Place Names, Symbolic Power and the Chinese State

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Abstract

Place and street names, although apparently an apolitical part of everyday life, are in fact often determined by the state for political ends. In the democratic West, the political aspect of street names is most often revealed in the controversy that can accompany name changes, but authoritarian states often put politics front and center. China, for example, has passed national legislation that restricts street and place names to those that support "national unity and the establishment of socialist modernization," while prohibiting those that "damage sovereignty or national dignity." Using a unique dataset of 4.8 million Chinese street names, in this paper I analyze the factors that are associated with unity-promoting names across 122 major Chinese cities. Quantitative analysis and historical data suggest that the central government is most concerned with promoting "correct" names in areas with high ethnic tension or large numbers of ethnic minorities. These results suggest that Beijing sees geographic naming as an important promoter of national unity.

Theoretical Introduction

Although national symbols and local place names are a common feature of everyday life, few people stop to consider that they are often politically determined. After regime change or during times of national upheaval, these elements of everyday life can burst into the foreground as the focus of popular anger; under normal circumstances, however, such symbolic elements lurk in the background virtually unnoticed by the conscious mind. But unnoticed does not mean unimportant. In this paper I first examine some of the circumstances and theories of how states deploy and defend their symbolic resources. Next I use a statistical investigation of millions of street names to measure how the Party/state of the People's Republic of China (PRC) uses its political penetration to encourage national unity. In doing so, I hope both to shed light on the use of symbolic power in the PRC and to demonstrate the increasing feasibility of empirically investigating previously intractable concepts in the social sciences.

The study of political symbolism – and of names in particular – is hardly new. A sub-branch of geography known as toponymy is dedicated to studying local place names, and the political importance of names, streets and other symbols has long been recognized in the social sciences. Benedict Anderson, for example, memorably writes about the importance of symbolic resources like museums and monuments in holding polities together.[1] Writing about how the British managed to keep a colonial hold on India for centuries, James Scott notes that the design of the imperial capital, New Delhi, was "intended to overawe its subjects (and perhaps its own officials) with its scale and its grandeur." Quoting an advisor to King George V, Scott writes that the new capital must "be 'conspicuous and commanding,' not dominated by the structures of past empires or

[1] Anderson (1991).

by the features of the natural landscape. 'We must now let [the Indian] see for the first time the power of Western science, art and civilization.'"[2]

Although a few scholars have recognized the importance of these symbolic efforts, most scholarly work has been concerned with the more material aspects of state power. But as T. Camber Warren writes, "states do not rely exclusively on carrots and sticks" to build their power. "They also rely on emotionally charged messages to *induce* voluntary compliance with state rule. That is, state capacity is premised – at least in part – on the normative power of *communication,*"[3] – communication that clearly includes the mobilization of symbolic resources.

Moreover, this project can be seen as an extension of what other scholars have done elsewhere in the world. Miguel Centeno's well-received and highly cited book on statebuilding in Latin America, for example, spends a chapter analyzing the "concrete manifestations of nationalist sentiments: monuments and street names." He astutely notes that "While these symbolic carriers lack the textual richness of other possible candidates … they have two important advantages. First, information about them is relatively easy to obtain for our cases and they can be easily categorized and counted. Second, they are on constant public display; they help define the public sphere." Although we cannot easily know how the populace receives these state messages, Centeno argues, "we can certainly trace their production as a way to define *state-sponsored* nationalism."[4]

The importance of purely symbolic issues becomes most apparent when they emerge in the foreground as a source of political contention. During the middle ages, for

[2] Scott (1998), p259.
[3] Warren (Forthcoming), p2, emphasis in original.
[4] Centeno (2002), p178.

example, local elites often fought viciously for the right to set their own weights, measures, and currency even though a "rational" approach to the issue would favor large-scale centralization. Witold Kula writes that "municipalities jealously guarded their right of metrological [i.e. measurement] self-determination, just as they staunchly defended their other privileges and 'liberties' – perhaps even more so, since a right to their own measures, like the right to mint coinage, was an external symbol of freedom that was readily seen by the whole world."[5] The importance of such political symbols remains obvious today, even if, as Susanne Rudolph writes, "Most post-eighteenth-century social science has lost the language to convey, let alone take seriously, the ceremonial and symbolic as anything but the instrument of the efficient."[6] But their importance is unabated in modern life. A recent flare-up of violence in Northern Ireland surrounded the decision of the Belfast city council to stop regularly flying the Union Jack,[7] and massive protests swept Turkey after the government announced plans to redevelop a public park into a mosque complex.[8] These protests also had other causes, of course, but it is significant that they were triggered by disputes over symbolic issues.

Such events, of course, are unusual; flags, parks, street names and other symbols rarely become sources of public contention. But for many authors, the virtual invisibility of these everyday symbols during ordinary times is not a sign of state weakness but of strength. Michael Billig, for example, writes that "in the established nations, there is a continual 'flagging,' or reminding, of nationhood. The established nations are those states that have confidence in their own continuity ... The metonymic image of banal

[5] Kula (1986), p20.
[6] Rudolph (1987), p742.
[7] Morris (2013).
[8] Arango ibid.

nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building."[9] Sociologist James Scott writes of the "thousands upon thousands of petty acts of insubordination and evasion create a political and economic barrier reef" upon which "the ship of state runs aground."[10] In this paper, however, I try to turn this formulation on its head and concentrate on the thousands of quotidian acts and symbols – like street names – that together naturalize and reinforce the superstructure of state power over everyday life.

Symbols, Names and Chinese Unity

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has maintained an unquestioned monopoly on political power since the end of the Chinese Revolution in 1949. Modeled on Leninist organizational principles, the CCP has consistently attempted to influence and infiltrate all aspects of the lives of ordinary Chinese citizens. During the Maoist era (1949-1976) in particular, the Party maintained tight control over citizens' employment, residence, schooling, travel, and even marriage and divorce.[11] Starting with the reform era in 1979, the Party/state has gradually distanced itself from many of these areas, allowing most citizens a (relatively) free hand in most economic and familial aspects of life. In addition to these reforms, however, the CCP has been careful to foster a strong sense of national identity and to encourage linguistic and cultural uniformity.

One of the ways the CCP has stabilized its rule and encouraged this shared national sense of purpose is through instituting concrete policies like the so-called "patriotic education" programs in all of China's primary and secondary schools. This campaign, planned soon after the Tiananmen uprising in 1989 and implemented by 1991,

[9] Billig (1995), p8.
[10] Scott (1986), p8.
[11] Walder (1986).

"has creatively used history education as an instrument for the glorification of the party, for the consolidation of the PRC's national identity, and for the justification of the political system of the CCP's one party rule."[12] The curriculum consists of stories extoling CCP virtue, creating a national foundation myth and, often, demonizing the West as responsible for China's "century of humiliation."[13] As China expert Andrew Kipnis writes, "the central Chinese government has self-consciously viewed the curriculum as a tool to build a unified, patriotic and Party-loving national culture."[14] And by many accounts, this campaign has succeeded in effectively generating "a new tide of nationalism encompassing not only the younger generation inside China, but highly educated overseas Chinese."[15]

Beyond concrete measures like the patriotic education campaign, the Party/state has also deployed symbolic resources to reinforce a sense of national common purpose. Despite the fact that China is geographically enormous, for example, soon after the Communist takeover in 1949 the new rulers abolished the country's previous four time zones and implemented a single "Beijing time."[16] Even in remote Tibet and Xinjiang, all government services run on Beijing time, despite the daily inconvenience to these provinces' citizens. No matter that many Uyghur residents of Xinjiang defy the authorities and live by a more convenient local clock; the temporal hegemony of the

[12] Wang (2008), p784.
[13] This is the period from the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries, during which China suffered military defeats and the imposition of humiliating unequal treaties.
[14] Kipnis (2012), p735.
[15] Wang (2008), p784.
[16] Guo Qingsheng (郭庆生) (2003).

capital is reinforced – literally hourly – by radio announcements that always mention Beijing time.[17]

Street names, too, fall under the seemingly innocuous resources that the Chinese government deploys to maintain its power. The Chinese have a long history of renaming areas after regime change, as when the Western Han usurper Wang Mang (45 BCE – 23 CE) "changed more than 800 big place-names, including 73% of the names of prefectures and 46% of the names of counties, in an attempt to erase the influence of the former dynasty, [and] to show his supreme power and authority."[18] This renaming trend taken to nearly a mania during the disastrous Cultural Revolution (1966-76). Streets, squares and buildings were often given new "revolutionary" names, a change reflected in the fact that one study found that 40% of all Chinese street names had political names in 1973, but only 6 years later – and after the Cultural Revolution (CR) was over – only 33% had such names. As soon as the political pressure of the CR diminished, streets from Ürümqi to Guiyang shed names like "Red Guard Road" or "The East is Red Avenue" and reverted to pre-CR names like "Zhongshan Road" and "South Riverbank Road."[19]

Even after most streets reverted to their previous names, Beijing has retained tight rein on local toponymy. Article 4 of the "Regulations on Managing Place Names (地名管理条例)" issued by the central government in 1986 demands that local place names must: "Respect national unity (人民团结), the path of socialist modernization, the wishes of local residents and balance the interests of different groups. In general, places should not be named after people. In particular using the names of 'national leaders' is

[17] On Uyghur temporal resistance, see Bovingdon (2002). For more on the history and symbolism of China's single time zone, see Hassid and Watson (2013).
[18] Li Huajun (李华君) (2002), p15.
[19] Ibid., pp18-19.

forbidden." Article 5 is even more explicit, requiring that street and place names be changed when they "damage sovereignty and national dignity."[20] Even when establishing formalized, friendly relations with sister cities abroad, negotiators must make clear that "no streets or buildings of China shall be named after the place names or personal names of the other party. If the other party raises the proposal, we can politely decline it by giving the reason that such practice does not exist in China." Such renaming, without approval from the very highest levels of government, is "improper."[21]

Local regulations often go even further. In addition to reiterating these central demands, for example, Shanghai demands that street names not only "have healthy implications and be in line with social morality," but also that all naming proposals be submitted first to the "District/County Place-name office," followed by the "Municipal Place-name office" and finally the "Municipal People's Government for examination and approval."[22] Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang province, even has specific regulations for "such legal symbols as brands, steles and plaques," with substantial fines for transgressions.[23]

Data and Methods

To test what these regulations and Beijing's tight symbolic control mean for ordinary citizens, I conducted statistical analysis of a unique dataset of Chinese street

[20] Regulation 1986-1-23, articles 4(1), 4(2) and 5(1). Document on file with author.
[21] Regulation 26, issued May 13, 1987 by the General Office of the State Council as the "Circular of the General Office of the State Council Concerning the Decision that Streets and Buildings in China's Cities which Have Established a Friendly Relationship as Sister Cities With Cities of Foreign Countries Shall Not Be Named After the Place Names or Personal Names of These Foreign Countries," translation by Westlaw.
[22] "Shanghai Place Name Regulations," Chapter 2, Article 7(3) and Article 14, respectively, adopted at the 5th Session of the Standing Committee of the 11th Shanghai Municipal People's Congress on September 22, 1998, translation by Westlaw.
[23] "Regulations of Harbin Municipality on the Administration of Names of Places," adopted April 28, 2005 as Announcement No. 38 of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of the Harbin Municipality, translation by Westlaw.

names. I purchased this dataset from Youbianku (邮编库) a Chinese company that provides postcode information for casual and commercial use. Ostensibly containing all the streets in China, in fact the data are missing for at least one strategically important city.[24] Overall though, the sheer size of the corpus – over 4.8 million names – and random spot checks of several cities with Google maps suggest the data to be reliable.

Using this dataset, I collected all the street names of each of China's 122 largest cities, including all provincial capitals and the province-level cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing. With the exception of Hainan, Qinghai, and Tibet, each of China's 28 provinces is represented by at least two, and generally five, cities each.[25] Next I processed these names through an automated "text factory" designed to remove the names of non-street places like villages and counties by only including those that contained the words for road, street, alley, way or hutong (路街道巷胡同). Although this approach might miss some non-standard names, research done on Nanjing's street names in 2011 suggests that these blanket terms encompass nearly 95% of Chinese urban streets.[26]

The next step was to "stem" the street names down to their principal components. In other words, while the database might list "Beijing Street," "Beijing Avenue," "Beijing Street West," "North Beijing Avenue," etc., this process is designed to reduce them to "Beijing" alone. This stemming is critical for comparing data across cities;

[24] Sanya city in Hainan province. Although it is impossible to know the reason for this omission, it seems likely that these data are withheld because Sanya is the home of the Chinese navy's major nuclear submarine base.
[25] Hainan, Qinghai, and Tibet just have data for their provincial capitals (Haikou, Xining, and Lhasa, respectively) but the provinces are on average represented by 4.2 cities each.
[26] For example the word for "road" (路) alone accounts for over half (57%) of the dataset. See Shen Yiru (沈意如) (2011), pp4-5.

despite the fundamental similarity of these example street names, without such processing they would all appear different to the computer.[27]

Having reduced the street names of these 122 cities to their principle components, I was then able to compare the extent of overlap between each city and Beijing, the national capital. Cities that base their names on generic national themes or directly imitate Beijing score highly on overlap; cities that take naming inspiration from local history or culture, by contrast, tend to have lower overlap. The three cities with the highest street name similarity to Beijing are all relatively minor: Zhongwei, in Ningxia (46.9% overlap); Baotou, in Inner Mongolia (32.4% overlap); and Chifeng, also in Inner Mongolia (30.9% overlap). Interestingly, the three cities with the lowest overlap – and greatest symbolic local independence – are all rich, populous and important: Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province (5.4% overlap); Wenzhou, Zhejiang province (5% overlap); and Shantou, Guangdong province (2.4% overlap). A complete list of the street name overlap of all 122 cities with Beijing, as well as their deviation (residual) from their predicted degree of overlap is listed in Appendix 1.

For more complete analysis, I used linear regression to try to isolate the factors that encourage cities to align their local names with Beijing. I included eight independent variables in this model: "Distance," "South," "Rank," "Capital," "GDP_1k," "Han," "Pop," and "FDI." "Distance," obviously, measures the distance in kilometers from the center of the target city to the center of Beijing, using Google maps data. Distance from Beijing ranges from Tianjin's 140km to Lhasa's 3616km. In theory, at least, distant cities should be more culturally autonomous than ones closer to Beijing. An old Chinese

[27] The BBedit Textfactory used for processing this data, with comments illustrating what the different actions do, is available from the author upon request.

saying claims such areas have a measure of independence because "the mountains are high and the emperor far away" (山高皇帝远).

The "South" variable is a binary dummy designed to measure the influence of southern Chinese culture and autonomy, measured here by whether the target province is south of the Yangtze River. Scholars have long seen southern China as having unique characteristics,[28] and for this analysis all cities in the following provinces are tagged as "southern:" Anhui, Chongqing, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Hainan, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Shanghai, Sichuan, Yunnan and Zhejiang.

The "Rank" and "Capital" variables measure the city's administrative rank and whether it is a provincial capital, respectively. Administrative rank in the Chinese system can be rather complicated, but these 122 cities all fit into three administrative ranks, creating a natural ordinal variable. Province level cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing) are at the top of the heap, and are coded as "1". Sub-provincial cities – generally the most important in a province – are coded as "2" and the remaining prefecture-level cities are coded as "3."[29] The "Capital" variable is a binary dummy denominating provincial capital status. Administrative rank is extremely important in the Chinese political system, with higher-ranked cities, ministries and bureaus allowed more latitude than lower ranked ones. Here, one might expect that cities with higher administrative rank can show greater local symbolic, as well as political, autonomy.

"GDP_1k" is a control variable measuring the city's per-capita GDP (in 1000s of RMB), sourced from the official 2009 City Statistical Yearbook (2009 年城市统计年鉴

[28] For a history of the scholarship on China's distinct regions, see Cartier (2002).
[29] There are also several ranks below the prefecture level, but cities in these areas are less populous, less important, and are not included in this analysis.

).[30] These income data are taken from the urban core districts only (市辖区) to avoid biasing the results for those cities with many rural – and generally poorer – districts. Lhasa, Tibet and Liuzhou, Guangxi only have data for the "whole city," including rural districts, and so might have income numbers biased slightly downward.

Although China officially has 56 ethnic groups, the vast majority of the population (>90%) is Han Chinese. The "Han" variable measures the proportion of Han urban residents, based on data from the 2000 census. Unfortunately these data are provincial-level only, meaning that heavily minority cities in mostly Han Chinese provinces (like Tongliao, Inner Mongolia) will be overestimated, and Han majority cities in minority-dominated provinces (like Ürümqi, Xinjiang) will be underestimated. These data, in short, are not perfect and represent only an approximation. I included this variable because it is possible that the local, provincial and national governments prize "unity" more in areas with a high level of potentially restive ethnic minorities. Indeed, unrest in Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia and Tibet in recent years seems to have reinforced Beijing's desire to impose national cultural uniformity.[31]

The "Pop" variable measures city population in units of 10,000 people, again based on urban core data from the 2009 City Statistical Yearbook. Finally, the "FDI" variable measures the percentage of total China-wide foreign direct investment (FDI) directed to each province. These data are from Cheung and Lin (2004), based on statistical data from 2000. Again, these are rather coarse provincial level data, and their age means that they might be missing recent trends directing FDI away from coastal provinces into the interior. Despite these shortcomings, however, the "FDI" variable is a

[30] National Bureau of Statistics of China (国家统计局) (2009).
[31] Yardley (2008).

reasonable proxy for the degree of foreign involvement in individual Chinese cities. I also included a binary variable indicating whether or not the target city was located in an "autonomous region" in several test runs.[32] As this control never achieved statistical significance, it was dropped from the final model.

Results

A simple OLS linear regression with these independent variables on the degree of street name overlap with Beijing produces the results detailed in Figure 1, below. Note that many of the independent variables violate some of the stricter OLS assumptions, in particular those requiring homoscedasticity. Running the regression with Huber/White robustness corrections, however, does not much change the final result, nor does running the equation as a hierarchical linear model. For ease of interpretation, therefore, I present only the OLS results:

Figure 1: OLS Regression Results for 122 Cities' Street name Overlap with Beijing

Variable	**Coefficient**	**Standard Error**	**Beta (standardized regression coefficient)**
Distance	-0.00002*	0.00001	-0.218
South	-0.04900***	0.01073	-----(dummy)
Rank	0.00621	0.01911	0.039
Capital	-0.03860**	0.01246	-----(dummy)
GDP_1k	-0.00036	0.00020	-0.132
Han	-0.12106**	0.03907	-0.287
Pop	-0.00004	0.00004	-0.125
FDI	-0.00193*	0.00081	-0.175
Constant	0.36136	0.07571	-----

Prob>F for full model = 0.000; R^2 = 0.59
*means p<.05, ** means p<.01 *** means p<.001
Using robust standard errors obtains similar results

[32] Five Chinese provincial-level units (Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Tibet and Xinjiang) are technically ethnic "autonomous regions" (自治区). In practice, however, these have no special advantages and act just like regular provinces. Indeed, some suggest these areas have even *less* autonomy than regular provinces. See Keller (1994).

The high statistical significance ($p<.0001$) and relatively good fit of this model ($R^2=0.59$) suggest that these factors capture most of the variance of Chinese street name overlap. Holding all other factors constant, five variables emerge as statistically significant: Distance, South, Capital, Han and FDI. It is generally easiest to interpret these results for non-categorical variables based on the standardized regression coefficient (beta), which is included in the figure above to help control for different underlying scales of the variables.

Southern Chinese cities have significantly less overlap with Beijing than their northern counterparts, holding other factors constant. Indeed, moving a hypothetical city from the north to the south is predicted to result in a 5% drop in street name overlap even if all other factors, including distance from Beijing, remain the same. In other words, southern Chinese cities are predicted to have more symbolic cultural autonomy than those in the north, validating the work of scholars who see a distinct southern Chinese identity.

Distance, too, has a big impact. Historically, Beijing's grip on China's interior has waxed and waned with the power and prestige of the central government. Rudolph describes the imperial "galactic model" of the Chinese state, where marginal and peripheral areas were held to Beijing's suzerainty not by military force but by symbolic and cultural suasion – a force that decreases with distance.[33] Although the CCP's centralizing juggernaut quickly penetrated most areas of the country after 1949, centripetal forces remain. The results above suggest that areas further from the capital continue to maintain local names and traditions (not to mention linguistic dialects) that distinguish them from the center.

[33] Rudolph (1987).

Another unsurprising result is the finding that provincial capitals have more distinct names than other cities, *ceteris paribus*. Given that these are symbolic regional state centers, it seems likely that local officials will endeavor to demonstrate the importance of their areas by retaining a certain degree of local symbolic autonomy.

Similarly, the finding that foreign financial capital can translate into local symbolic capital is not unexpected. In this dataset, an increase of one standard deviation in FDI is predicted to result in a drop of nearly 18% street name overlap with Beijing, holding other factors constant. Interestingly, however, local GDP is statistically insignificant in this equation, a result suggesting the distinct impact of foreign versus domestic money. Those cities with a high influx of foreign capital – places like Wenzhou (Zhejiang) or Zhuhai (Guangdong) – tend to also have distinct ties to foreign or expatriate communities.[34] Although richer cities are, on average, no more likely to have distinct street names than poorer ones, those with greater foreign investment also seem to have greater local autonomy.[35]

Finally, the biggest measured factor in predicting local street autonomy is the absence of local ethnic minorities. Many of China's 55 official ethnic minorities retain their own languages and traditions, a factor suggesting areas dominated by these minorities will have local linguistic or cultural differences from the rest of China. In practice, however, the opposite appears to be true; holding other factors constant, an increase of one standard deviation in the proportion of Han Chinese predicts a decrease of nearly 30% in local name autonomy. Areas with high concentrations of ethnic

[34] Tsai (2002).
[35] For more on some of the local political impact of foreign direct investment, see Gallagher (2002).

minorities, in other words, have streets that look *more* like those in Beijing, not less, perpetuating a strong sense of national identity.

Interestingly, Lhasa seems to be the outlier here, having a strong proportion of local Tibetan, rather than Han Chinese, street names. Lhasa's overlap with Beijing is only around 12%, compared to a predicted overlap (based on its other characteristics) of over 25%.[36] Although Lhasa is not the biggest outlier – this honor goes to Zhongwei, Ningxia – it is especially unusual in that it has been the site of much ethnic tension in recent years.[37] Given the push in recent decades to better culturally and economically integrate Tibet into the rest of China, and especially given the huge influx of Han Chinese into the province, this relative cultural autonomy is surprising. In the absence of on-the-ground research I can only speculate that this result is related to the 1950 incorporation of Tibet into the PRC, which was governed by the so-called Seventeen Points agreement. Point 9 refers to the preservation of the Tibetan language, and Point 11 guarantees that "In matters related to various reforms in Tibet, there will be no compulsion on the part of the central authorities."[38] Given these nominal constraints, it is possible that Beijing never forced name changes on the local Tibetan authorities in the early years, and any attempt to do so now would precipitate further ethnic unrest. In any case, most cities in other areas with considerable ethnic tension (including those in Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia and Yunnan) generally have strongly Sinicized street names, reflecting Beijing's emphasis on building a strong, unified national identity.

[36] In other words, the residuals for Lhasa are high at 0.13.
[37] Xu Zhiyong (2012).
[38] The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet, available in translation at http://www.china.org.cn/english/zhuanti/tibet%20facts/163877.htm

Discussion

"The function of a national identity is to sustain the state by unifying the population, at least psychologically," writes Michael Ng-Quinn.[39] To this end, the CCP seems to have hit upon an effective – and relatively cheap – way to instill national identity into the Chinese population as they go about their daily business. Just as in medieval Europe, where centralizing authorities endeavored to suppress the "political fragmentation … marked by a proliferation of weights and measures peculiar to the numerous sovereign duchies,"[40] today central states often continue in their conscious efforts towards symbolic consolidation. Although naming (and renaming) streets might not seem important or political, the results serve as an omnipresent reminder of state power and unity.

Even secure democratic nation-states find a need to continually reinforce their unity and the primacy of the state. Here it is worth quoting at length from Eugen Weber's magisterial *Peasants into Frenchmen* about how the French state was built and is maintained today:

> There is something strange about the talk that swelled in the late nineteenth century, and that continues to this day, about being French. If the French were (are?) as French as we have been led to believe, why so much fuss? The fact is, the French fuss so much about the nation because it is a living problem, became one when the set the nation up as an ideal, remained one because the found they could not realize the ideal. The more abstractly the concept of France-as-nation is presented, the less one notes discrepancies between theory and practice. When one gets down to facts, things become awkward. Take, for example, Carlton Hayes's naive definition of nationality: 'a group of people who speak either the same language or closely related dialects, who cherish common historical traditions, and who constitute or think they constitute a distinct cultural society.' This would never do for the France we have been talking about, because it simply does not fit French [end of p112] conditions. A lot of Frenchmen did not know that they belonged

[39] Ng-Quinn (1993), p32.
[40] Kula (1986), p22.

> together until the long didactic campaigns of the later nineteenth century told them they did, and their own experience as conditions changed told them that this made sense.[41]

Although Weber considers France to be a fully consolidated nation-state by World War One, a distinct sense of national identity and strong rule from Paris do not prevent the French state from continuing to push its symbolic primacy. The 1994 Toubon Law forces the use of the French language in all official contexts, a 2003 law (Loi no 2003-239, article 433-5-1) created heavy fines for publicly insulting the national anthem or flag, and "In 2010, Prime Minister François Fillon announced plans to hoist a French flag at every school in France and require students to sing the national anthem at least once a year."[42]

In trying to emulate the unchallenged national unity of places like France, the Chinese government has long noted the power of these symbolic elements to hold a country together. Even at the nadir of its political weakness in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "China survived the death of Confucianism and much else besides because the idea of China was attached to the ideal of a unitary state rather than to the ideology of a particular regime."[43] With the waning of its defining ideology, the CCP continues to press the idea of China as a strong, united nation.[44] Like all countries, China is ultimately held together not by laws and armies, but because its citizens believe (and daily create) the national "imagined community."[45] New data sources and new methods have made it possible for the first time to systematically study the effective symbolic resources that hold these imagined communities together; it is time to make visible these "invisible" state tools.

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[41] Weber (1976), pp112-113.
[42] Hassid and Watson (2013), p18.
[43] Fitzgerald (1995), p85.
[44] Guang (2005).
[45] Anderson (1991).

Appendix 1: Overlap & Predicted[46] Street Name Overlap Between 122 Cities and Beijing

City	Province	Street Name Overlap with Beijing	Predicted Street Name Overlap	Difference (Residuals)
Bengbu	Anhui	0.1932203	0.1777466	0.0154737
Hefei	Anhui	0.1166667	0.1192822	-0.0026156
Huainan	Anhui	0.1269841	0.17638	-0.0493959
Ma'anshan	Anhui	0.175	0.1551238	0.0198762
Wuhu	Anhui	0.1506849	0.1636452	-0.0129602
Chongqing	Chongqing	0.0933403	0.0577764	0.035564
Fuzhou	Fujian	0.0839612	0.0942684	-0.0103071
Putian	Fujian	0.1123596	0.136719	-0.0243595
Quanzhou	Fujian	0.0753286	0.1331813	-0.0578527
Sanming	Fujian	0.1473684	0.1422207	0.0051477
Xiamen	Fujian	0.1058122	0.1233189	-0.0175067
Baiyin	Gansu	0.2368421	0.2264066	0.0104355
Jinchang	Gansu	0.2702703	0.2082725	0.0619977
Lanzhou	Gansu	0.1212121	0.1804555	-0.0592433
Tianshui	Gansu	0.206751	0.2307468	-0.0239957
Wuwei	Gansu	0.244898	0.2287068	0.0161912
Guangzhou	Guangdong	0.0544018	0.0121536	0.0422482
Shantou	Guangdong	0.0243328	0.0862656	-0.0619328
Shaoguang	Guangdong	0.1448171	0.1033018	0.0415152
Shenzhen	Guangdong	0.1136951	0.0661691	0.047526
Zhuhai	Guangdong	0.0940526	0.0828356	0.0112169
Beihai	Guangxi	0.1629393	0.1906918	-0.0277525
Guilin	Guangxi	0.141046	0.1976294	-0.0565834
Liuzhou	Guangxi	0.1358025	0.1982504	-0.062448
Nanning	Guangxi	0.1473397	0.1435374	0.0038023
Wuzhou	Guangxi	0.179661	0.1951413	-0.0154803
Anshun	Guizhou	0.2258064	0.2021251	0.0236813
Guiyang	Guizhou	0.1652299	0.1517554	0.0134745
Liupanshui	Guizhou	0.254902	0.1927282	0.0621738
Zunyi	Guizhou	0.1859649	0.2013719	-0.015407
Haikou	Hainan	0.1292876	0.1189978	0.0102898
Handan	Hebei	0.1877608	0.232723	-0.0449622

[46] By OLS equation, based on the cities' structural characteristics.

Qinhuangdao	Hebei	0.3076923	0.2337282	0.0739641
Shijiazhuang	Hebei	0.1700288	0.1898046	-0.0197758
Tangshan	Hebei	0.1867572	0.2243961	-0.0376389
Xingtai	Hebei	0.2005076	0.2376783	-0.0371707
Harbin	Heilongjiang	0.118412	0.158806	-0.040394
Hegang	Heilongjiang	0.2747253	0.2208445	0.0538808
Jixi	Heilongjiang	0.2581818	0.2207196	0.0374622
Qiqihar	Heilongjiang	0.2248996	0.2224097	0.0024899
Shuangyashan	Heilongjiang	0.2422908	0.2195304	0.0227604
Anyang	Henan	0.2418478	0.1853604	0.0564874
Kaifeng	Henan	0.1965318	0.1848965	0.0116352
Luoyang	Henan	0.1625544	0.173701	-0.0111465
Pingdingshan	Henan	0.2439678	0.1751307	0.0688372
Zhengzhou	Henan	0.1698957	0.1281539	0.0417418
Huangshi	Hubei	0.1469388	0.1710042	-0.0240654
Shiyan	Hubei	0.1661631	0.1658413	0.0003219
Wuhan	Hubei	0.1024027	0.1019157	0.0004871
Xiangyang	Hubei	0.176976	0.1706605	0.0063154
Yichang	Hubei	0.1300236	0.1664919	-0.0364683
Changsha	Hunan	0.094697	0.1143752	-0.0196783
Hengyang	Hunan	0.1666667	0.1721063	-0.0054396
Shaoyang	Hunan	0.1954887	0.176671	0.0188177
Xiangtan	Hunan	0.1086956	0.1681914	-0.0594957
Zhuzhou	Hunan	0.1972318	0.1676742	0.0295577
Changzhou	Jiangsu	0.1125	0.1260967	-0.0135967
Nanjing	Jiangsu	0.1473397	0.0691908	0.0781489
Suzhou	Jiangsu	0.0879062	0.1088667	-0.0209604
Wuxi	Jiangsu	0.0919283	0.1112774	-0.0193491
Xuzhou	Jiangsu	0.1819672	0.1385662	0.043401
Jingdezhen	Jiangxi	0.1925134	0.1663062	0.0262072
Jiujiang	Jiangxi	0.1316239	0.1594076	-0.0277837
Nanchang	Jiangxi	0.1154401	0.1115623	0.0038779
Pingxiang	Jiangxi	0.2410714	0.1632949	0.0777765
Xinyu	Jiangxi	0.1318681	0.16172	-0.0298518
Changchun	Jilin	0.2056604	0.1718759	0.0337845
Jilin	Jilin	0.1805556	0.2275463	-0.0469908
Liaoyuan	Jilin	0.2605042	0.2352902	0.025214
Siping	Jilin	0.2429577	0.2405534	0.0024043
Tonghua	Jilin	0.2619048	0.2337031	0.0282017
Anshan	Liaoning	0.2662722	0.221985	0.0442872
Benxi	Liaoning	0.2097561	0.2330952	-0.0233391

Dalian	Liaoning	0.1307628	0.2048727	-0.07411
Fushun	Liaoning	0.1526104	0.2354114	-0.082801
Shenyang	Liaoning	0.1268917	0.1658226	-0.0389309
Baotou	Nei Mongol	0.3236994	0.2362552	0.0874443
Chifeng	Nei Mongol	0.3089431	0.2609403	0.0480028
Hohot	Nei Mongol	0.2178218	0.2098185	0.0080033
Tongliao	Nei Mongol	0.2831858	0.25206	0.0311258
Wuhai	Nei Mongol	0.2222222	0.2423857	-0.0201635
Guyuan	Ningxia	0.2166667	0.2679728	-0.0513062
Shizuishan	Ningxia	0.2328767	0.2628833	-0.0300066
Wuzhong	Ningxia	0.2826087	0.2698128	0.0127959
Yinchuan	Ningxia	0.2181208	0.2219022	-0.0037814
Zhongwei	Ningxia	0.46875	0.2679053	0.2008447
Xining	Qinghai	0.2345133	0.2277333	0.0067799
Baoji	Shaanxi	0.1750742	0.2155976	-0.0405234
Tongchuan	Shaanxi	0.1981982	0.2275763	-0.0293781
Weinan	Shaanxi	0.1892523	0.228182	-0.0389297
Xi'an	Shaanxi	0.1788079	0.1575269	0.021281
Xianyang	Shaanxi	0.2397959	0.2192718	0.0205242
Dongying	Shandong	0.2228916	0.1796571	0.0432345
Jinan	Shandong	0.1242673	0.1577288	-0.0334615
Qingdao	Shandong	0.1070878	0.1814916	-0.0744037
Zaozhuang	Shandong	0.2168285	0.2127702	0.0040583
Zibo	Shandong	0.1736111	0.2017042	-0.0280931
Shanghai	Shanghai	0.0545763	0.039287	0.0152893
Changzhi	Shanxi	0.2808219	0.2324124	0.0484095
Datong	Shanxi	0.203966	0.234954	-0.030988
Jincheng	Shanxi	0.2285714	0.230901	-0.0023296
Taiyuan	Shanxi	0.1680498	0.1804064	-0.0123566
Yangquan	Shanxi	0.2705882	0.2373924	0.0331958
Chengdu	Sichuan	0.0942323	0.0969919	-0.0027596
Deyang	Sichuan	0.1613924	0.1662123	-0.0048199
Luzhou	Sichuan	0.1299871	0.1629896	-0.0330025
Panzhihua	Sichuan	0.1417323	0.1437127	-0.0019804
Zigong	Sichuan	0.1573034	0.1616934	-0.0043901
Tianjin	Tianjin	0.1307137	0.1479673	-0.0172536
Lhasa	Tibet	0.1225806	0.2522943	-0.1297136
Karamay	Xinjiang	0.2890625	0.2229687	0.0660938
Urumqi	Xinjiang	0.2376238	0.21045	0.0271737
Baoshan	Yunnan	0.2191781	0.178618	0.0405601
Kunming	Yunnan	0.161157	0.1334524	0.0277047

Qujing	Yunnan	0.2087542	0.1812769	0.0274774
Yuxi	Yunnan	0.1575492	0.1658291	-0.0082799
Zhaotong	Yunnan	0.2371795	0.1948677	0.0423118
Hangzhou	Zhejiang	0.1034717	0.0828513	0.0206204
Huzhou	Zhejiang	0.0805031	0.15788	-0.0773769
Jiaxing	Zhejiang	0.1418764	0.1598502	-0.0179738
Ningbo	Zhejiang	0.0747354	0.1219713	-0.0472359
Wenzhou	Zhejiang	0.0495034	0.1388135	-0.0893101
AVERAGE	**------**	**0.1778991**	**------**	**------**

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