

Notes on LOC Scroll Translation

[Provided to Hanzhong Museum with the draft translation with some text translated and some commentary added by Prof Wang Chunmei of NW University at Xi'an.]

The English translation of the paper by Director Feng Suiping provided in the Qinling Plank Roads to Shu web page under "[Qing Period Maps](#)" had some choices to make. The following document discusses the choices and lists some things to be discussed if the translation is to be used in a formal publication.

1. Structure of the document

The document now uses English style sections and headings which are numbered. An additional heading ("2.1 The general appearance of the scroll map") was added. The unlabelled text at the start is now labelled "Introduction", and an "Acknowledgements" section has been added.

The English version has also used a more common English approach to Figures and Tables. Tu (图) has been called a "Plate" in the text and Biao (表) has been called a Figure. The Figures and Plates are as they were in the original document and use the same images. If higher resolution versions are needed I can extract them from the original TIFF files that were provided by the US LoC.

Two sections of text listing items in rows have been made into Tables ("Rest stops and Lodgings" and "Additional Information"). Some lists in the text have been numbered or the first item made bold.

These changes have (I think) made it more in the style of an English language publication.

2. References

A collection of references from the text has been made in new section called "Reference List". The references are in English and (where they are Chinese) in Chinese. I think the references may not be sufficiently detailed to enable someone to find them in a Library or on the web. If they can be revised and made more detailed it will help.

I would also like to have the full reference to the published version of the paper so that I can refer to it correctly later.

3. Footnotes and Endnotes

I have made the Footnotes in the current text into Endnotes and collected them at the end of the paper. I have added a set of new footnotes that I think will be helpful for English readers who may not be as familiar with some parts of the text as Chinese. The endnotes provide the same important additional information as they did before. The only difference is the extra explanation for foreign readers.

4. Use of brackets in text

I have added words and short phrases into the text where I think they do not change the meaning but make the structure more like English. For example, “As the period evolved, the need for (additional) information for the journey along the "Yunzhan" (Plank) Road (also) increased.” Short phrases in brackets have also been used to add alternative text, brief explanations that are too short for a footnote and references to Figures. I hope they do not interrupt the flow of the text too much. If so, it is possible to revise the paper to reduce the number of parenthetical additions.

5. Place Names

It was very hard to decide how to translate place names. In the end I have mostly used Pinyin. The Pinyin orthography is as described in the Hanyu Pinyin Cihui (汉语拼音词汇, 1982) for place names. Basically, a place is thought of as having a basic “name” and designators related to its position or geography. In the basic names, the Pinyin for the characters is grouped together and the group has an initial capital letter. Place names often (usually) have designators for administrative level, geography etc. Designators are written separately and also have an initial capital letter. So, 河北省 is Hebei Sheng and 洞庭湖 is Dongting Hu with “Sheng” and “Hu” as administrative and geographic designators. In the scroll map, the administrative designators were indicated as extra additions such as 府, 厅, 州, 县 but townships could also be associated with the Postal System as indicated by designators such as Yi (驿), Zhan (站), Tang (塘) or Pu (铺) etc. Geographic designators are those like gully (沟), mountain (岭), river (水) and especially 关 (guan, written 関 on the scroll) etc. This leads to lists of names looking like: “Huangniu Pu, Huangniu Yi, Wuguan Yi and Wuguan Jie”.

I think this is the safest way to express the names but it is often rather clumsy and not very interesting in English. Some writers have tried to use English for the basic name as well as the designator so that 鸡头关 would be translated as “Chickenhead Pass”. Even Chinese associate this place with a Chicken head! But if this is always done, the names become complicated and people cannot find them on maps or really understand each other’s translation. For example, in English, Guan can be gate, barrier, pass or barrier pass and sometimes it just becomes part of the name when the original designator is not as important. At least if Pinyin is used, someone can find the place on a Pinyin map or guess the characters. Sometimes I have used “County” instead of “Xian” but not always. One issue was whether Liuba Ting and Ningxiang Zhou should also be translated as “County”? I do not know. If anyone feels there is a better balance (such as always using County for Xian but Ting for Ting and Zhou for Zhou) I am happy to change but the problem is that in time and over history, places can have a designator that later becomes part of its “name”. Hangzhou (杭州) is now not a “Zhou” and should not be written Hang Zhou. So, I have used Pinyin in most places and tried to guess what would have been a working designator in the scroll map and separated it from the name.

6. Available Documents

We now have the papers by Bi and Li (2004) and Feng (2010) as English versions. These two papers (taken together with Prof Li Xiaocong's information in the book on the collection at the US Library of Congress) are complementary it is important to have them both available. The possibility of reprinting the Herold Wiens paper may also be explored.

For Feng Suiping's (2010) paper there was a previous "translation" version created in which the text is split up into short sections and the Chinese and English are interleaved with the English aimed at representing the meaning without a lot of attention to English grammar and current usage. If there are any questions about the translation choices, they are best sorted out using this version. The final collated English version has had changes but they are only grammatical and editing changes.

I have made the papers available on the web as PDF files. The Word documents are available and can be provided when the translation is cleared and final. As I mentioned, it is possible to extract the Figures directly at high resolution from the original scanned TIFF files from the Library of Congress. The data on the web is taken from lower resolution Jpegs. The TIFF data provide the best possible and most clear resolution as originally supplied by the LoC. It is possible to do this for any of the Figures if improved resolution is needed for any Figure in the PDF file or printed version.

7. Web Access

The three publications by (i) Herold J Wiens (1949), (ii) Bi Qiong and Li Xiaocong (2004) and (iii) Feng Suiping (2010) are available as PDF files on the web page that describes the background to the scroll map and also provides access to (reduced resolution) Jpeg versions of the scanned map.

The page can be accessed from the Main Page of the web site (by clicking on "[Qing Period Maps](#)" in the projects selection bar) at:

<http://www.qinshuroads.org/>

A direct path to the page is:

http://www.qinshuroads.org/LOC_Scroll_web/LOC_Scroll.htm

The PDF files are about 1 MB each and so can be downloaded easily. They are being updated as changes are suggested, so it is most useful to direct people to this web site for access to the document rather than send a PDF that may be out of date. At the web page they have extra information and access to all three documents plus Jpegs.

DLBJ

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[PS: Someone noticed that I have spelt 𡗗 in English as "gulley" and not "gully". The truth is that both forms are acceptable as the word originally comes from French "gullet" or "throat". I have used the (less common) alternative as the paper is about classical Chinese and works of art. So perhaps it fits better with the "classical" situation of the scroll.]