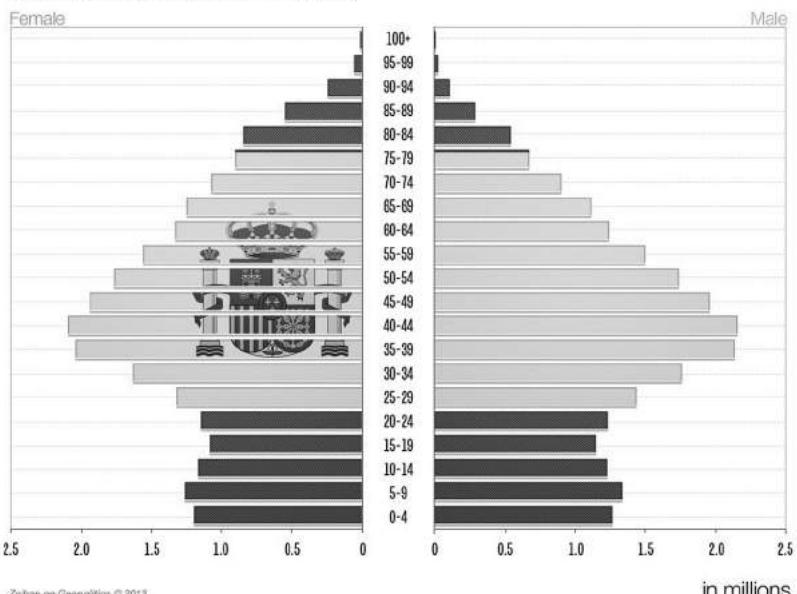


in millions

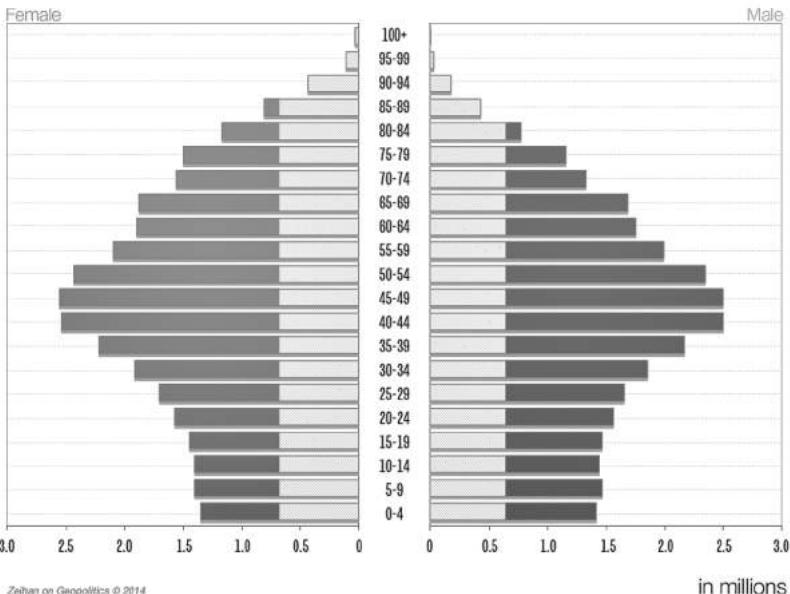
GREECE DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



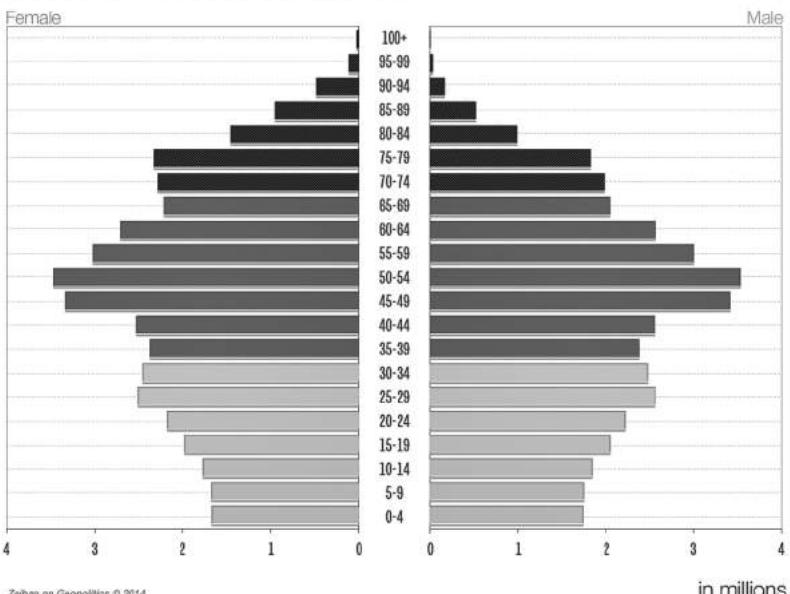
SPAIN DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



ITALY DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

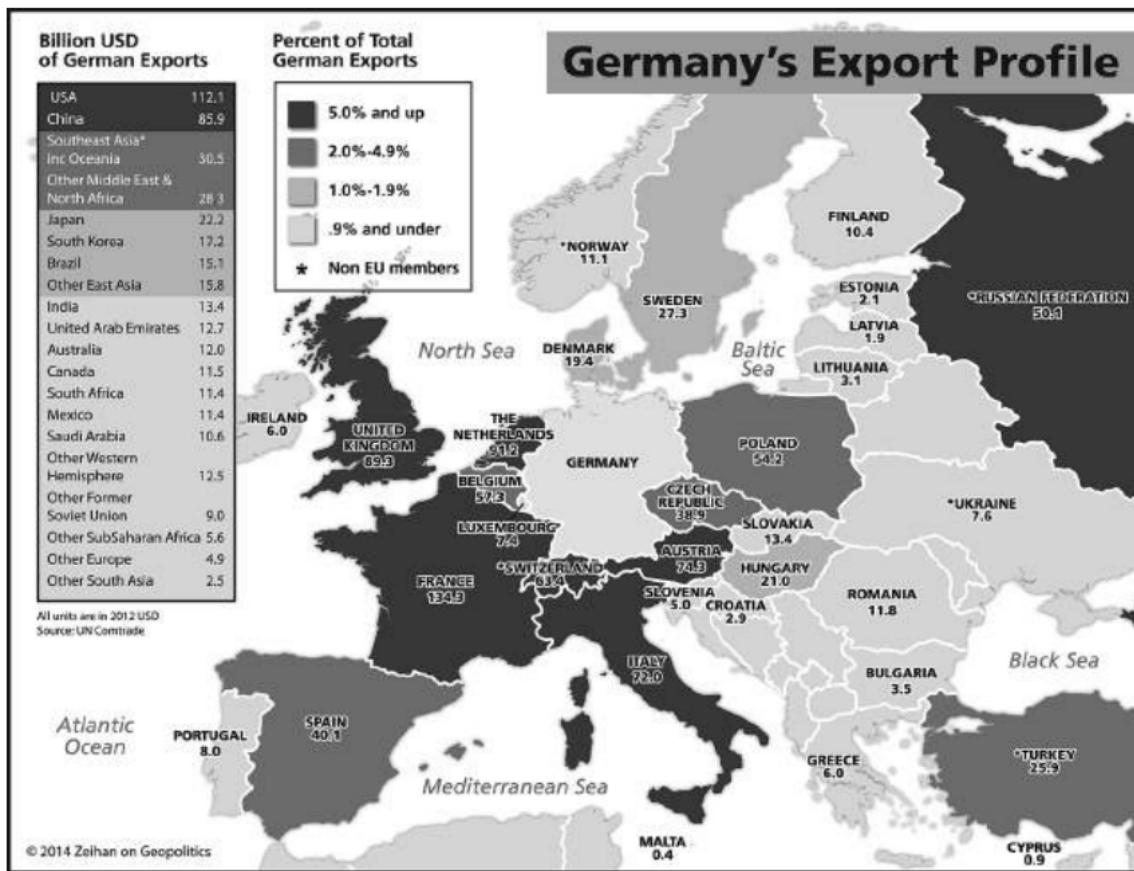


GERMANY DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



Zelhan on Geopolitics © 2014

Germany's Export Profile



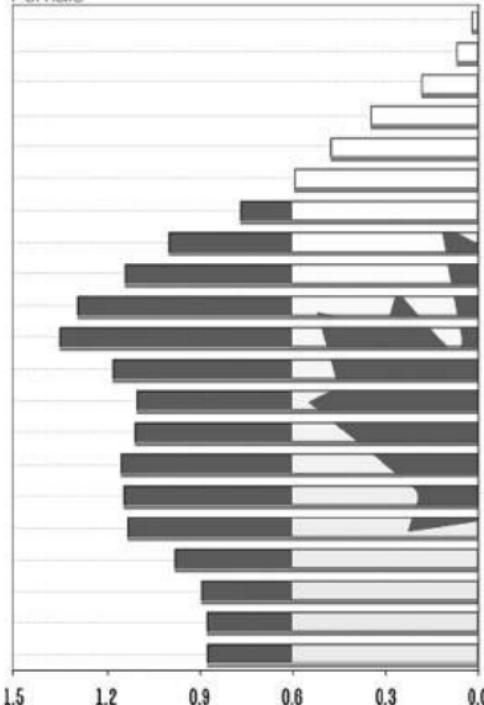
And the shield isn't done. It also hives off Ontario from Quebec. There is only one multilane road connecting the two, the 401, which follows the shore of Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River for nearly its entire length. The shield reaches down all the way to the lake and the river in several places, and dominates the northern suburbs of Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, and Quebec City, complicating significant northward urban expansion. In fact, only Toronto is sufficiently free from the shield in other directions that it can expand in any meaningful way (mostly to the southwest along Lake Ontario). One result is that Ontarian and Quebecois cities sport some of the most expensive real estate in North America, despite being in a climate that is far from balmy. Another is that despite being surrounded by Anglophone Canada, the Quebecois of Quebec have so few practical connections to their neighbors that they have fairly easily been able to maintain their Francophone status.

East of Francophone Canada lie the Maritime provinces, which are, well, maritime and not linked into the rest of the country much at all. From the bridge crossing at Quebec City, a single road snakes across two hundred miles of the southern extension of the Canadian Shield south of

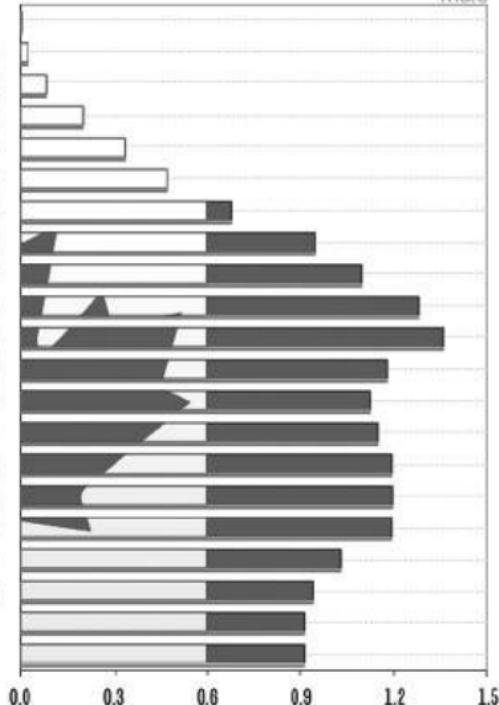


CANADA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

Female



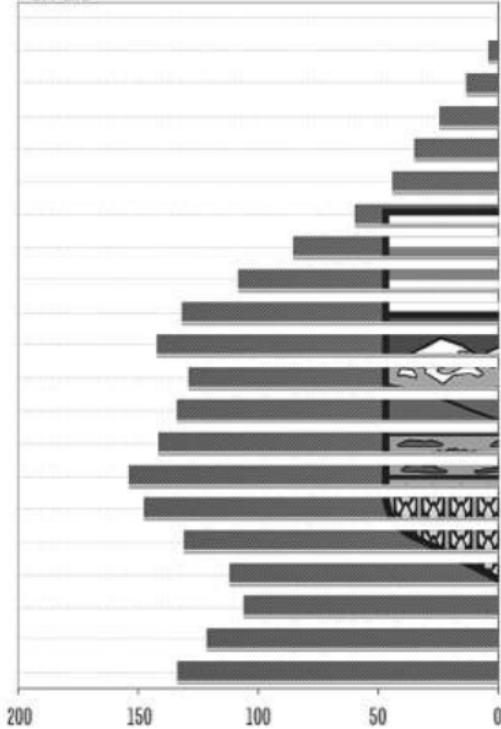
Male



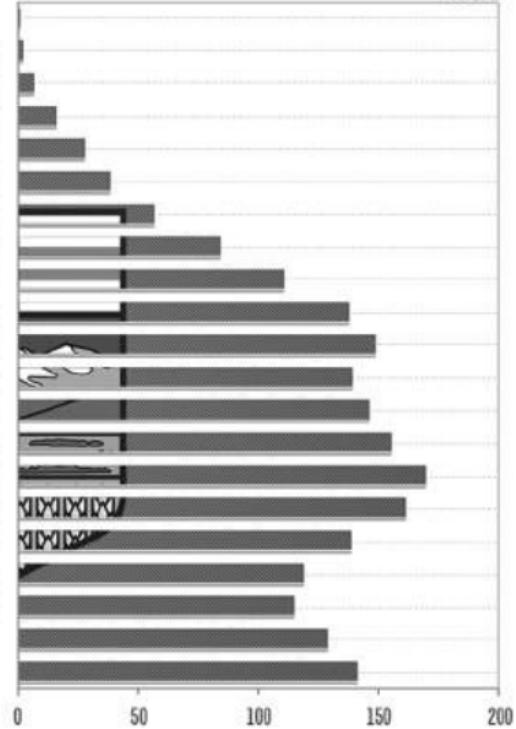
in millions

ALBERTA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

Female



Male



in thousands

Canadian-American Energy

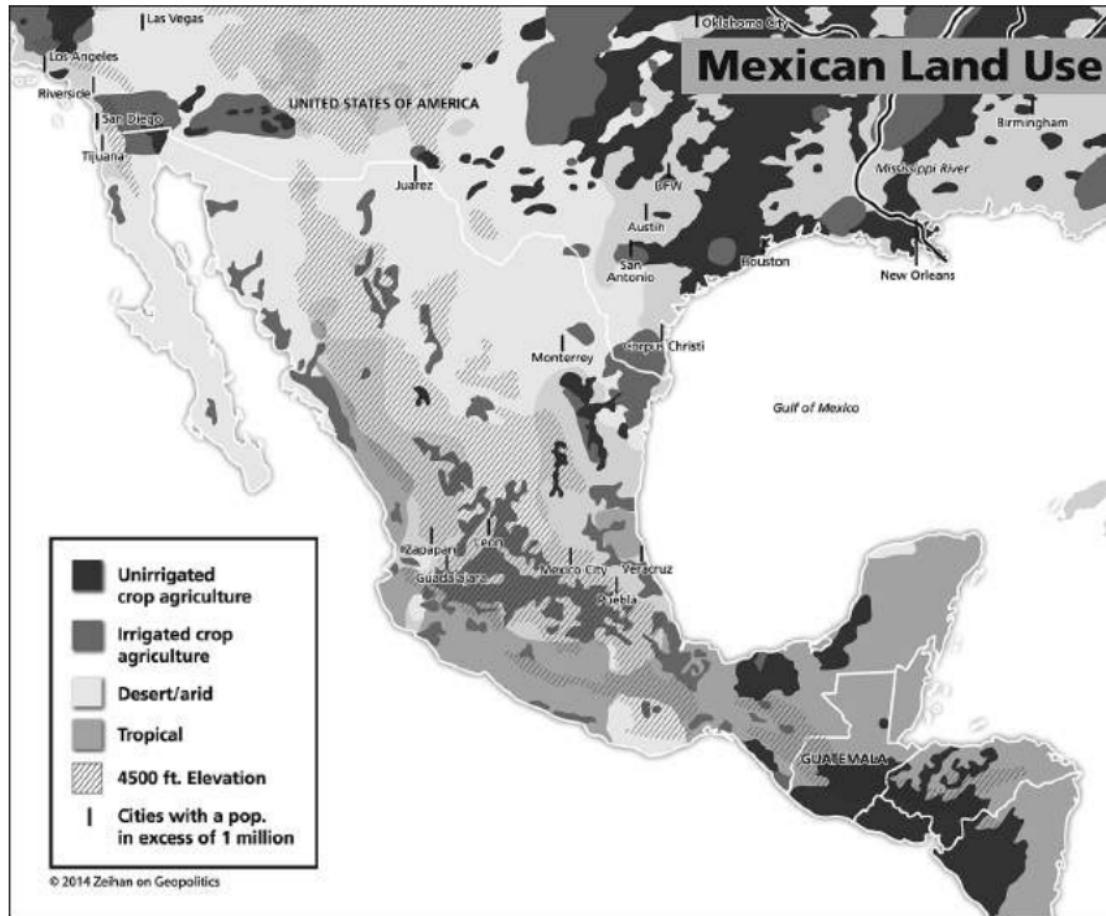


North American GDP

	per capita GDP in thousand U.S. dollars*	per capita GDP as a % of Canadian average	per capita GDP as a % of American average
Alberta (richest Canadian province)	82	153%	162%
British Columbia	50	93%	99%
Ontario	51	96%	102%
Quebec	46	85%	90%
Canada (national average)	54	100%	106%
PEI (poorest Canadian province)	39	72%	76%
Maryland (richest U.S. state)	70		139%
California	57		113%
New York	55		109%
US (national average)	51		100%
Texas	49		98%
Mississippi (poorest U.S. state)	37		73%

*2001 value of \$1.05 USD per CAN

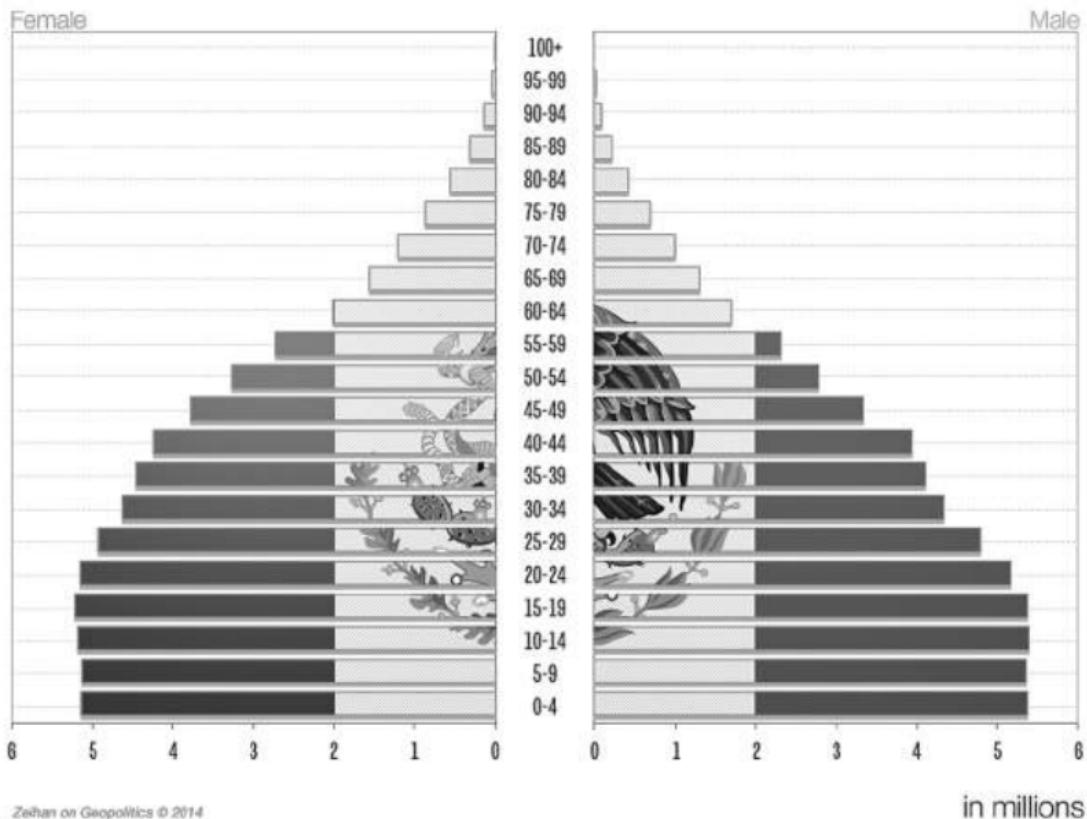
Sources: U.S. Census, Statistics Canada



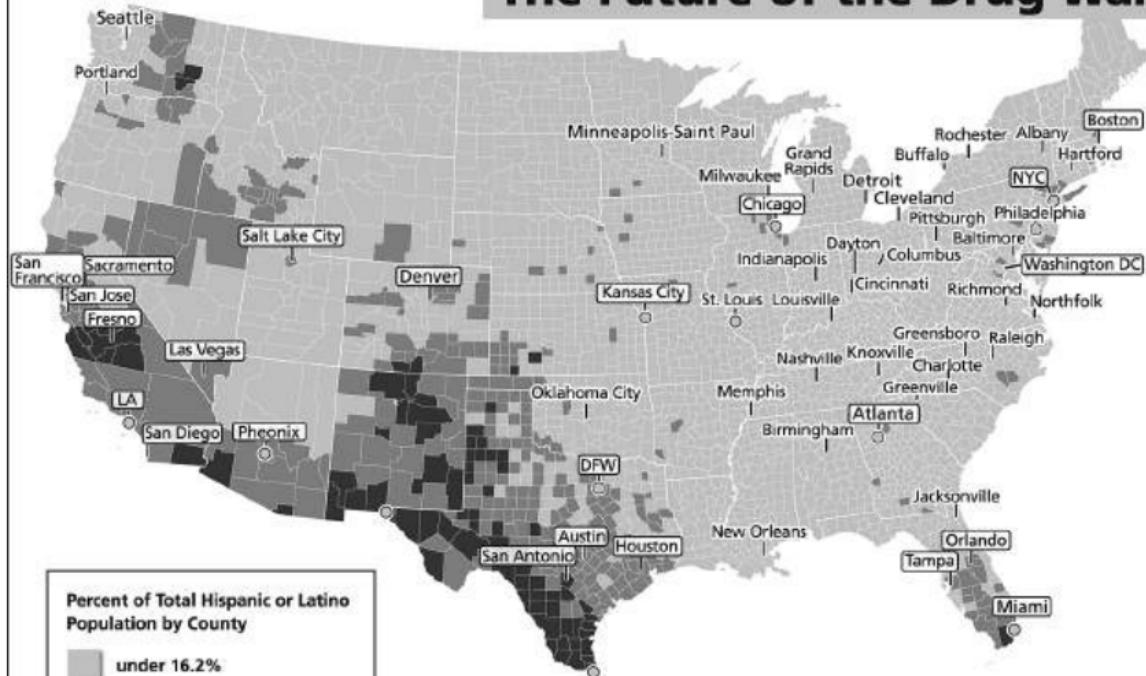
Mexican Infrastructure



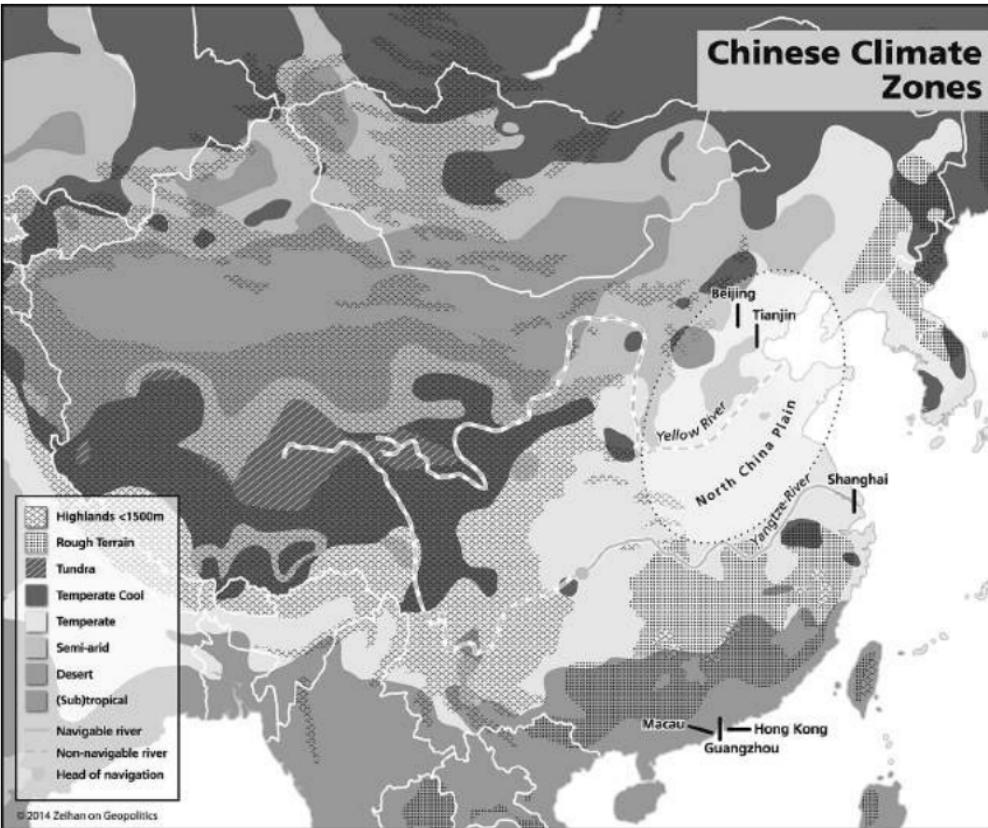
MEXICO DEMOGRAPHY: 2015



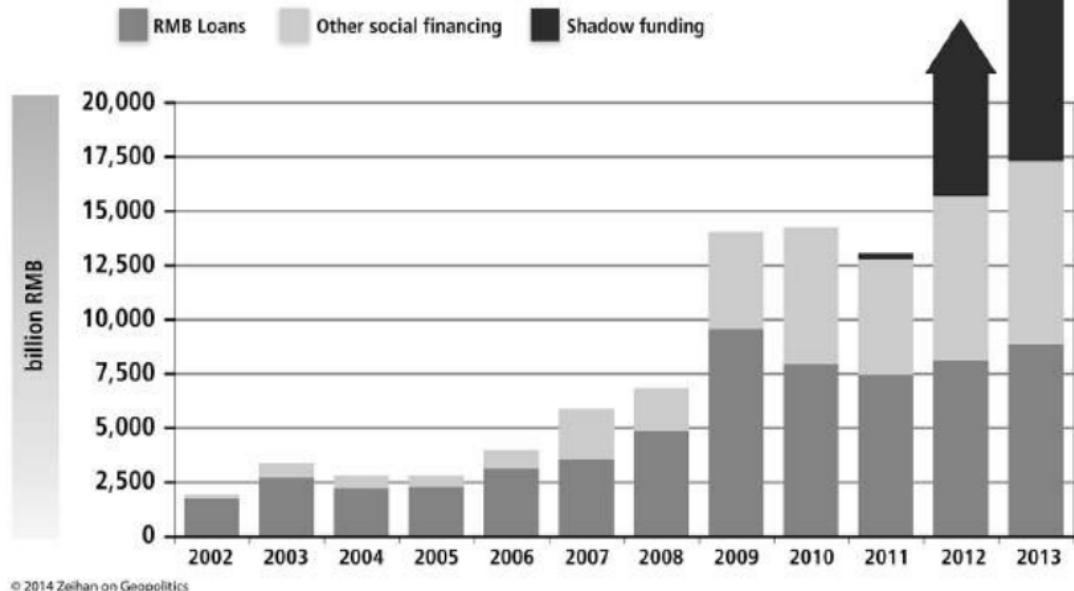
The Future of the Drug War



Chinese Climate Zones

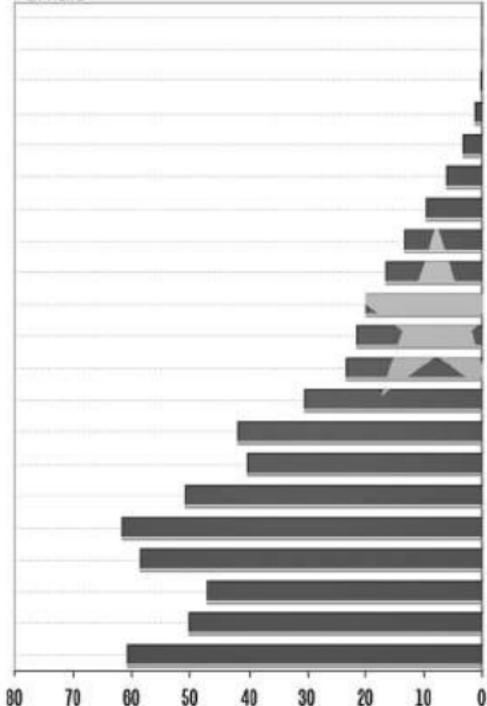


Chinese Lending

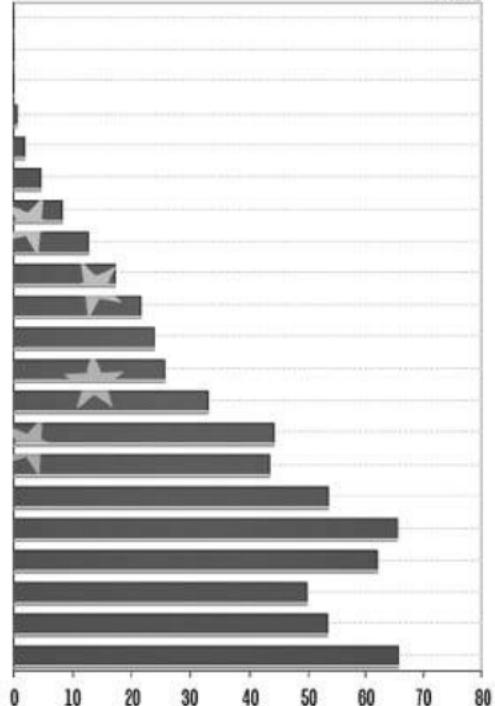


CHINA DEMOGRAPHY: 1990

Female



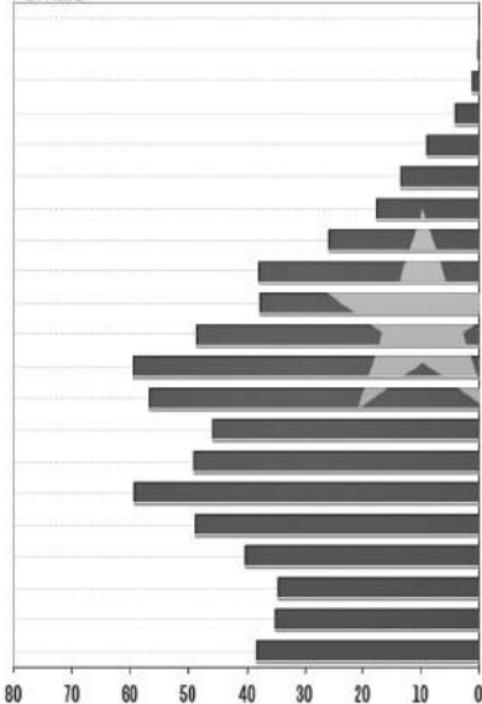
Male



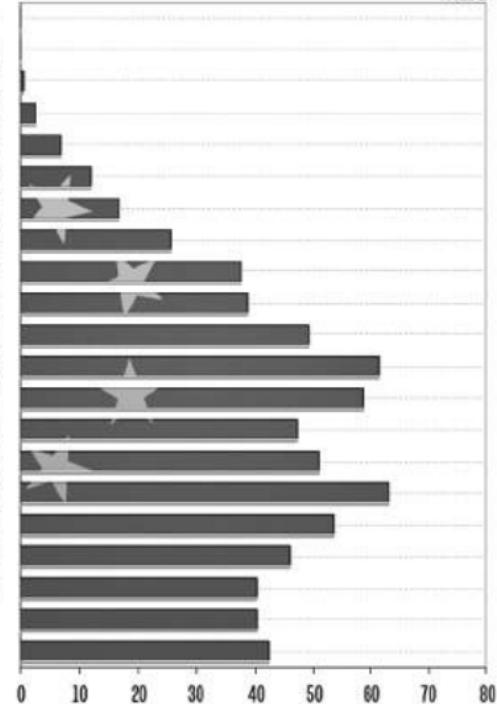
in millions

CHINA DEMOGRAPHY: 2015

Female



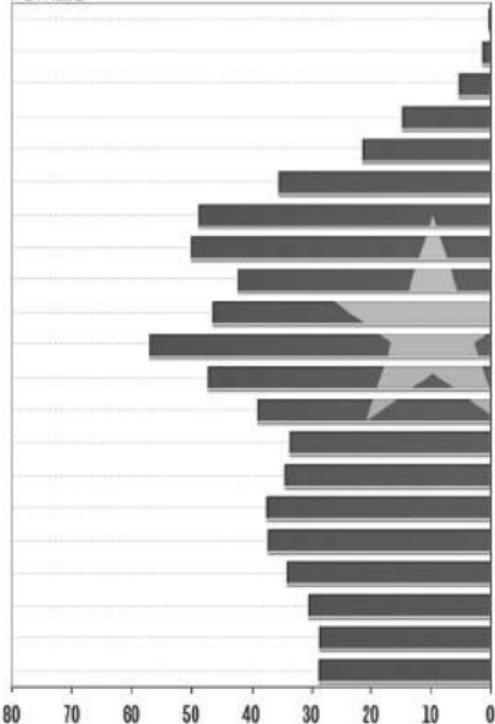
Male



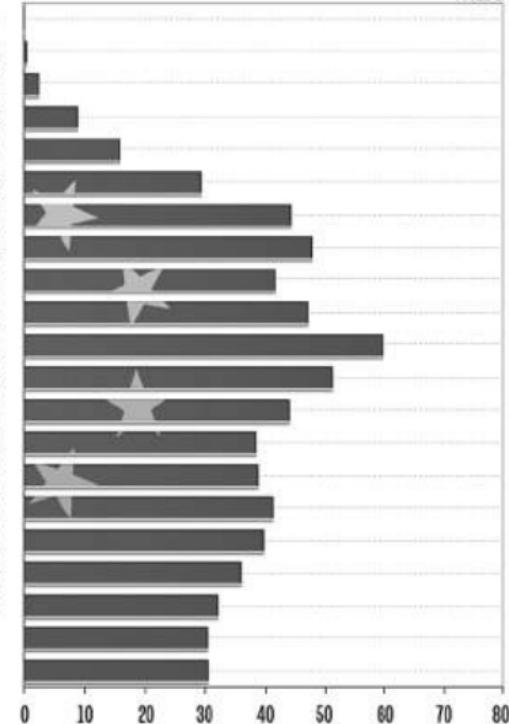
in millions

CHINA DEMOGRAPHY: 2040

Female

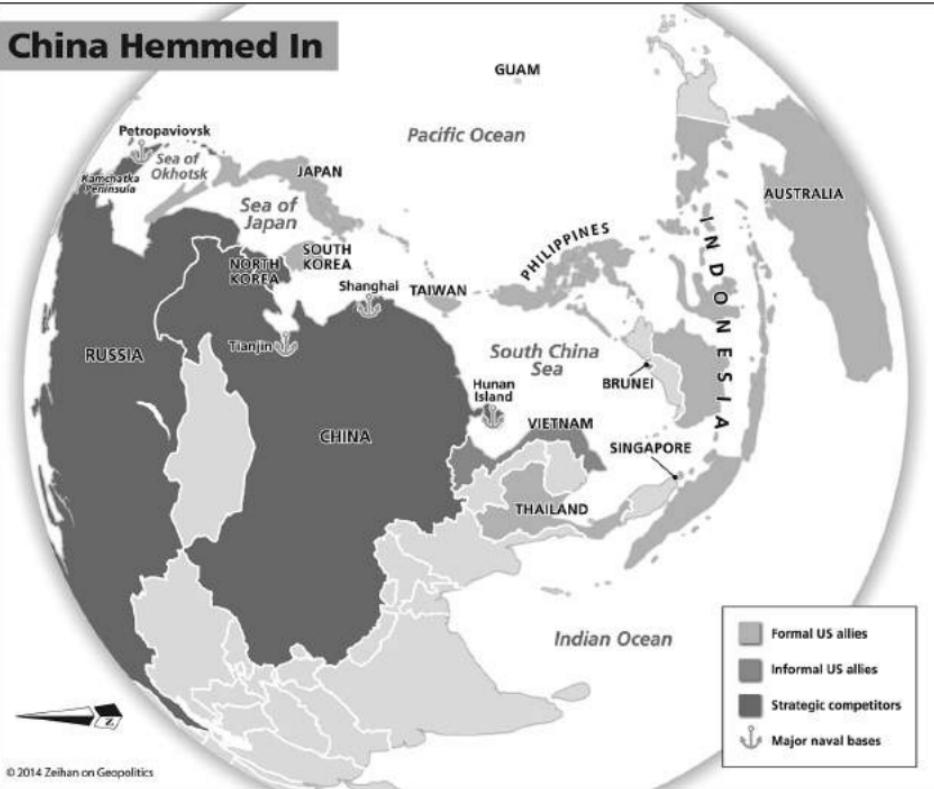


Male



in millions

China Hemmed In



Chinese Economic Concentrations

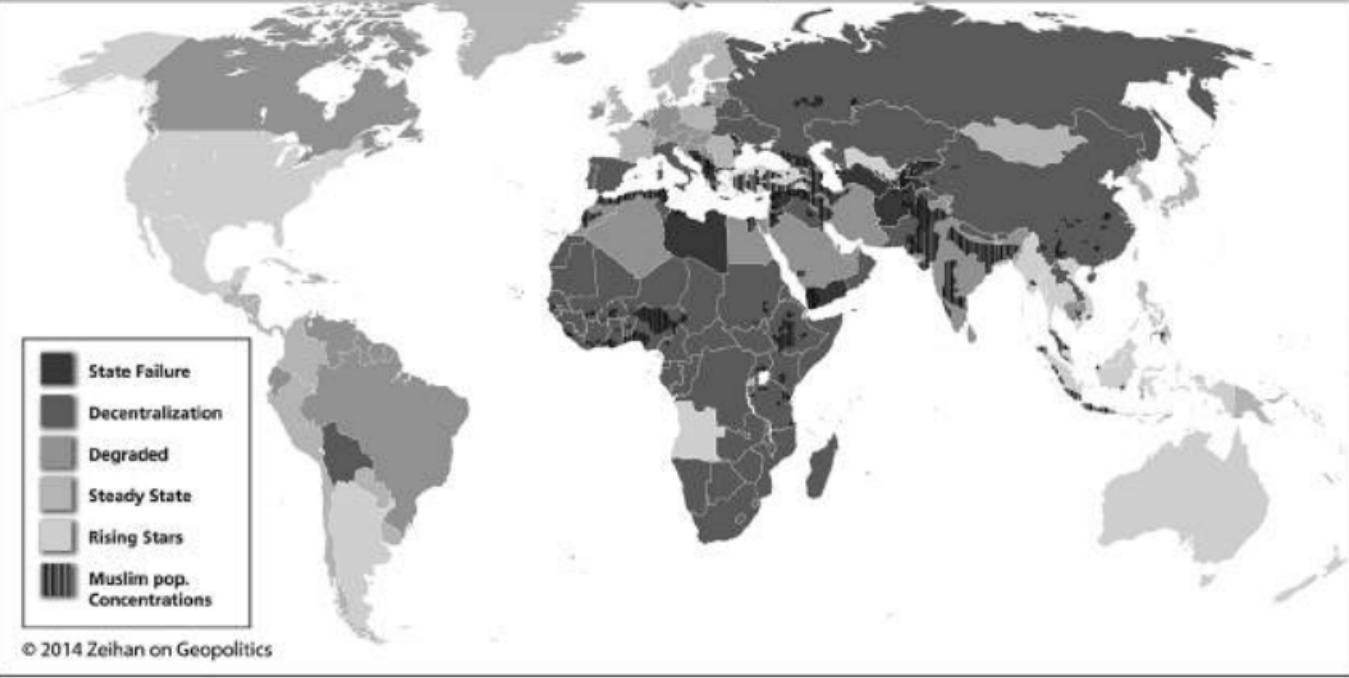


Global Stability and Skilled Migrant Sources

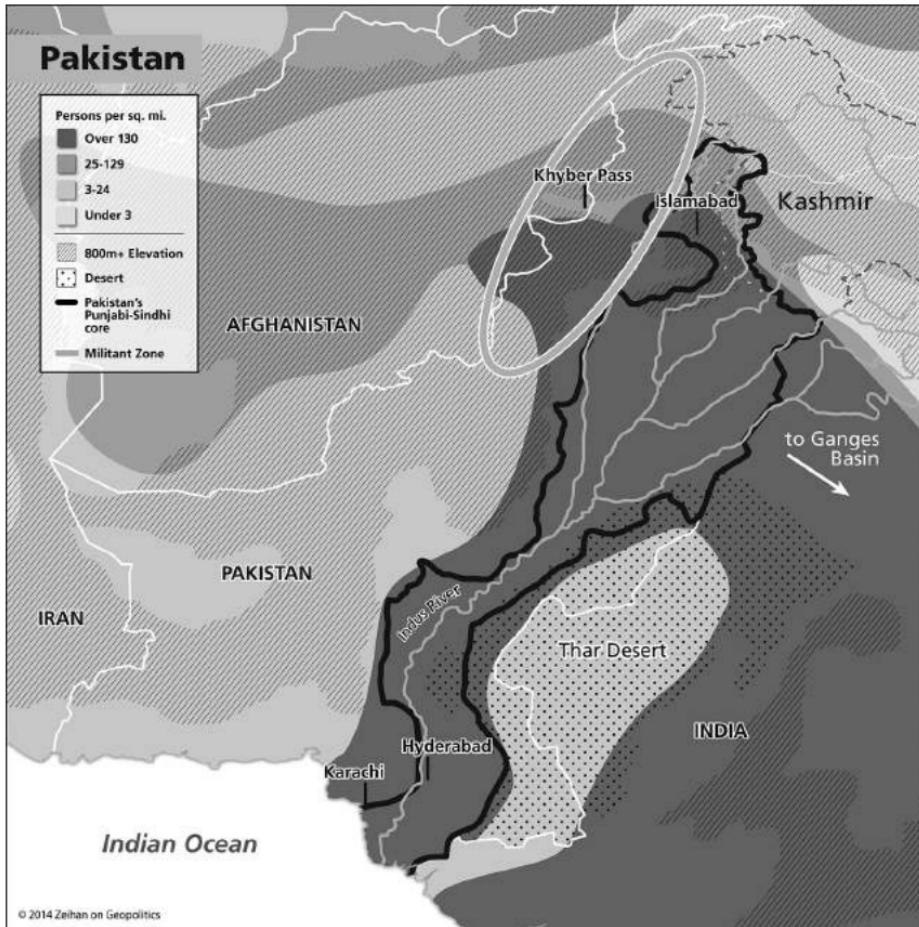
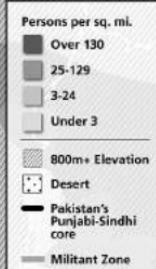


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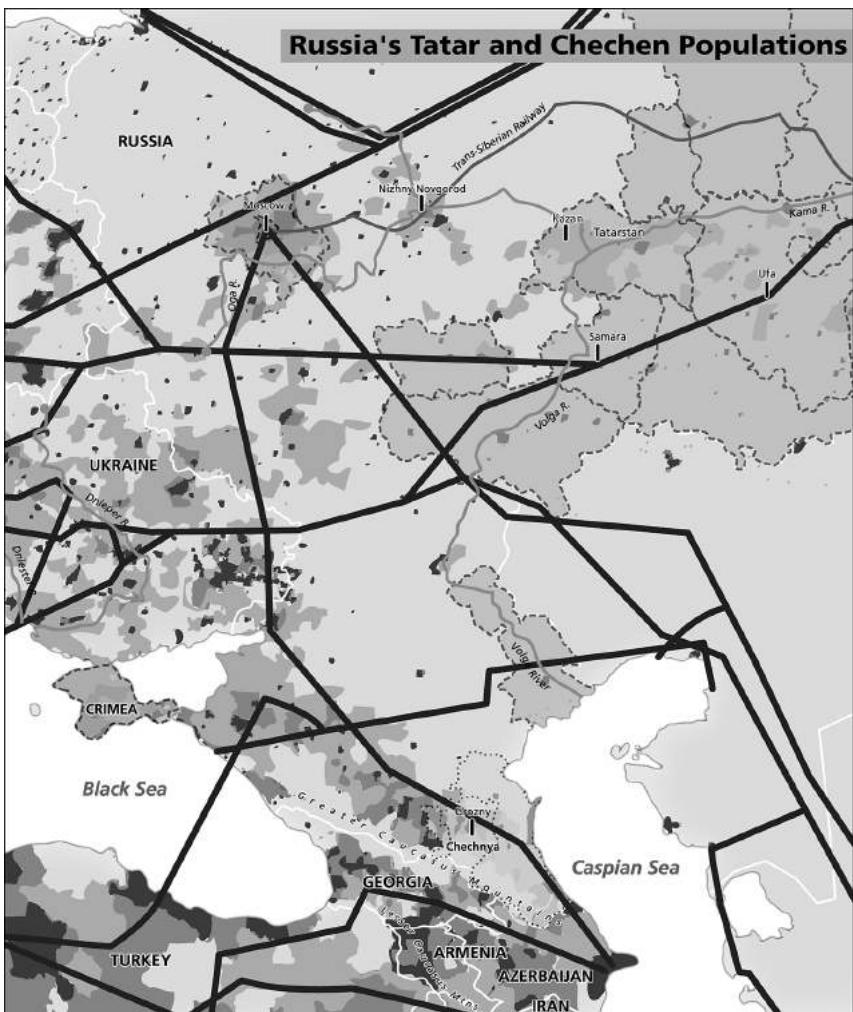
Global Stability and Muslim Population Concentrations



Pakistan



Russia's Tatar and Chechen Populations



— Major Petroleum Trunklines

— Navigable rivers

● Head of Navigation

■ Republics with over 50,000 Chechens

■ Republics with over 500,000 Tatars

Population Density people per sq. km.

Over 100

25.1-50

50.1-100

Under 25

Source: Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC)