USING GIS TO ANALYZE THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC URBAN GREEN SPACES IN HAMBURG AND MARSEILLE (1945–1973)

Digital History Switzerland

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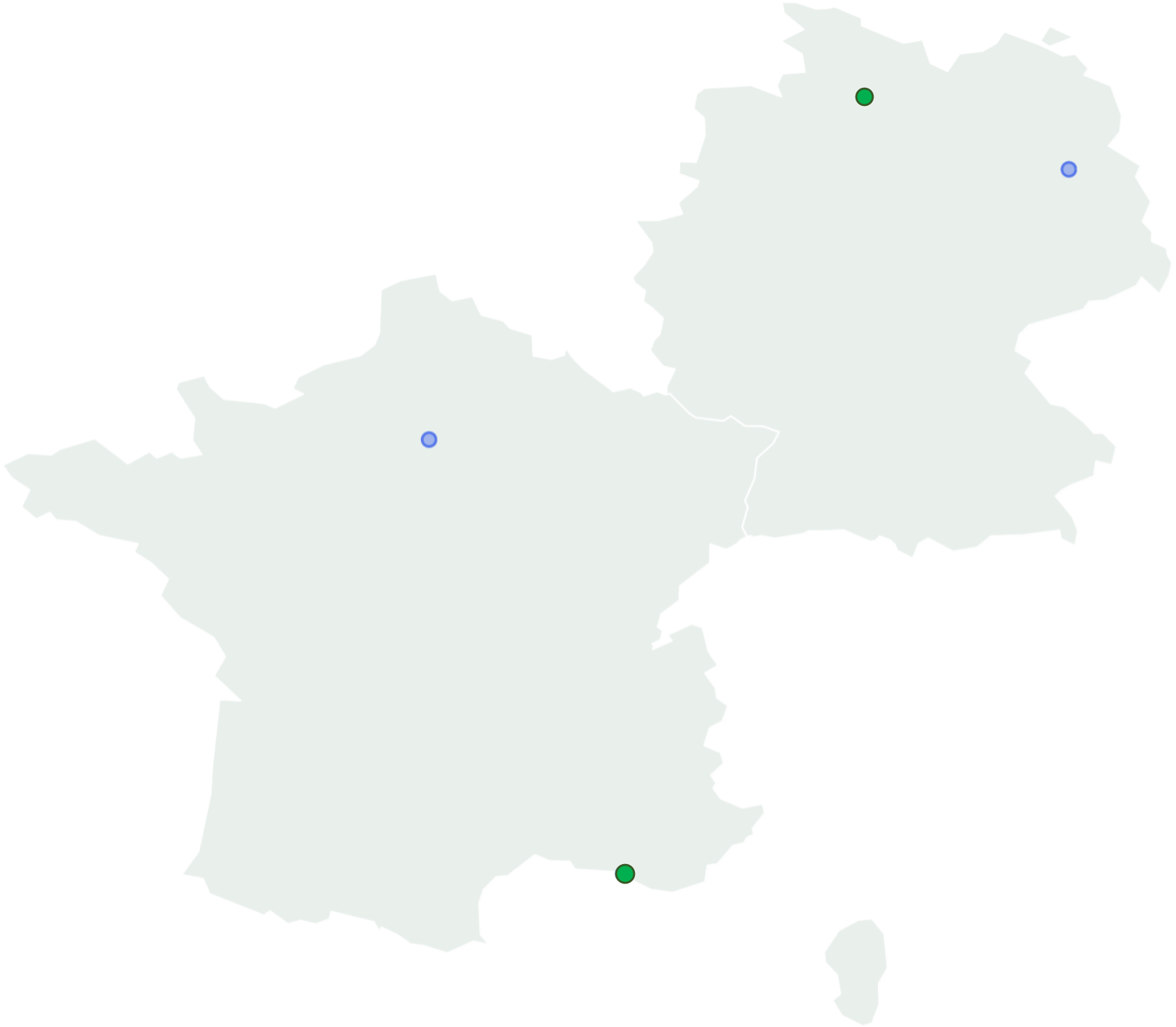
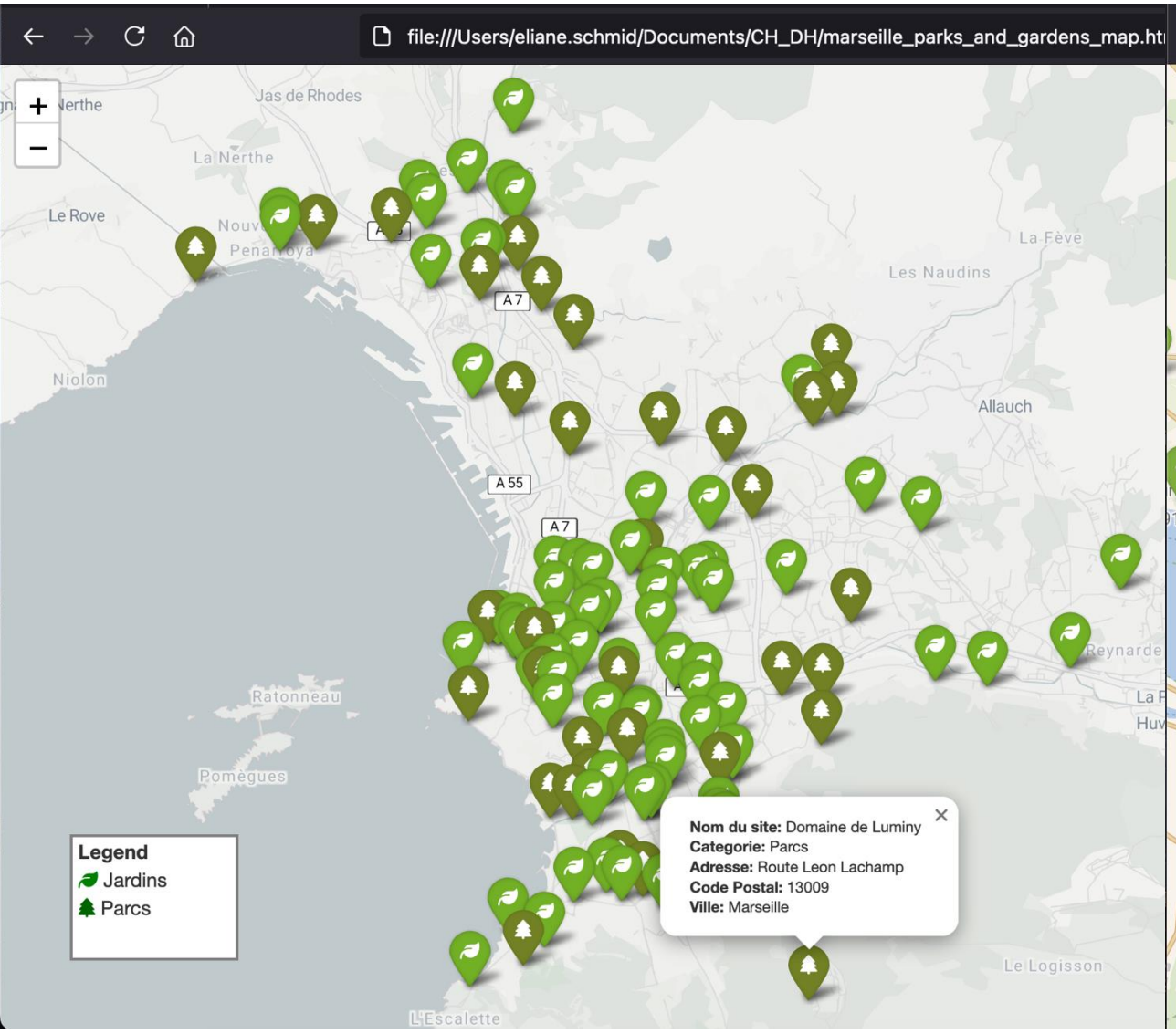
Eliane Schmid, C2DH, Université du Luxembourg

GOAL

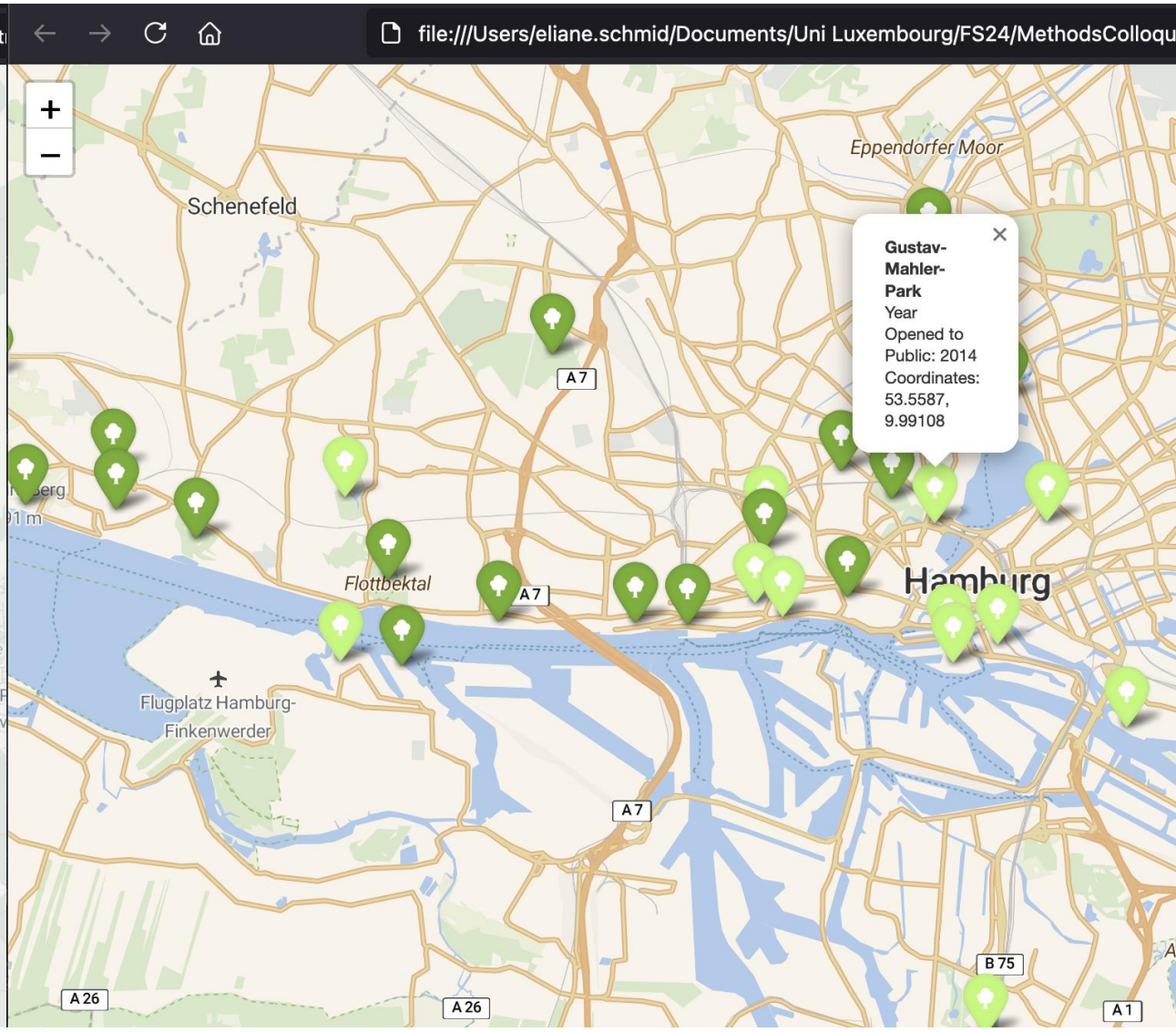
- When does the use of GIS genuinely **support research**?
- How can working with GIS aid the formulation of **hypotheses and arguments**?
- How can layering information in GIS change the way historians **approach** their **sources** and **think** about their **data**?
- What role does creating visuals with GIS have for **developing historical narratives**?

OPPORTUNITIES



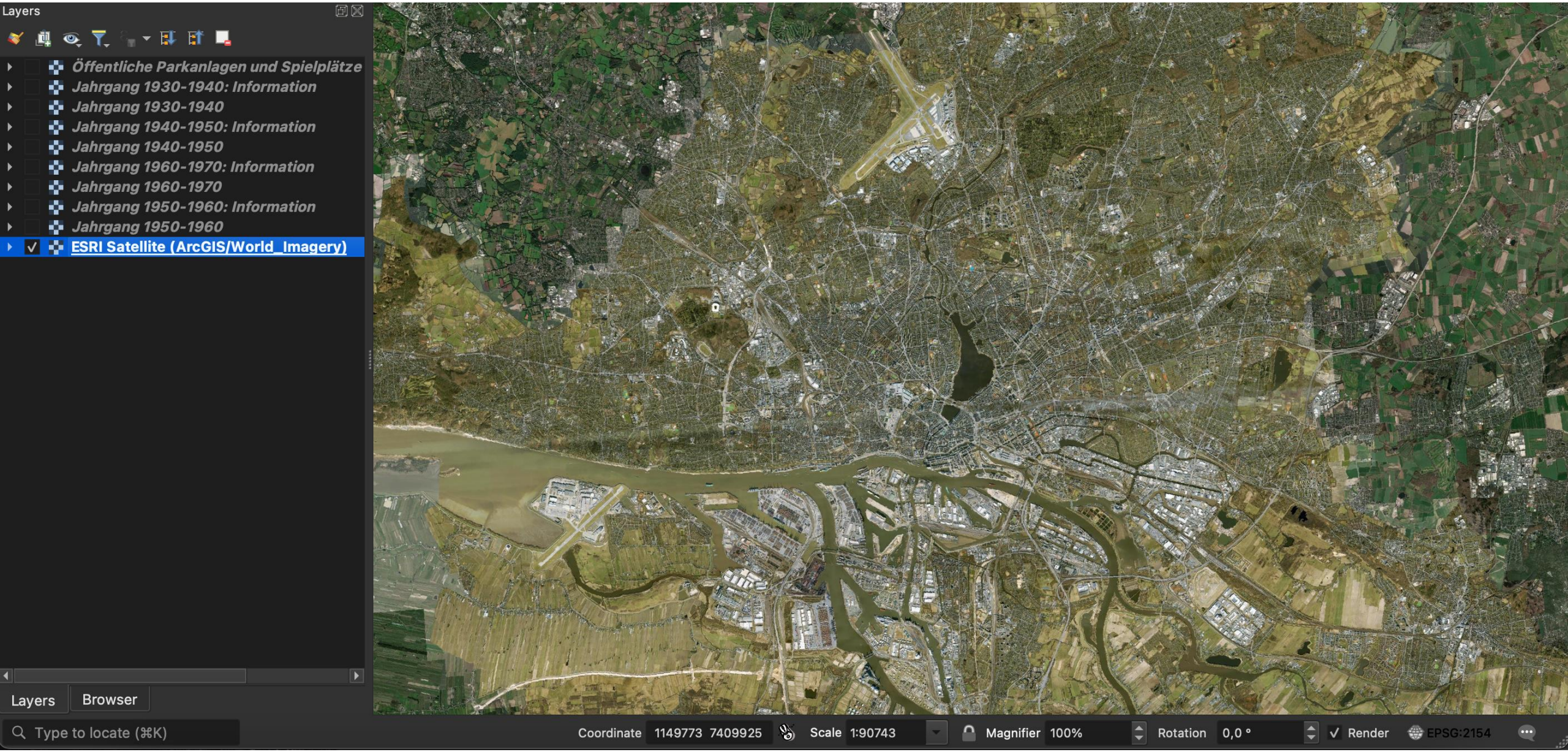


Data: DataSud

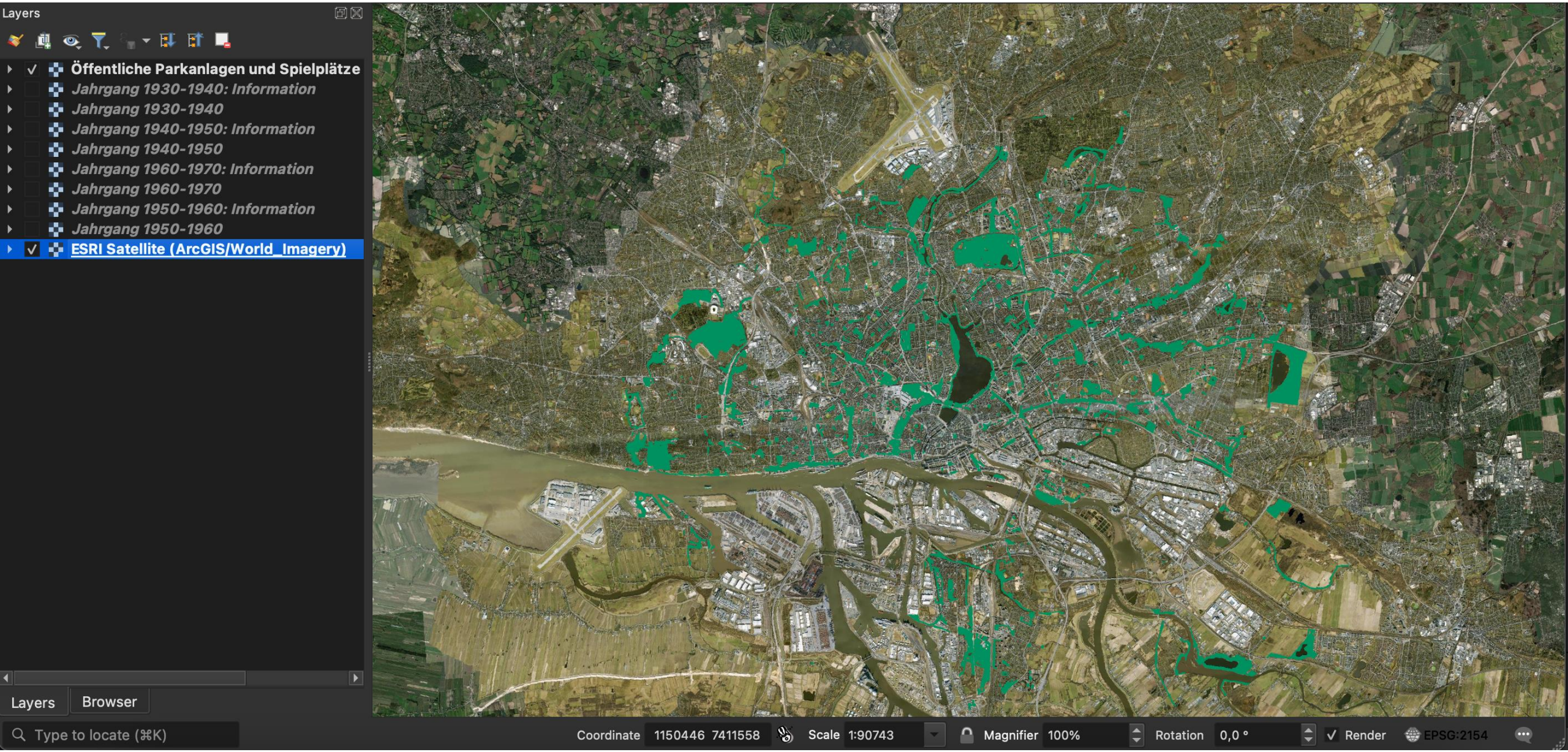


Data: Geoportal Hamburg

- Distant reading – close reading
- Producing data – understanding historical sources
- data creators – map makers
- AI technologies can aid acceleration of tedious manual work = more time to focus on design
- Working with GIS and studying GIS produced outcomes supports spatial understanding
- Elements of ‘where’ and ‘when’



Data: Geoportal Hamburg
Screenshot: Eliane Schmid's QGIS workspace



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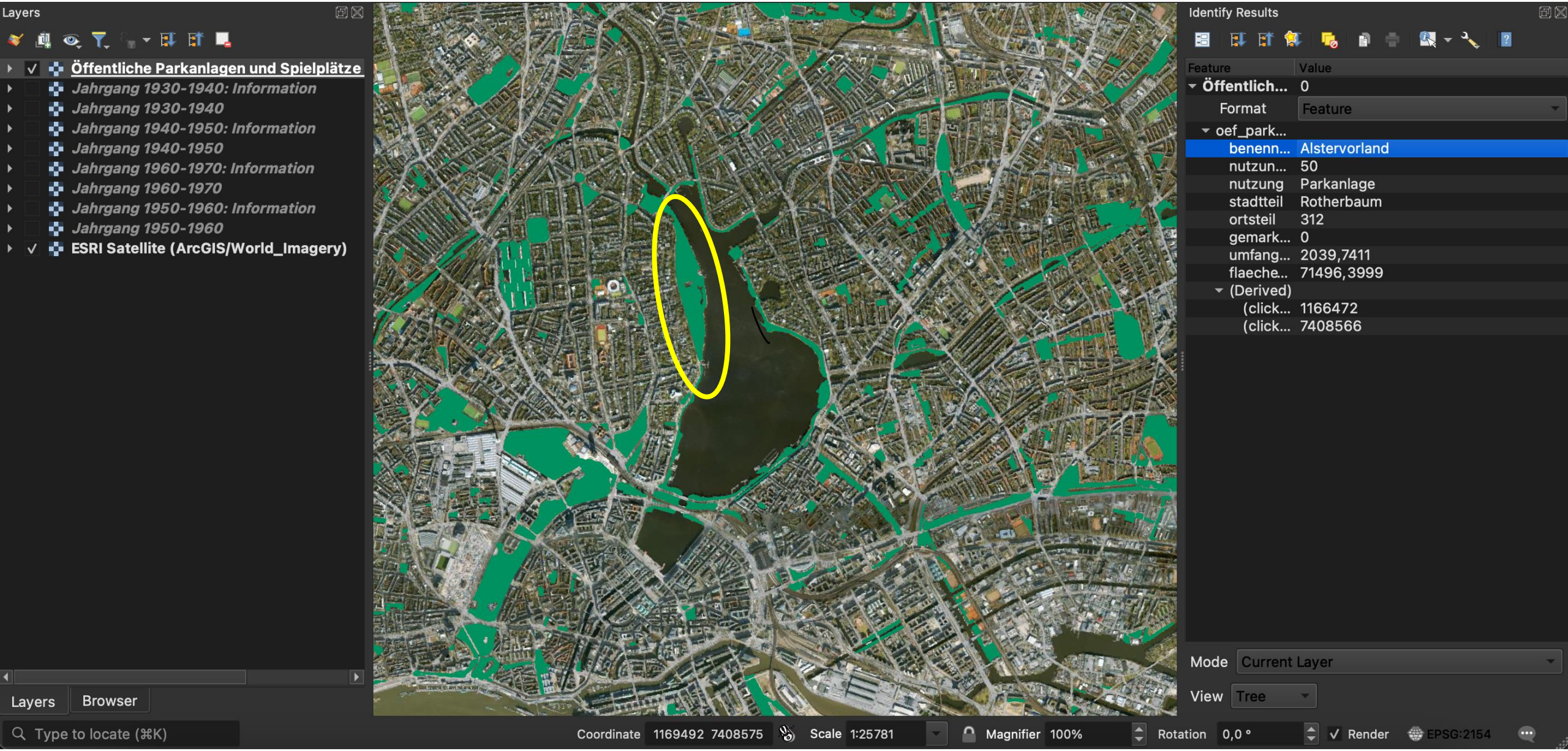

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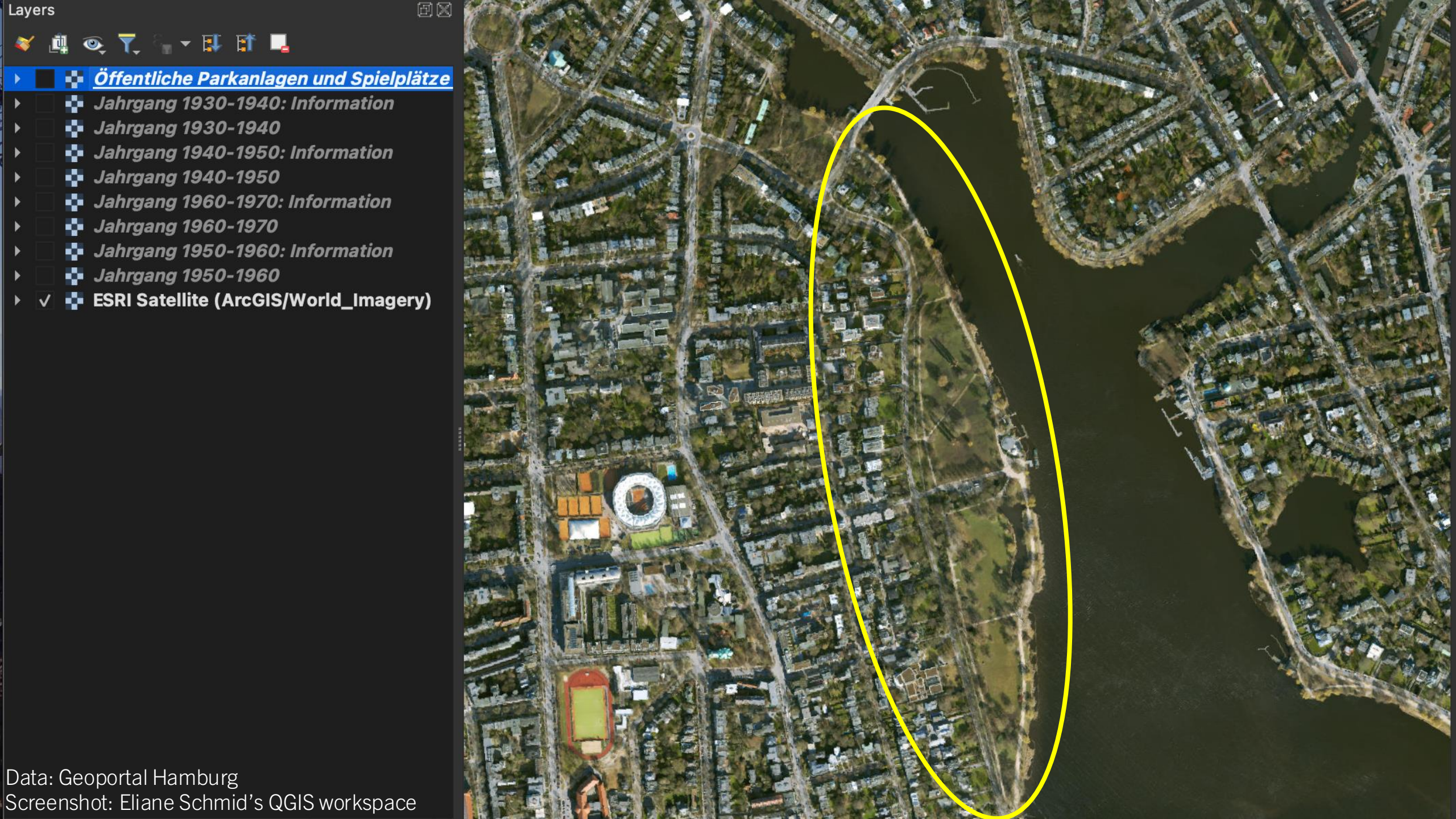

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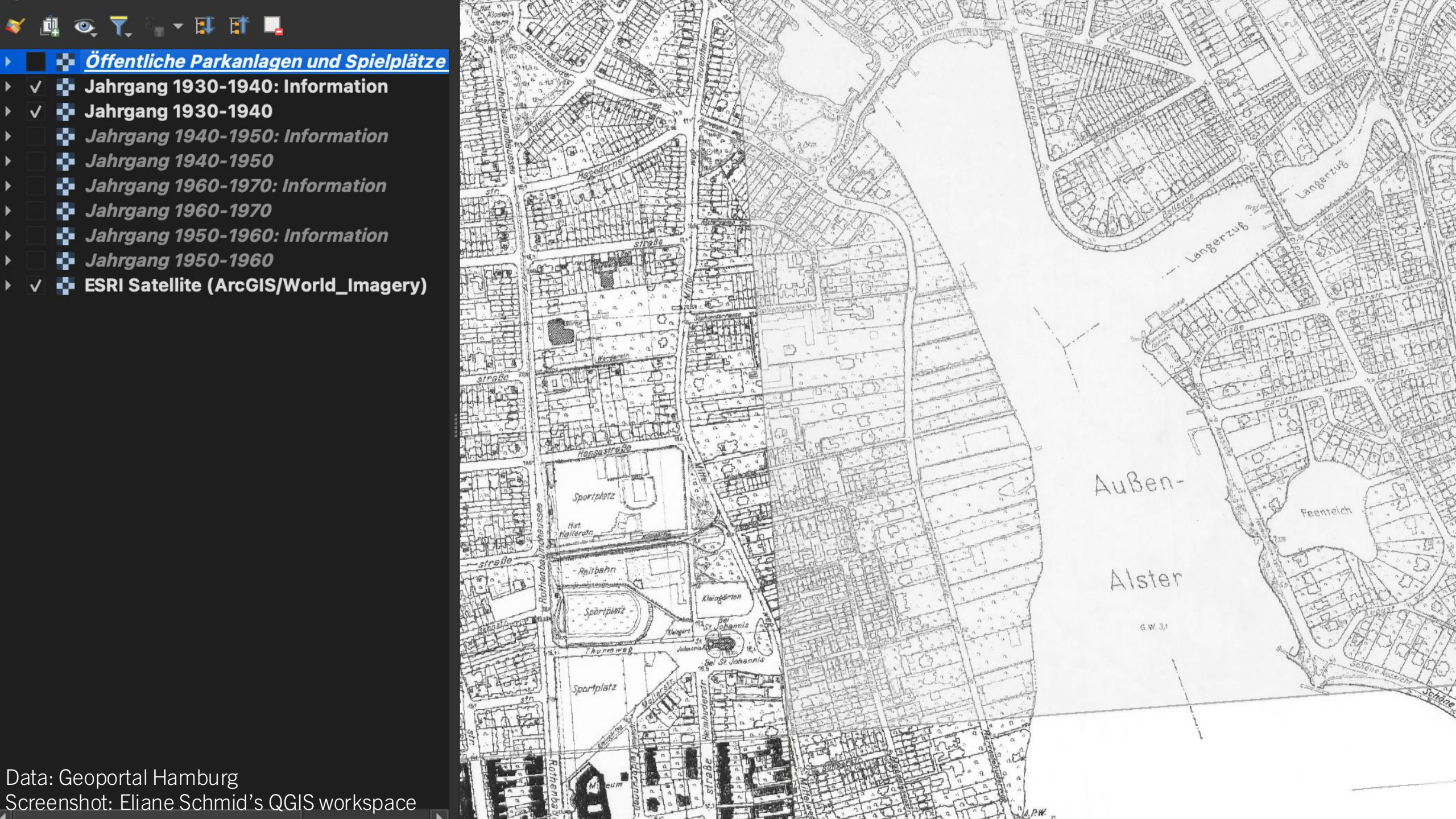

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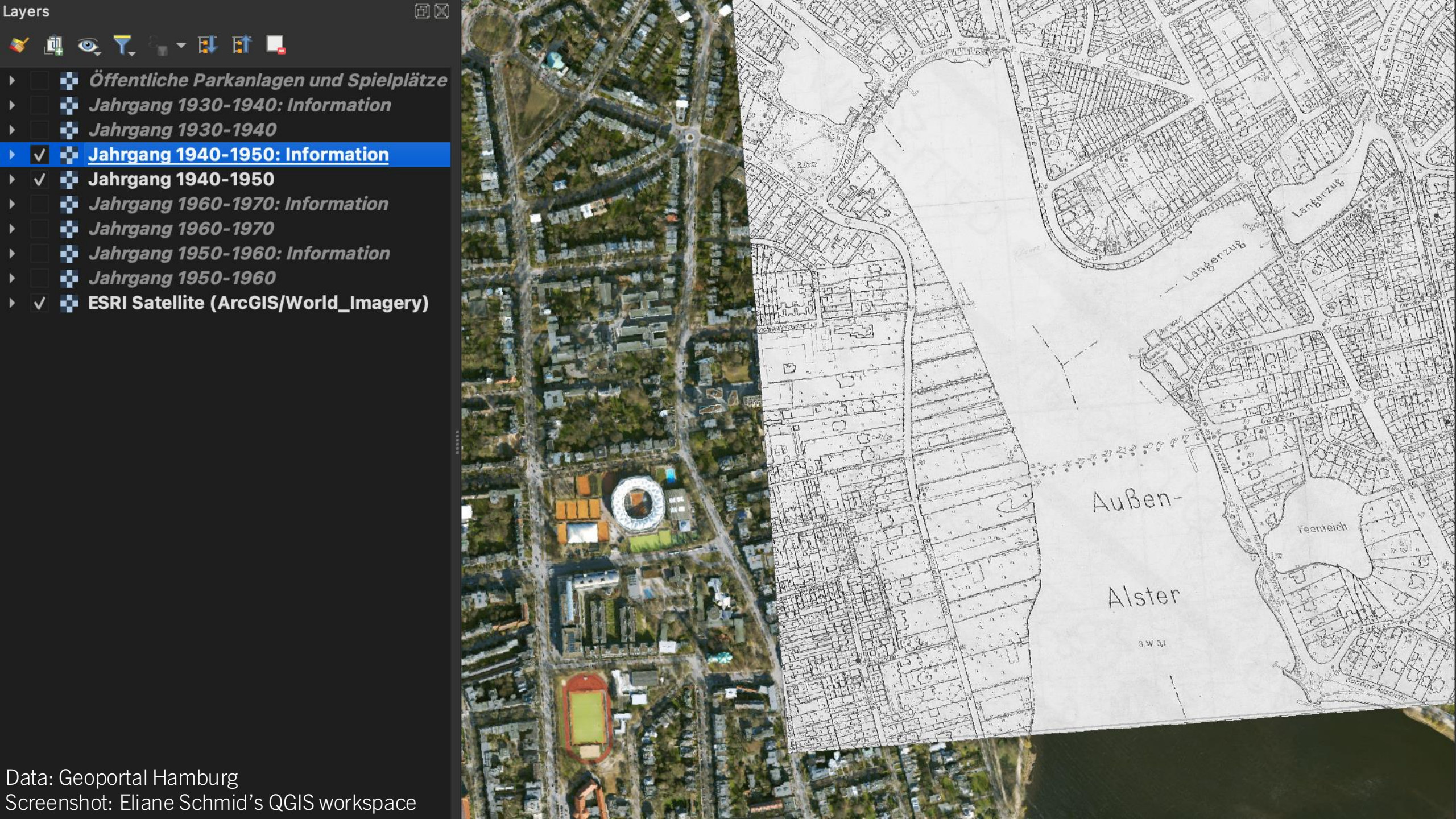

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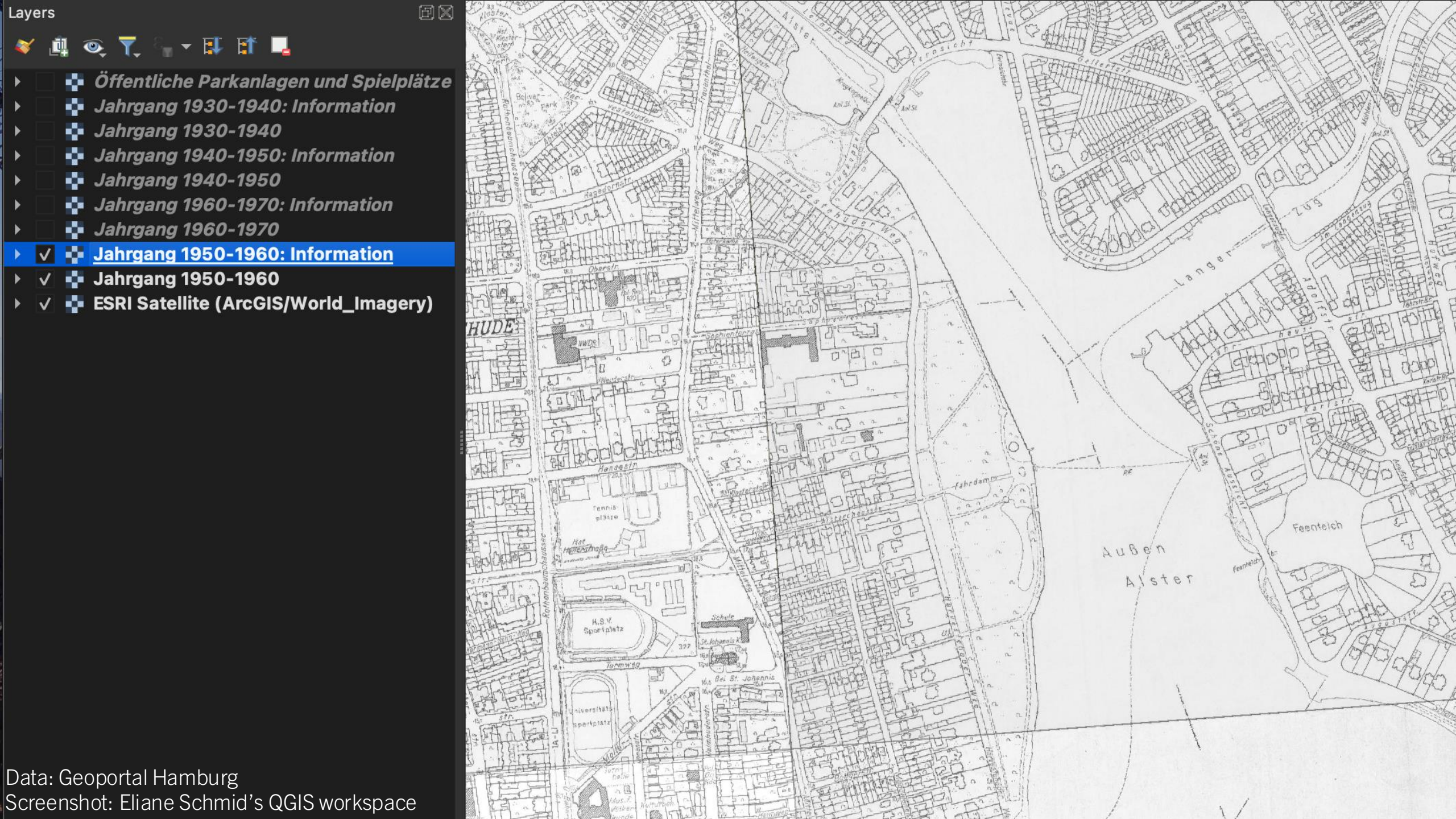

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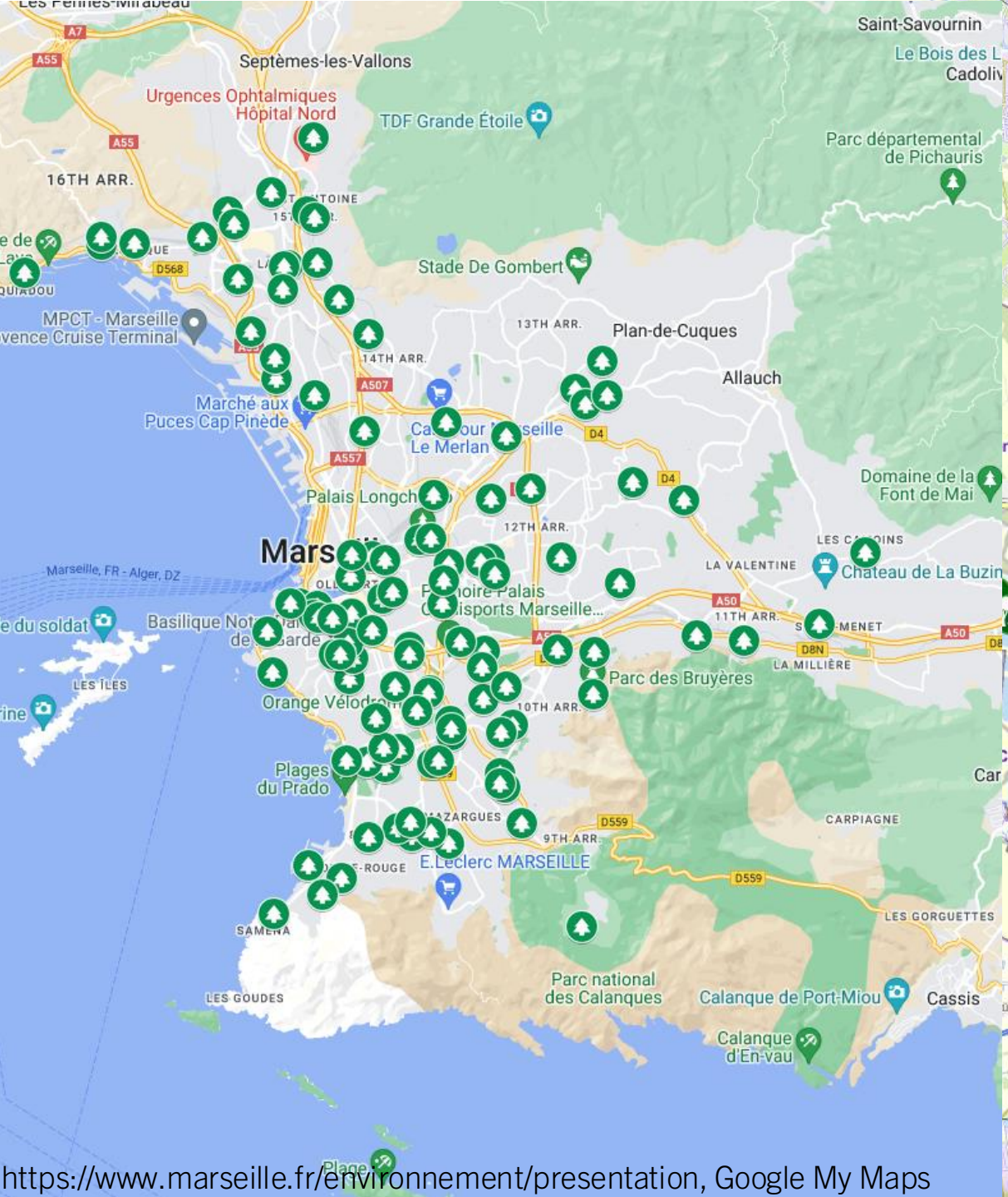
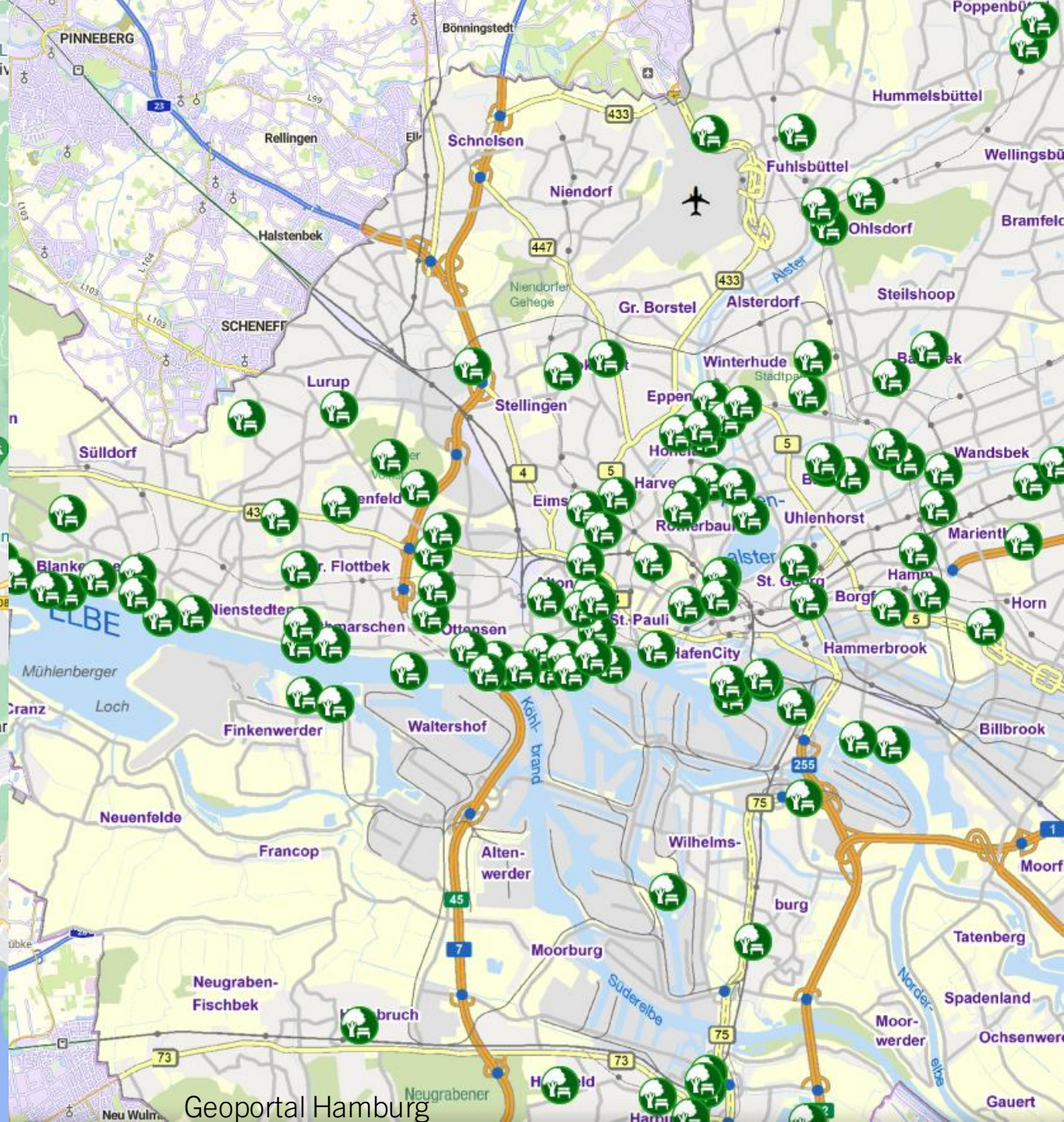
- GIS models can spark interest and curiosity to dig deeper



https://www.marseille.fr/environnement/presentation, Google My Maps



Geoportal Hamburg

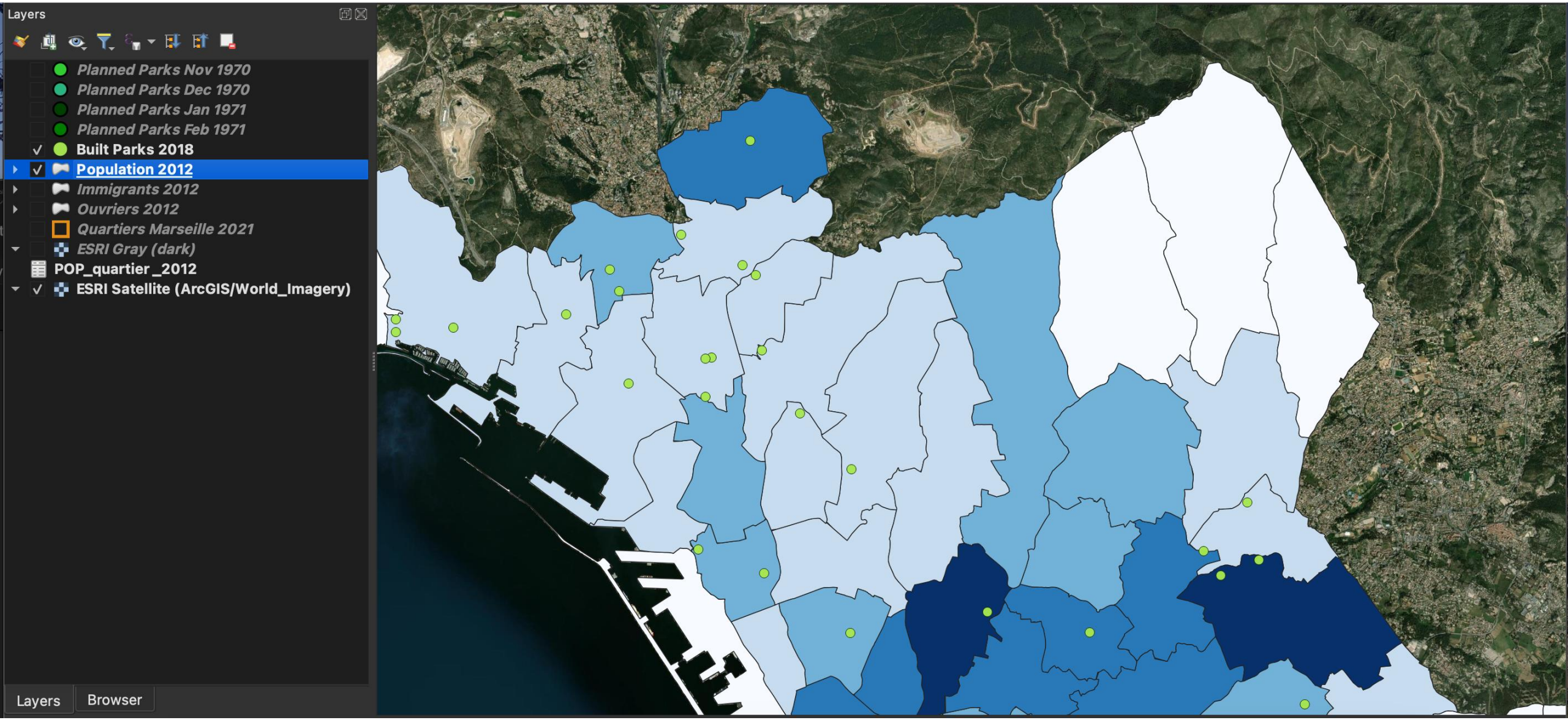
“La *city* de Marseille et les cities de taille équivalente en Europe”

(Insee, Eurostat, 2022)

Marseille
241 km²
873 076 - 3628 / km² (INSEE, 2021)
+ 700 ha ”espaces verts” (Marseille.fr, 2024)

Hamburg
755 km²
1,96 mio - 2603 / km² (Statistik Nord, 2023)
3.242 ha ”Grünflächen” (Hamburg.de, 2022)

- Visual representation of power structures and imbalances



Data: INSEE
Screenshot: Eliane Schmid's QGIS workspace

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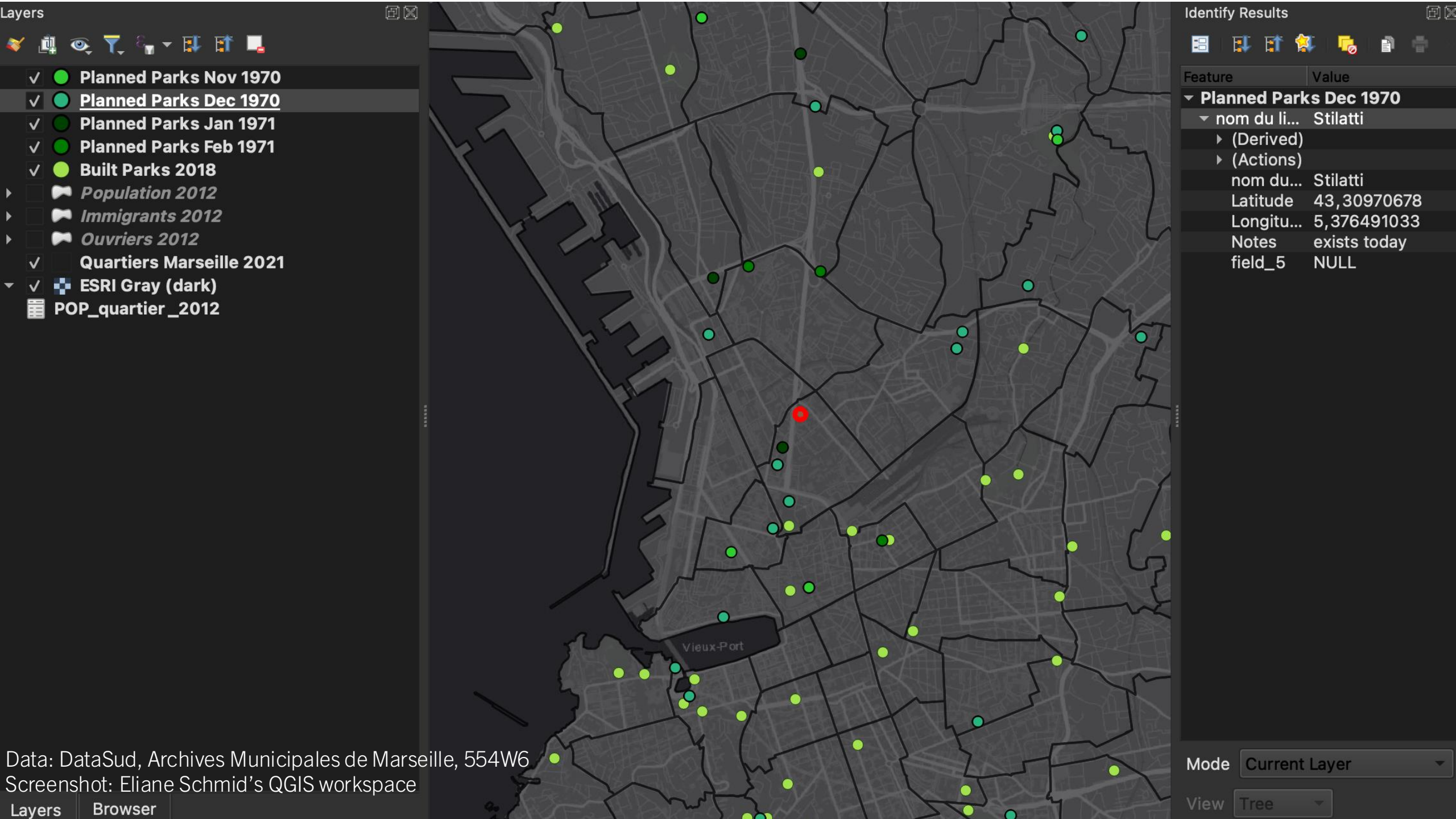
Screenshot: Eliane Schmid's QGIS workspace

CAVEATS

- Mismatch between GIS requirements and imperfection of historical sources
- GIS does not allow for gaps or ambiguities
- Difficulty of capturing time
- GIS work is labor-intensive and time consuming
- Discrepancies between mapped data and on-the-ground reality


Layers
Planned Parks Nov 1970
Planned Parks Dec 1970
Planned Parks Jan 1971
Planned Parks Feb 1971
Built Parks 2018
Population 2012
Immigrants 2012
Ouvriers 2012
Quartiers Marseille 2021
ESRI Gray (dark)
POP_quartier _2012
Vieux-Port
Identify Results
Feature
Value
Planned Parks Dec 1970
nom du li...
Stilatti
(Derived)
(Actions)
nom du...
Stilatti
Latitude
43,30970678
Longitu...
5,376491033
Notes
exists today
field_5
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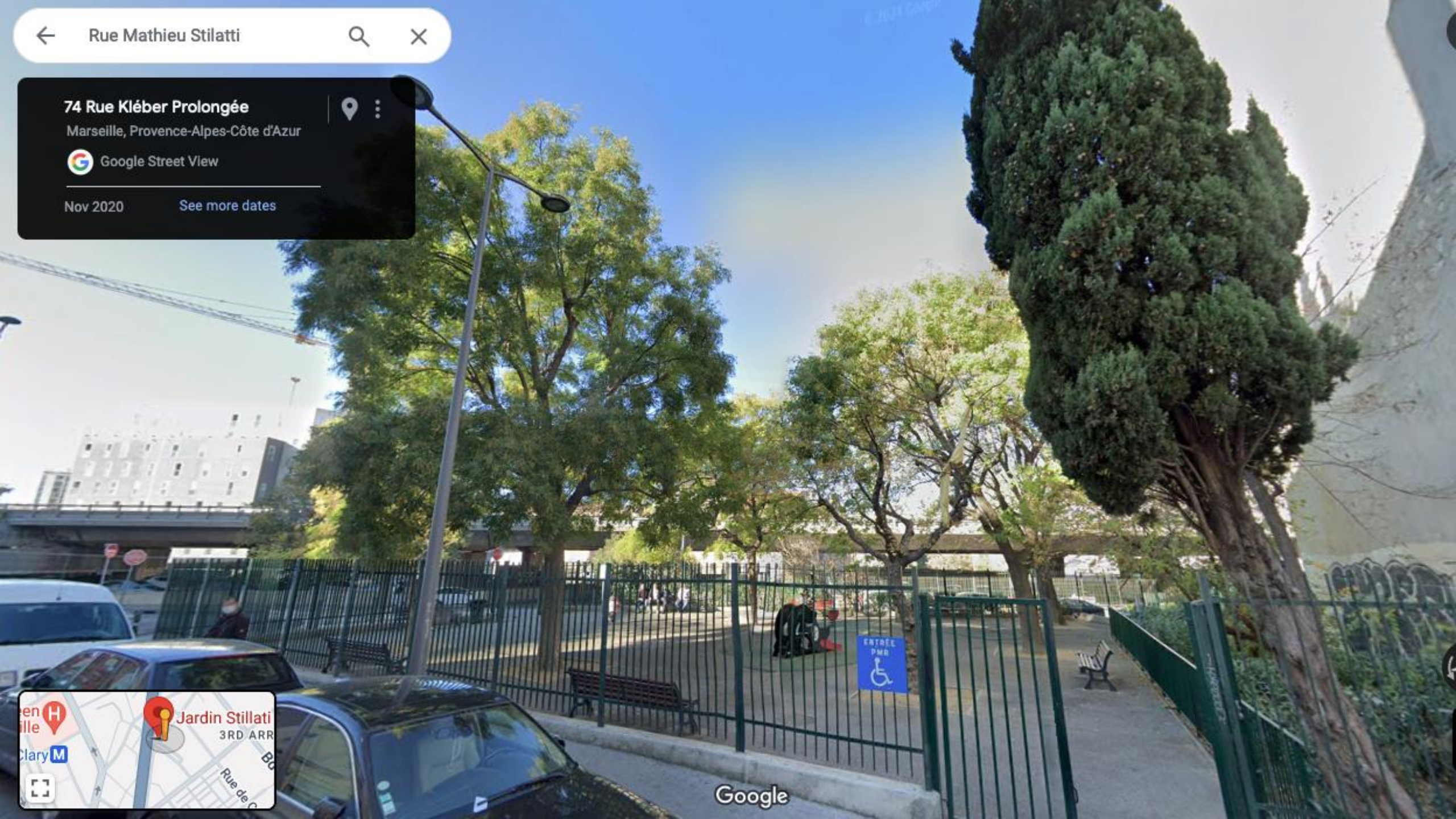
Mode
Current Layer
View
Tree
Data: DataSud, Archives Municipales de Marseille, 554W6
Screenshot: Eliane Schmid's QGIS workspace
Layers
Browser


Rue Mathieu Stilatti
74 Rue Kléber Prolongée
Marseille, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
Google Street View
Nov 2020
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Jardin Stillati
3RD ARR
Clary M
ENTRÉE PMR
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Parcs et jardins

Le patrimoine des espaces verts de la ville de Marseille recouvre plus de 640 hectares : parcs, jardins, espaces verts de voirie, cimetières,

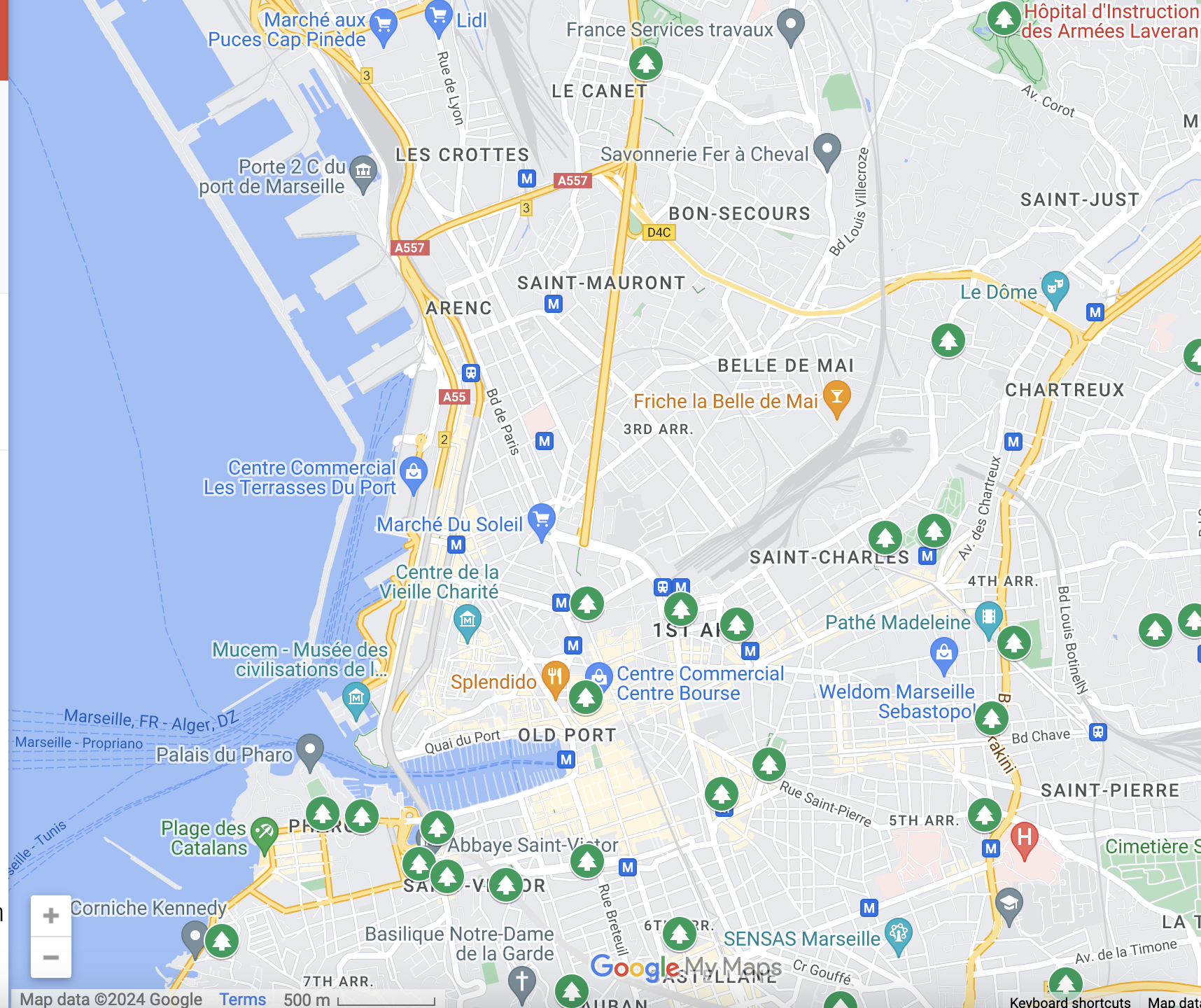
128,912 views

Published on January 25

SHARE

Parcs & Jardins

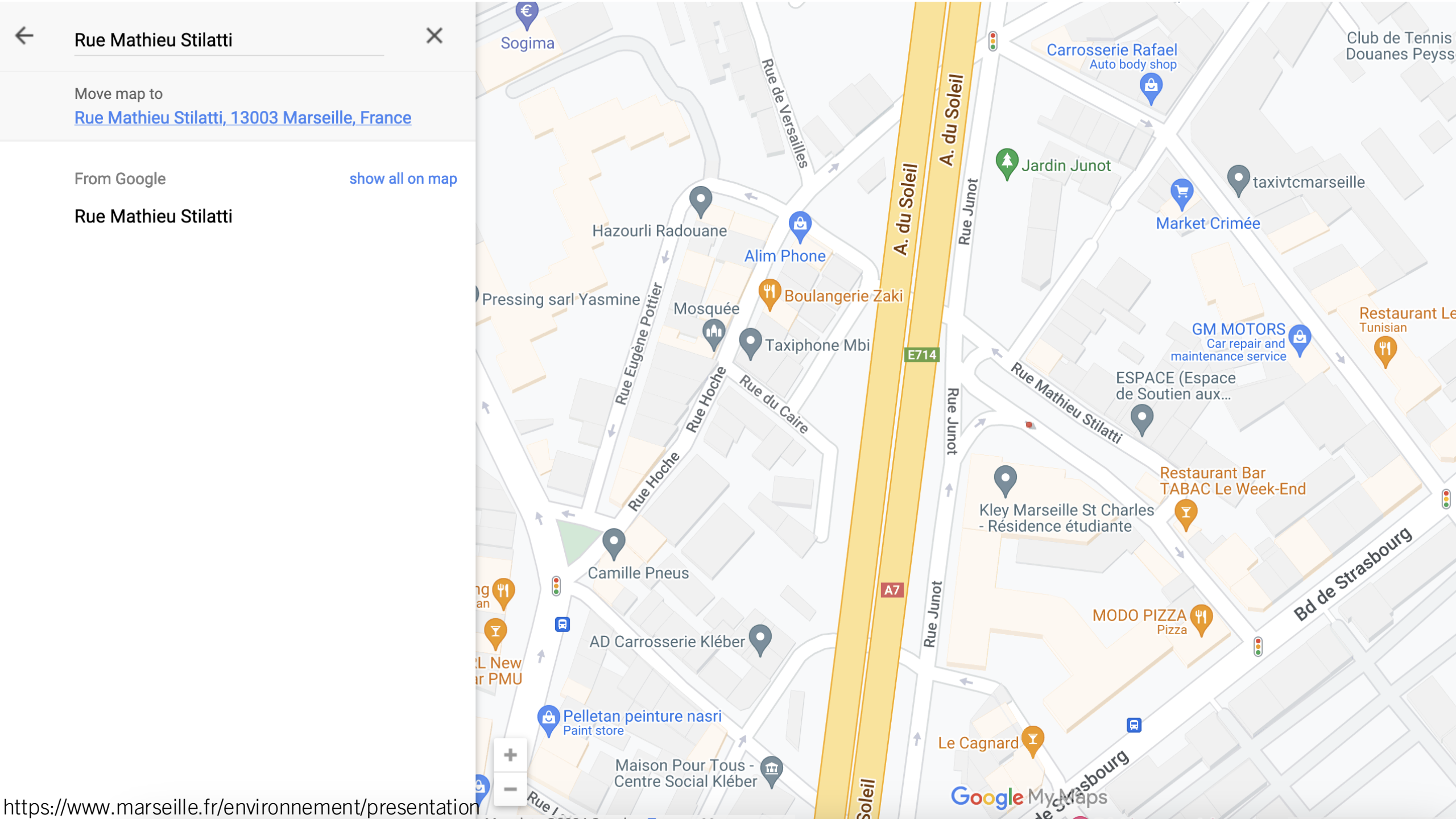
All items



https://www.marseille.fr/environnement/presentation

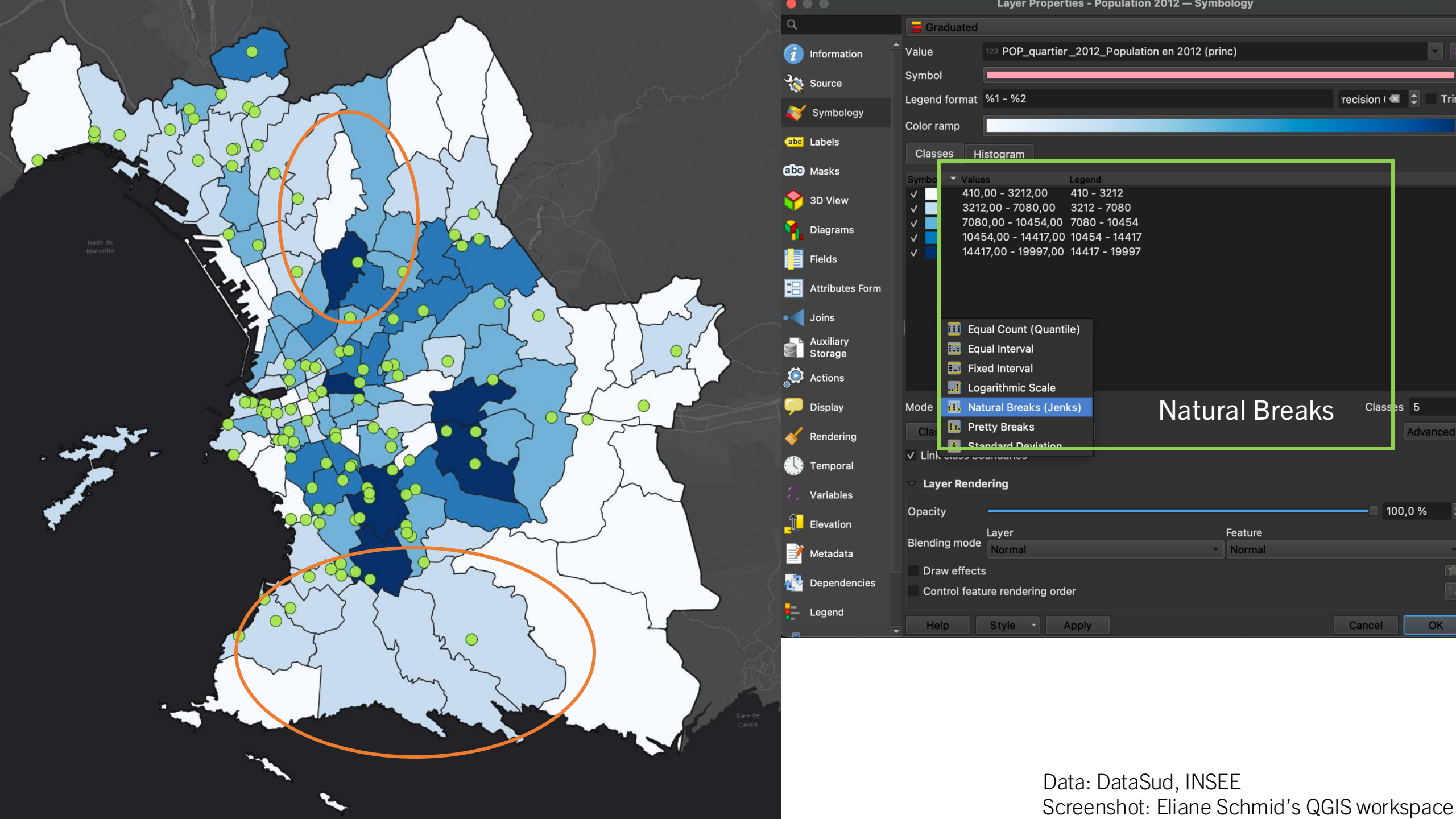
Terms

Made with Google My Maps



https://www.marseille.fr/environnement/presentation

- GIS models are shaped by and reflect personal convictions and biases
- GIS models are easy to manipulate



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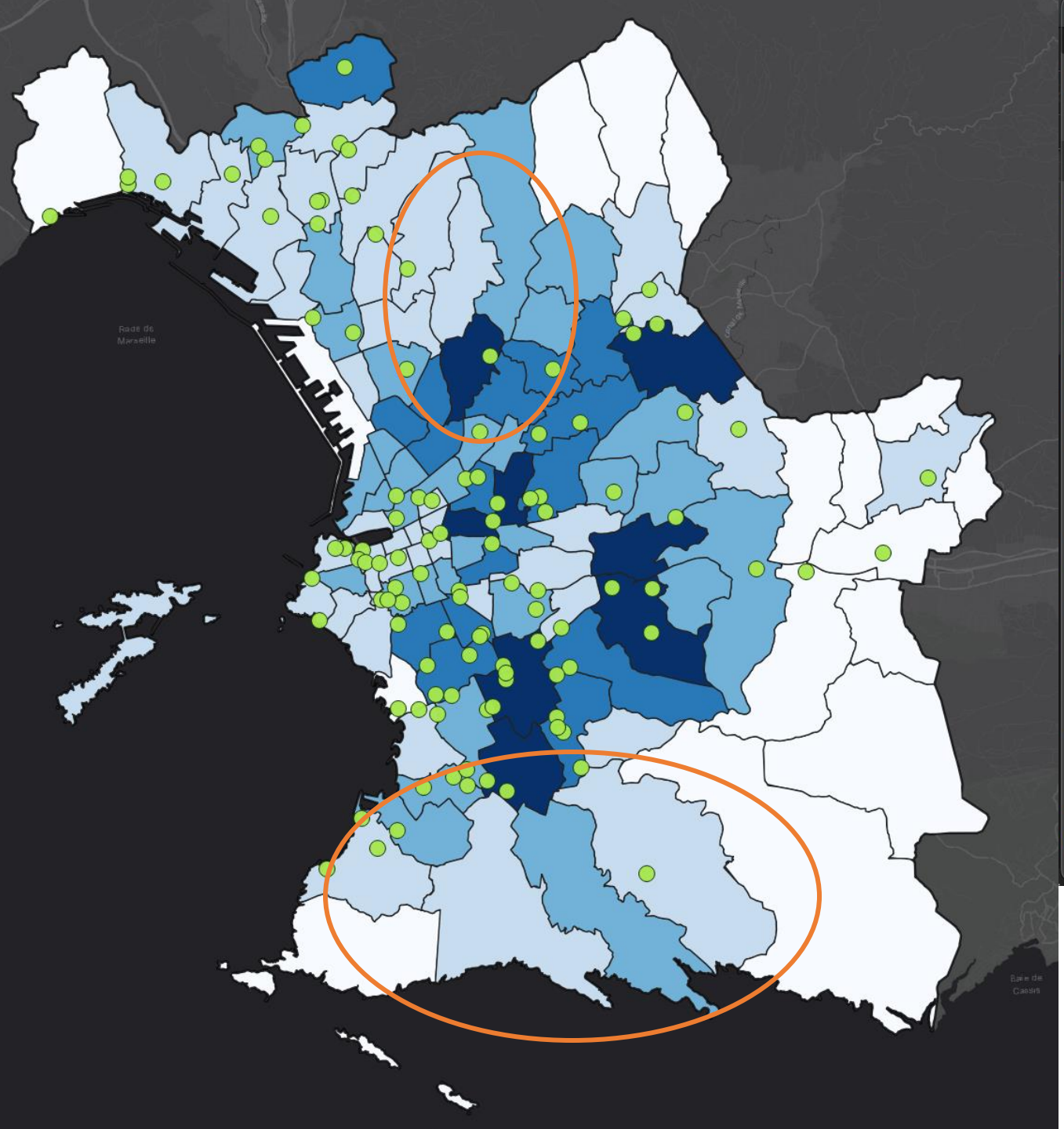

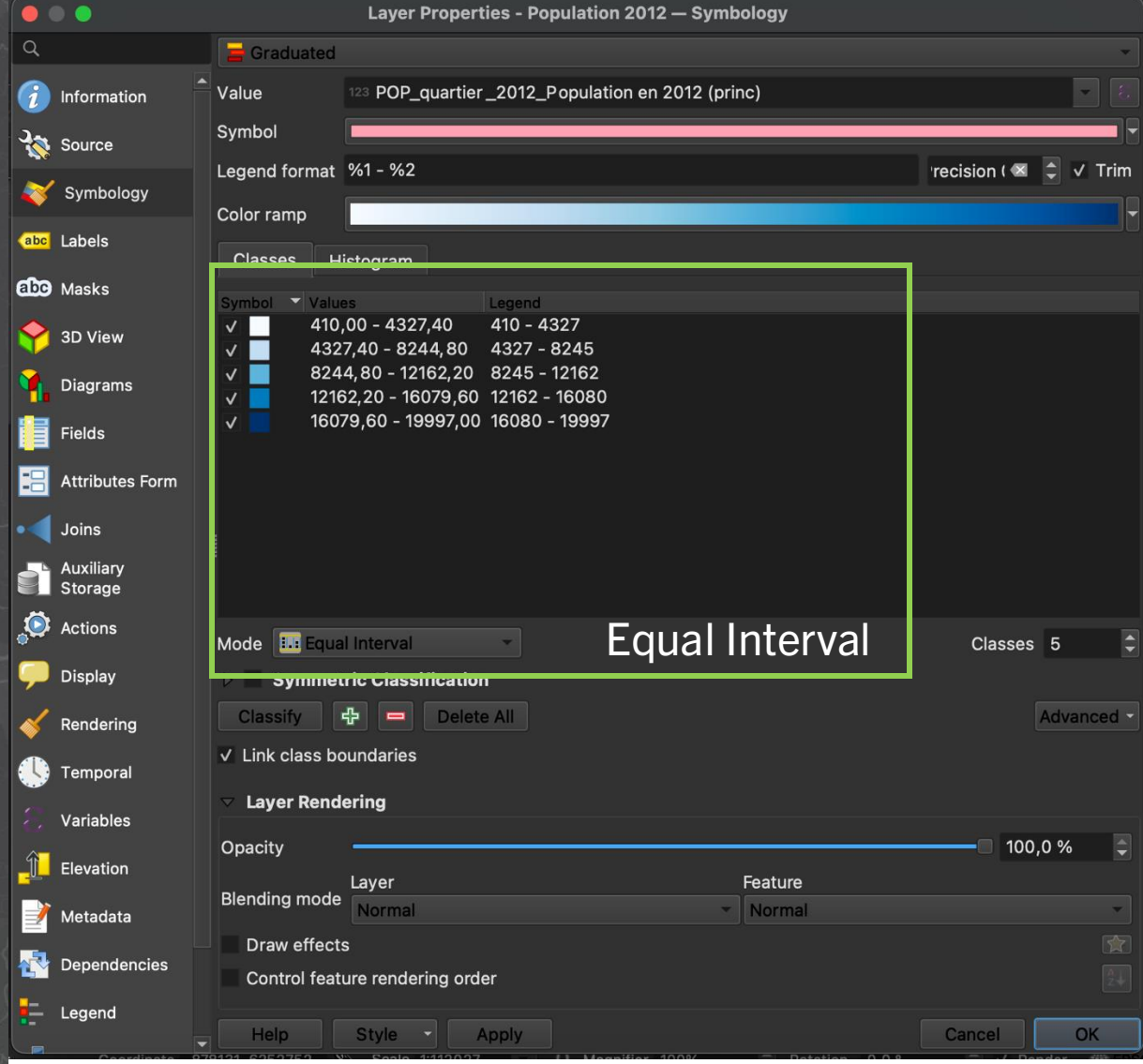

Equal Interval

Data: DataSud, INSEE
Screenshot: Eliane Schmid's QGIS workspace

- A map is a series of decisions – it reflects the biographies of creator, observer, user
- “80% of GIS is about transforming, manipulating and managing spatial data” (Jones and Schiel, 2022)

CONCLUSION

- Craft of the historian
- Power of storytelling
  (cf. Roth, 2020)
- Critical and conscious consumption

- GIS models as support systems for spatial understanding
- GIS can (and should) be used for historical reflections to enhance our conception of socio-temporal, - political, -demographic dynamics in historical contexts.

THANK YOU!