

Possible locations for the “72” valley entrances on the northern slopes of the Qinling

David Jupp
September 2015

Between 1813 and 1822, the Prefect of Hanzhong, Yan Ruyi working with a surveyor Zheng Bingran revised work done earlier for the 1813 Hanzhong Gazetteer (Yan Ruyi, 1813) and produced the “Map of neighbouring regions of four provinces on the north bank of the Han River”. A copy of this map has been stored by the US Library of Congress (Li Xiacong, 2004; Lin Tianren and Zhang Min, 2013) and has been the subject of a number of papers that are described and translated on the Qinling Plank Roads to Shu web site [HERE](#).

On the map is an annotation describing the 72 Valley Entrances located between the Wei Valley and the Qinling Mountain range. A translation of the annotation says:

“Between the Hua Mountains in the east and Baoji in the west, there are altogether 72 valleys providing entrances into the mountains to the south. On the outside of the valleys is the Guanzhong region, also called “the endless fertile plain”. Entering the valleys, there are many deep and narrow passages. Through the Dayu valley mouth you can go through Xiaoyi, Zhen’an and Xunyang and down to Xing’an by the east road, which is more than 800 Li. Through the pass at Baoji you can go to Fengxian, Liuba, Baocheng down to Hanzhong by the west road which is 640 Li. This road is called the Northern Plank Road. It is as rugged as the east road but provides a better developed route. From Chang’an there is also the [northern] Ziwu valley through which you can reach the [southern] Ziwu valley near Xixiang. Wei Yan wanted to use this route to march on Chang’an. It is also 640 Li in length. There is also possible access in and out via the deep forests through Wulang, where the presence of destitute people increases the danger.”

In his paper on the map, Feng Suiping listed 54 entrances that could be found on the map. This document presents a Table listing Yan Ruyi’s “72” entrances to valleys on the northern slopes of the Qinling Mountains. The material came from Yan Ruyi’s map and Feng Suiping’s 2013 paper for which the translation can be found [HERE](#). The yellow **highlighted** text indicates valleys listed by Yan Ruyi that were also included by a person listing a modern suggested set of 72 valleys on a web site. That person seems to have listed 73 but maybe it was an error? Yan Ruyi’s map has 54 although he mentions the number “72” in his annotation. In the annotation it also mentions that 散峪 was used from Baoji to go south but it is not separately recorded on the map. For comparison, a later work by Mao Fengzhi (Mao Fengzhi, 1868) and discussions of it by Prof Li Zhiqin can be used to help resolve some issues.

The Table has been used in the translation of ZFeng Suiping’s paper and has been recorded with more detail here to accompany a KMZ file that locates as many of these sites in Google Earth as possible without ground inspection. The annotation “NF” means “not found” and these valley entrances are not in the Google earth presentation. A KMZ file for the presentation can be downloaded [HERE](#).



The 54 valley entrances listed by Yan Ruyi in the annotation to his map were recorded as Pinyin in Feng Suiping’s 2013 paper. 21 of these are “NF” (or “not found”) so that means there are 33 in the Google Earth presentation (see above) and finally of these 21 are in common with a modern web blogger’s list of modern names for valley entrances (峪 or 峪口) along the Wei River into the Qinling. To check the “blog” (which has now developed into a more comprehensive site covering the 72 Valleys) it can be accessed at:

<http://baike.baidu.com/view/2865347.htm>

Images of the map as Jpegs and a Google Earth presentation as well as a Jpeg of the annotation in the map listing the names, which Feng Suiping’s paper describes, can be found on the Qinling Plank Roads to Shu web site at:

http://www.qinshuroads.org/Yan_Ruyi_Qinling_Hanshui/Qinling_Hanjiang_subs.htm

The names in the Table are written as simplified Chinese and have been taken from Feng Suiping’s paper. Some of the original traditional and ancient characters were not easy to decipher in the old woodblock print and some may be in error in the original text but mostly they are as written in Yan Ruyi’s map. They have been grouped here roughly into County sections. They were not grouped in the map annotation.

(1) 华州 (7)

童峪	Tóng Yù	(Near Tongguan) (but does not use 潼)
扇车峪	Shànchē Yù	NF
黄神峪	Huángshén Yù	NF
仙峪口	Xián Yù Kǒu	Access to mountains in modern map.

瓮峪	Wèng Yù	Character identified as 瓮 but hard to read on map. Road south through here from Hua Zhou in Qing map. Modern road S202 seems to go south from “Liu Yu” (柳峪) which is not mentioned here, just to the west.
葱峪	Cōng Yù	Access to mountains and present in GE
构峪	Gòu Yù	Also access to mountains in GE

(2) 渭南縣 (4)

小敕谷	Xiao Chì Yù	NF
石佛峪	Shífú Yù	NF. (堤 Instead of 佛??)
箭峪	Jiàn Yù	Jian Yu is close to a road from Weinan to here and on over Qinling. Today not a major road.
酒峪	Qiú Yù	NF. Difficult character (滑, Hua?? But no Hua Yu on modern map).

(3) 臨潼縣 and 藍田縣 (4)

陽峪	Yáng Yù	NF
黃峪	Huáng Yù	NF
翠花峪	Cuihuā Yù	NF (Qing map has road to and from here joining Lintong to Lantian.)
小峪	Xiǎo Yù	Just west of Dayu in modern maps – wrongly placed? Or wrong name for this place?

(4) 西安府 (4)

祥峪	Xiáng Yù	NF
大峪	Dà Yù	Former way to Kugu Road. Goes there in Qing maps. Marked on GE presentation.
豹頭峪	Bàotóu Yù	NF
石邊峪	Shíbiān Yù	Present day valley called 石砭峪 (Shibian Yu) Main road to present "Kugu" Road and Qianyou (乾佑) River
子午峪	Zǐwǔ Yù	Next town into mountains is 渭子坪. Today goes nowhere. Formerly link to Ziwu Road. Goes through Stone Sheep Pass.

(5) 戶縣(鄜縣 On Yan Ruyi map) (11)

泮峪	Fēng Yù	Present day main road G210 to former Ziwu road goes via this valley.
象峪	Xiàng Yù	(祥峪 assumed) Present day place uses 祥
高關峪	Gāoguān Yù	Present map 高冠峪 Gāoguān Yù. Has a road over the mountains here.

太平峪	Tàipíng	On present map to west of Gaoguan Yu. Road goes into mountains linking with Gaoguan and Lao roads along the Qinling spine.
涝峪	Lào Yù	Today's Xihan Tollway starts via this valley from Xi'an. Qing map had road that joined Ziwu Road. Also in modern maps. Edge of major catchment draining into Xun River (Kugu Road) and reaching the Han at Xunyang.
石景峪	Shíjǐng Yù	NF
干峪	Gān Yù	Present day valley called the 甘峪 (Gan Yu)
小金峪	Xiǎo Jīn Yù	NF
金峪	Jīn Yù	NF. Have 大耿峪 (Da Geng Yu) in what seems at this place.
赤峪	Chì Yù	Chi Yu is present on today's map west of Dageng Yu. Road into mountains in Qing map. Not in many modern maps.
田峪	Tián Yù	Tian Yu is present on today's map west of Chi Yu. Road south goes over Qinling in Qing map and today

(6) 整屋縣=周至县 (13)

塔儿峪	Tǎ'ér Yù	In GE but small. Possibly just the 塔峪 (Ta Yu)
岫峪	Xiù Yù	Strictly NF (But 岫峪 may be the present name – need to ask about it)
马岔峪	Mǎchà Yù	In GE but small. Qing map had a path into mountains.
团彪峪	Tuánbiāo	NF (but possibly now 团标峪)
黄巢峪	Huángcháo	NF
黑水峪	Hēi Shuǐ Yù	Heishui present on modern map. Major river and road into mountains to east of river. But not to Houzhenzi
虎峪口	Hǔyù Kǒu	Huyu Cun (village) is close by here on GE.
熨斗峪	Yùndǒu Yù	Yundou Cun (village) is close by on GE
辛口峪	Xīnkǒu Yù	Alternative valley into mountains on Tangluo Road. But hard to find in maps. There is a village called Xinkou here on GE gazetteer.
西骆峪	Xīluò Yù	Xiluo Yu present west of Hei Shui. Entrance to old Tangluo Road.
稻峪	Dào Yù	NF
车峪	Chēyù Kǒu	Cheyu village and valley marked on GE
强峪	Qiáng Yù	Seems to be present in GE but to EAST of Cheyu. So in question.

(7) 郿县 (10)

泥峪	Ní Yù	Ni Yu present today to west of Xiluo, alternative way to Laojun Ling and Taibai
汤峪	Tāng	Exists today to west of Ni Yu. Now a major access to Taibai mountain area. Tangyu Zhen is local township.
红河峪	Hónghé Yù	Exists on present maps to west of Tang Yu. On Qing map road going south here across Taibai to Xu River. Today part of round route to Taibai with the Tang Yu.
同峪	Jiōng Yù	NF (character 铜?)
斜峪	Xié Yù	Major entrance near Meixian to ancient Baoye Road. Major dam here now. But the Baoye road does not seem to be fully open in Yan Ruyi's 1820 maps.
[the following valleys are in a dissected and complex terrain area. Roads from Guozhen to Taibai and Baoji to the south along the Beizhan do not seem to be associated with entrances marked with a “Yu”.]		
藺峪	Lìn Yù	NF
麦峪	Mài Yù	There seems to be a present day Mai Yu to the west of Meixian. But not clear if it is the same.
代峪	Dài Yù	NF (character 伐??) Road here in Qing map that seems to go south.
马峪	Mǎ Yù	NF. Then should come road from 虢镇 (Guozhen) to present Taibai but no “Yù” to be found.
散峪	San Yu	Main road south through Dasan Pass is not marked as a “Yù” on the map. Only listed as a “yukou” in annotation to Qing Map.

(8) 宝鸡县 (1)

晁峪	Cháo Yù	This is a long way west and has a road that goes to Sancha and Donghe Qiao. Road can be seen in Russian map.
----	---------	--

The 1822 publication by Yan Ruyi has more complexity near to Baoji but the term Yukou (峪口) does not seem to be as commonly used at this end of the Wei Valley as it is at the other.

Starting Points of 5 Main Ancient Shu Roads

大峪	Dà Yù	Kugu Road.
子午峪	Zǐwǔ Yù	Ancient Ziwu Road through Stone Sheep Pass.
西骆峪	Xīluò Yù	Main entrance to old Tangluo Road.
斜峪	Xié Yù	Main entrance to ancient Baoye Road.
散峪	San Yu	Main Postal road south through Dasan Pass .

The Comments made at the Baidu web site

The comments made at the Baidu web site referenced above are very interesting. A translation of the summary heading and the brief introduction to the list given at that site is as follows:

<http://baike.baidu.com/view/2865347.htm>

The 72 valleys of the Qinling

“The 72 valleys are all on the north slopes of the Qinling. It is often said the the steep and mountainous Qinling has 1000 gulleys and 10000 ravines, and that its steep ravines are no different from north to south. So why is it said that the north slopes have the "72 valleys of the Qinling" and at what time did this saying first spread around? The answers are still to be verified by historians, but I think there are probably (at least) two reasons. The first is that Xi'an (Chang'an) has since ancient times been the capital of the Emperor, and secondly, Xi'an is quite close to the north slopes of the Qinling. So over much of the history that we are familiar with, the north slopes of the Qinling have been the site of a rich store of history, geography, religion and gained the attention of literary scholars. This area has seen continuous occupation and development by people. Emperors and generals have travelled and hunted through it, writers and scholars have sought out places of beauty and inspiration for their work, monks and priests have come to seek spiritual development, and criminals and refugees have come to seek refuge and make a home.

1 Introduction

First thing to note is that the ancient people have often used the number "72" to describe a significant number, so that we can find "Sun Wukong's 72 changes (of form)", "the 72 occupations of the people and soldiers" etc, so having 72 valleys is also simply an indication of a large number of valley entrances. If you check an atlas and make a count along the side of the mountains, you will find that the valleys on the north slope of the Qinling is not limited to 72, however, many of these valleys are very small (short), or not very well-known, so are generally not included in the count.”

The information provided on this site has been taken into account in the Table but more work is planned cross matching with Mou Fenzhi's book and Prof. Li Zhiqin's annotations and commentary in Mao Fenzhi (1868).

References

Yan Ruyi (Ed) (1813) “Hanzhong Gazetteer”
严如煜纂修《汉南续修郡志》。

Li Xiaocong (Ed) (2004). “Summaries of holdings in the US Library of Congress' Collection of ancient Chinese maps”, Beijing, Cultural Press, October 2004. (Chinese and English)

李孝聪编著：《美国国会图书馆藏中文古地图》卷二《区域地图：省、府、州、厅、县》，文物出版社 2004 年 1 月，第 50 页

Lin, Tianren and Zhang, Min, Eds (2013). "Reading imperial cartography: Ming-Qing historical maps in the Library of Congress", text in Chinese and English, Published by the Academia Sinica Digital Center (Taipei) in association with the US Library of Congress, 2013/11/01. ISBN: 9789860393637.

林天人编撰、张敏译：《皇舆搜览——美国国会图书馆所藏明清舆图》，台北中央研究院，数位文化中心出版，2013 年 11 月。

[Qing] Mao Fengzhi (1868). "An examination of the valley entrances of the southern mountains of Shaanxi" Published in the 7th Tongzhi year of the Qing period.

Also recently available in: Li Zhiqin (annotator) "Annotations for the Valley Mouths of the Southern Mountains [Qinling]", in "Collected Studies of relic sites of Chang'an", Wei Quanrui (Chief Editor), 2005.

[清]毛凤枝《陕西南山谷口考》清同治七年(1868)出版

近代注释: 李之勤校注《南山峪口校注》长安史迹丛刊, 魏全瑞主编, 三秦出版社, 2005 年。

Endnote: Chinese Text from the Baidu Website

秦岭七十二峪

这 72 峪都位于秦岭的北坡，按说秦岭崇山峻岭千沟万壑，其山谷应不分南北，为什么单是秦岭北坡有这“秦岭 72 峪”说法，且又是什么时候开始流传这种说法，这有待历史学家去考证，我想可能两点原因。一则西安（长安）自古帝王之都，而秦岭北坡距离西安很近，长期的历史浸淫造就了秦岭北坡地区丰富的历史、地理、宗教、人文内涵，这是被人类不断涉足和充分开发的地区，历史上帝王将相把这里作为避暑狩猎之地，文人墨客把这里作为寻幽咏怀之处，僧侣隐士把这里作为修身养性之所，逃犯流民把这里作为避难存身之家。

简介

另一则古人常常用七十二来形容多，就好像我们熟知的“孙悟空 72 变”、“工农兵学商 72 行”等，72 峪也不过是为了形容峪口的众多，其实如果查看地图或者沿山边细数起来，会发现秦岭北坡远远不止这 72 峪，不过因为很多峪较为小（短）或不太出名，就没有被罗列进去。