

Differences in the use of general river names between Hakka and Min ethnic groups

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Abstract

This study use interdisciplinary approach to integrate geography, linguistics and history, and focus on differences in general river name between the Hakka and Min ethnic groups in Taiwan, Fujian and Eastern Guangdong. The general names of river include: Jiang (), he (), xi (), gang (), chuan (), shui (), ke (), ke (), keng (), gou () and so on. This study aims to discuss the etymology of those general names and explore the characteristics of spatial distribution in the Hakka and Min dialect regions of Taiwan, Fujian and Eastern Guangdong. We also want to know the causality of the shaping spatial distribution and present theoretical arguments and documents.

This article focuses on rivers to retrieve place names information through the Fujian and Guangdong provincial atlas, and conduct a statistical analysis. From these research results, whether in the Guangdong or Fujian Provinces, or in the Hakka and Min dialect regions, the general name of high-grade rivers is mostly named “Jiang ()”. The low-grade rivers in Min dialect region is mostly named “xi ()”. The Hakka dialect region in southwestern Fujian is still “xi ()” dominant, but in eastern Guangdong Hakka dialect region is “he ()” predominance. In Taiwan, the vast majority of the general river names are “xi ()”. Some use “he ()” for high-grade rivers, such as Tamsui River and Keelung River. In the late 19th century to the early 20th century “xi ()” converted to “he ()”. Research shows Hakka are accustomed to “he ()” as general river name. In addition, general names such as “gang ()”, “keng ()”, “gou ()”, “ke ()”, “ke ()”, are gradually losing their original meaning, and are being superimposed or replaced by “xi ()” as a general name.

Both in Fujian, Eastern Guangdong, or in Taiwan, the general river names marked on the maps are mainly due to the customary terms of different ethnic groups naming that river. On the other hand, the

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customary terms closely link the formation of processes and their diachronic evolution of language, regional development and immigration ancestral home of geopolitical association. In addition, the mother tongues of rulers are also a sticking point. This paper also hopes to guide elementary school and high school in correctly learning general river names in Taiwan.

Keywords: toponymy, general name, place name, Hakka, Southern Min, river name

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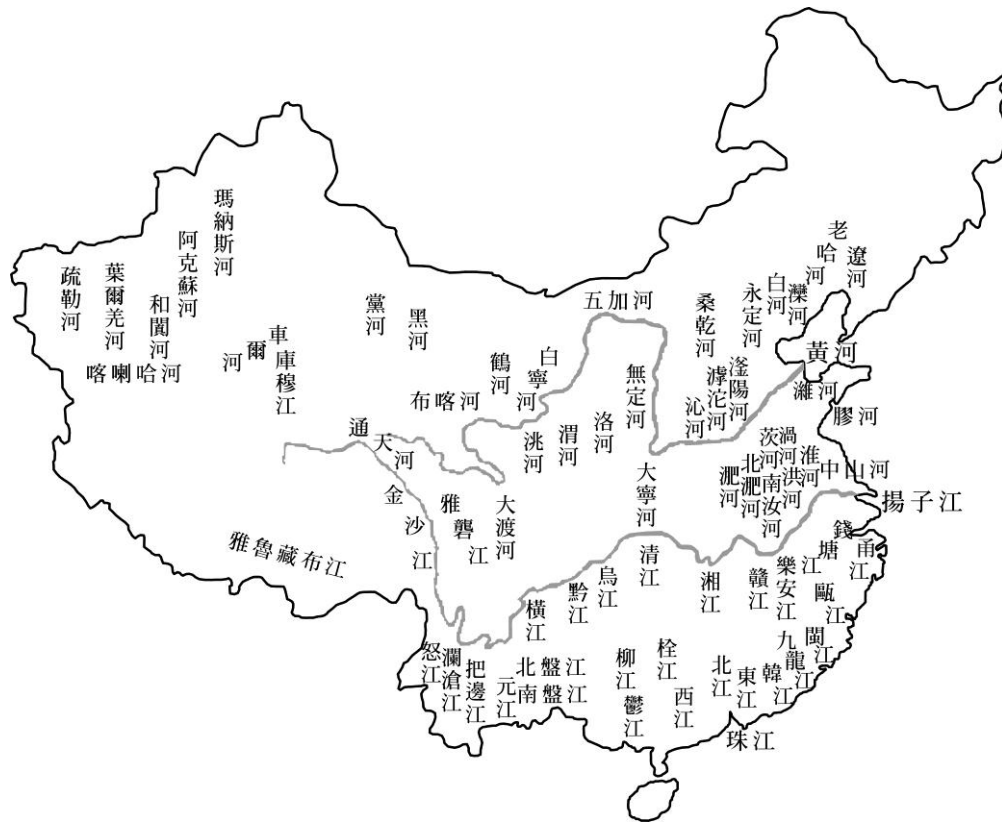
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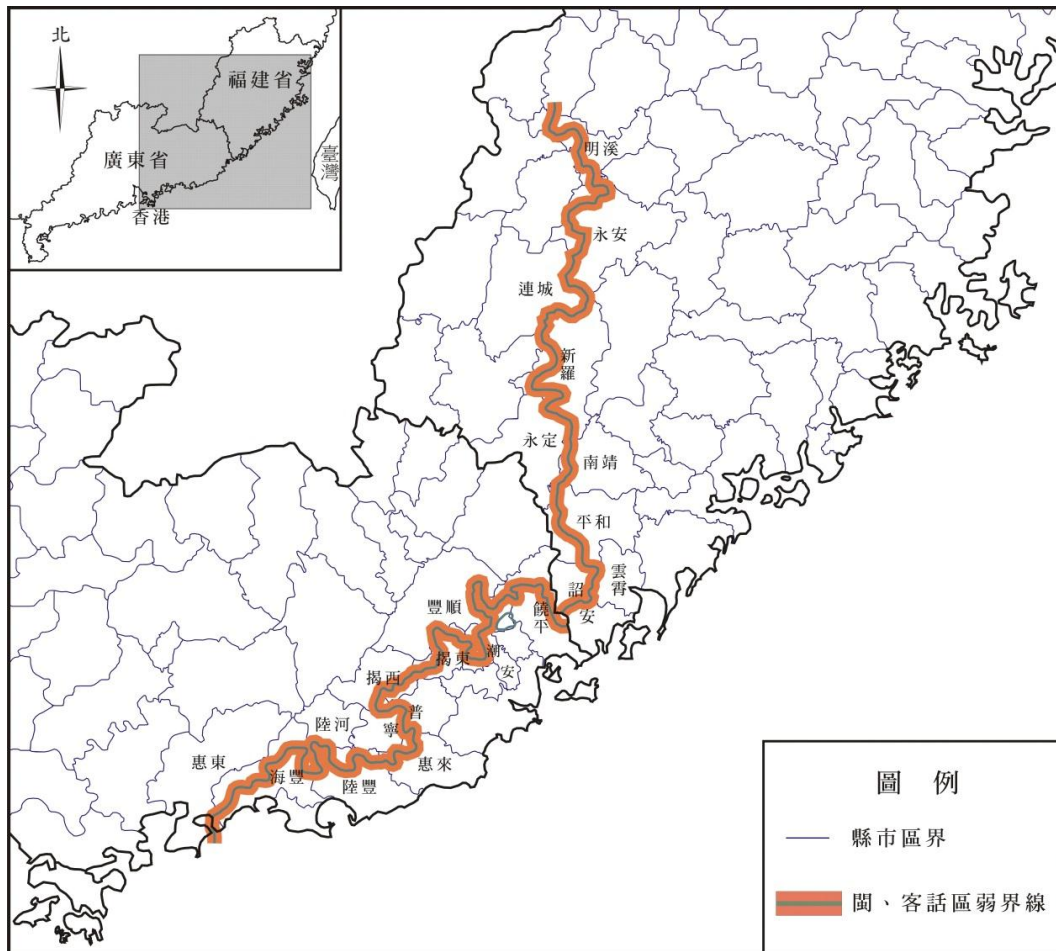
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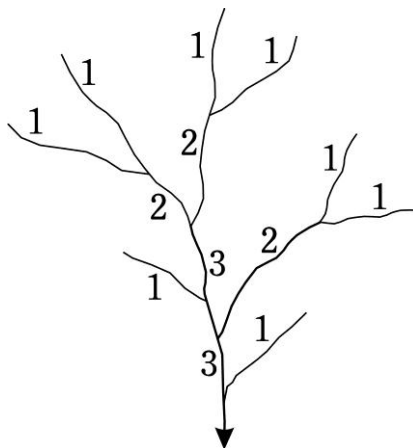
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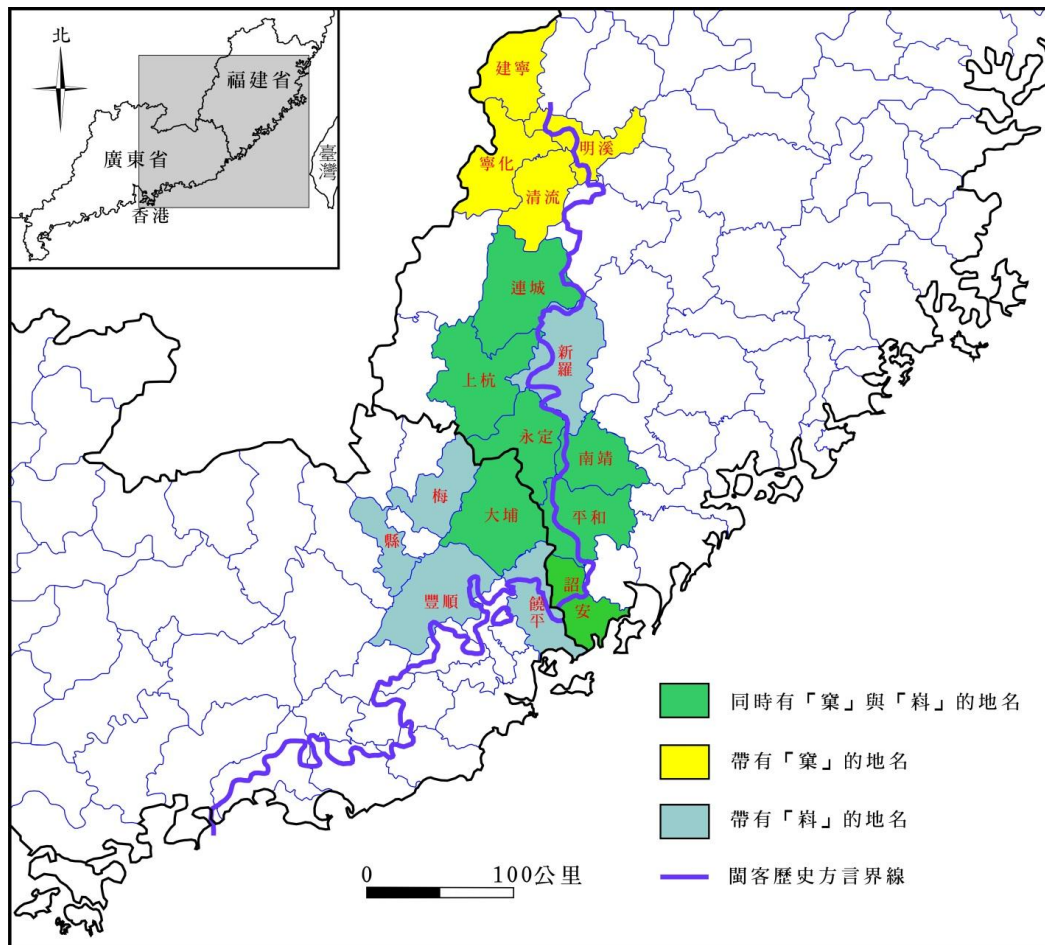
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