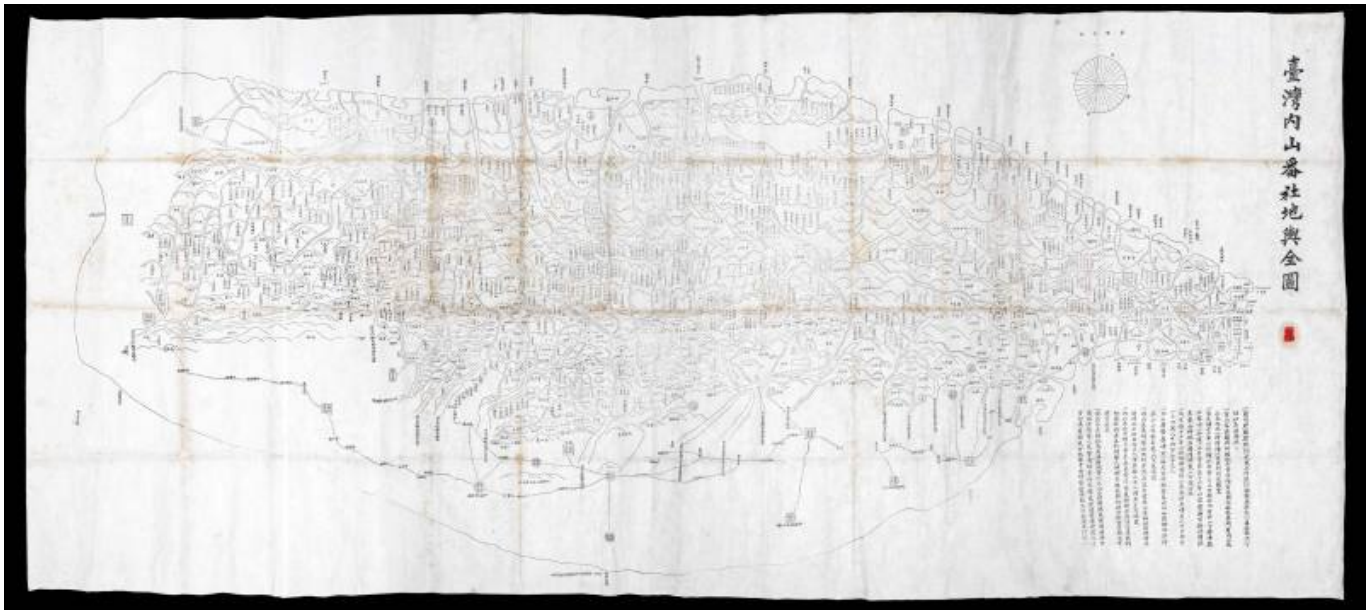


Lithograph, some staining along the folds, obscured red seal to the right.

THE FIRST ACCURATE MAP OF THE ISLAND OF TAIWAN

Taiwan neishan fanshe diyu quantu 臺灣內山番社地輿全圖 (Complete Map of Taiwan including the indigenous regions in the mountains).

Author
[ANONYMOUS]

Publication date
1888 (光緒十四年).

Publisher

Publication place
[Taiwan],

Physical description
Lithograph, some staining along the folds, obscured red seal to the right.

Dimensions
970 by 2230mm. (38.25 by 87.75 inches).

Notes
An extremely rare map of Taiwan made in 1888 at the culmination of two centuries of the Qing Dynasty (1684-1895). It is the first map to show the entire island with a high degree of accuracy and comprehensive geographical information; a feat that had never before been achieved.

The map is oriented to the East, extending north to south (left to right on the map) from Taipei fucheng 臺北府城 (Taipei provincial capital) to Hengchun xiancheng 恆春縣城 (Hengchun Township), and east to west from Hualiangang 花蓮港 (Port of Hualian) to Lugang 鹿港 (Lukang Township). The island is labelled with toponyms in Chinese. Relief is represented in elevation across the map, reflecting Taiwan’s mountainous terrain. In particular, the middle band of map shows densely packed mountain forms, representing the renowned ‘Central Mountain Range’, the principal

mountain range which runs from the north to the south of the island.

As explained in the legend beneath the title to the far right of the map, place names are framed in different shapes to signify different governmental levels: Fu 府 (prefectures) and xian 縣 (districts) are represented in double- bordered squares; wenwu fenfang 文武分防 (literary and military bureaus) are shown in double-circle rings; fukenju 撫墾局 (local bureaus) and fanshe 番社 (villages) are represented by large and small circles respectively.

As the Qing Empire expanded, geographical knowledge about Taiwan, as one of its newly acquired lands, was crucial for strategic and administrative purposes. However, Qing maps of Taiwan made before 1879 depict only the western side of the island, while about three quarters of the island is dismissed. This is because the Central Mountain Range that divides the island is notoriously difficult to cross, effectively cutting off the eastern half of Taiwan. Taiwan was not officially recognised and incorporated into the imperial geography until the spring of 1684, during the reign of Emperor Kangxi.

In 1714-15, the Jesuits constructed the first attempt at a map of the entire island. This survey was part of the overall survey of the Qing empire carried out by French Jesuits at the behest of the Kangxi emperor. Employing European cartographic technology, and consulting Chinese geographic sources, three Jesuits travelled from the northern tip of Taiwan to the south in order to map the whole island. The Jesuits, however, still could not survey beyond the Central Mountain Range. Therefore, their survey depicts only the major landmarks on the western coastal plain, with the remainder fading off into empty space and leaving the eastern half of Taiwan a cartographic blank.

The first map to finally project a detailed image of eastern Taiwan was published in 1879 by Xia Xianlun 夏獻綸 in his 'Taiwan yutu bingshuo' 臺灣輿圖並說 (Atlas of Taiwan with explanations). It was prompted by a policy implemented by the Qing in 1875, namely "Open the Mountains and Pacify the Savages" (kaishan fufan 開山撫番). This policy legalized the entry of Han Chinese settlers into the remaining indigenous territory of Taiwan. Xia's map embodies the results of that policy, by showing the Central Mountain range no longer as an obstacle between two halves of the island, and providing a new spatial image of Taiwan as a unified terrain.

At the time, Taiwan was not yet a province, but only a prefecture under Fujian province. It wasn't until 1885-87 that Sinicization fully came into force, when the imperial court granted the island full status as a province of China. This was prompted by the French naval blockade of 1884-1885, in response to which the Qing government dispatched Liu Mingchuan 劉銘傳, a Chinese official, who successfully warded off the French threat and proclaimed victory. Liu consequently initiated the process of modernizing the island's infrastructure and economy, and changed the island's administrative structure, establishing three major prefectures: Tainan 臺南, Taiwan 臺灣, and Taipei 臺北. The eastern coast was designated to be a separated administrative department, Taidong 臺東.

This marked shift in Taiwan's political status resulted in a drastic update in its cartographic representation, as evidenced by this rare copy of Taiwan neishan fanshe diyu quantu 臺灣內山番社地輿全圖 (Complete Map of Taiwan including the indigenous regions in the mountains), published in 1888, one year after Taiwan became a province. The map clearly identifies the new prefectures set up by Liu, all framed in double-bordered squares.

These new prefectures also represent the critical shift of the provincial capital from the south to the north. Tainan 臺南 does not appear on maps made before this example, such as the aforementioned 1879 map of Taiwan, which instead marks the location as the capital Taiwan fucheng 台灣府城 (provincial capital of Taiwan). This is because Liu transferred the site of Taiwan's provincial capital from Tainan 臺南 to central Taiwan. While the new capital was under construction, the northern city

of Taipei, designated as the temporary provincial capital, became the permanent capital.

As the first complete map showing Taiwan as a Chinese province, it speaks for perhaps the most critical transition period in the history of Taiwan.

Very rare. The only other example is in the National Library of China.

Bibliography

Teng, Emma. 2006. Taiwan’s imagined geography: Chinese colonial travel writing and pictures, 1683-1895. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. Xu, Yuliang. 2019. Guang xu shi si nian(1888). Taiwan: Yuanzu wenhua.

Provenance

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