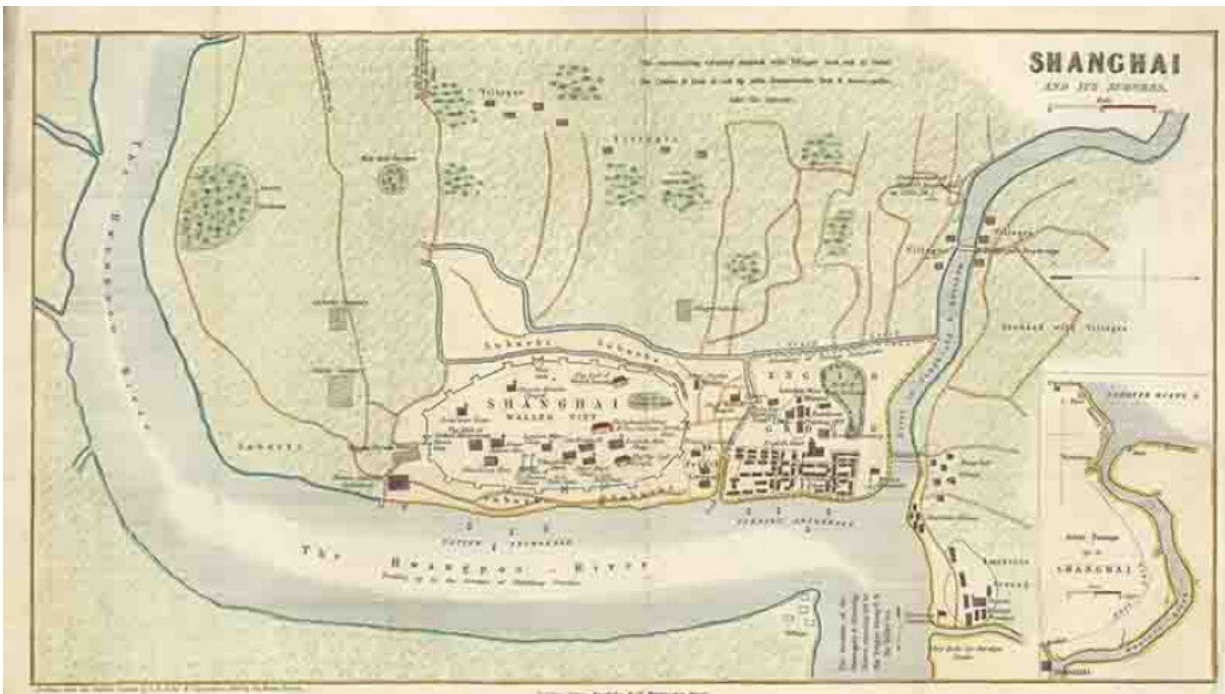


## 5,000 rare and unique maps are now available online

May 21 2020

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Mapmaker is William Charles Milne (1816-1863). Map dated C1853. Hand coloured engraving. Credit: Asia-Pacific Map Collection

Over 5,000 unique maps from the Asia-Pacific Map Collection are now available online as part of an ongoing project by The Australian National University's College of Asia and the Pacific.

This significant portion of the college's map collection is now available

on Open Research for people to download and enjoy for free.

The collection is home to a variety of topographic, cadastral, aeronautical, and thematic maps, some of which date back hundreds of years.

"The earliest map dates back to 1632. It is a full map of Batavia—the old capital of the Dutch East Indies—with all its forts," said Jenny Sheehan, who manages the collection.

"We have over 120 antique maps from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, 60 of which were generously donated to us by Clive Kessler."

The collection is home to some unique, one of a kind pieces as well.

"The Roti Map is a pre-1907, hand drawn piece representing Dutch political structure, showing all villages on the island," said Ms Sheehan.

"The map is full of local knowledge and was locally produced."

According to Ms Sheehan, the map has been analyzed by experts who say it is unique and cannot be found in Indonesian or Dutch archives.

"Of course the value of the maps is the story they tell of that particular snapshot in time," she said.

The collection also features a 76 year old inclinometer. The instrument was created in 1942 in Australia to aid the Allied military forces with surveying during World War 2.

Along with the Roti Map and the inclinometer, some of the stand out pieces available in the collection include a booklet of 30 historic Papua New Guinean photos, a 19 inch Phillips terrestrial globe from 1945, and

a rare map from 1896 of catholic missions across New Zealand, Tahiti, Samoa, Hawaiian Islands, Tonga and a number of other islands.

Kay Dancey who manages the CartoGIS services area of the College of Asia and the Pacific, says the maps are also used for practical purposes.

"The maps have been used as reference material in a range of research projects including those looking at historic and contemporary infrastructure comparison, the recreation of historic journeys, and Pacific nation land ownership," she said.

The collection can be accessed from all over the world.

Data shows people from China, Indonesia and Germany have accessed the maps more than 117,247 times since the [collection](#) gradually started becoming available in 2011 and it has seen 129,226 total downloads in last 12 months.

**More information:** The Asia-Pacific Map Collection: [openresearch-repository.anu.ed ... u/handle/1885/107367](https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/107367)

Provided by Australian National University

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