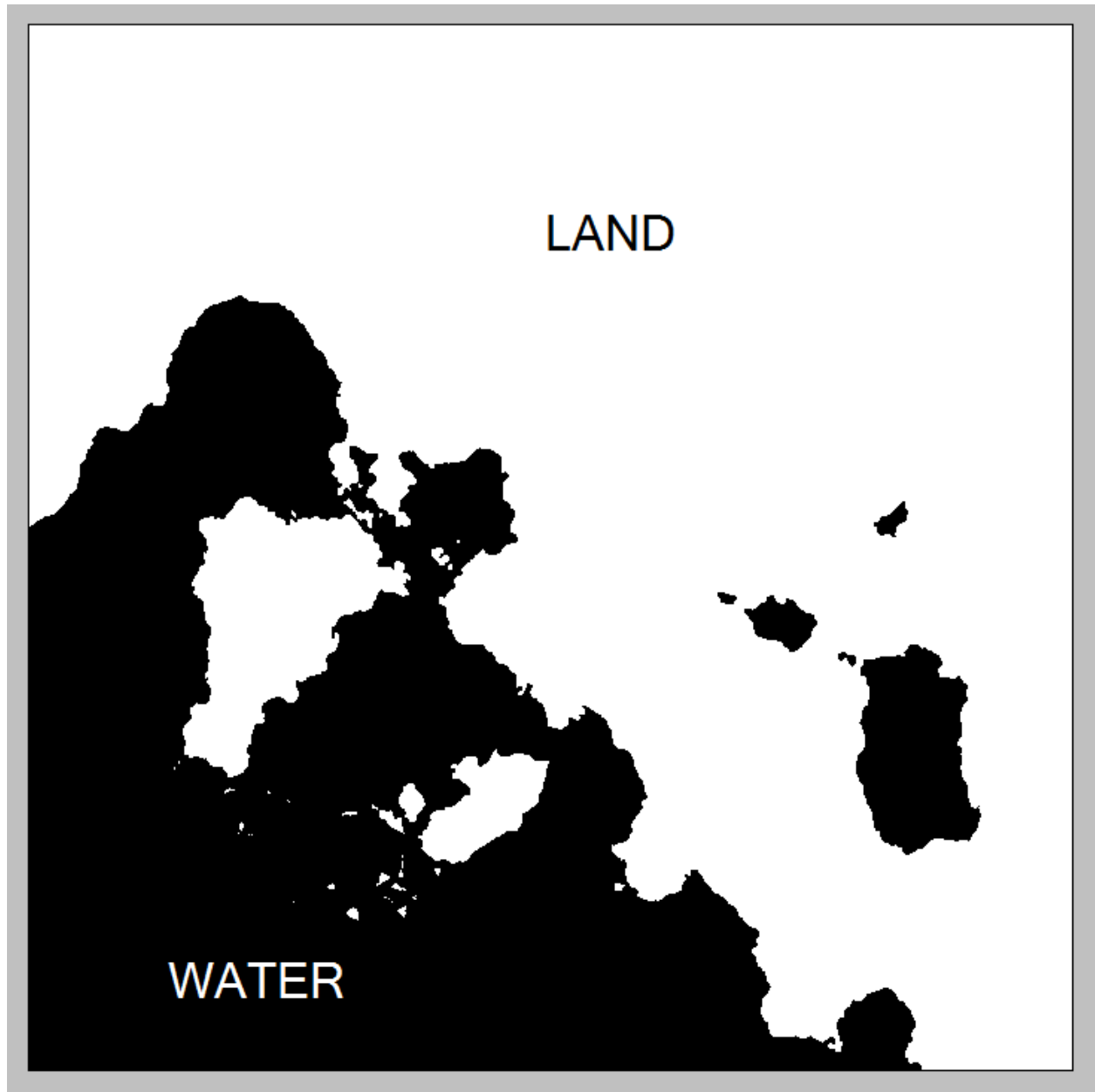


Spotted Effects Around Coastlines

This mini-tut was done for Photoshop CS2, but I'd imagine it'll work just the same on all other versions, and probably Gimp too. The tut is based on having a black and white base copy of your map to work with. It doesn't matter if black is sea and white is land, or vice versa, but I usually set it up that way.

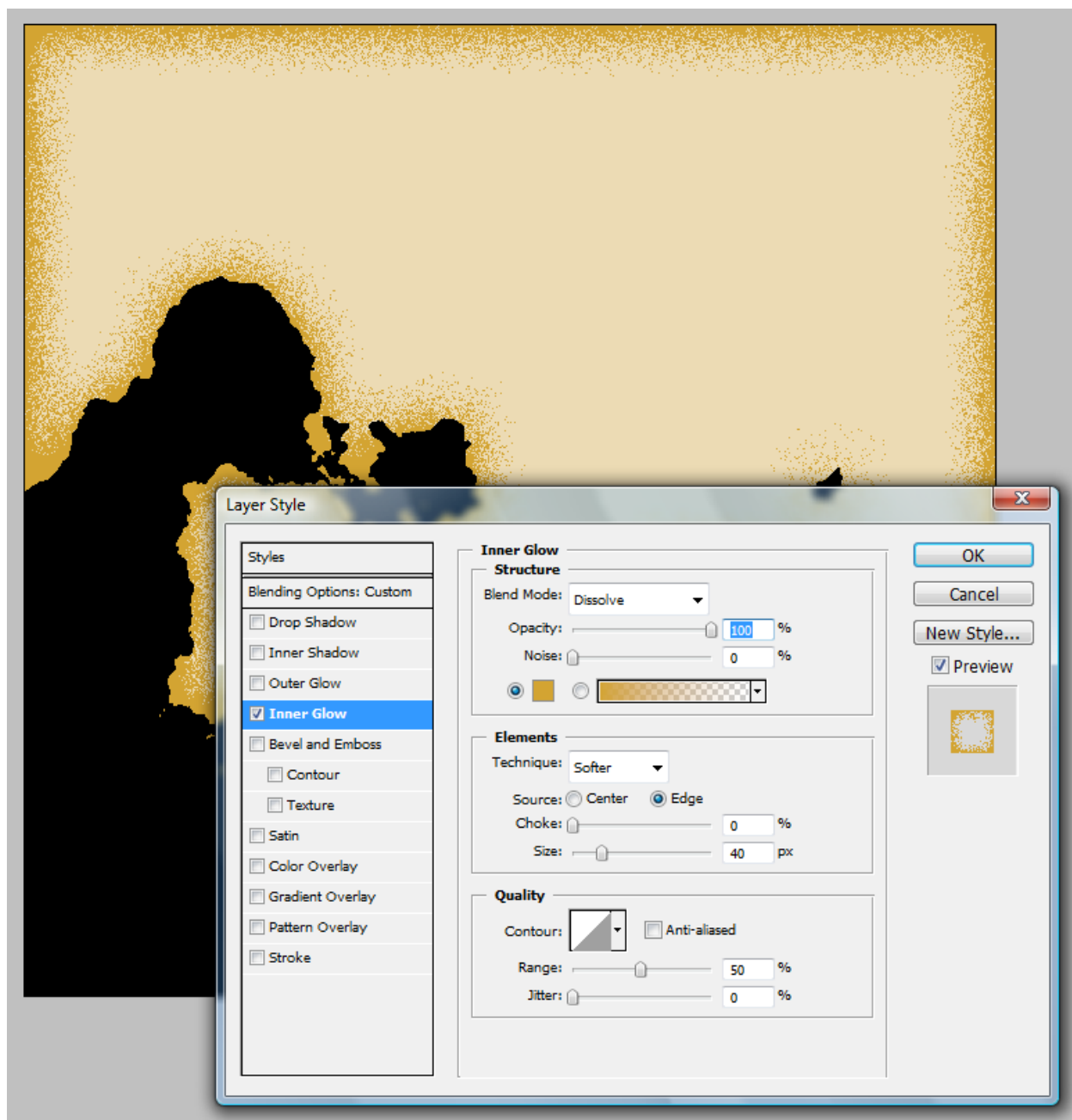


Once you've got that in place, duplicate the layer and change the name to 'Land 1' or something similar. Now Select → Color Range → Black → 200%, and hit Delete. You're left with just the white areas. (Keep the original black and white Base layer; don't delete it in case you make a mistake and need to start over, or in case you want to do some ocean effects, you can delete the white and leave the black seas.) Duplicate the Land 1 layer, change the name to Land 2, and hide it. Now click back on the first Land 1 layer.

At this point what I usually do is lay in my base land color; here I went with a light tan color (#ecdbb4). You may already have some colors, special effects, whatever, in place. If so, use that layer(s) instead of a new, color-filled layer.



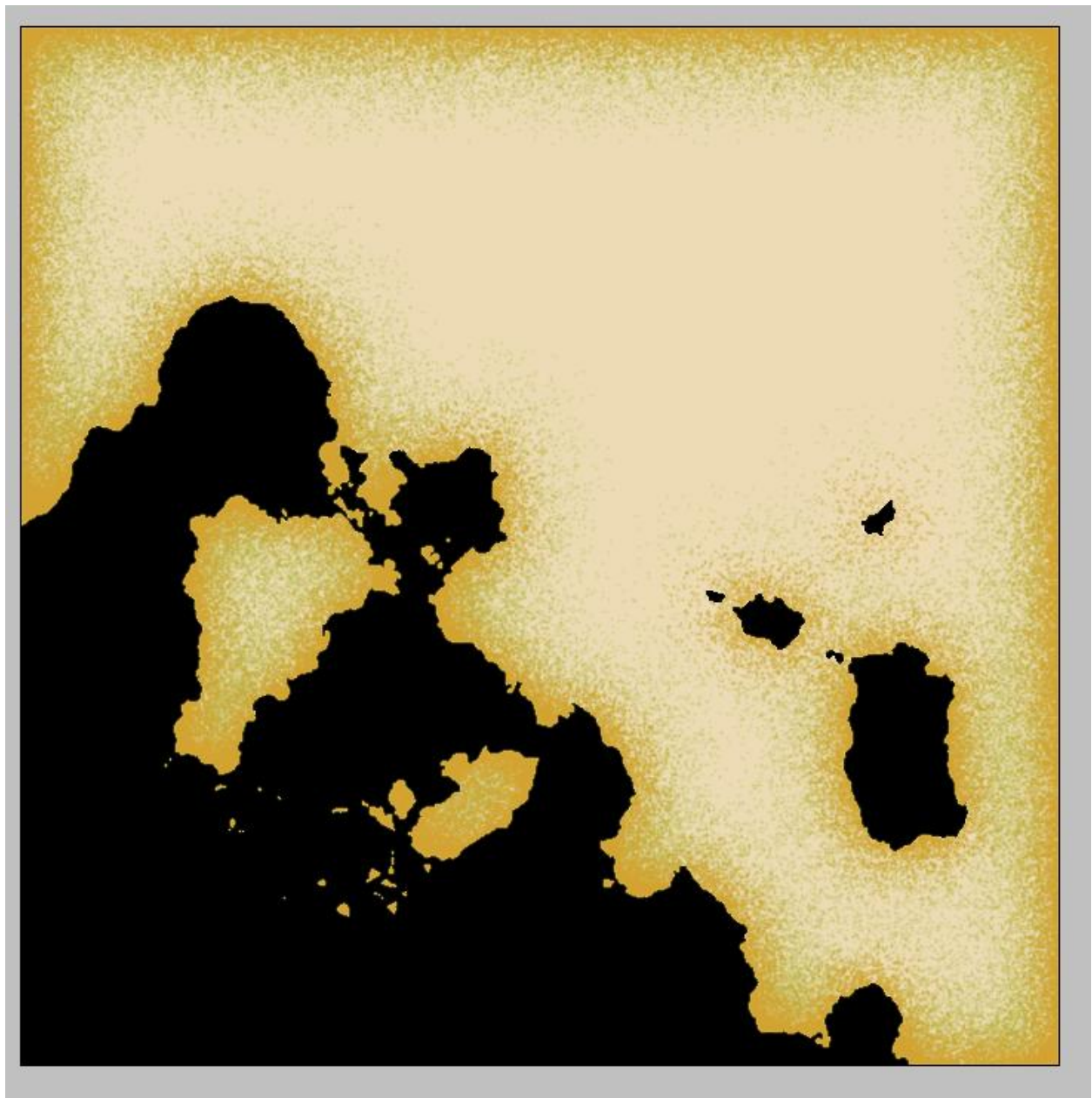
Now click on your Land 2 layer and set the Fill to 0%. Then we add a Layer Style of Inner Glow. I used the following settings, but this is where you can play around to get the exact color and look you want. The brown color is #d3a432.



Now create a new layer under the Land 2 Layer and merge those two layers together. Then, apply a Filter: Gaussian Blur at 0.5. You can play around with the amount of blur to get the

desired effect; the more blur, the less distinct the ‘spots’ will be. When you’re done with that, there might be some bleed effect into the seas from the Gaussian Blur filter; if that’s the case, just make a selection of the Land 1 layer (or whatever your Land layer/coastline layer happens to be), Inverse, and Delete.

And that’s pretty much it for the basics. If you want to create some really cool effects, add more layers with different color ‘spots’ (Inner Glow), different sizes and opacities, and differing amounts of blur. Layered one on top of the other, the total effect can look pretty nifty. Here’s an example with two different layers:



If you don't want the spots to extend all the way around the outside of the frame like they do here (since the land runs off the edge of the image), just take your eraser brush, choose a fairly big size, like a soft 100 pixel, set the flow to around 30%, and erase as needed. Just be careful when you get to those tricky corners where the land and sea intersect the edge of the image.

If you get really ambitious, you can do this same effect with your rivers too. Just follow the same steps as above (using duplicate river layers), but instead of an Inner Glow, change it to Outer Glow. Of course, if your rivers were already part of your black and white base map, the effects will already be applied.