

Modeling Historical Place Names:

The Digital Gazetteer of the Song Dynasty and the
World Historical Gazetteer

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World History Center

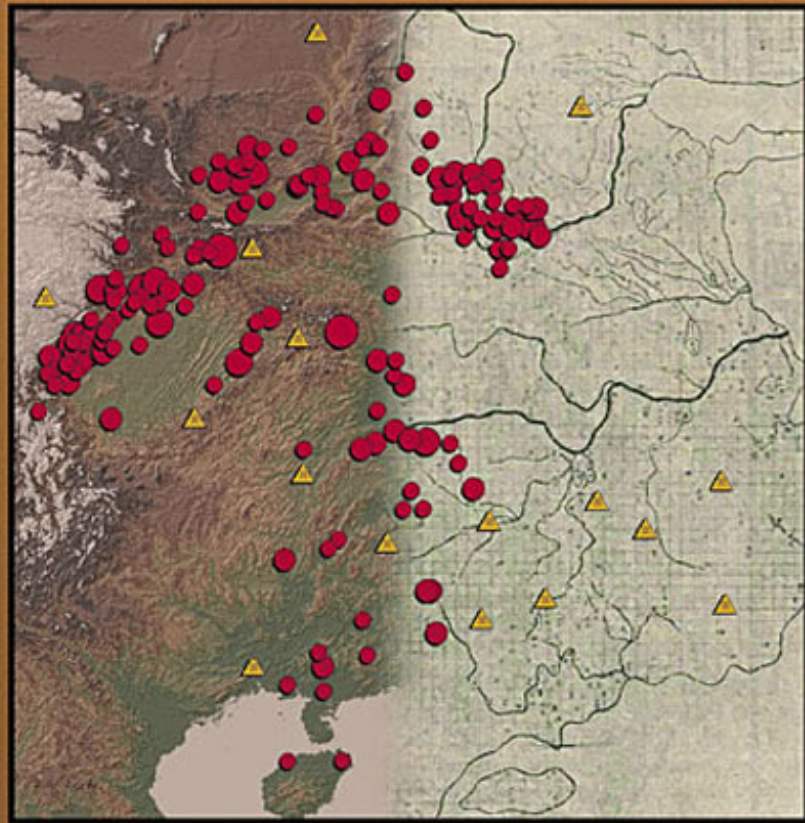
 @ruthmostern

Methods in Sinology

September 8, 2022

'Dividing the Realm in Order to Govern'

The Spatial Organization
of the Song State (960–1276 CE)



Ruth Mostern

The Digital Gazetteer of the Song Dynasty

a digital history project at the University of California, Merced

General

Search

General

By admin | Comments turned off

Overview

In 1958, Sinologist Hope Wright published a work entitled *An Alphabetical List of Geographical Names in Sung China*. Originally published in Paris by the Centre de Recherches Historiques of the École Pratique des Hautes Études, and reprinted as a second-generation photocopy in 1992 by the Journal of Song-Yuan Studies, the *Alphabetical List* is now out of print.

Wright's compilation is the most comprehensive print source for Song geography in any language. The **Digital Gazetteer of Song Dynasty China** (DGSD) is a MySQL database derived primarily from the *Alphabetical List*.

The *Alphabetical List* is an index to every jurisdiction in the Song (960-1276) spatial administrative hierarchy named in one or more of the following three Song texts: the *Song History* (宋史 *Song shi*) Geography Monograph, the 980 *Records of the Universal Realm in the Taiping Era* (太平寰宇紀 *Taiping huanyu ji*), and the 1085 *Treatise on the Nine Territories in the Yuanfeng Reign* (元豐九域志 *Yuanfeng jiuyu zhi*).

Sections

- Overview
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 - SQL Database
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 - Entities
 - Historical Instances
 - Point Location
 - Attributes
 - Data Types
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 - Example of Ningyuan

The Map of the Tracks of Yu
禹跡圖, 1137 CE





The *dili yan'ge* 地理沿革* Tradition

*Spatial Persistence and Transformation

First, frequently changing the number and rank of counties and prefectures was considered to be consistent with wise government and good administration. Almost every Song text about territory includes a heading entitled Persistence and Transformation (*yan'ge* 沿革 or less commonly *yin'ge* 因革), in which geographers traced how each ruler contributed to the evolution of the political landscape.

By the Song, Persistence and Transformation treatises were widespread. They marshalled historical evidence on behalf of positions about the proper form of organization for the empire. They were published as free-standing works and were a component of all geographical texts.

The *dili yan'ge* 地理沿革* Tradition

*Spatial Persistence and Transformation

Second, the realm was divided into jurisdictions with territorial extent. Song thinkers did not contest the necessity of subdividing the realm into spatial units, although they argued vigorously about the details. These jurisdictions could be located in space and on maps.

There were multiple and coexisting means of explaining the location of a jurisdiction – relative to the capital, to cosmic reference systems, to topography, according to its place in a spatial hierarchy, and more.

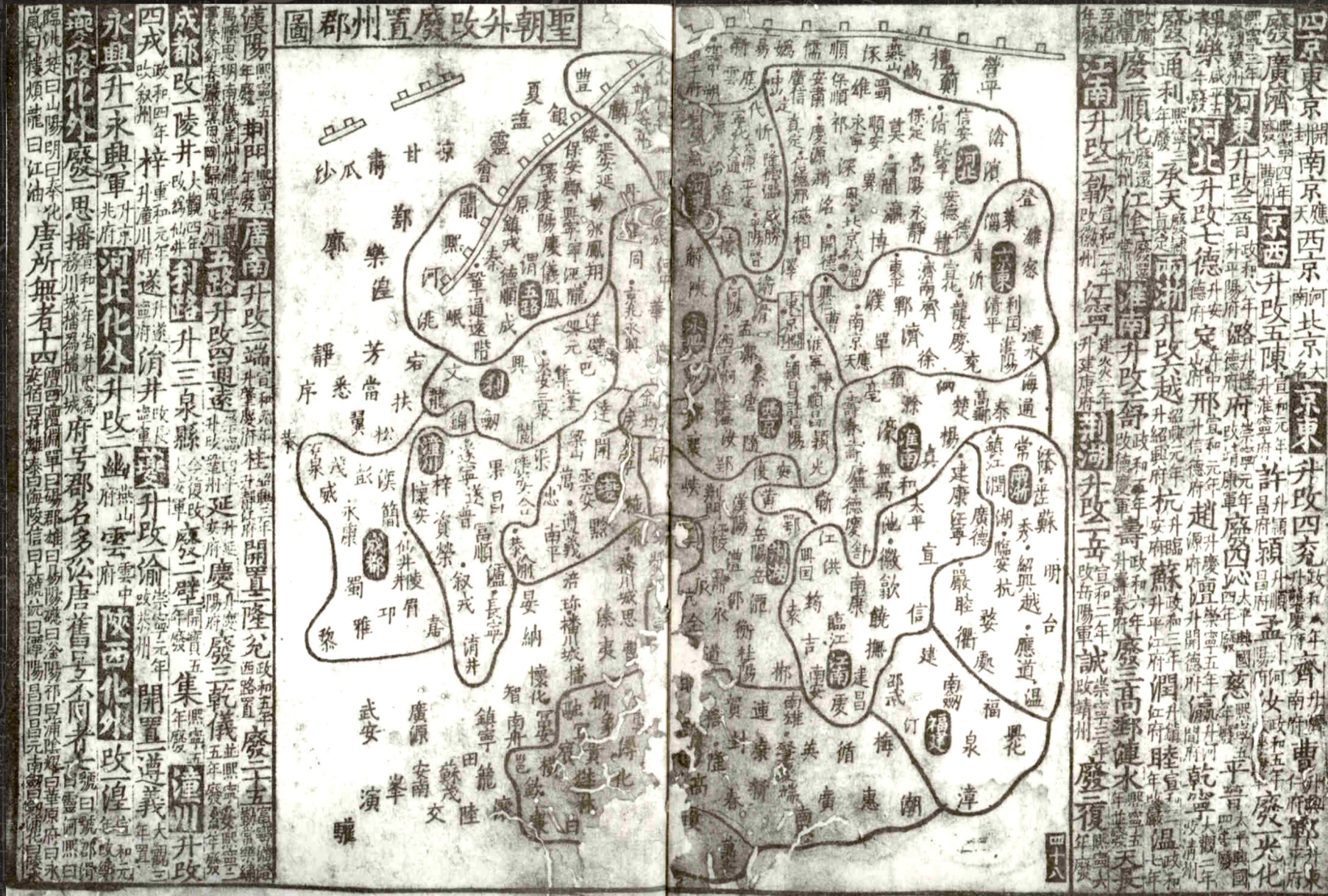
The *junxian* county and prefecture system contrasted with the *fengjian* fiefdom system that had been discredited in the late Tang - see Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819).

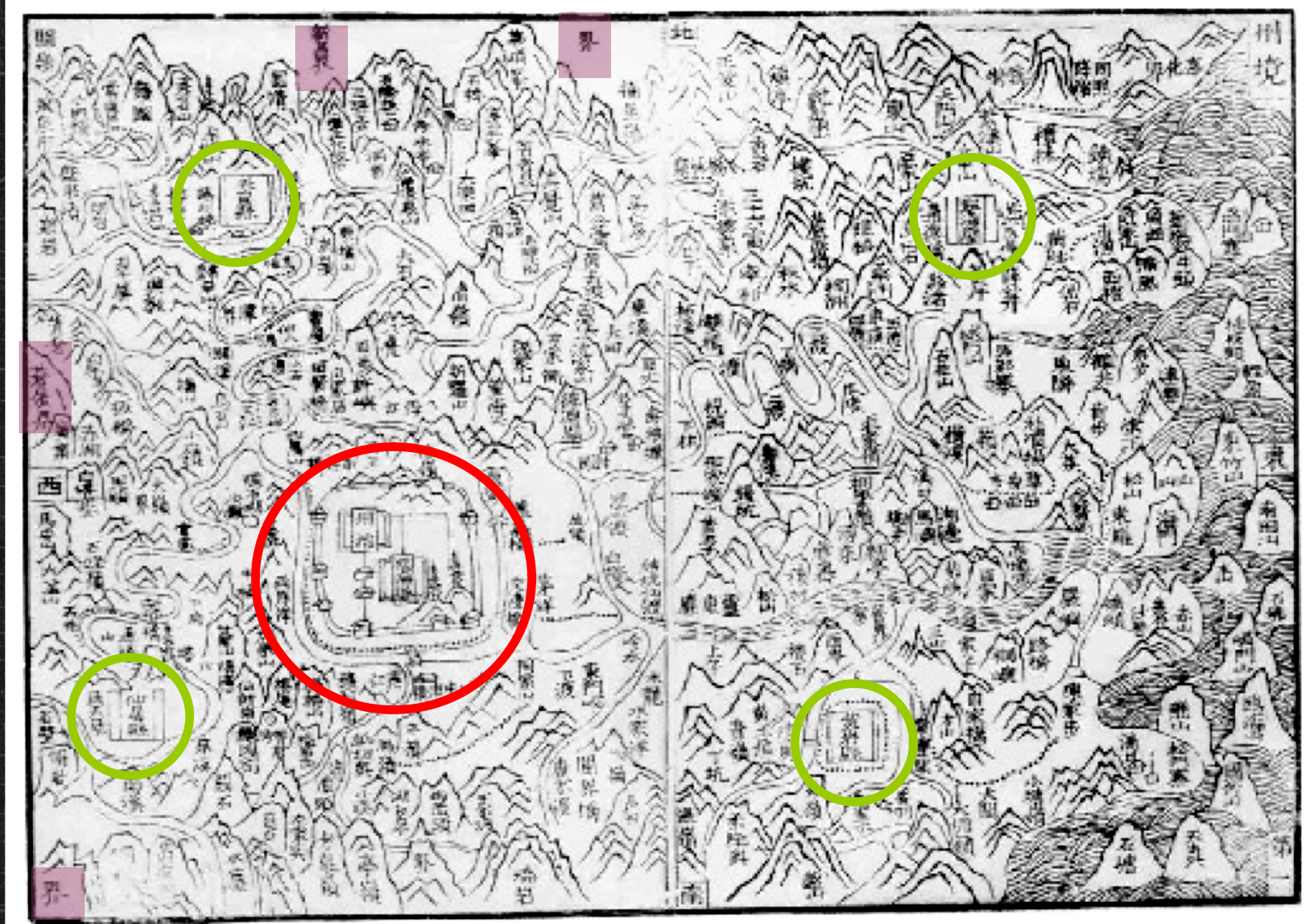
The *dili yan'ge* 地理沿革* Tradition

*Spatial Persistence and Transformation

Third, territorial knowledge production evolved substantially during the course of the dynasty. During the early Northern Song, the court possessed and controlled most information about the geography of the realm and propagated the image of a resplendent empire. Subsequent political upheaval and rapid spatial change made records difficult to maintain, eroded the credibility of the court as a spatial authority, and stimulated a localist response that inspired scholars to privately compile maps and gazetteers of their own.

“A Map of Prefectures Elevated, Altered and Established in This Dynasty,” from Shui Anli, Handy Maps of Historical Geography, ca. 1120s.





The Map of the Territory of the Prefecture (州境圖 zhou jing tu) from the block printed 1223 Chicheng Gazetteer of the Jiading Era (嘉定赤城志 Jiading Chicheng zhi), a local chronicle of Tai zhou prefecture. This map is printed from blocks carved in 1497.

郴州

郴縣 桂陽 宜章 永興 資興 桂東



禹貢荆州之城翼軫之分野春秋戰國屬楚秦屬長沙郡項羽徙義帝於長沙都郡即此地也

漢高祖屬荆州三國吳蜀分荆州以湘水為界長沙江夏桂陽以東屬其晉屬江州又屬湘州隋廢桂陽立郴州因

漢縣名也唐改桂陽郡復為郴州國朝因之 中興領縣四 寧宗朝以溪峒擾攘削資興桂東兩縣今領縣六

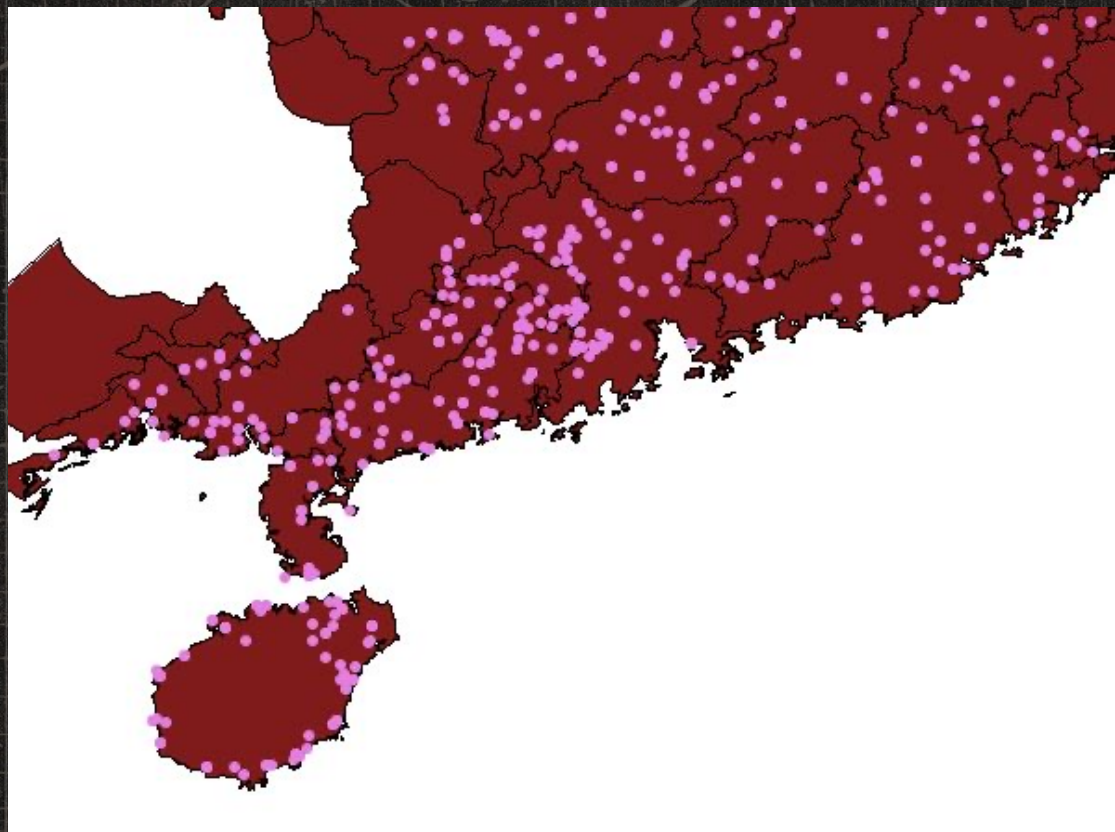
治郴縣

每方折
地百里
山川名
州郡名
水地名
年四月刻石

Kuang-nan W. 18 N., 109 E. (Yai) *Hsia. Formerly ¹Yai chou, reduced ²to Chu-yai chün 1073; abol ³1136, att ⁴as Ning-yüan hs to CH'IUNG, Kuang-nan W. Re-est ⁵as Chi-yang chün 1143. 1073-1136: No hsien. 2 chen. Lin-ch'uan, T'eng-ch'iao. From 1143 ⁶2 hsien: Ning-yüan (former Lin-ch'uan chen); Chi-yang (former T'eng-ch'iao chen.)
Pop. (1080) 251 [TP 351 (340; 11)]
[YF 351 (340; 11) Another ed: 251 (2401 11)]
(TP 169; YF 9/465)

CHI-YANG, Kuang-nan W. *Hsia.
When Yai chou abol 1073, this hs made a chen ⁷name changed to T'eng-ch'i ⁸; tr as chen ⁹ CH'IUNG in 1136. Re-est ¹⁰as Chi-yang hs att to chün in 1143.

From Hope Wright, *An Alphabetical List of Geographical Names in Song China*



“According to the maps and registers of Lingnan, the counties and prefectures are numerous, but the population is small. Guang Prefect Pan Mei and Fiscal Commissioner Wang Ming are ordered to investigate its territories and amalgamate them in order to benefit the people.”

按嶺南圖籍州縣多而戶口
少命知廣其地潘里美并省以便民

“Under most circumstances, the spatial distribution of state activity that serves military purposes well differs sharply from the spatial distribution that serves the production of revenues.”

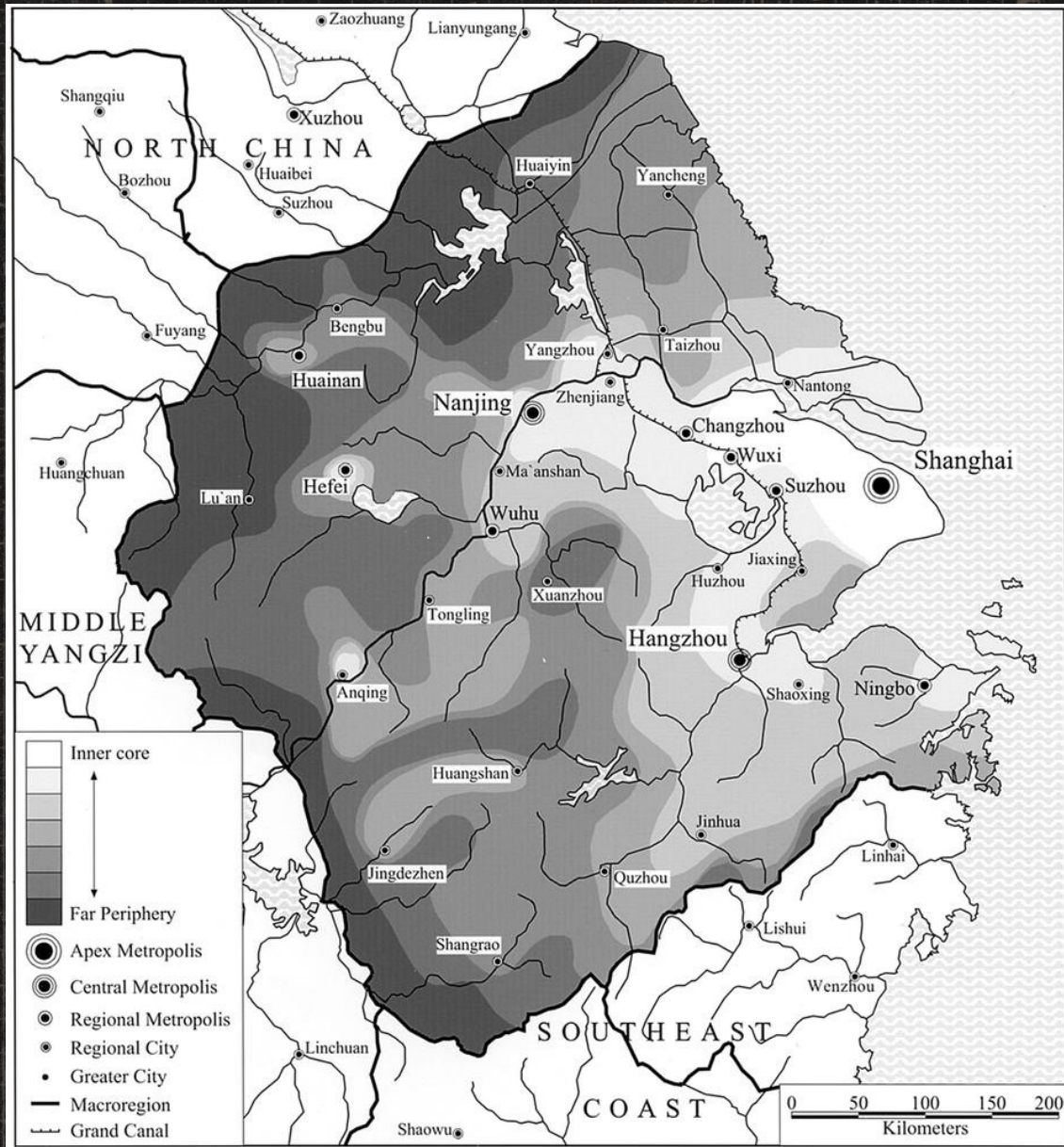
COERCION, CAPITAL, AND EUROPEAN STATES,

AD 990-1992



Charles Tilly

(But Tilly and others do not fully engage the spatial analysis that their theories imply.)



- The Chinese state persistently redrew its domestic administrative boundaries through “skilled husbanding of limited bureaucratic power.” New counties were founded on the frontier as old counties were consolidated in the periphery.
- BUT there was almost no change in the total number of counties throughout the 2,000-year imperial era, even as the population expanded tenfold.

G. William Skinner has worked this out at only several pages length!

DEFINITIONS

Change Type Table

Unique ID
Pinyin
Chinese
English
Notes

Rank Type Table

Unique ID
Pinyin
Chinese
English
Notes

Attribute Type Table

Unique ID
Pinyin
Chinese
English
Notes

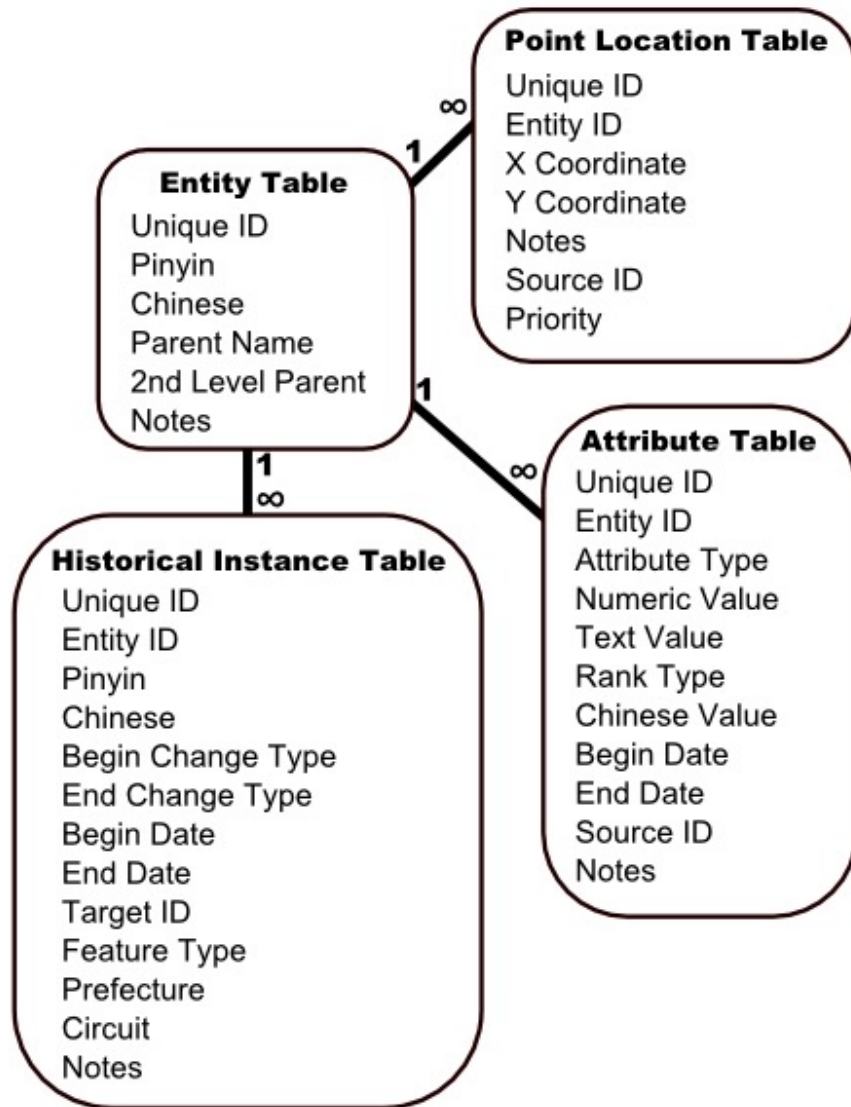
Source Type Table

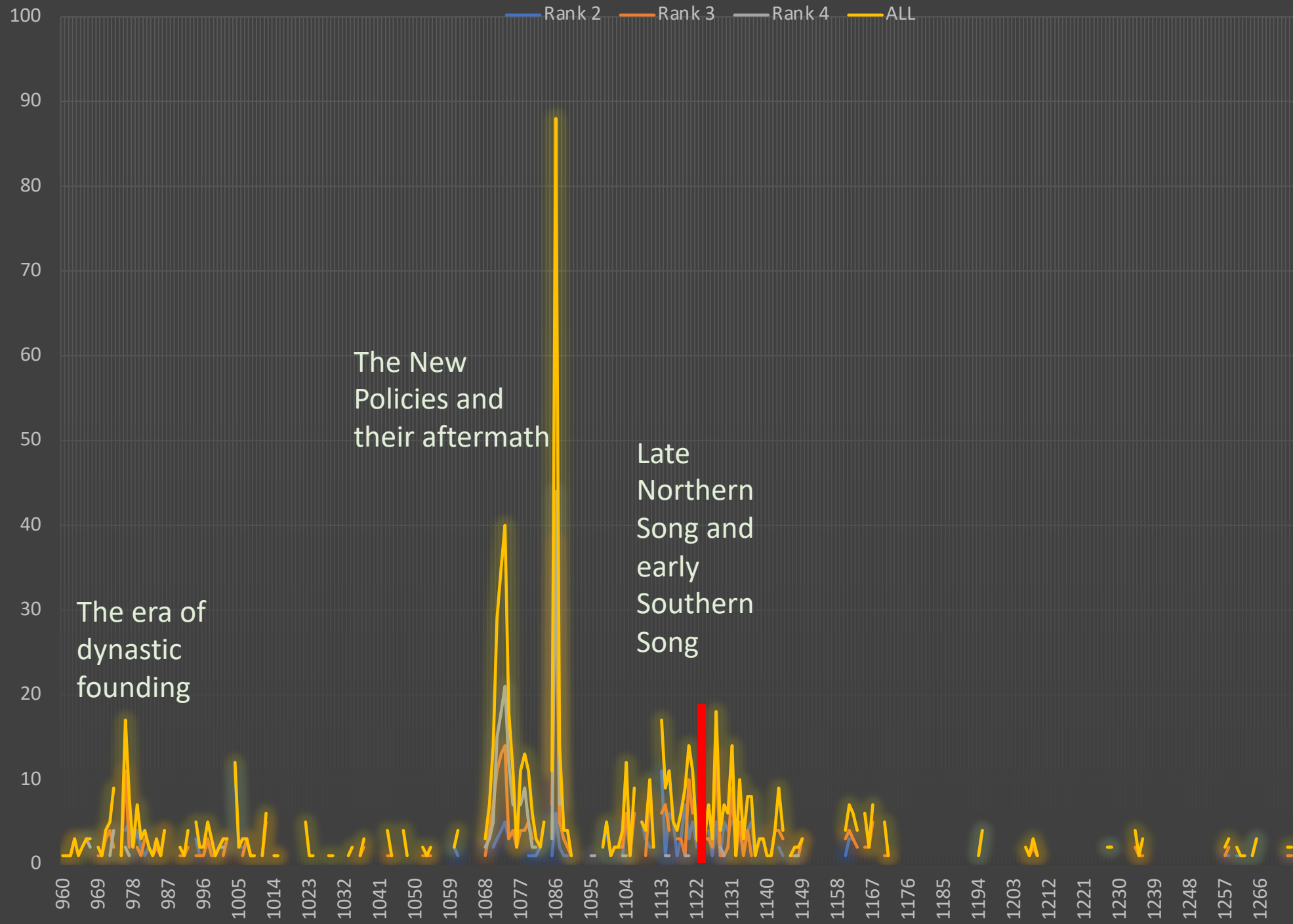
Unique ID
Pinyin
Chinese
English
Notes

Feature Type Table

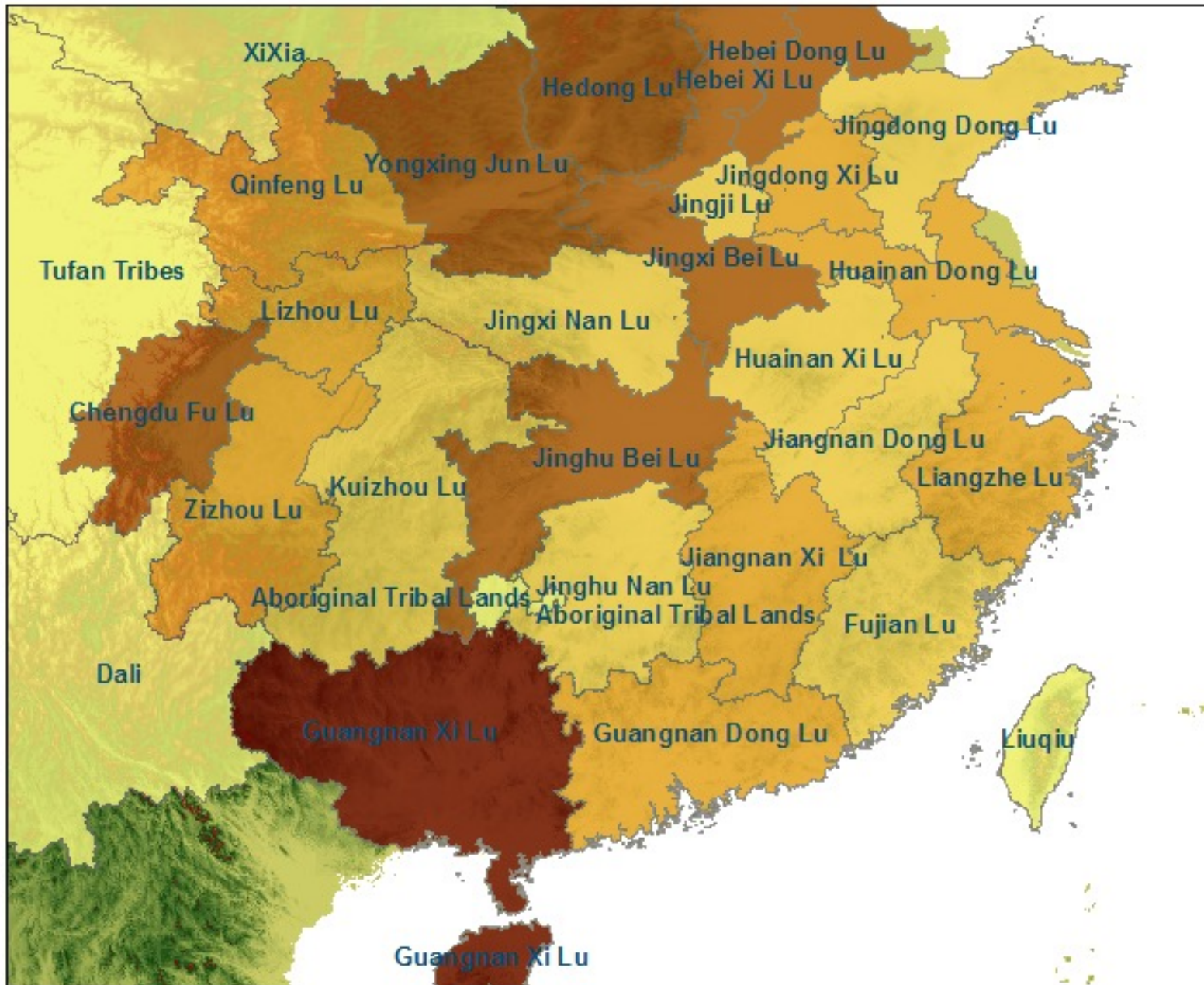
Unique ID
Pinyin
Chinese
English
Status
Notes

DATA

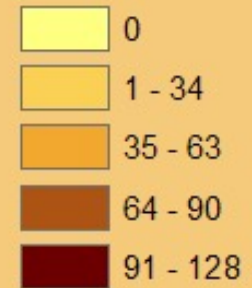




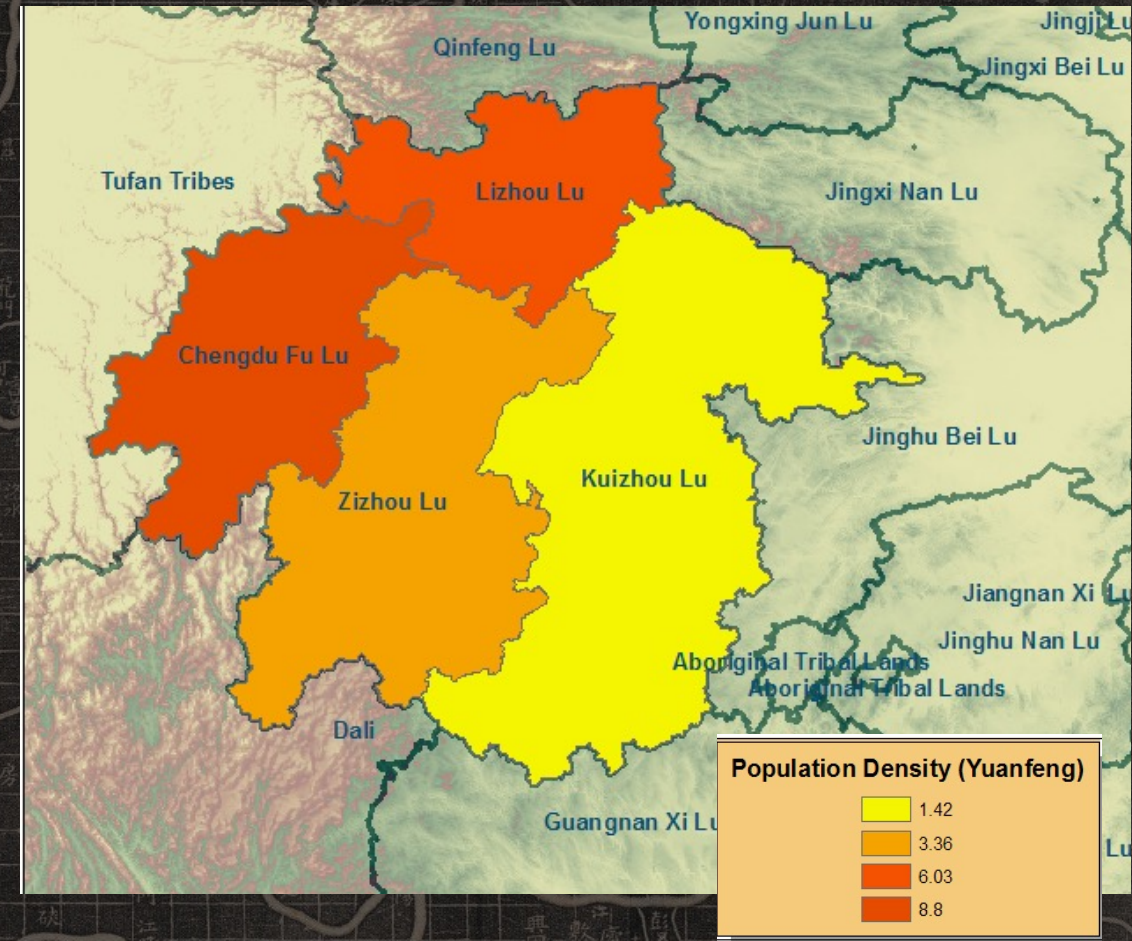
The Rate of Change Varied Spatially



Number of Total Changes

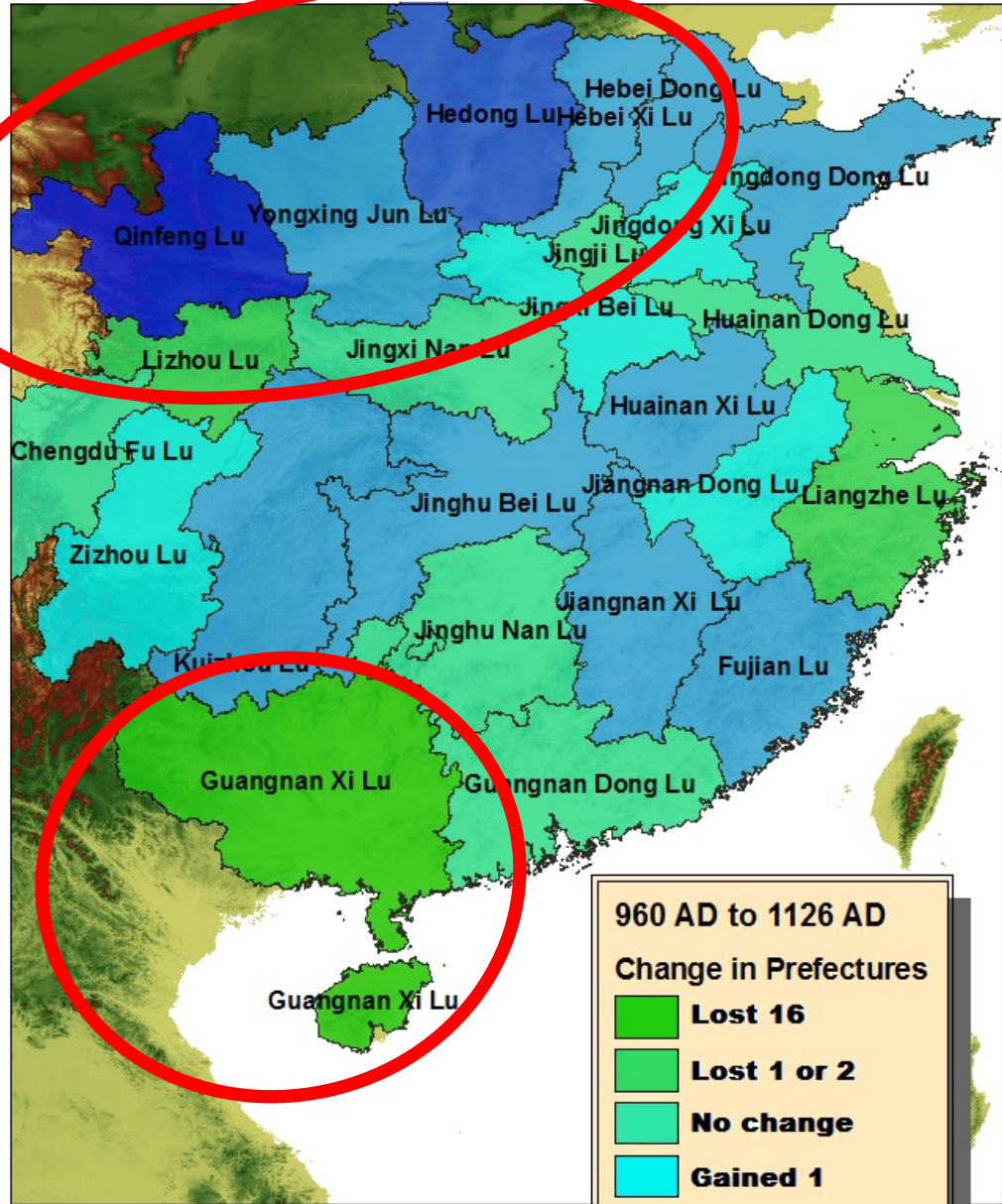


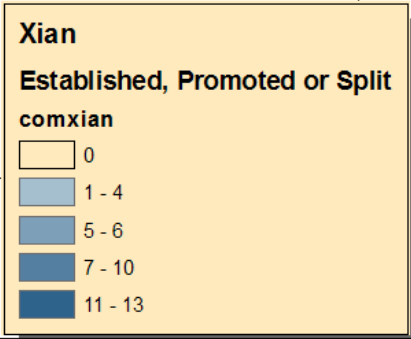
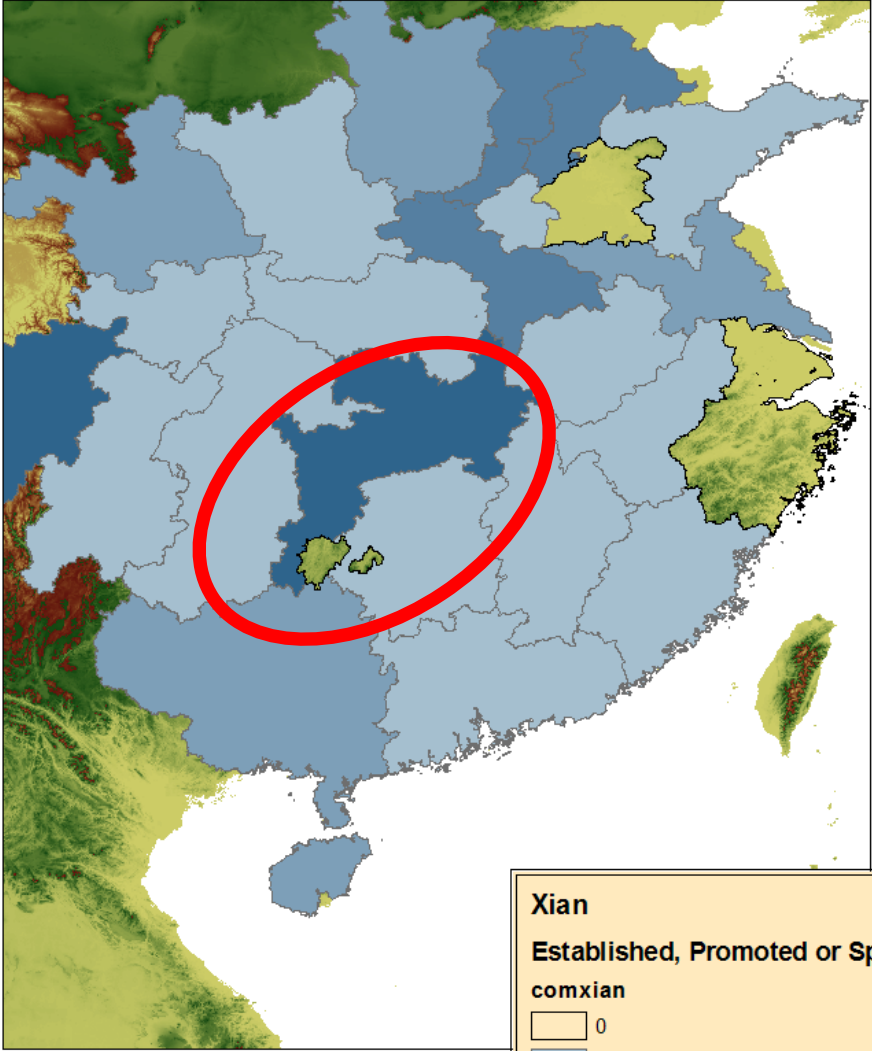
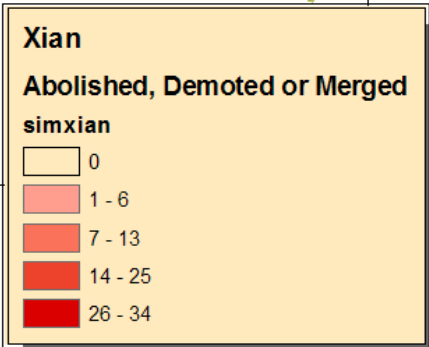
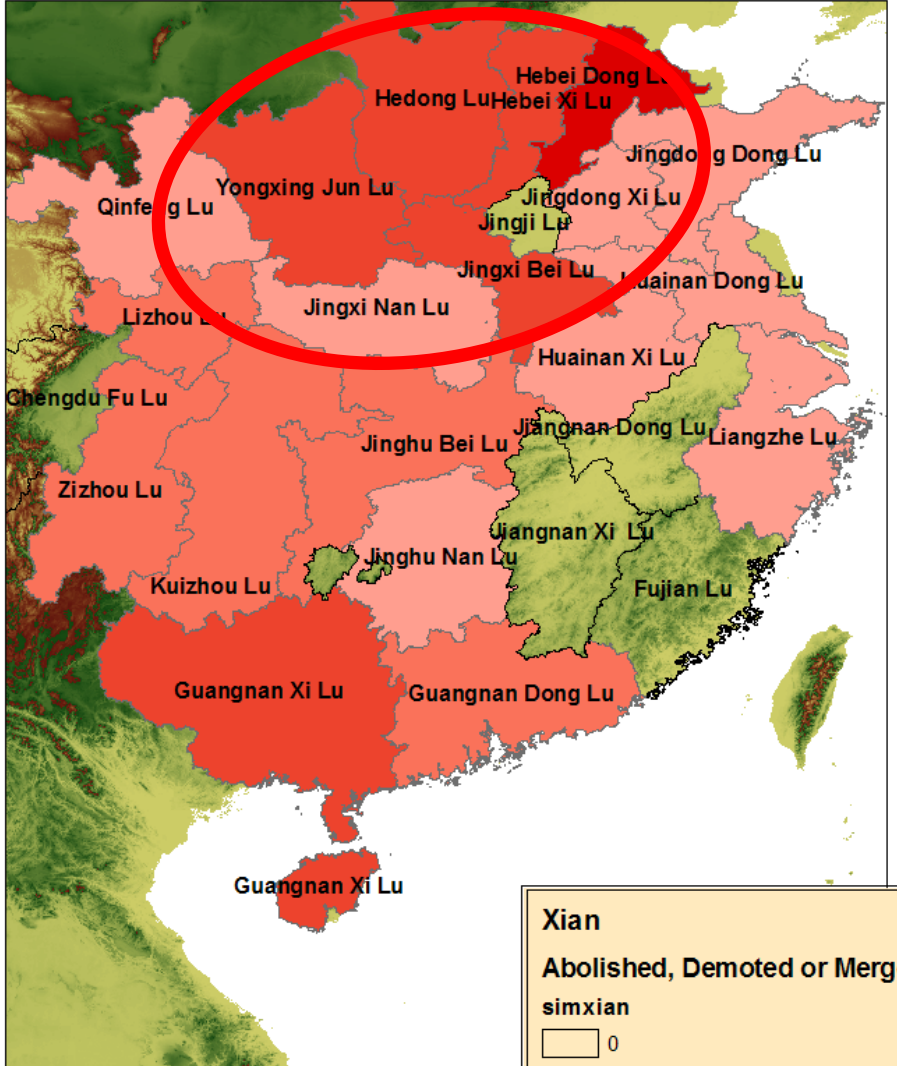
Provincial Circuit	Number of Prefectures	Number of Counties	County/Prefecture	Households
Chengdu fu	14	58	4.14:1	832,360
Zizhou	14	59	3.5:1	477,152
Lizhou	11	39	3.54:1	339,595
Kuizhou	12	28	2.33:1	256,619



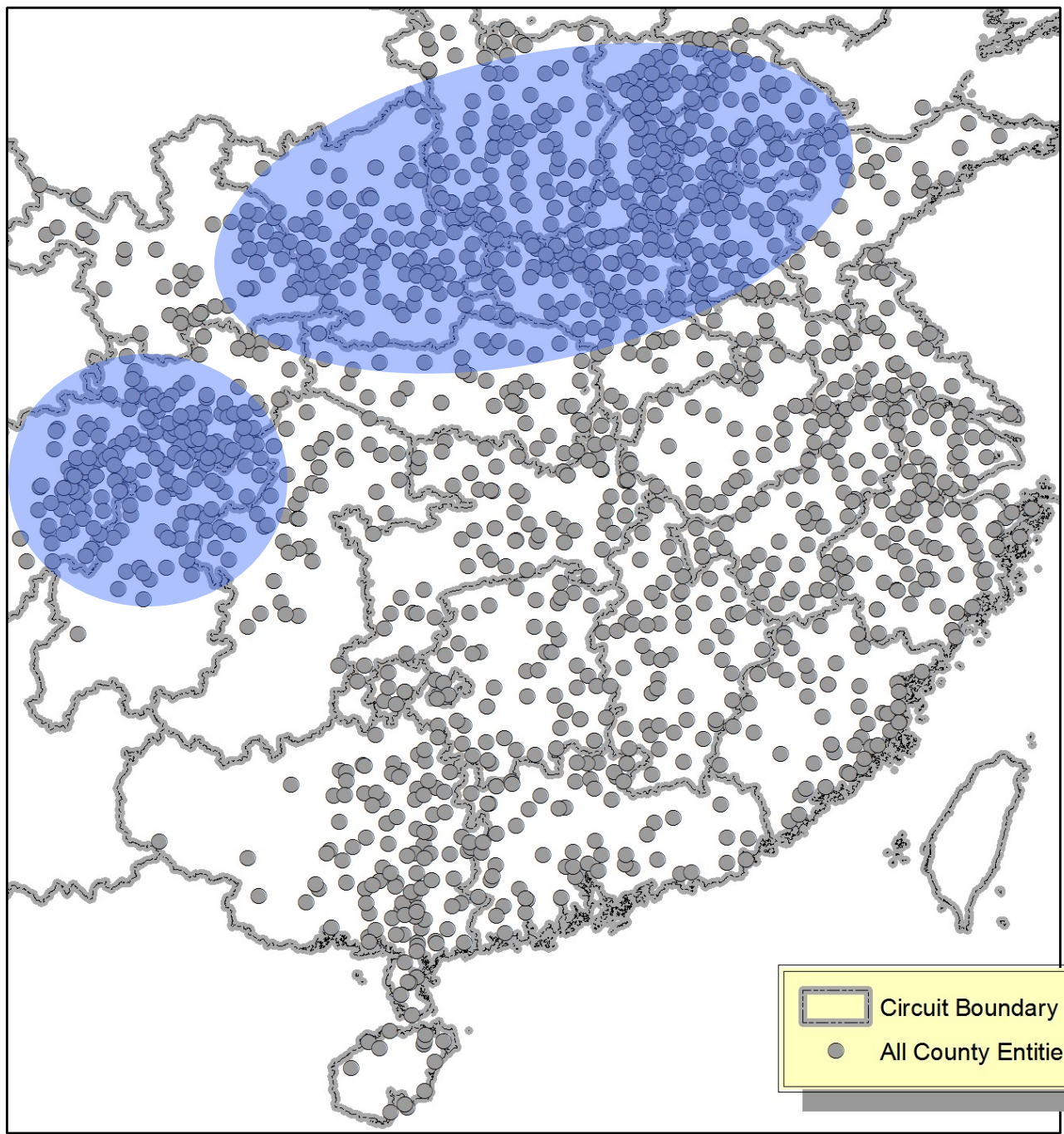
→ Remember Tilly's theory of the geography of war versus the geography of revenue? Here it is embodied in western China.

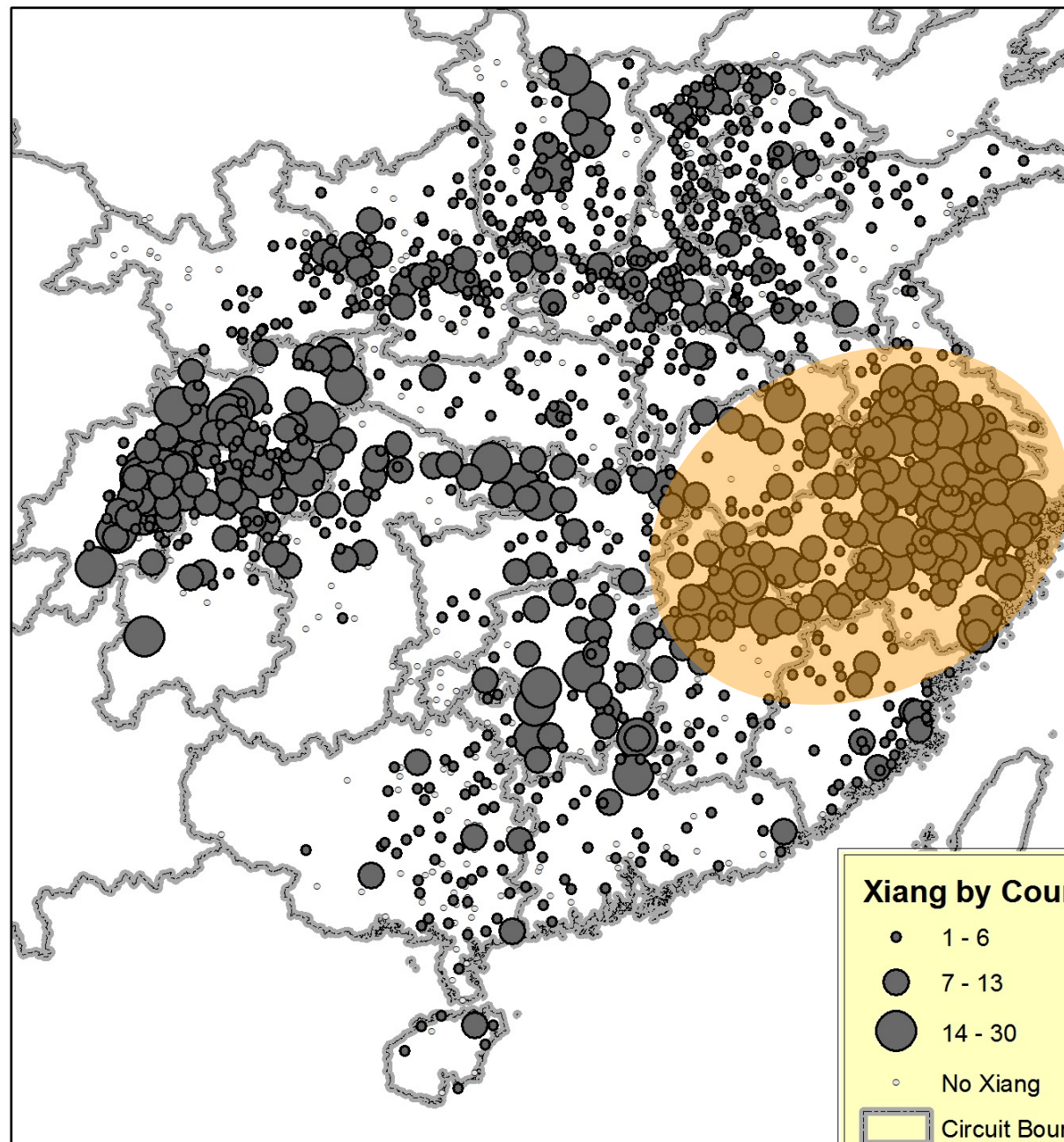
The Density of State Presence Shifted: Prefectures





The
Density of
State
Presence
Shifted:
Counties





Xiang by County - SS

• 1 - 6

● 7 - 13

● 14 - 30

○ No Xiang

□ Circuit Boundary

“Dividing the Realm in order to Govern”

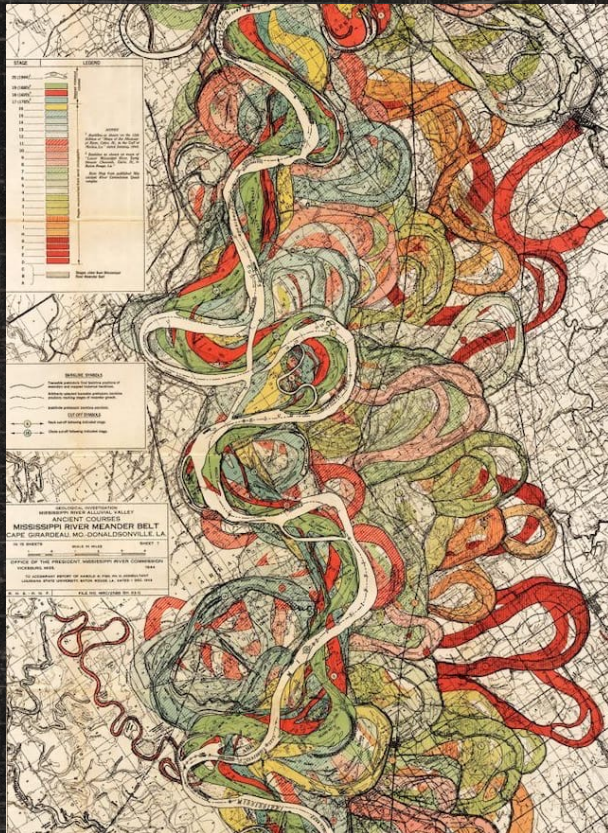
“Territories ... are fundamentally *constitutive* of the social orders whose features they express... Territorial configurations are not simply cultural artifacts. They are political achievements.” – David Delaney

The way that a state organizes its territory is the the way that its “ideology...is translated into spatial organization.” – Joseph Whitney

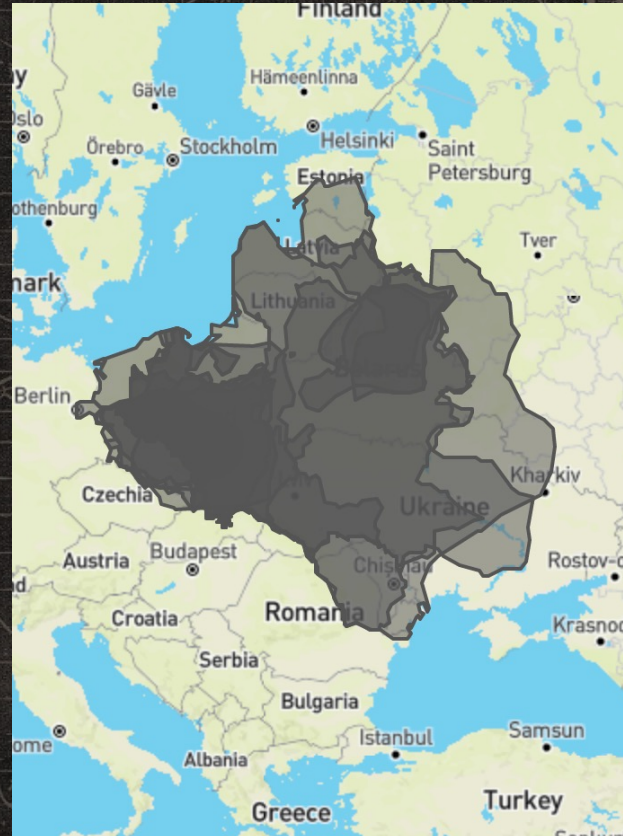
“Alas! Since the Three Eras, there have been none who have not divided the realm in order to govern.” 嗚呼自三代以上莫不分土而治也 —Ouyang Xiu

In Song Dynasty China, over 20% of all jurisdictions underwent some change during the 300 years that the regime was in power.

Historical Gazetteers Describe Events



The Mississippi River



Poland

Properly speaking, a gazetteer – a list of named places, if it is historical, is a list of events. It is a set of attestations about acts of placemaking: changes in name, status, affiliation, et cetera.

What is Place?

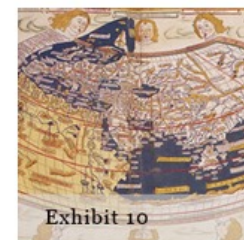
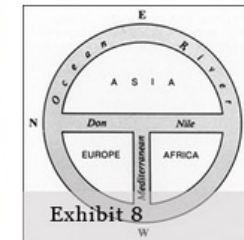
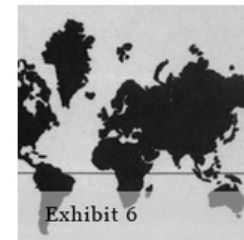
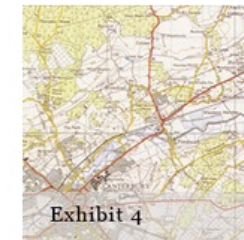
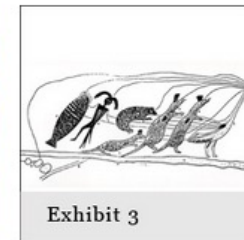
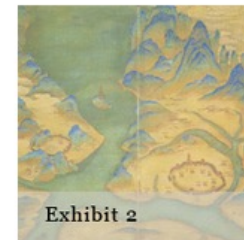
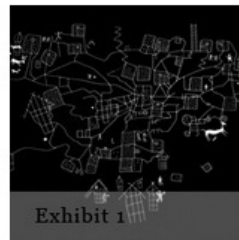
- Place is not about geography and place is not about names. Places are spatial settings for human activity.
 - Tim Ingold's "taskscape"
 - David Turnbull's "indexicality"
 - Michael Curry's "topos," "choros," and "geos"

MAPS ARE TERRITORIES SCIENCE IS AN ATLAS a portfolio of exhibits

CONTENTS PREFACE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Maps Are Territories: Science is an Atlas is a book by David Turnbull, with a contribution by Helen Watson with the Yolngu community at Yirrkala.

EXHIBITS



Place is Always Plural

Individual places have multiple meanings, and places make meaning in relation to one another, in combination with one another, and in networks of other places and human activities. Places almost always have multiple names at any given time and over time.

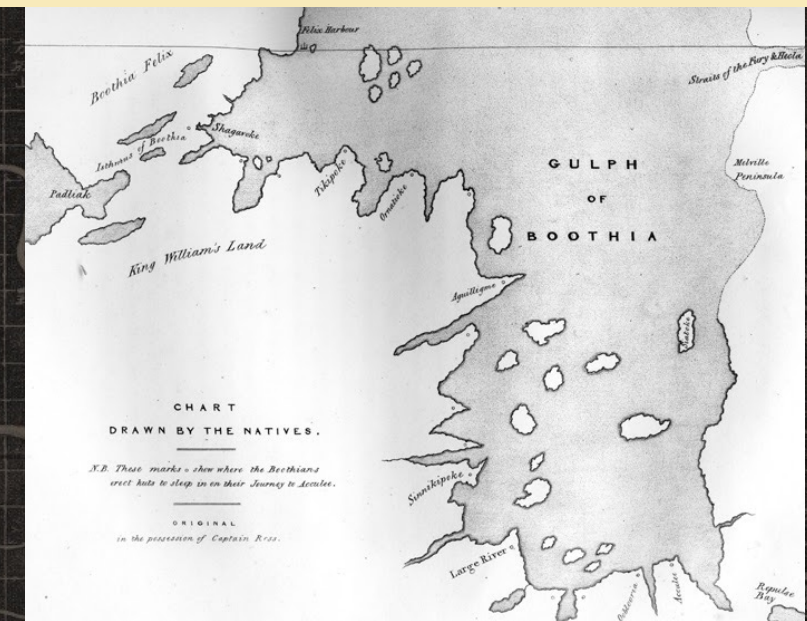




“Map of the Arctic and Adjacent Regions,” Sir John Ross, 1855 (Library of Congress)



“Ikmalikik and Tiagashu draw a map for Captain John Ross” (1777-1856). Ross was a Scottish Royal Navy officer and polar explorer who traveled to the Gulf of Boothia in 1829 as part of the European efforts to seek a Northwest Passage and to scope opportunities for whaling voyages.



Since any place has many meanings, attestations about places almost always reflects acts of power, conflict, contestation, and control. Maps often hide these activities, but gazetteers are well equipped to reveal them. Making gazetteers is about decolonization, diversity, and multivocality.



Coming Home

TO INDIGENOUS PLACE NAMES IN CANADA

Specifications

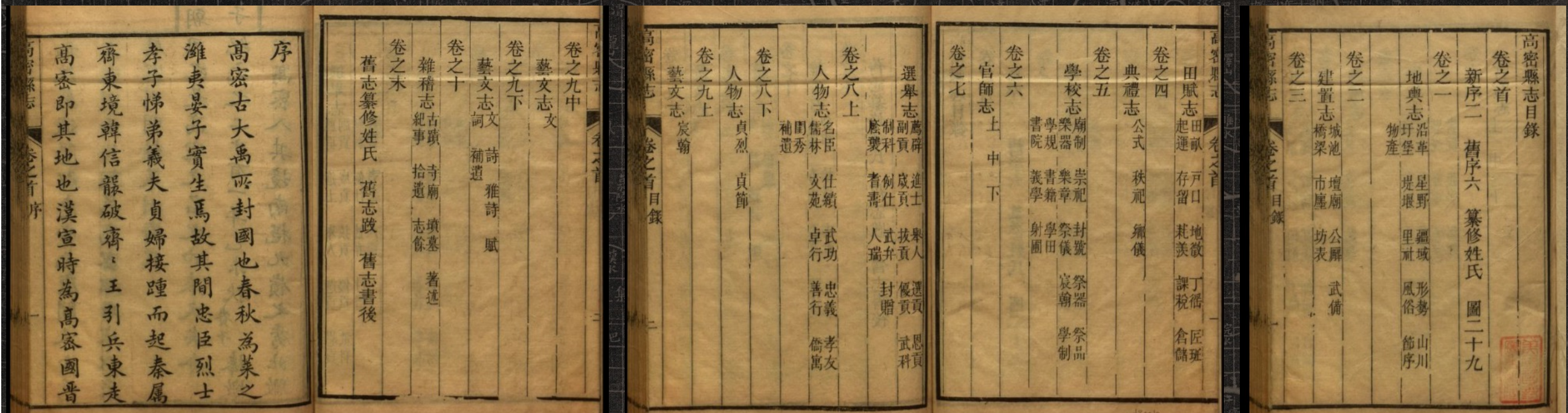
Size: 42" x 33"
Available rolled or folded

Publisher:
Canadian-American Center
The University of Maine
Orono, Maine, USA

The Cartographer

Dr. Margaret Wickens Pearce is a [cartographer](#) and the author of several award-winning maps, including *Ivoko Eli-Witnamakav Katohkinawal/This is how we name our lands* (Penobscot Cultural & Historic Preservation, 2015) in collaboration with Penobscot C&HP, and *They Would Not Take Me There: People, Places and Stories from Champlain's Travels in Canada, 1603-1616* (Canadian-American Center, 2008), in collaboration with Michael J. Hermann. She also maps as [Further Reading and Studio 1.1](#).

Gazetteer of Gaomi County, Shandong (Gaomi Xianzhi 高密縣志), 1605



A nineteen-chapter descriptive gazetteer of a single place with an entire chapter devoted only to its location: the evolution of the administrative unit, its astrological setting, its boundaries, the settlements within it, its topography, et cetera. Subsequent chapters cover matters ranging from infrastructure to commodities to schools to famous people.

Historical Names of Beijing

- **Ji and Jicheng:** The first major known settlement was the eponymous capital of the ancient Ji state neighborhood south of the Beijing West Railway Station. Located 20 miles south of the Liao, Jin, Yuan
 - Ji: simplified Chinese: 蓟; traditional Chinese: 薊; pinyin: Jì; Wade-Giles: Chi
 - Jicheng: Chinese: 蓟城; pinyin: Jìchéng; Wade-Giles: Chi-cheng; literally: "Ji City"
- **Yan and Yanjing:** Ji was conquered by Yan around the 7th century BC but was employed as its core Rengong (as King of Yan), and the Princes of Yan. The Khitans of the 10th- to 12th-century Liao Dynasty former Yencheng University (since merged into Peking University).
 - Yan: Chinese: 燕; pinyin: Yān; Wade-Giles: Yen
 - Yanjing: Chinese: 燕京; pinyin: Yānjīng
- **Guangyang:** After the Qin conquest, Ji was made the capital of the Guangyang Commandery.
 - simplified Chinese: 广阳郡; traditional Chinese: 廣陽郡; pinyin: Guǎngyángjùn; Wade-Giles: Kua
- **Fanyang and Yuyang:** During the Han Dynasty, the commandery was renamed Yuyang and the city
 - Yuyang: simplified Chinese: 渔阳郡; traditional Chinese: 漁陽郡; pinyin: Yúyángjùn; Wade-Giles: Fan
 - Fanyang: simplified Chinese: 范阳; traditional Chinese: 范陽; pinyin: Fānyáng; Wade-Giles: Fan
- **Jixian:** From the 1st century BC until at least the AD 4th-century Western Jin dynasty, Jixian served
 - simplified Chinese: 蓟县; traditional Chinese: 蓟縣; pinyin: Jìxiàn; Wade-Giles: Chi-hsien
- **Youzhou:** Under the Tang Dynasty, the city generally employed Youzhou as its name. During the
 - Chinese: 幽州; pinyin: Yōuzhōu; Wade-Giles: Yu-chou
- **Nanjing:** In the 10th and 12th centuries, the northerly Liao Dynasty restored the name
 - Chinese: 南京; pinyin: Nánjīng; Wade-Giles: Nan-ching
- **Zhongdu:** During the 12th-century Later Jin dynasty, it was known as Zhongdu.
 - Chinese: 中都; pinyin: Zhōngdū; literally: "Central Capital"
- **Khanbaliq:** The Mongolian Yuan Dynasty originally restored the name Yanjing before the city gradually absorbed the former settlements around the area.
 - Chinese: 大都; pinyin: Dàdū; literally: "Great Capital"
- **Beiping:** Under the Ming Dynasty, the city itself was initially known as Beiping. The name
 - Chinese: 北平; pinyin: Běipíng; Wade-Giles: Pei-p'ing; literally: "Northern Peace"
- **Shuntian and Beizhili:** When the usurping Yongle Emperor established his base of Beiping, he
 - Shuntian: simplified Chinese: 顺天; traditional Chinese: 順天; pinyin: Shùntiān; Wade-Giles: Shun-t'ien
 - Beizhili: simplified Chinese: 北直隸; traditional Chinese: 北直隸; pinyin: Běizhílì; Wade-Giles: Pei-chih-li
- **Jingshi and Beijing:** When the palace was finally completed in 1420, the Yongle Emperor used to describe the area directly administered by the capital (generally modern Hebei)
 - Jingshi: simplified Chinese: 京师; traditional Chinese: 京師; pinyin: Jīngshī; Wade-Giles: Ching-shi
- **Beiping,** in both its connotations, was restored as the name in 1928 by the Republic of China. The Nationalist Government restored "Beiping". In 1949, the official name again reverted to "Beijing", was adopted for use within the country in 1958, and for international



A 1584 map of China by Abraham Ortelius with Beiping marked as *C[ivitas] Paquin*



v2.1 beta

What's New

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World Historical Gazetteer

linking knowledge about the past via place



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Upload and **extend** your data with geometry and identifiers from Wikidata and Getty TGN



Contribute your uploaded data to WHG by linking it to other places in our index



Teach with WHG-focused lesson plans



Create and share your custom collection of places and datasets published in WHG



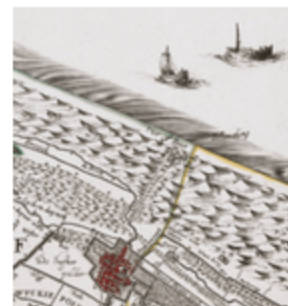
Integrate WHG data using our application programming interface

Featured Datasets and Collections

[list all](#)

Dutch Global History

The 'Dutch Global History' collection will offer users a central point of entry for all Dutch historical place names and other place names related to Dutch history — in the broadest geographical sense. As the collection grows, it will also function as a public resource for the wide range of projects on Dutch history that carry spatial components. The collection is being compiled on an ongoing basis by the [KNAW Humanities Cluster](#) from new and existing datasets created by a variety of different institutions, projects, and individual researchers.



collection (in-progress)

An Historical Atlas of Central Asia

This dataset comprises 759 place records, digitized in 2018 from 15 of the 48 maps in this scholarly atlas. The maps' extensive sources, detailed in the Preface and Notes, include "...all reliable general surveys of Central Asian history, and schola...



dataset

HGIS de las Indias

Historical geography for the Bourbon Spanish America through time (1701-1808), comprising settlements (lugares) and their temporally scoped position within the administrative territorial structure (territorios) of that period and region.



collection

Places Traces ?

Search Index Search Database

pre-filters

PLACE CATEGORIES CLEAR ALL

- administrative entities (A)
- cities, towns, hamlets... (P)
- sites, buildings, complexes... (S)
- roads, routes, rail... (R)
- regions, landscape areas (L)
- terrestrial landforms (T)
- water bodies (H)

TEMPORAL (DEFAULT = ALL)

earliest year latest year

SPATIAL

Region, country, study area

reset search

result filters Place type Modern country bounds

Draw a bounding box to filter result list

500 km

Tiles © MapBox | CC-BY-NC 3.0

UNION INDEX SEARCH RESULTS (g) List may include records with no geometry

Title	Linked	Countries	Type(s)	Name variants	geom?
Beijing	6	CN	populated place	BJS; Bac Kinh; Baek-ging; Baekging; Behezhzhin; Beijing Shi ... 129 total	
Beijing Paifuhe	1	CN	canal		
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	北京	
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	陵径	
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	北京	
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	陵径	
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	北井	
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	北井	
Beijing	1	CN	inhabited place	北井	

Beijing (Getty TGN (partial))

Record title: Beijing

WHG identifier: 4871603 (Linked Places record)

Source identifier: 7001758 source record

Variants: Beijing; Beijing Shi; Cambaluc; Chi; Daidu; Khan Bhalik; Khanbalik; Pechino; Pei-Ching; Pei-ching; Pei-ching-shih; Pei-p'ing; Pei-p'ing-shih; Peiching; Peip'ing; Peiping; Pekin; Peking; 北京; Peking

Earliest/Latest: none yet

Type(s): city; religious center; inhabited place;

Linked records in WHG: none yet

Locations (t): copy coordinates to clipboard

TEMPORAL ATTESTATIONS

Dataset details

Title: Getty TGN (partial)

Creator(s): Getty Research Institute

Last modified: 18 Oct 2019

Close

Leaflet

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Search API Tutorials About Data Logout

return to search results

Beijing

Beijing from dataset: gn500 227541 full record

Variants: 北京; 北京市; 베이징; 북경 ... 104 more

Types: populated place

Links: 6 linked records

Beijing from dataset: tgn_filtered_01 4871603 full record

Variants: Beijing; Beijing Shi; Cambaluc; Chi ... 16 more

Types: city; inhabited place; religious center

Links: 1 linked records

Related: within Beijing Shi, Zhongguo, Asia, World

Beijing from dataset: black 81975 full record

Variants: Beijing

Types: province

Links: 1 linked records

When: [1949, 1980]; [1950, 1990]

Beijing from dataset: black 81976 full record

Variants: Beijing

Types: settlement

Links: 5 linked records

When: [1926, 1937]

Khanbalik from dataset: black 85724 full record

Variants: Beijing; Khanbalik

Types: settlement

Links: 6 linked records

When: [-140, 1295]; [1225, 1350]

Peking from dataset: black 88177 full record

Variants: Peking

Types: settlement

Links: 6 linked records

When: [1310, 1360]; [-200, 500]; [1937, 1942]; [1942, 1945]

Beijing from dataset: black 81974 full record

Variants: Beijing

Types: battle; settlement

Links: 6 linked records

When: [1310, 1360]; [1910, 1928]; [1600, 1914]; [1840, 1910]; [1917, 1930]; [1368, 1644]; [1626, 1645]; [1644, 1911]; [1674, 1900]; [1873, 1929]; [-1030, -220]; [1860, 1920]; [1750, 1925]; [1492, ...]

TEMPORAL ATTESTATIONS

GEOGRAPHY nearby places (300 max)

300 km

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TRACES (related persons, events, works, objects)

- work.text ['created_at (1676)']: San Li Tu
- work.painting ['created_at (1773)']: Drinking in the Bamboo Garden

