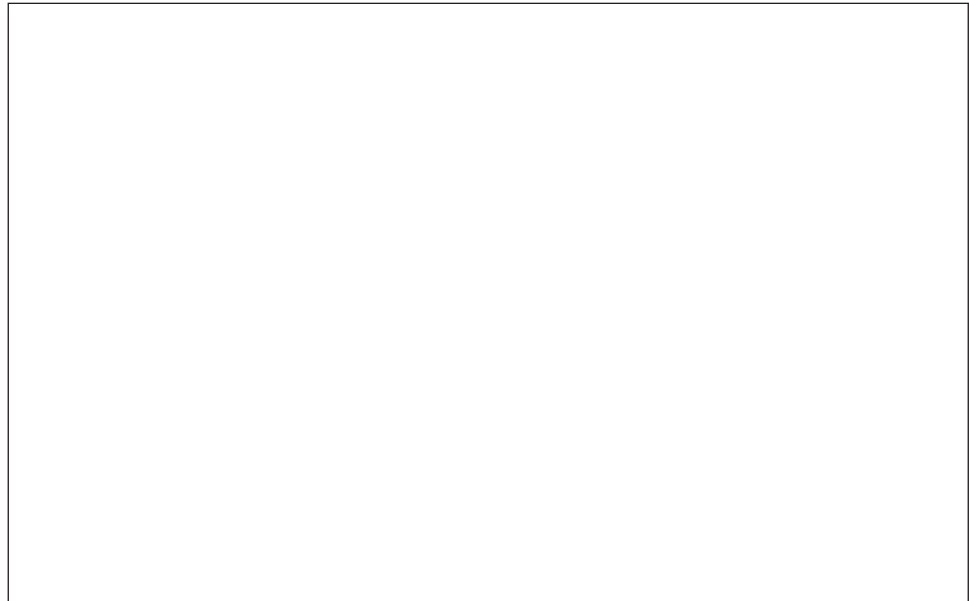


Files needed:

Parchment Effect.zip

Creating a Parchment Effect

You can create a parchment look for map areas; this can add a nice touch for historical maps, especially of the Mideast. I recently came across this map of Iran:

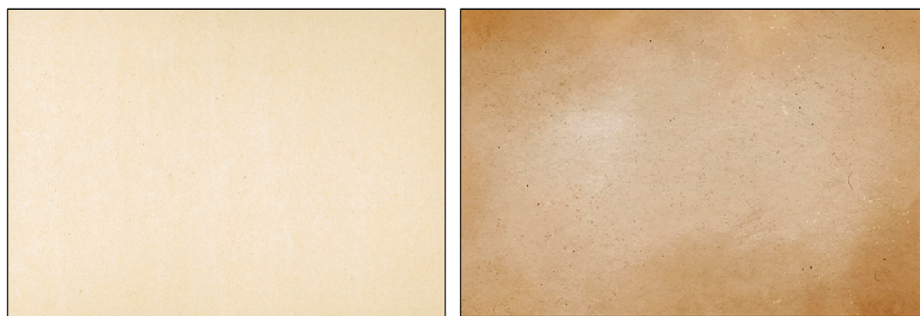


► **Tip:** You can combine several paper textures in Photoshop and adjust the opacity and blending mode of the layers to get exactly the effect you want. I've included an assortment in the Download.

I really like the parchment effect, so I'll recreate it in this chapter.

What you need

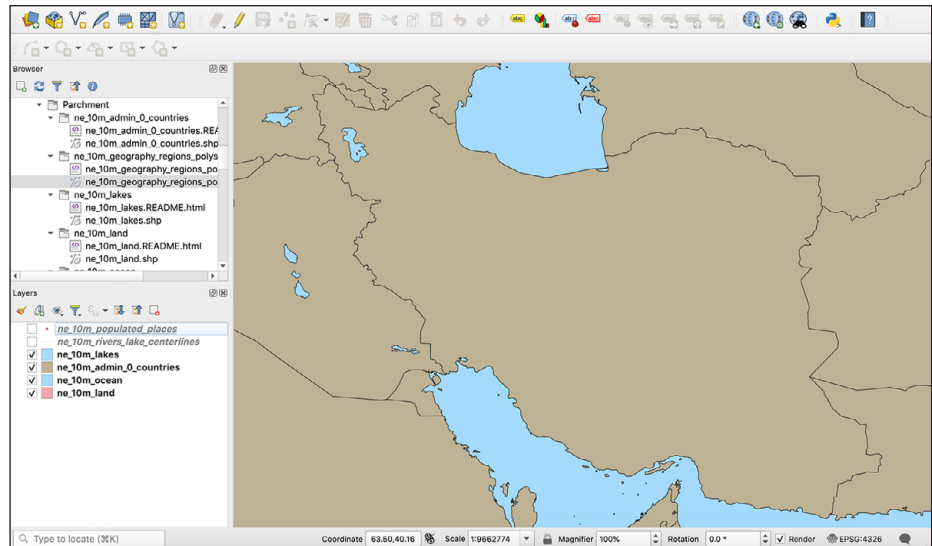
Aside from the files you need to create the map, the only other thing we need is a parchment texture. These are easy to find online; I found these two on [Freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com) (a great source for free stock images):



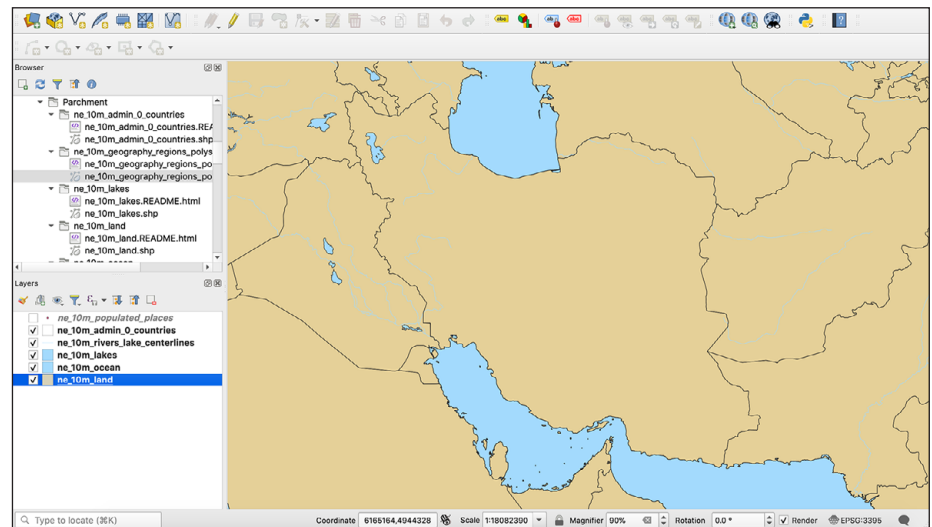
Make sure you get a texture that's big enough; at least 3000 pixels wide should be good.

Creating the Base Map

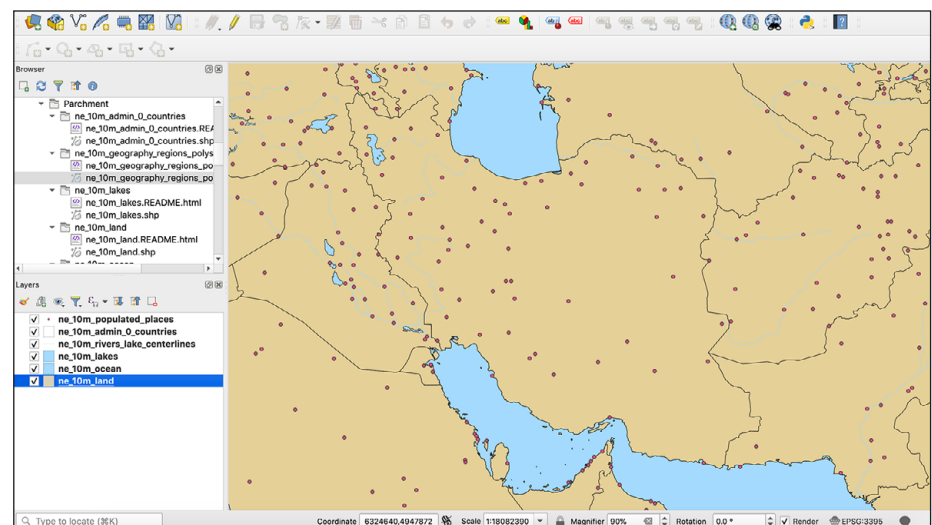
The base map for this project is pretty simple: country borders, cities, rivers, and geographical areas. This map doesn't include shaded relief, so I don't need a DEM file. I'll use [Natural Earth](https://www.naturalearthdata.com/) vector data and load it into QGIS (see next page):



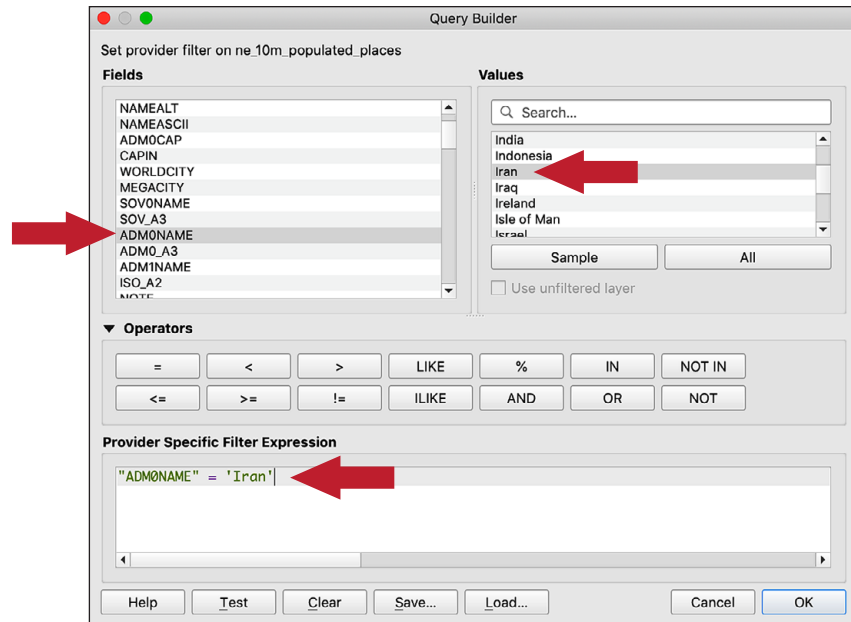
Now I'll change the projection to **World Mercator** and set the **Countries** layer to **No Brush** to only show the borders:



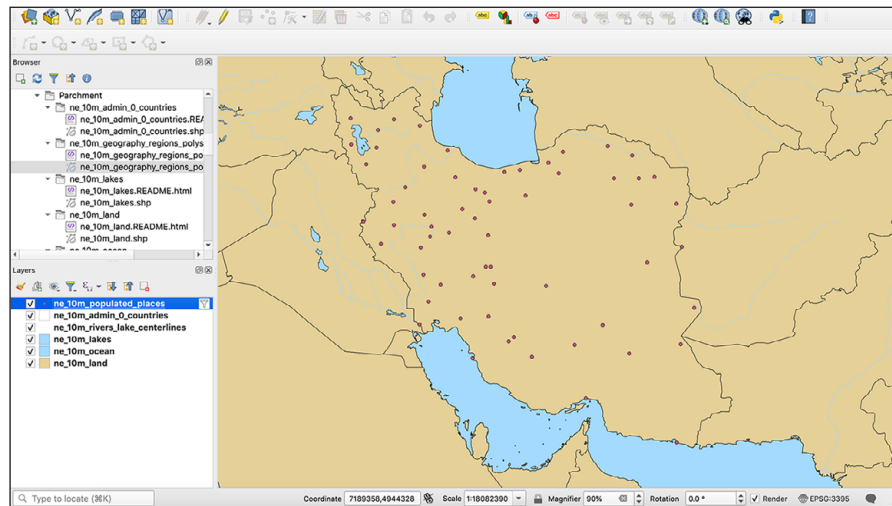
Now I'll turn on the **Cities** layer:



The original map only shows cities in Iran, plus a few in other countries, so I need to separate them. First, I'll filter the data to separate the Iranian cities by right-clicking on the layer and selecting **Filter**. The **Query Builder** window will appear.



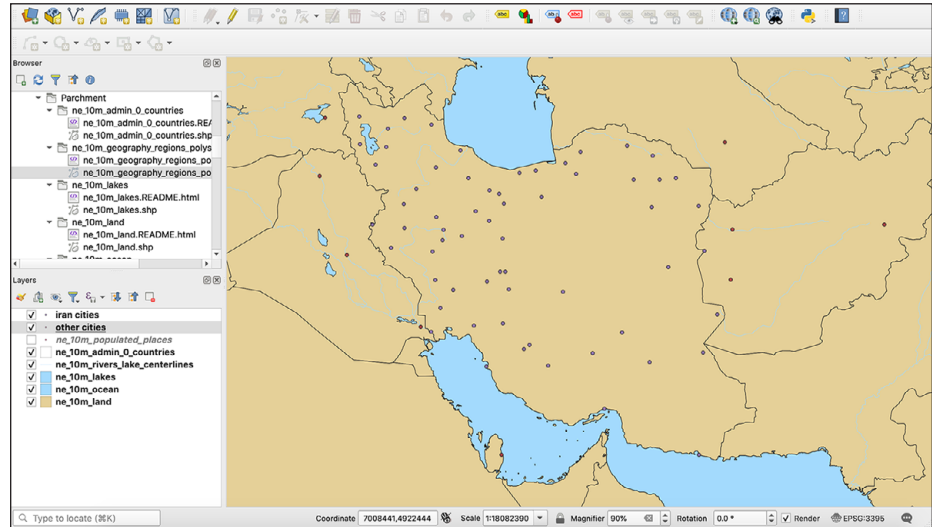
The **Field** I need is **ADMNAME** and the **Value** is **IRAN**, so I'll enter **"ADMNAME" = 'IRAN'** into the **Expression** field, then click **OK**. Here's what that does:



Only Iranian cities are shown. I want to save this as a shapefile, so I'll right-click on the layer and go to **Export > Save Features As** to save the file. I now have a new layer with just Iranian cities. Now for the non-Iranian cities. I only need about eight of these, so I'll open the **Attribute Table** for the **Cities** layer to find the attribute I need:

SCALARANK	NATSCALE	LABELRANK	FEATURECLA	NAME	NAMEPAR	NAMEALT	NAMEASCII	ADMOCAP
907	8	10	3 Populated pl...	Gyeongju	NULL	NULL	Gyeongju	0 N
908	8	10	3 Populated pl...	Changwon	NULL	Masan	Changwon	String(500) NULL
909	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Southend-on-Sea	NULL	Southend	Southend-on...	0 N
910	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Reading	NULL	NULL	Reading	0 N
911	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Leicester	NULL	NULL	Leicester	0 N
912	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Bradford	NULL	NULL	Bradford	0 N
913	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Sheffield	NULL	NULL	Sheffield	0 N
914	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Polatti	NULL	NULL	Polatti	0 N
915	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Karabük	NULL	NULL	Karabuk	0 N
916	8	10	5 Populated pl...	Niuseuhin	NULL	NULL	Niuseuhin	0 N

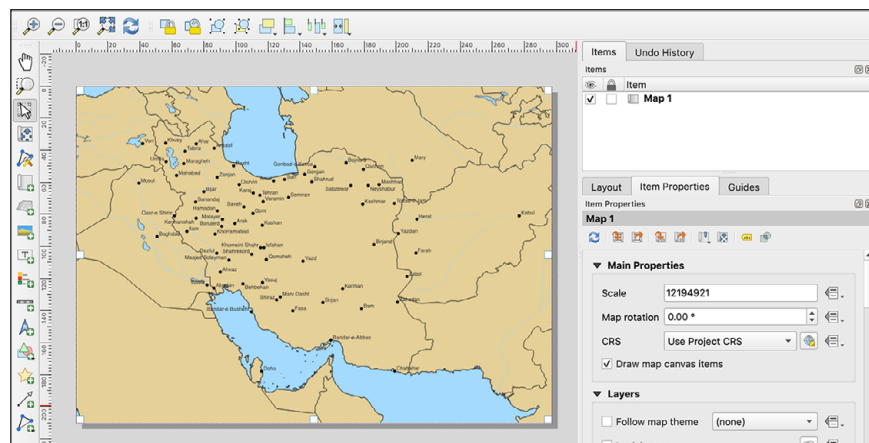
The attribute is **NAME**. To make it easier to find the ones I need, I'll click on the **NAME** column to sort them alphabetically, then I'll select the ones I need by clicking in the left column for that city. Hold down the **cmd/ctrl** key and click to select non-contiguous rows. Once they're all selected, save the selection by right-clicking on the layer and using **Export > Save Selected As**. Turn off the original **Cities** layer and your map should now show on the the cities you need:



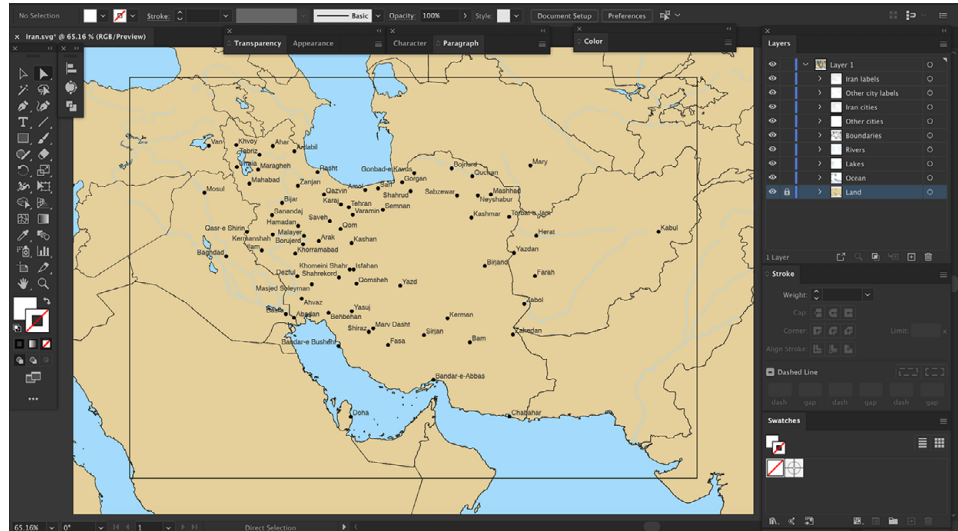
Next, I'll change the city markers to a small black dot and add basic labels. I'll be adding different city markers in Illustrator, so for now I only need them to mark the locations:



And that's all I'm going to do in QGIS. I'll adjust the map in the main window to show the area I want, then export it as an SVG (select **Export Text as Text Objects**):

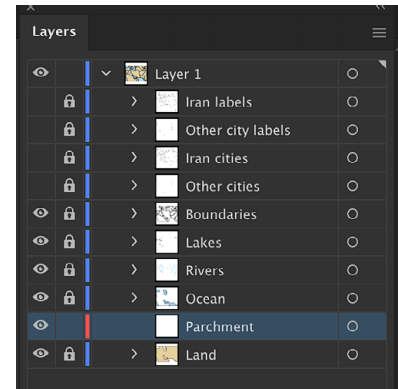


Now to Illustrator. First, I'll do the usual things: rename the layers, delete bounding boxes, and save it as an .ai file.



Adding the parchment

I'll turn off the city and label layers and work on the parchment effect first. Then I'll add a new layer for the parchment file and arrange the layers like this:

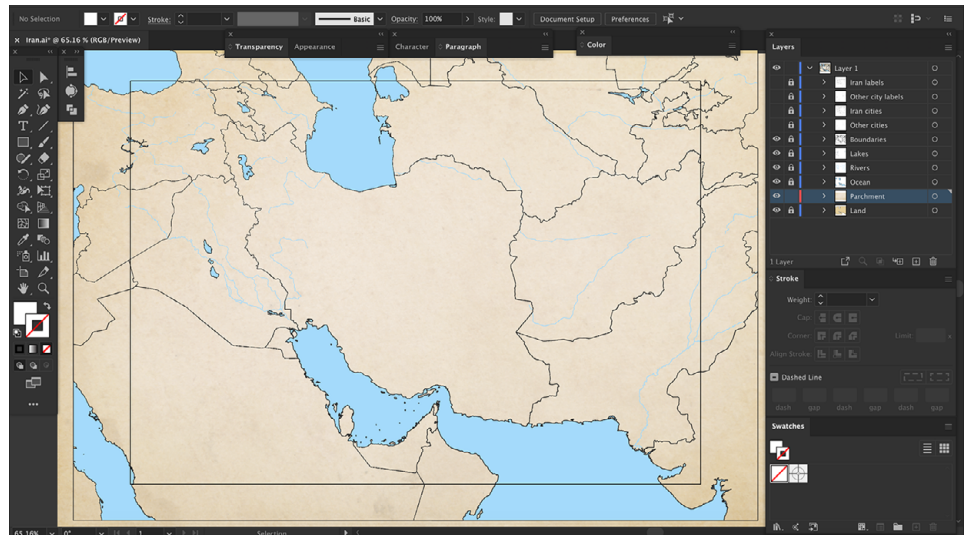


For the parchment, I found some images on [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com) and combined them in Photoshop to get this:

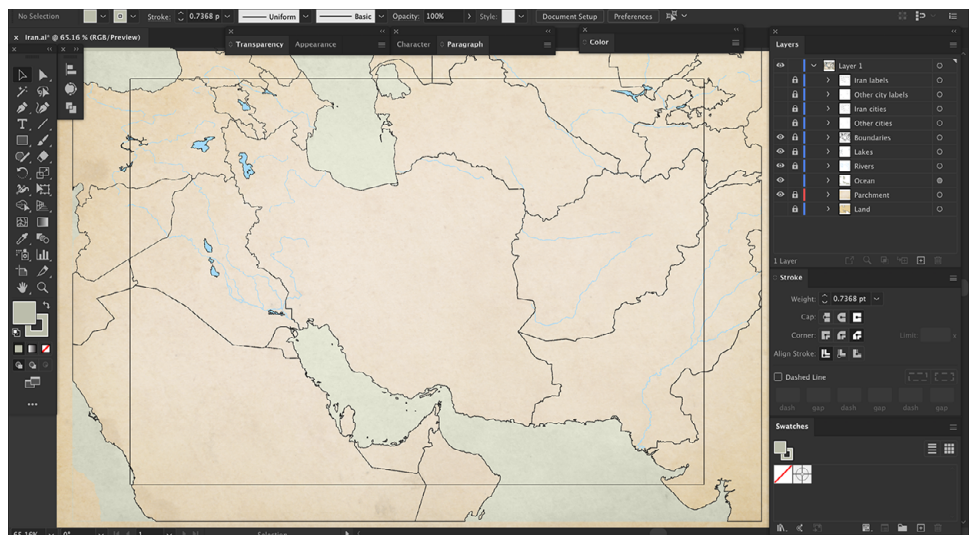


You can make your parchment as smooth or irregular as you like; I usually start with several different images, combine them in Photoshop, and adjust layer opacity and blend mode to get just the right amount of “parchmenty” feel.

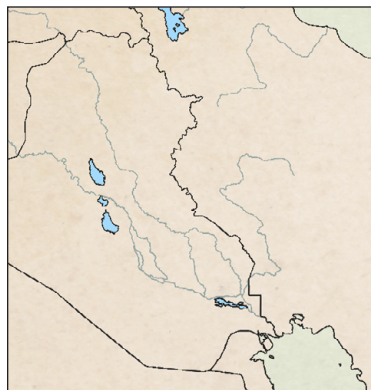
I'll place the parchment image into its layer:



Make sure it covers the entire map area; scale it if needed. I'll fix the oceans first. I selected the oceans layer and changed the fill color to #BBBDAB, then set the blend mode to **Color**:



Next, I'll select the **Rivers** layer and set the color to #95A6A3:



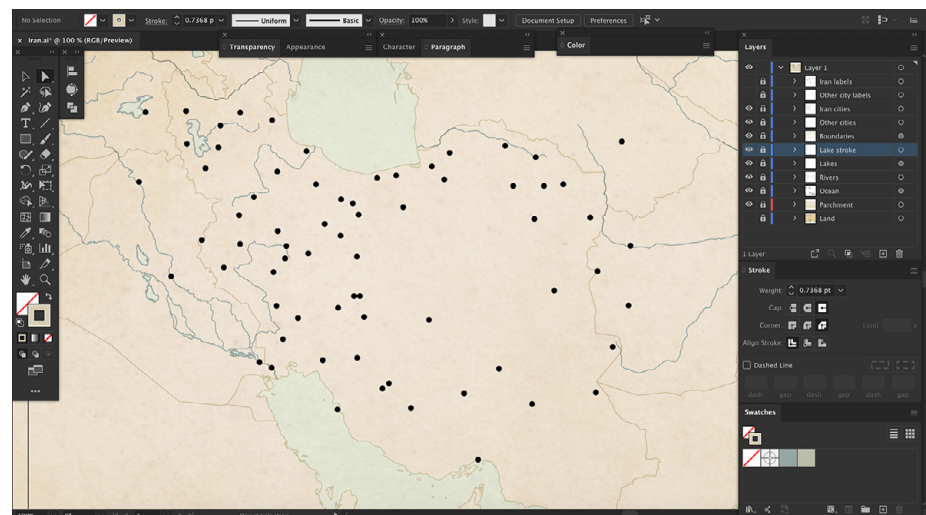
Now I'll duplicate the **Lakes** layer and set the bottom one to a fill of **#BBBDAB** with **Color** blend mode. The I'll select the top layer and set it to a **#95A6A3** stroke with no fill, **Normal** blend mode:



That looks good for now. Next, I'll select the **Boundaries** layer and change the stroke color to **#D9CEB2** with **Multiply** blend mode:

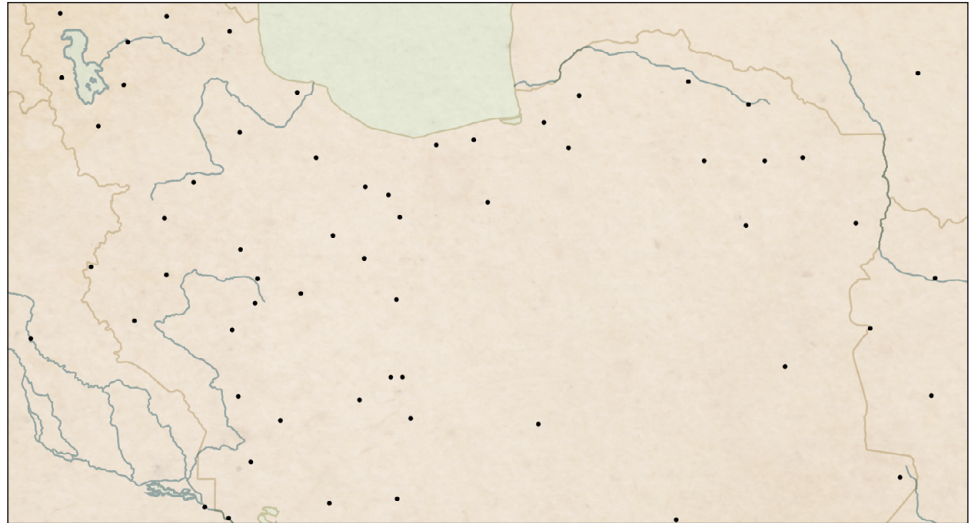
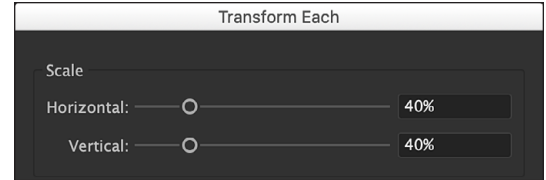


Now for the cities. I'll turn the **Cities** layers on:



The city markers are too big. Instead of going back to QGIS to change their size, I can scale them in Illustrator. First, there's really no reason to keep the Iran and non-Iran cities separated, so I'll select both layers and merge them (I'll do the same with the city label layers). Now I'll select the cities layer and **Ungroup** twice. **This is important**; when the **Ungroup** command is dimmed, you're good to go. With the cities still selected, go to **Object > Transform > Transform Each**. This window will appear (see next page):

Set both of the scale sliders to 40% and ignore the other settings, then click **OK**. Here are the cities now:



Perfect. I'll be creating my own city markers, so I only need the original ones as a guide, but I wanted to make sure they were small enough to be covered by the new markers.

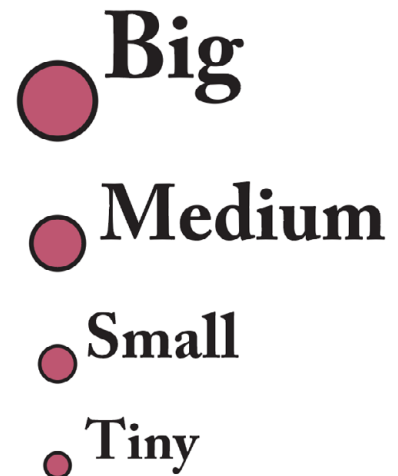
► **Tip:** *If you're interested, (and more technically savvy than I am), see [QGIS Map Design](#) by Anita Graser and Gretchen Peterson for a description of the procedure.*

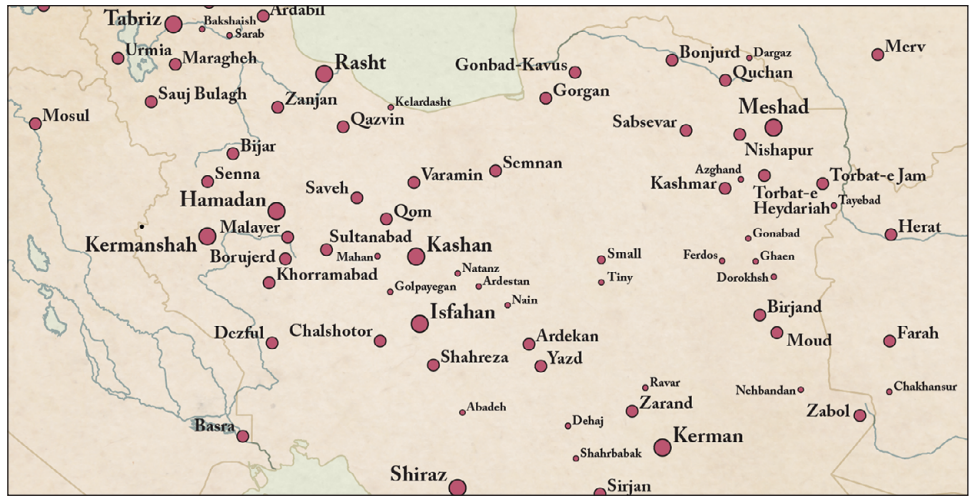
The original map uses four different sizes of city markers, corresponding (I assume) to population. The labels are also sized the same way. There is a way to do this in QGIS, but it's really complicated, and I haven't been able to figure it out yet. Instead, I'll just eyeball it. First, I need to create four markers. The original map markers are circles with a fill of **#BC546F** and a black stroke, so I'll draw that in four different sizes:



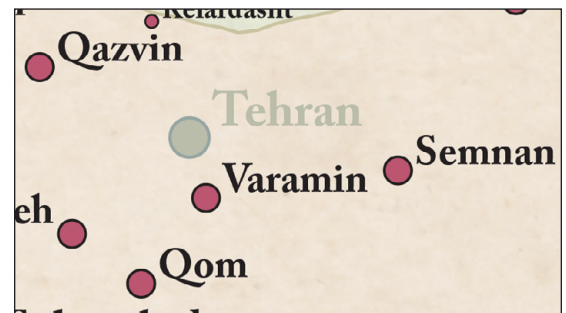
Instead of placing these on the map, I'm going to add a generic label for each one. Since the label sizes correspond to the marker sizes, this will speed up the process and ensure that each marker has the correct label size. Here's what I came up with:

The font is Adobe Caslon Bold, and the sizes are 12, 10, 8, and 7 points. I'll put these on my map and move them into the correct positions, using the original city markers as a guide (see next page):





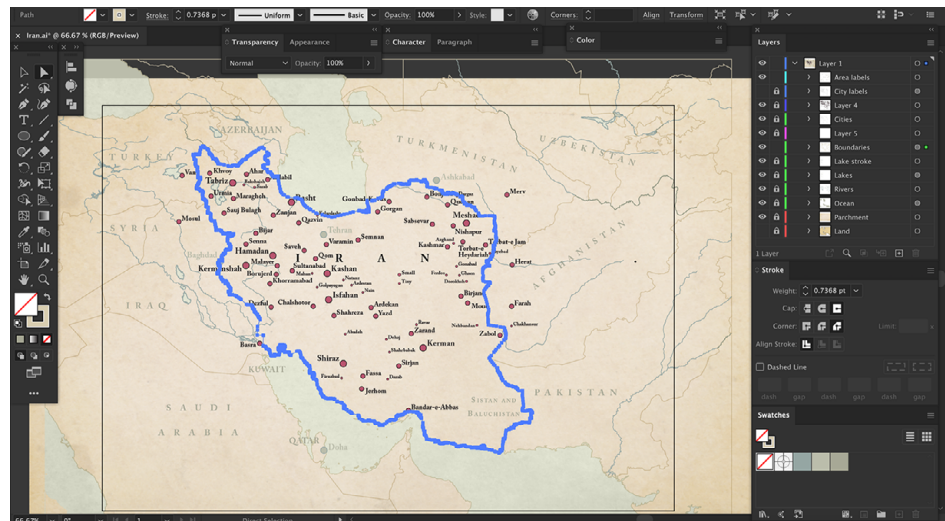
A few cities—Baghdad, Doha, Tehran—use a different symbol and label color, so I’ll add that:



Next, I’ll add some area labels. Most of these use a large letter spacing, and some of them are on a curve:



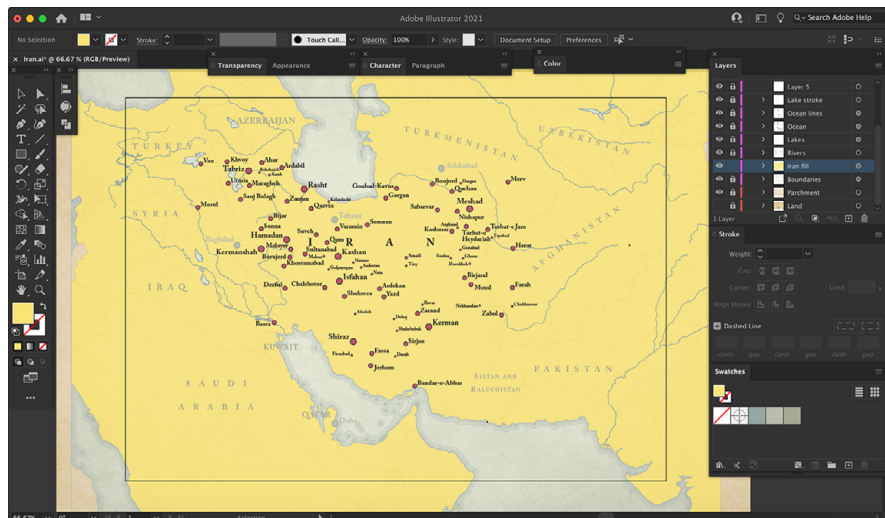
On the original map, Iran has a yellow tint to set it off from the surrounding area. To do this, I’ll select the Iran boundary:



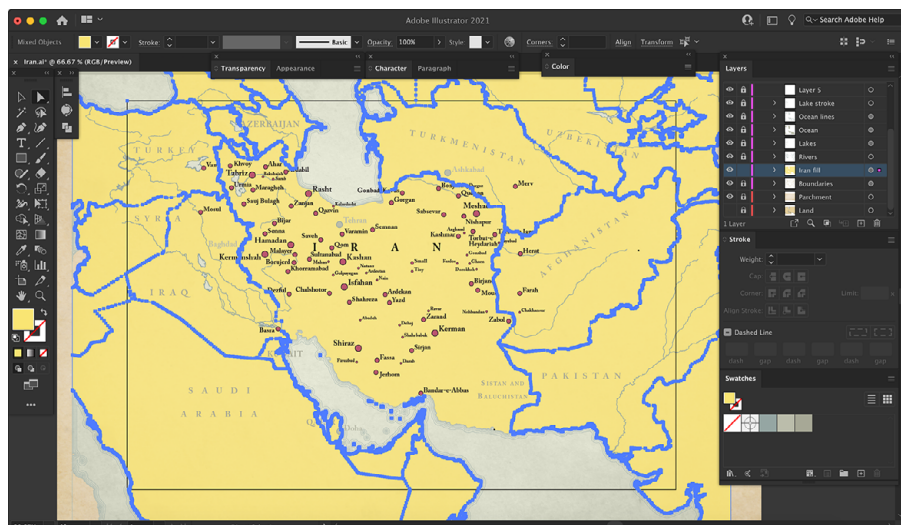
And give it a yellow fill:



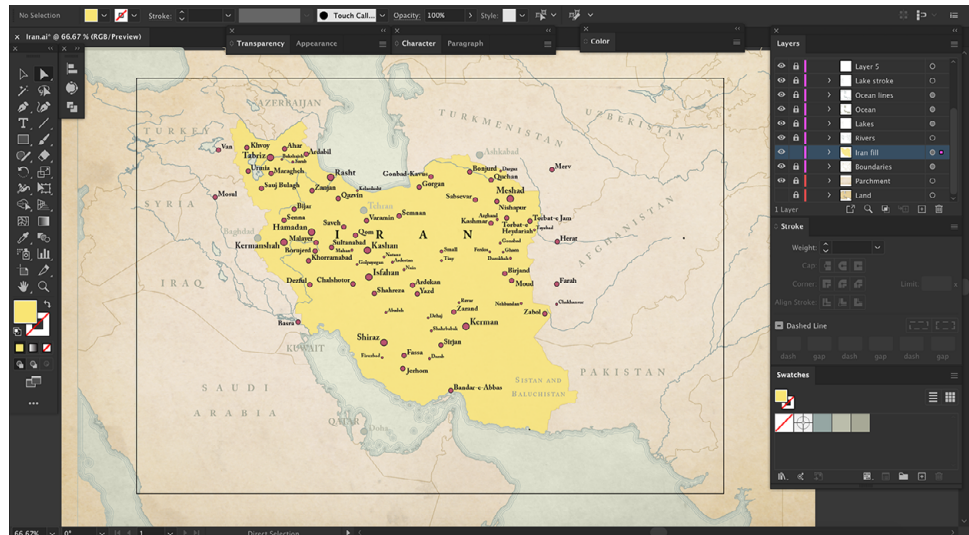
That's too dark, because we set the boundary layer to **Multiply** blend mode earlier. I want to use the **Color** blend mode for this fill, so I'll undo it. Instead, I'll duplicate the boundary layer and rename the layer Iran Fill. Then I'll select that layer and set it to **Normal** blend mode with a yellow fill and no stroke. It looks like this:



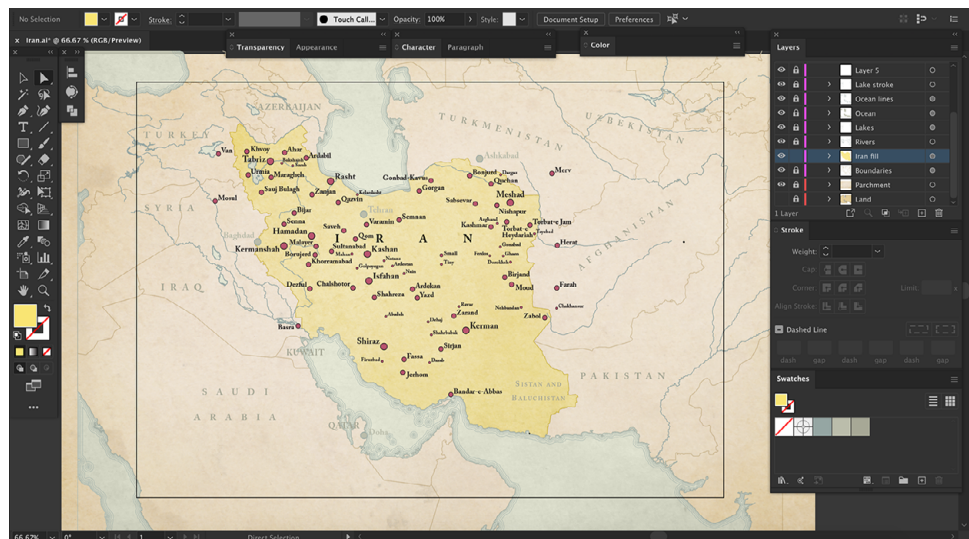
Now I'll click on Iran with the **Direct Selection** tool and go to **Select > Inverse**. This selects everything except Iran:



And now I'll delete. Here's what's left:



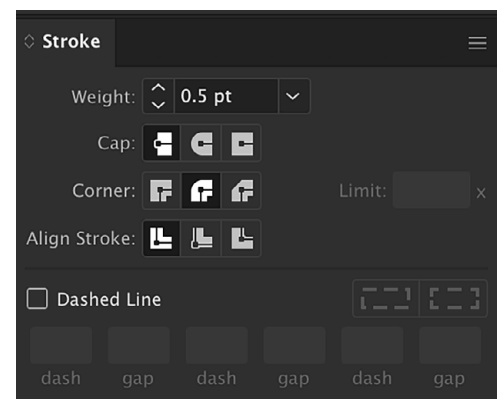
Now I'll set this to **Color Burn** blend mode and reduce the opacity to 30%:



● **Note:** For a step-by-step procedure of this technique, see the *Line and Halftone Shorelines* chapter.

Looks good. The original map uses concentric line shading for the water, so I'll add that now. I cover this technique in more detail in the **“Line and Halftone Shorelines”** chapter.

First, I duplicated the **Ocean** layer and move it above the existing ocean layer. I'll select this layer and set No Fill and a blue-grey stroke of 0.5 points. Note: The width to use for the stroke depends on the size of your map; experiment with different widths. While I have this stroke selected, I'll set the stroke alignment to **Center** and the corner to **Round Join**:



With the layer still selected, go to **Object > Path > Offset Path**. The **Offset Path** window will appear.



Here's where we specify the spacing for the first concentric line. Since we're working with the **Ocean** layer, the lines will be coming back into the ocean area; this means we need to use negative values for the spacing. I'll start with a value of -1 point, and I'll set the joins to **Round**, then click **OK**. The line will be added and selected—don't deselect it or you'll have to start over. Here's how that looks:



The general idea for the spacing is that the lines should be close together near the land, then gradually become spaced farther apart. Since my first line is still selected, I'll repeat the process, this time increasing the spacing to -1.5 points:



For the next one, I'll use -2 points for the spacing, then a final one spaced at -2.5:



And we're done.

