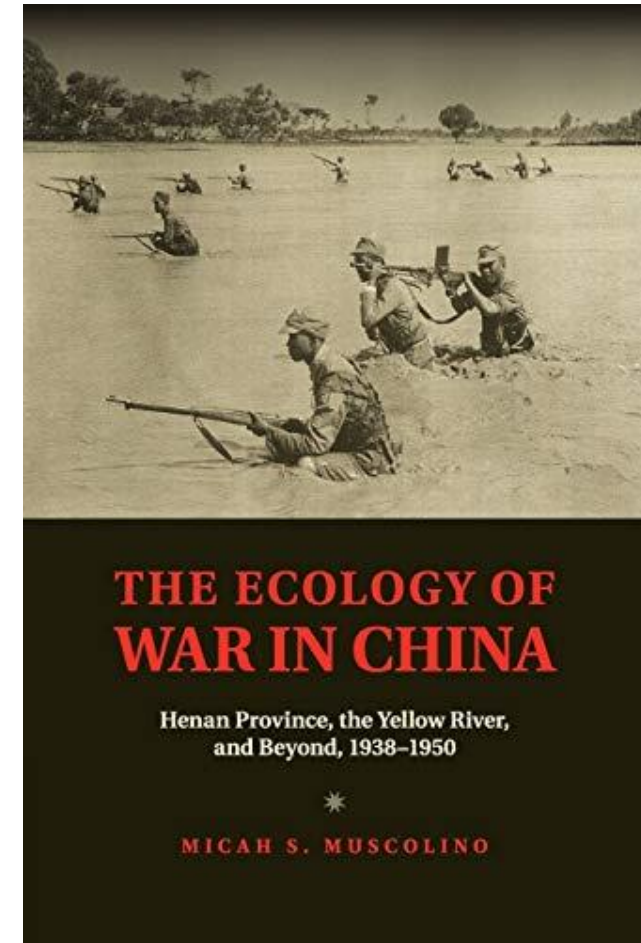
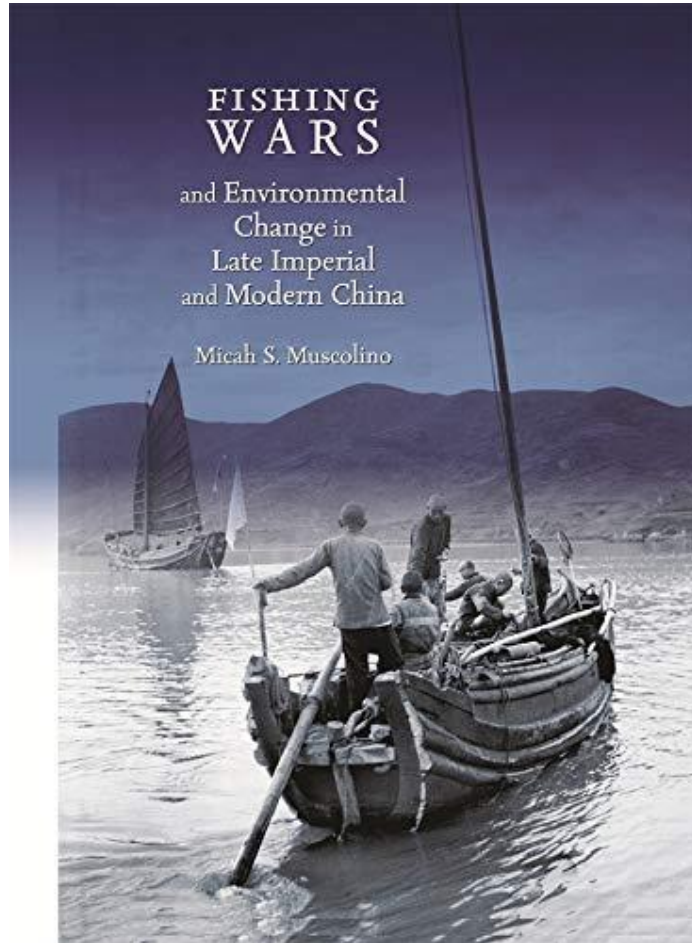


The Burden of Conservation: Water, Soil and History in Modern China

Micah Muscolino
Professor and Paul G. Pickowicz Endowed Chair in
Modern Chinese History

Research website: <https://chinawatersoilhistory.com>



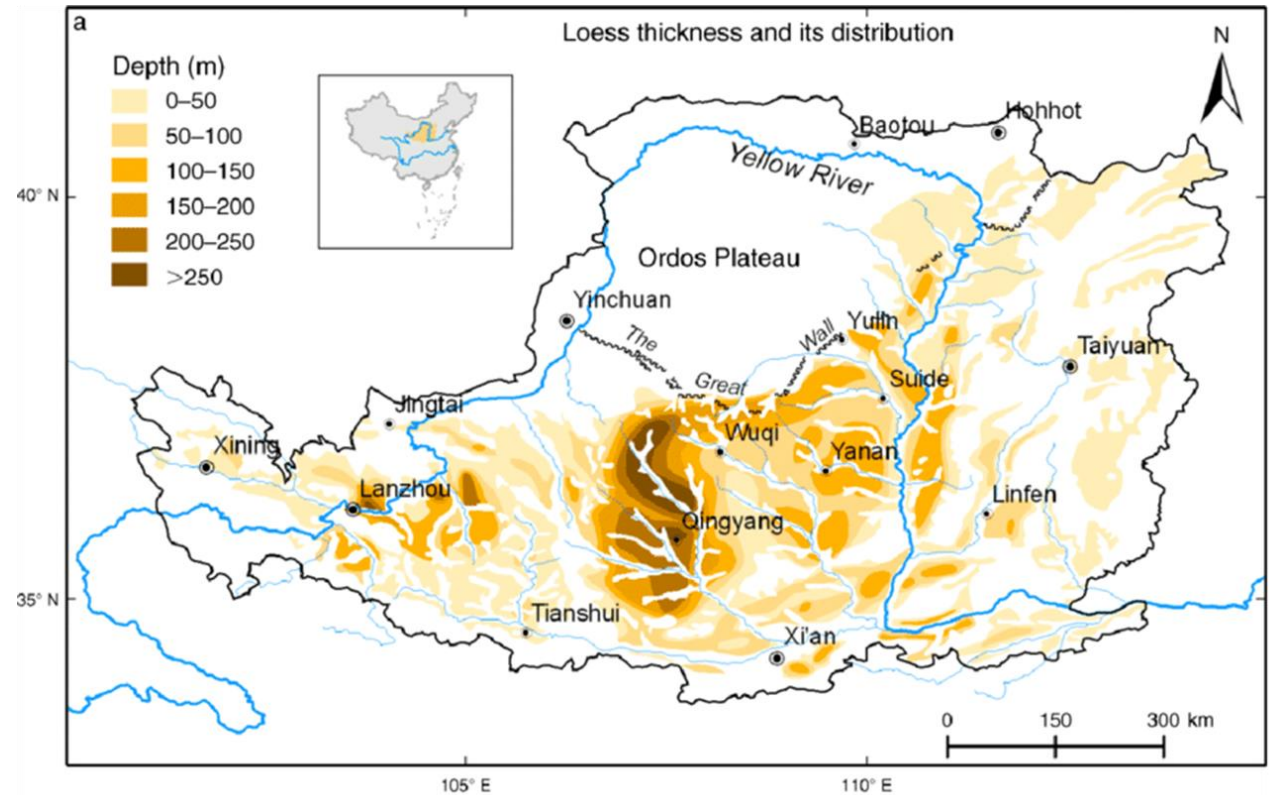


Gansu 甘肃



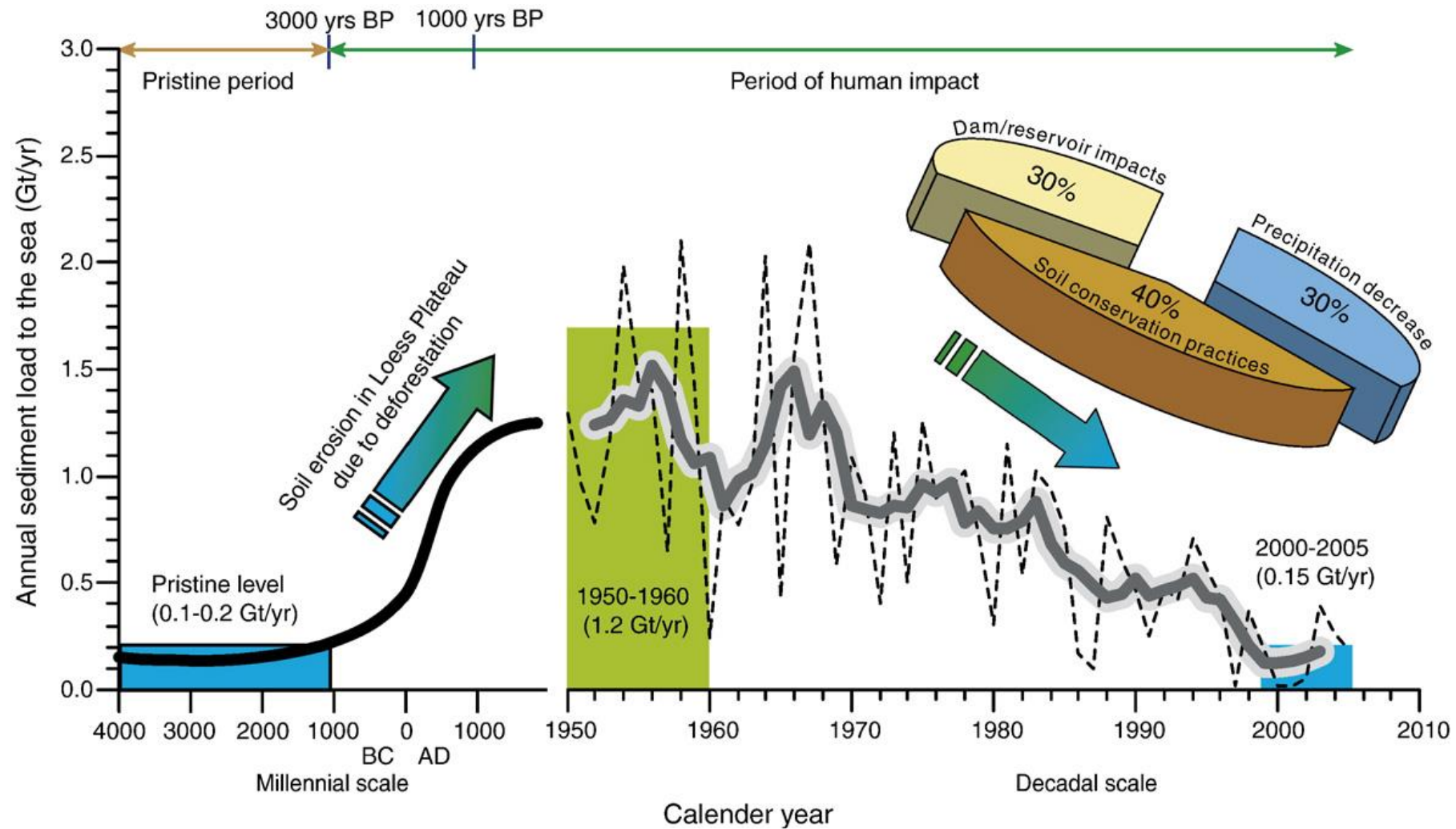
The Loess Plateau 黄土高原

Wang, et al. "Ecologically asynchronous agricultural practice erodes sustainability of the Loess Plateau of China" (June 2010), *Ecological Applications* 20(4):1126-35 DOI:10.1890/09-0229.1





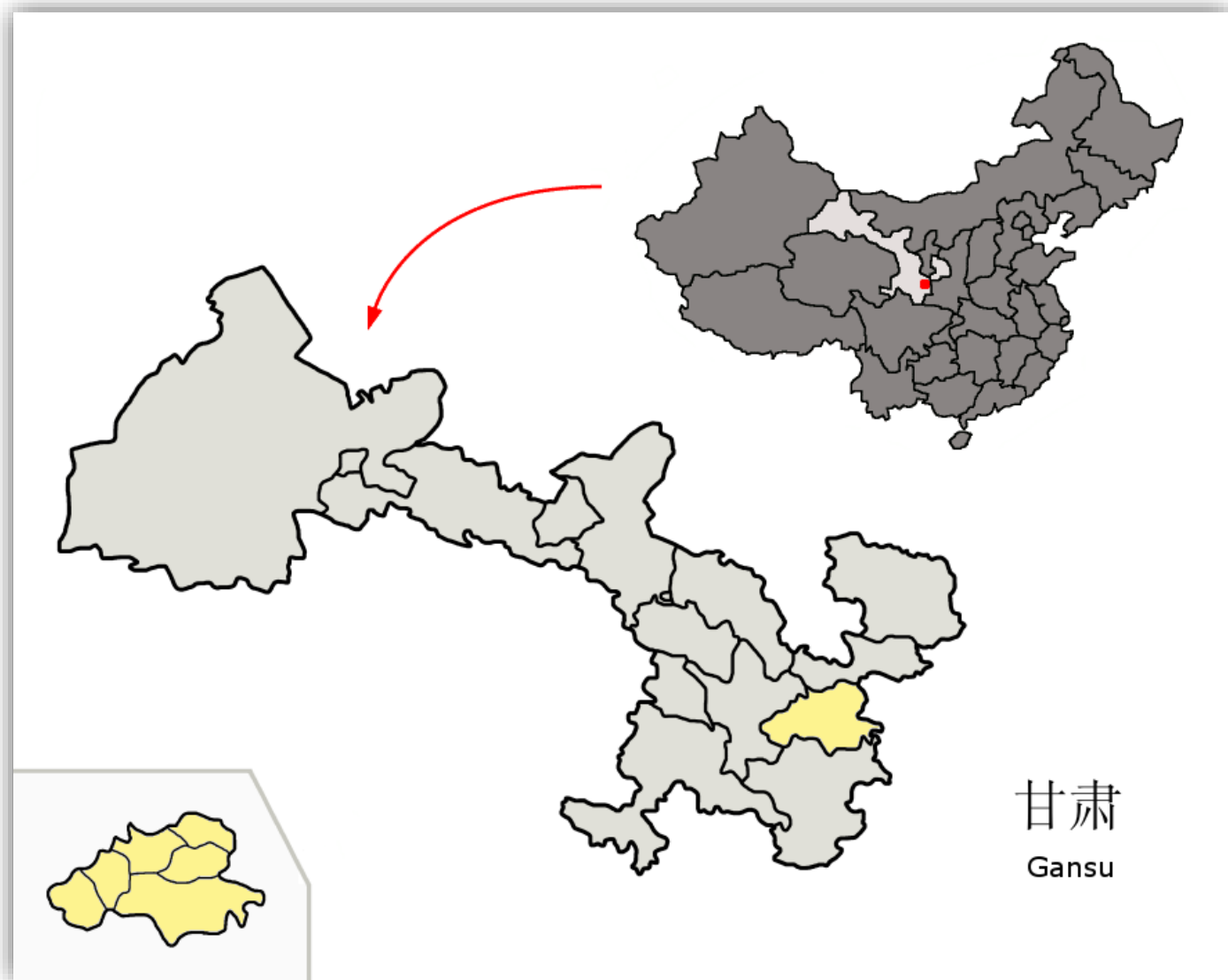
Aerial view of terraced fields, Tianshui 天水, Gansu



Wang, et al. "Stepwise decreases of the Huanghe (Yellow River) sediment load (1950-2005): Impacts of climate change and human activities" (June 2007) *Global and Planetary Change* 57(3-4):331-354 DOI:10.1016/j.gloplacha.2007.01.003

Tianshui

天水



Panorama of eroded landscape Tianshui (October 1943)



Source: W. C. Lowdermilk Papers, ca. 1912-1969
Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley

Tianshui Water and Soil Conservation Experiment Area 天水水土保持实验区(1943)



Source: W. C. Lowdermilk Papers, ca. 1912-1969
Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley

Building
terraces in
Tianshui
(ca. 1955)



Source: 天水水土保持科学试验站资料室

Story Maps

Women and Water and Soil Conservation in 1950s Gansu



This [StoryMap](#) contains a set of maps and images that supplement my article “‘Water Has Aroused the Girls’ Hearts’: Gendering Water and Soil Conservation in 1950s China” in the journal *Past and Present*.

You can access a pdf version of the article [here](#).

‘WATER HAS AROUSED THE GIRLS’ HEARTS’: GENDERING WATER AND SOIL CONSERVATION IN 1950s CHINA*

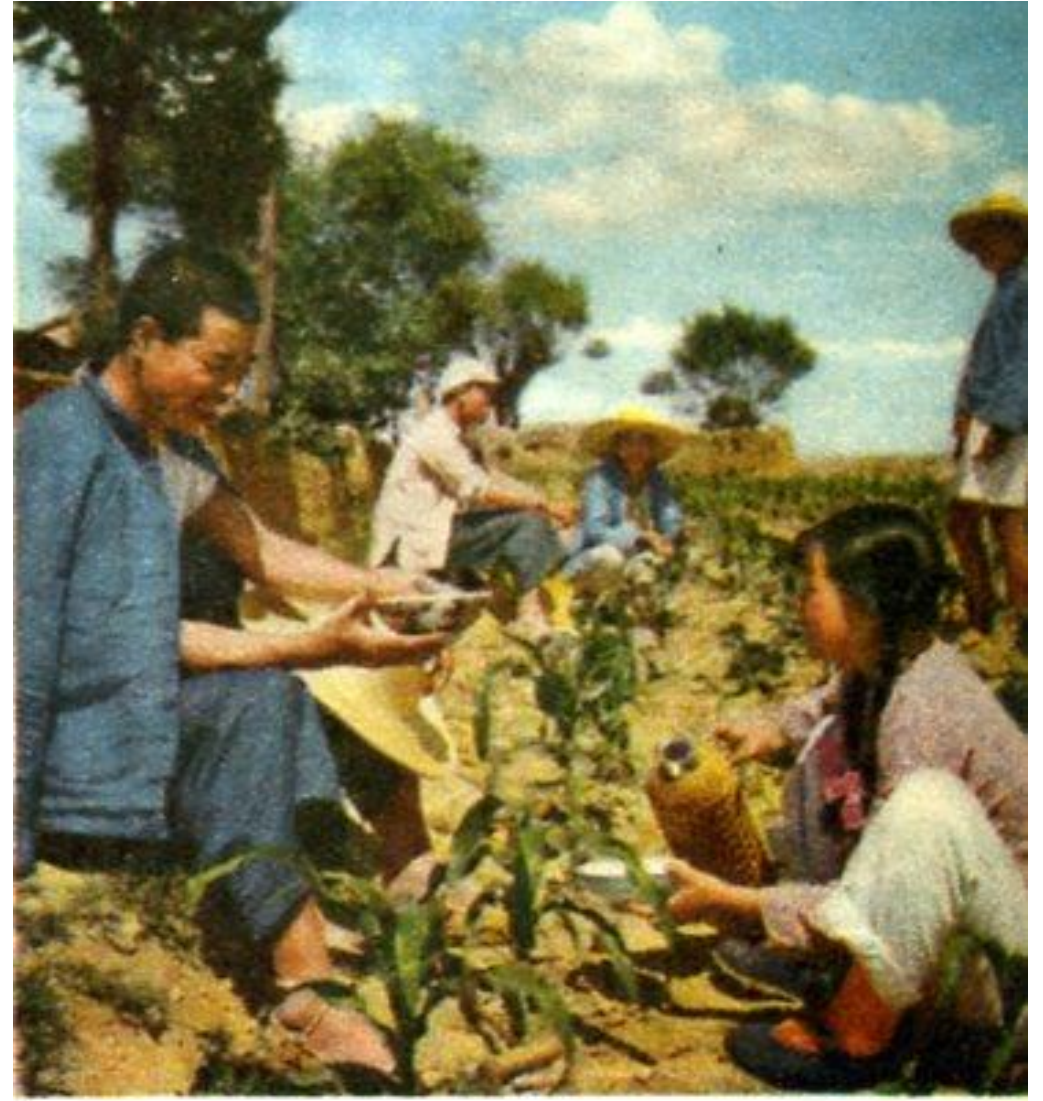
I INTRODUCTION

In the decade after the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the upland village of Dengjiabao in Wushan county, in the north-western province of Gansu, gained renown as a national model in state-led efforts to curb erosion in order to prevent downstream sedimentation in the Yellow River and its tributaries, and boost agricultural production in the Loess Plateau through water and soil conservation (*shuitu baochi*).

I first went to Dengjiabao in 2017 to investigate how local cadres persuaded rural people to implement land and water management measures during the 1950s and how they championed their village as a model in nationwide conservation campaigns. While conducting the fieldwork, I had the opportunity to interview an elderly woman named Deng Fenqin, whose image had appeared in an article on Dengjiabao’s water and soil conservation achievements published in 1957 in the high-profile national periodical the *People’s Pictorial* (*Renmin huabao*) (see [Plate 2](#)). Deng Fenqin hadn’t known that the *People’s Pictorial* had published this photograph of her and her late husband. When I showed it to her, it moved her to tears, and her family crowded round to look at it. My interviews with

* I should like to thank Peter Braden, Thomas Chan, Janet Chen, Niall Chithelen, Sakura Christmas, Shumeng Han, Stevan Harrell, Weijing Lu, Erika Milam, Ruth Morgan and Sarah Schneewind for their comments on earlier versions of this article. Research for the article was supported by a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship and a Research Grant from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange.

Deng Fenqin 邓粉琴



Source: 《人民画报》 10 (1957).

甘肃省水土保持工作示意图

1958年8月



历年来完成水土保持工作量

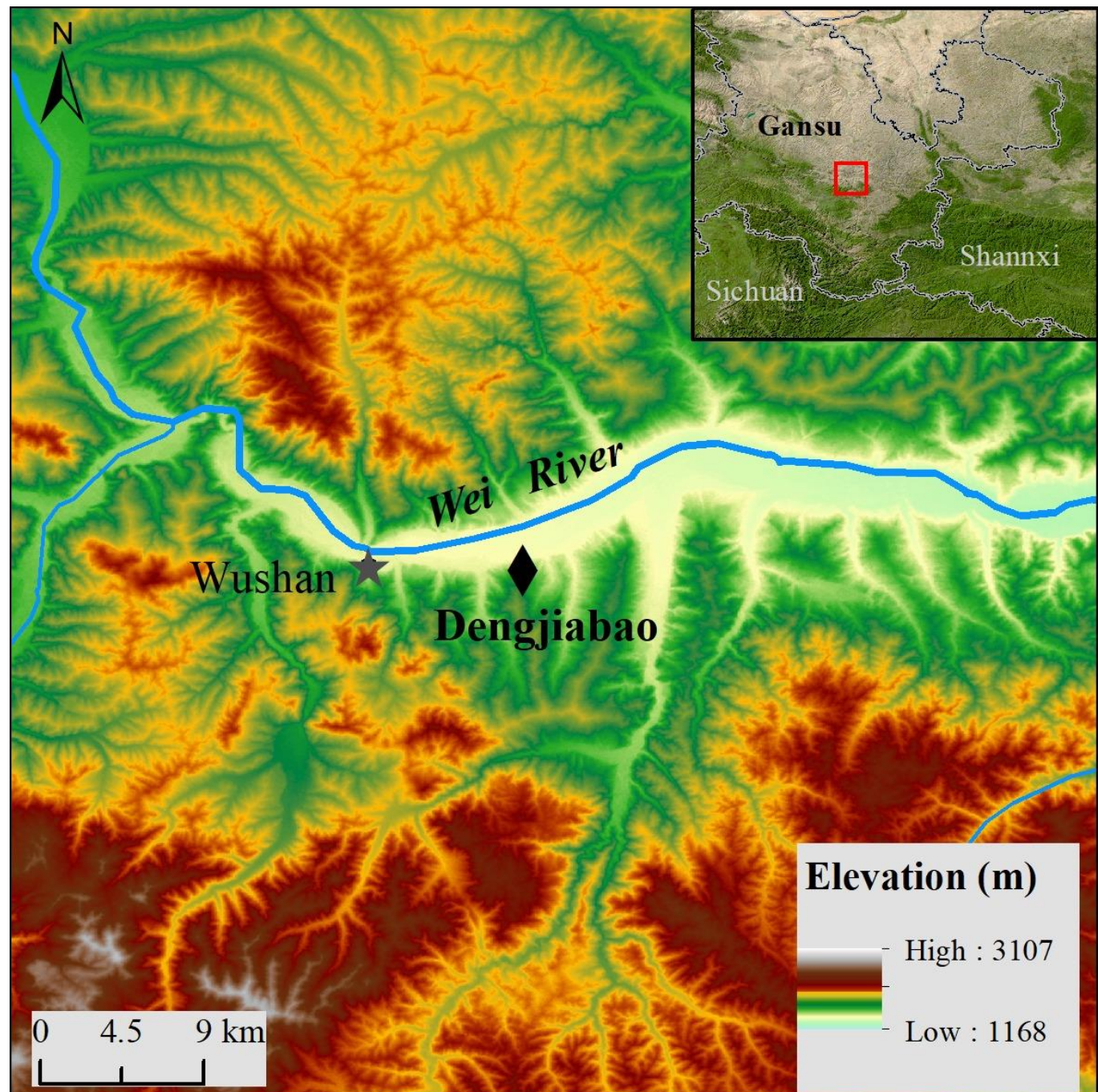
总土地面积 **460,360** 平方公里
 水土流失面积 **172,000** 平方公里
 截止57年完成控制面积 **30,930** 平方公里
 58年截止7月底完成控制面积 **42,041** 平方公里
 58年计划控制面积 **40,000** 平方公里
 58年跃进指标 **26,000** 平方公里
 59年全部初步控制

梯田化
 地埂化
 绿化

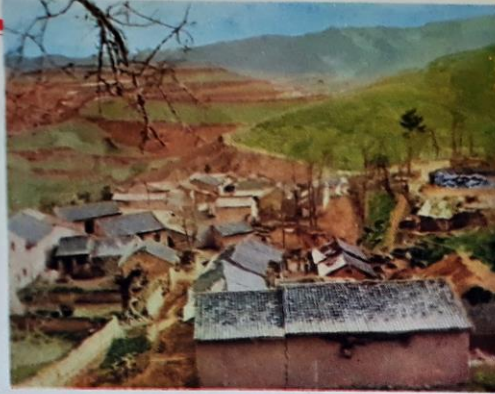
修梯田	420万公	封山育林	1200万公	毛沟治理	3万条
培地埂	3360万公	种草	920万公	淤池	552947个
完成邓家堡	11000个	土坝	24007座	绿化县	20个
造林	3720万公	谷坊	30万道	地埂化县	13个
				梯田化县	4个

Wushan
武山

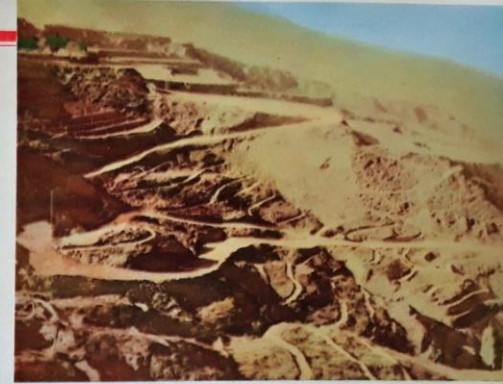
Dengjiabao 邓家堡



Dengjiabao (1957)



这是鄧家堡
現在的全景。



武山鄧家堡的馬
家山治理情況。

武山鄧家堡現在的景象



這是鄧家堡最先治
理的橋子溝，現在已
是草木叢生，基本上
控制了水土流失。



鄧家堡的鰲家
坪山莊全景。



在海拔二千
七百多公尺的
高山上，已修
成了一灣一灣
的平坦梯田。

Dengjiabao

1956 and 2019



Top: <https://dy.163.com/article/FRKFED3K0543HZQ2.html>

Bottom: Photo by author.

“The heroes waging war in
Dengjiabao swear to raise
Dengjiabao's red flag
higher and higher”

大战邓家堡的英雄们宣誓：要
使邓家堡的红旗高举更高举
(1958)

在党的领导下，群众干劲冲破天，誓师征服大自然



↑ 大战鄧家堡的英雄們宣誓：要使鄧家堡的紅旗高举更高举。

《甘肃省的水利水土保持》 1958.

Waging the Great War in Dengjiabao 大战邓家堡 (1958)



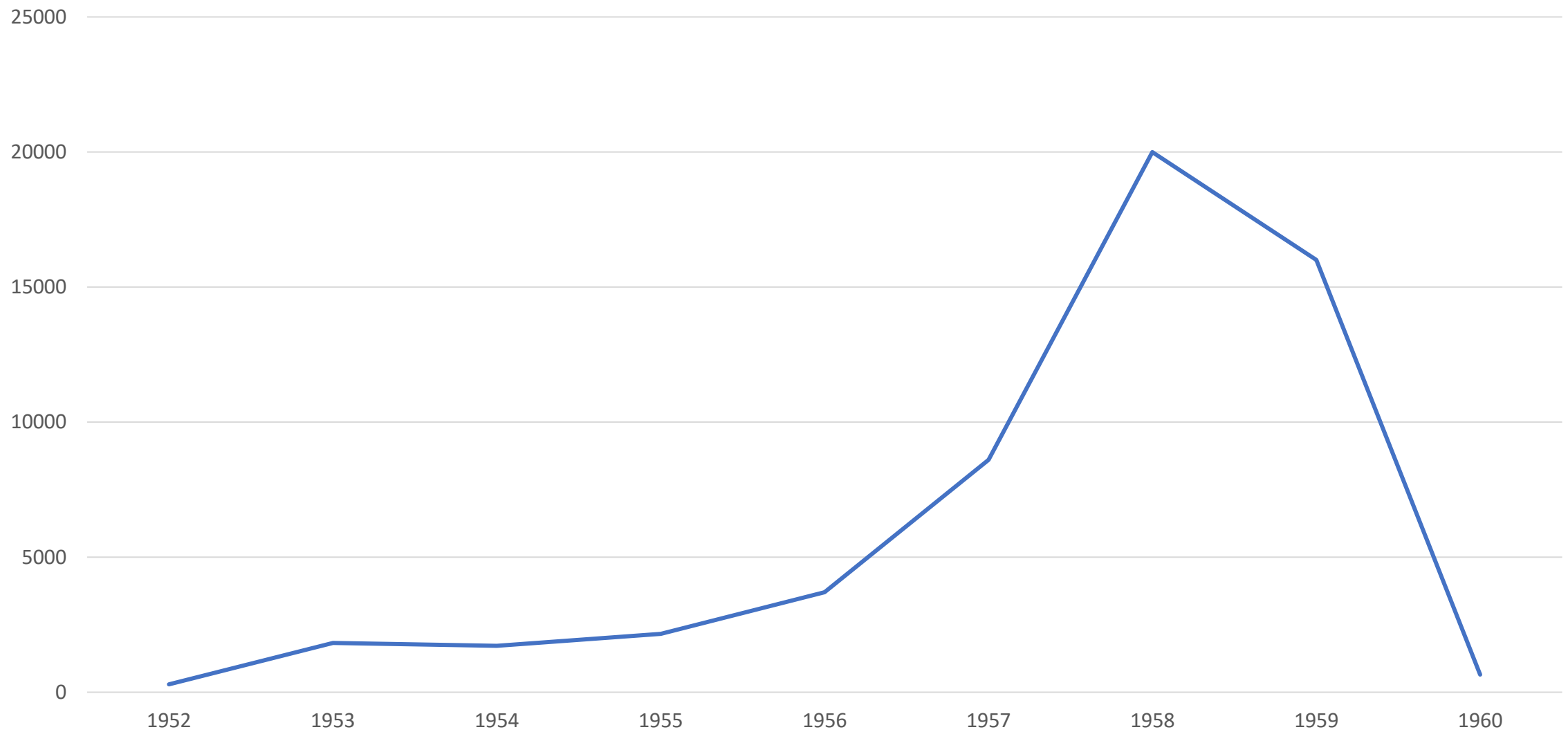
Source: 天水水土保持科学试验站资料室

Waging the Great War in Dengjiabao 大战邓家堡 (1958)

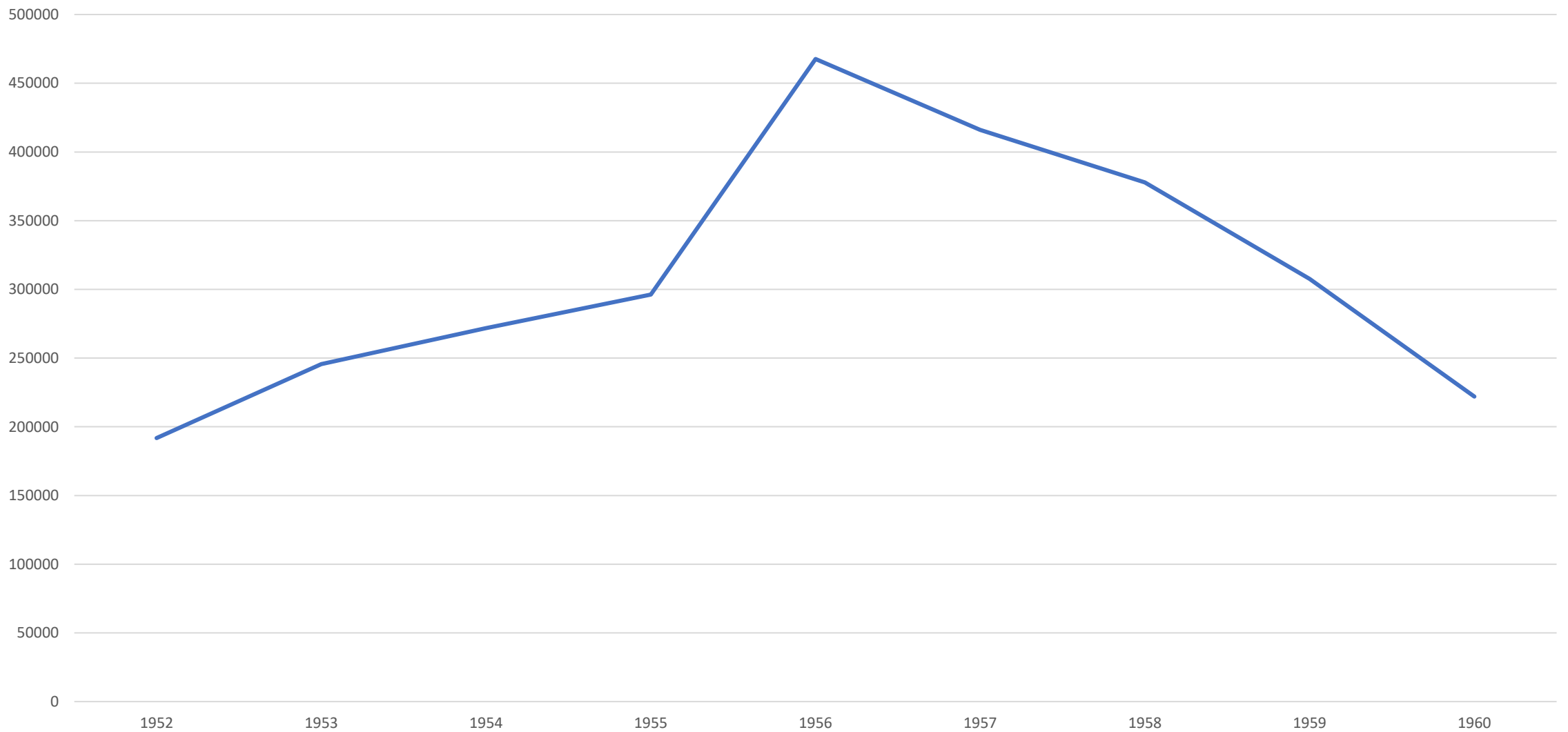


Source: 天水水土保持科学试验站资料室

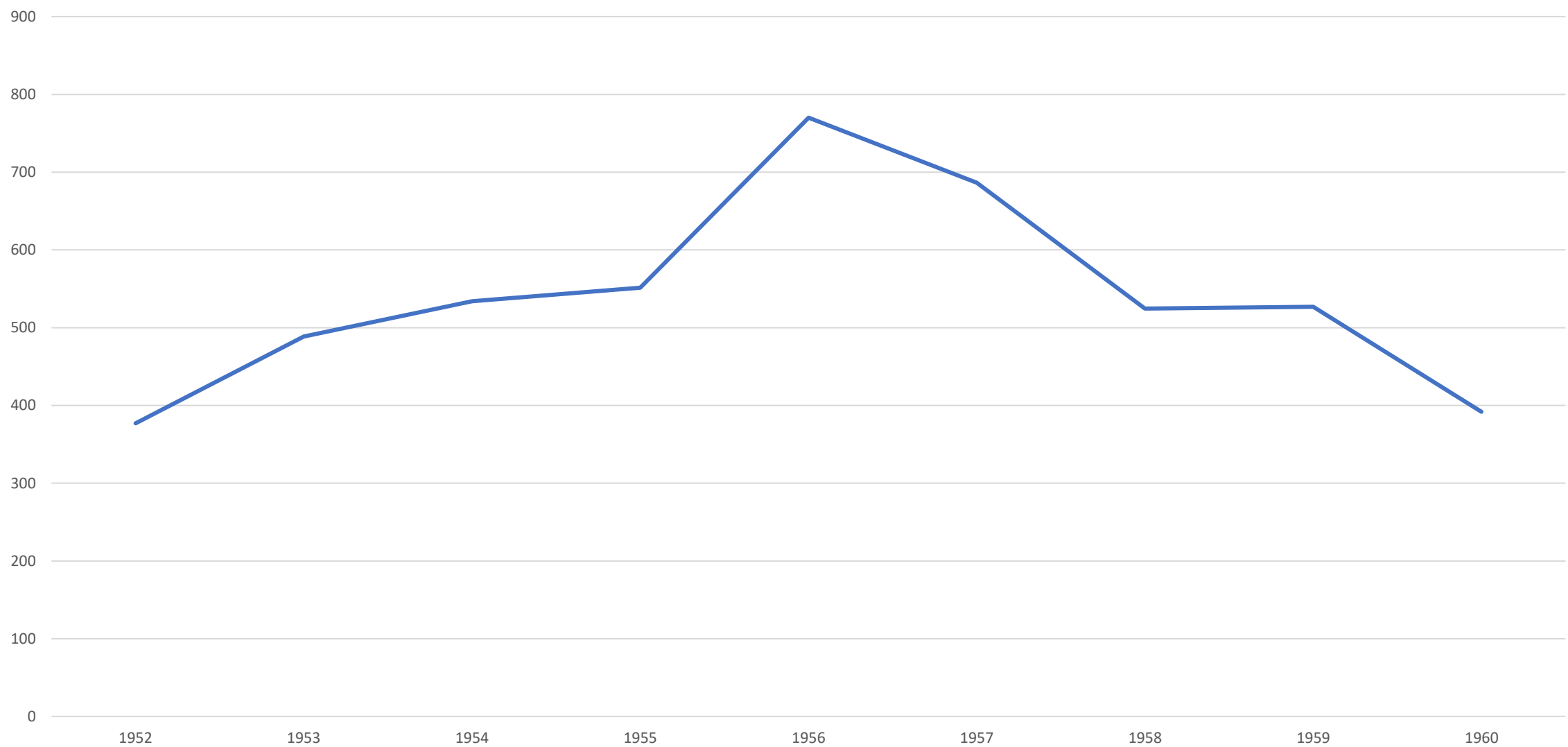
Water and soil conservation work-days in Dengjiabao



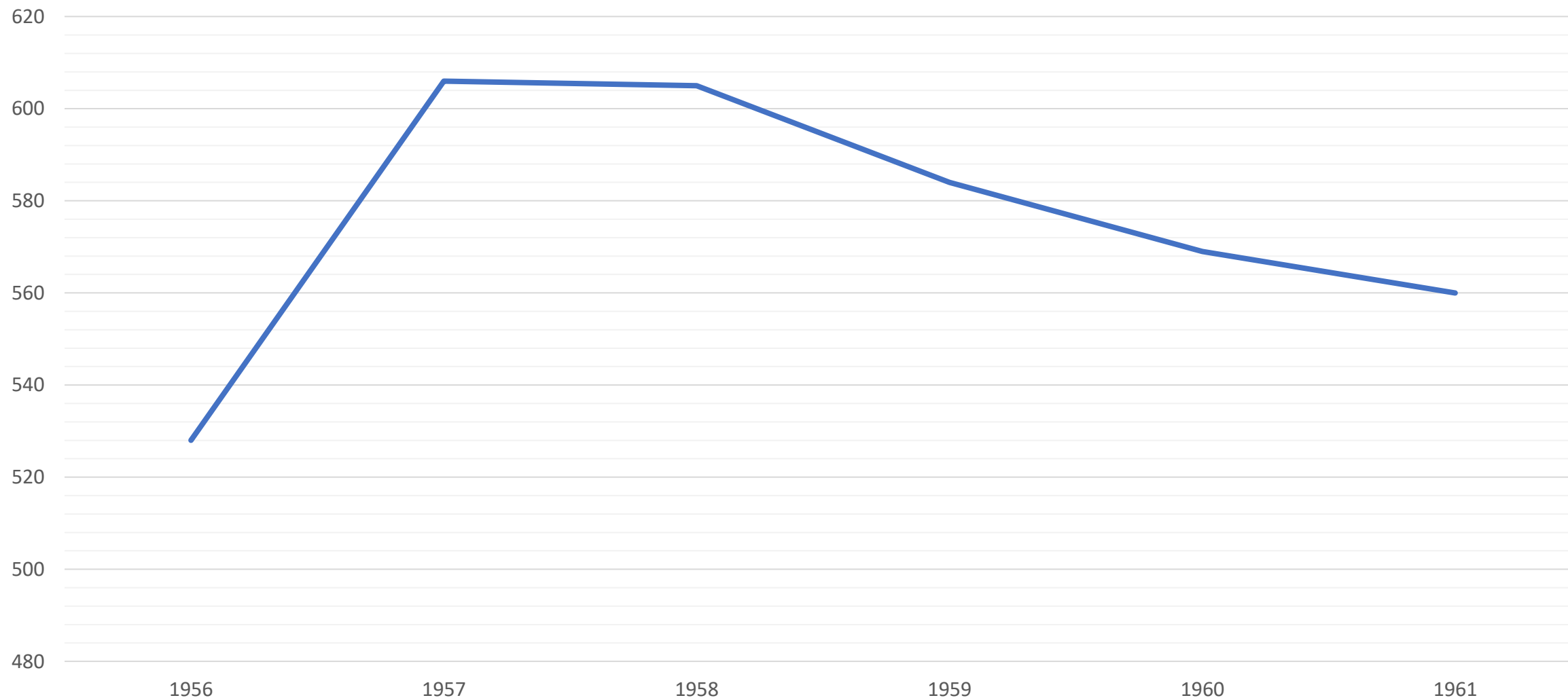
Total crop production in Dengjiabao (jin)



Per capita crop production in Dengjiabao (jin)



Dengjiabao population



《邓家堡水土保持典型调查报告（初稿）》(1961)

Li Xuding
黎绪定



《甘肃省的水利水土保持》 1958.

小楷南

XIAOKAIBEN



校名武山鄧家堡水土保持

姓名調杏記錄本(3)

1961.5.19

全年佔有 9000 个方

每季每方可占 25 天

1961.5.23

黎清廷	大队中农	黎建荣	中农
黎礼发	小队中农	黎建元	中农
黎礼才	中农		

水土保持好是好的，但也要知道，别给黎清廷
根本就不能不上去，水土保持工作，要队队人，都要平地
不欢喜平地

社员对平耕地，地不平，翻地，反右时，可以
多打粮食，字种，一平地，不作，什么平地

大兵团，作地，不好，在 1958 年，大兵团，作地，
当时，把他，作地，不好，作地，不好，作地，不好，
一平，作地，不好，作地，不好，作地，不好，
作地，不好，作地，不好，作地，不好，作地，不好，
作地，不好，作地，不好，作地，不好，作地，不好，



Dengjiabao, 2018/2019