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Introducing Shengjing lu cheng tu 盛京路程圖: A Tentative Study of a Manuscript Chengtu 程圖 in the Mu Collection

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In the Mu Collection of Chinese rare books (慕氏藏书)¹ at the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library, University of Toronto, a mysterious set of two-volume manuscript maps catalogued under the title, “Shengjing lu cheng tu” 盛京路程圖, has been a puzzle for librarians. Information about it is scant and the volumes do not carry hints concerning its author or intended use. A recent investigation looks into the volumes’ cartographic and textual details in hope of resolving the mystery surrounding the set. By comparing the information with historical records, librarians now believe that the hand-drawn maps, as a rare sample of cheng tu 程圖 or route maps, are primary documents related to the trip taken by Emperor Jiaqing 嘉慶 (reigned AD 1796-1820) in 1805 from Beijing to Shengjing 盛京, the auxiliary capital of the Qing dynasty (AD 1644-1911), to pay respects at the Three Imperial Mausoleums there.² This article will summarize the recent findings and provide a succinct introduction about cheng tu as an indigenous cartographic genre.

Background: Route Records and Route Maps as a Genre

In ancient China, route information was collected and compiled into volumes to provide geographical guidance to travelers. Such information could be conveyed in maps or textual forms, which were respectively known “route maps” (程圖 cheng tu) and “route records” (程錄 cheng lu). Typically, the organization of such route books followed the geographical flow of cheng 程, referring to the successive phases of a trip that were carefully planned and charted out in advance to guide travelers methodically from one place to another³.

¹ The Mu Collection of Chinese rare books was originally a private library compiled by a Chinese scholar, Mu Xuejun 慕學勳, which was purchased and transferred to the University of Toronto by an Anglican bishop, the Rev. William C. White in the mid-1930s. On the history and scope of the Mu Collection, refer to Anna Liang U, “The Ever Beckoning Horizon: The East Asia Collection at the University of Toronto,” in Collecting Asia: East Asian Libraries in North America, 1868-2008, ed. Peter Zhou (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 2010), pp. 136-151.

² The Three Imperial Mausoleums near Shengjing (盛京三陵, Shengjing san ling) refer to the three early imperial tombs of the Manchus located in the areas surrounding Shengjing. These are the Yongling 永陵 Tomb, the Fuling 福陵 Tomb, and the Zhaoling 昭陵 Tomb.

The origin of route records and maps can at least be traced to the Song dynasty (AD 960-1279), but its full maturity as a practical travel genre came about after the late sixteenth century, when urbanization and commercialization of the economy led to unprecedented levels of spatial mobility of people and goods. According to previous research, in the prime days of commercial woodblock publishing in late Ming, different route publications were compiled catering to needs of different groups of travelers, most typically merchants and officials. However, despite their popularity and ubiquity, not many route books have survived to the present day. This rarity is partly to be explained by the fact that such books had been used as pocket references by travelers and hence were exposed to all sorts of mishandling and damage, leading naturally to a high attrition rate. Furthermore, the mundane nature of the genre might have also worked against their long-term preservation. For they, as practical handbooks, would have been deemed “vulgar” and despised by literary elites who were often book selectors and collectors for private or government libraries. Likely, the literati had chosen to turn a neglectful eye towards this segment of pragmatic literature in order to avoid compromising their literary or aesthetic tastes. These and many other factors may have combined to make production and circulation of route books a shining but transient phenomenon in Chinese book history.

Shengjing lu cheng tu 盛京路程图 at the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library

The two volumes of Shengjing lu cheng tu at the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library are thread-bound and covered in blue silk-cloth. The volumes measure 14.5 centimeters in height and 9.2 centimeters in width, which makes them “dwarfs” compared with most wood-block prints of the Ming and Qing period. The contents of the set present a continuous tu 圖 — a hand-drawn map with accompanying textual information recording places and landmarks passed by a traveler on a trip from Beijing 北京 to Shengjing 盛京 and back. Except the tu, no other information inside the volumes indicates its origin, purpose or intended use. The single clue of

5 For related information, refer to Timothy Brook, Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China (University of California Press, 1998); and, Yongtao Du, The Order of Places: Translocal Practices of the Huizhou Merchants in Local Imperial China (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2015).
6 Timothy Brook, Confusions of Pleasure, p. 35. According to Brook, the earliest route book remaining today is Yi tong lu cheng tu ji 一統行程圖記 (Comprehensive Routes in Maps and Notes), a text-based route book published during the late Ming, in 1570.
7 The version of “Shengjing lu cheng tu” at the East Asian Library is later referred to in this article as “the/this Tu”.
8 In classical Chinese, tu 圖 refers to visual records and materials such as pictures, illustrations, maps, or diagrams. It exists as the opposite of the category of wen 文, or written accounts and records.
9 Shengjing is the former name of present-day Shenyang 沈陽. It used to be the capital of the Manchus during the early seventeenth century. In 1644, Emperor Shunzi 順治 (reigned 1644-1661) transferred the Qing capital to Beijing, but Shengjing was retained as the auxiliary or secondary capital of the Qing dynasty. For a history of Shengjing, see Ding Haibin 丁海斌, Qingdai peidu Shengjing yanjiu 清代陪都盛京研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2007).
the title is available from a line of Chinese characters reading "盛京路程圖" that shows only when the two volumes are stacked upon each other (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1 "Shengjing lu cheng tu", its two volumes within and without the blue custom-made book case, with the handwritten Chinese characters, "盛京路程圖", showing at the bottom surface made up by the feet of the pages.

While information directly pertaining to the origin and use of the set is not available, librarians at the East Asian Library are now able to link the set to the traditional cheng tu, in particular one that might have been created by the Qing court to be used for emperor Jiaqing’s ritual trip in 1805. Some of the evidences and findings are presented below.

• **physical form**

The title of the set, which is to be literarily translated into English as the “Shengjing Route Maps”, serves a telltale clue to relate it to the cheng tu genre. Adding to that, the two volumes are of a comparatively small size (14.5 * 9.2 cm), which is also typical of the measurements of the genre,\(^\text{10}\) as route books were intended to be handy portable references for travelers.

• **cartographic representation**

Like other traditional maps of China, this Tu does not have any geographic coordinate system to indicate direction or distance. It was an abstract “approximation” of the route based on the visual observation of its creator. The route itself has been represented by a continuous dotted line that runs straight across in the middle of the page throughout both volumes (Fig. 2), indicating a traveler-centered perspective "anchored" in his subjective observation. This unique angle makes all other geographic elements relative. Because of this, Shengjing lu cheng tu does not convey direction in the conventional sense of east, west, north and south, as is typical of the Western cartographic tradition, but only ambiguously directs forward or backward, depending on the direction of the traveler’s footsteps. Such characteristics set the Tu distinctly apart from Western cartographs, and thus attest to its indigenous nature as a type of Chinese cartographic making.

• **accompanying textual information**

\(^{10}\) Refer to Table 1, in which all the court route maps are of a small, portable size.
A closer look at the textual information of the maps shows that this *Tu* was devoted to a particular trip — the one between Beijing and Shengjing: the first volume illustrated the route and recorded the progress of the traveler from Donghua Gate 東華門, or the east gate of the Forbidden City, to Shengjing, and the second volume the return route from Shengjing to Donghua Gate — such geographical names unmistakably relate the maps to the Qing dynasty and the Forbidden City.

In addition, the *Tu* is accompanied by a variety of other textual information. The text typically mentions names of villages, towns and travelling camps. Sometimes, succinct commentary was made about landmarks of interest to the traveler, such as “法輪寺有塔” (Falun Temple - has a pagoda), ”土台” (flat-topped hill), and “塌堤” (breached levee). Most interestingly, like a travel diary, the texts successively tracked daily progress of the trip by noting the date, the “station” (站 zhan) the traveler reached and stopped each day, the distance counted in *li* 里 between stations, and the *jiao ban* 轿班11 information (Fig. 3). Such textual information and explanations have been supplemented to make up for the lack of cartographic accuracy.

![Fig. 2 “Shengjing lu chenu tu”, volume one and two placed side by side – both showing the same section of route, albeit traveling in opposite directions. The dotted line going through the middle of the pages represents the route of the traveler.](attachment:image1.jpg)

![Fig. 3 The traveler’s diary, showing the date, name of the station, distance travelled, and the jiao ban 轿班 information.](attachment:image2.jpg)

A close reading of the textual details reveals a consistent link to the Qing court’s tradition of travelling to Manchuria for the ritual ceremony of *ye ling* 踏陵, namely paying respects to the Three Imperial Mausoleums of the early Qing emperors in Shengjing. Also known as *dong xun* 東巡 (Tours of the East), such ritual trips undertaken by *Qing emperors* were among the most important state

11 *Jiao ban* 轿班 refers to the laborers who carried the *jiao* 轿, or official litters, of the emperor, the imperial families and high court officials.
rites of the Qing court. According to historical records, there were only four emperors who took ten such tours that brought them to Xingjing and Shengjing in Manchuria during the Qing dynasty; and each of the tours took the emperor away from Beijing for approximately two to five months.\(^\text{12}\) Through a systematic comparison (refer to Appendix I for details) of the itinerary information gleaned from the \textit{Cheng Tu} with existing Qing court records, especially the \textit{Da Qing shilu} (Veritable Records of the Qing Dynasty),\(^\text{13}\) it is found that the trip recorded in the “\textit{Shengjing lu cheng tu}” perfectly matches the particular ye ling trip of Emperor Jiaqing in the tenth year of his reign (嘉慶十年, 1805). Based on this comparison, “\textit{Shengjing lu cheng tu}” is not only a rare cheng tu, but also a primary court record directly associated with Jiaqing’s trip in 1805.

**Discussion:**

Route maps as cartographical sources and visual records of ancient Chinese travelers’ observations about their traveling experience are important research materials for researchers. But as \textit{tu}, they were usually created in manuscript format because of the technological difficulty of reproducing them in print. Compared with text-based route records and travel writings, many of which were printed as individual books or included in other genres of printed books, far fewer cheng tu manuscripts have managed to be preserved to the present. Those still in existence are usually collected in museums or private collections. So far, few Ming-period route maps are known to be still in existence. Current understanding about the form and format of early route maps is mostly inferred from a few extant Qing examples.\(^\text{14}\) In our case, given the court origin of this “\textit{Shengjing lu cheng tu}”, there are only a few copies of similar cheng tu with possible links to the Qing ye ling trips. Table 1 lists a summary of the information on these various editions of Qing cheng tu. By grouping information about these sporadic editions of cheng tu, we hope to gradually piece together a fuller context made up of comparable reference points, in order to further understanding of this type of court-made cheng tu of late imperial China.

**Table 1** A list of chengtu possibly made by the Qing court\(^\text{15}\)

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\(^{12}\) In the approximately 160 years between the 1670s and the 1820s, four Qing emperors, namely Kangxi 玄熙 (reigned 1661-1722), Qianglong 乾隆 (reigned 1736-1795), Jiaqing 嘉慶 (reigned 1796-1820) and Daoguang 道光 (reigned 1821-1850), made ten ye ling tours from Beijing to Shengjing. For a summary about the Qing ye ling tours, see Yang Yulian 杨余练, ed., \textit{Qingdai Dongbei shi} 清代東北史 (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1991).

\(^{13}\) The \textit{Da Qing shilu} 大清實錄 is the official diary tracking the daily activities of the Qing emperors.

\(^{14}\) For more information on the general rarity of \textit{tu}, see Emma Teng, “Texts on the Right and Pictures on the Left: Reading the Qing Record of Frontier Taiwan,” in \textit{Writing and Materiality in China}, ed. Judith Zittel and Lydia Liu (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center for Harvard-Yenching Institute), pp. 451-54.

\(^{15}\) Except the two versions of “\textit{Shengjing lu cheng tu}” and “\textit{Shengjing cheng zhan tu}”, information about the other cheng tu included in the list is based on that provided by Timothy Brook in his article, “Guides for Vexed Travelers: Route Books in the Ming and Qing”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Owner Information</th>
<th>Binding</th>
<th>Physical Notes</th>
<th>Year of Creation</th>
<th>Other Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>盛京路程圖/Shengjing lu cheng tu</td>
<td>Formerly belonged to the Manchukuo-Japan Cultural Association (滿日文化協會).</td>
<td>Folded manuscript (折本); landscape paintings, with huangqian 黃簽 notes (Fig. 6).</td>
<td>12.7*6.5cm</td>
<td>1778 / (乾隆四十三年)</td>
<td>Manuscript route map mentioned in the article by Kuroda Genji 黒田源次.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>西陵細路程/Xiling xi lu cheng</td>
<td>Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo 東洋文化研究所</td>
<td>manuscript with printed cover label, bound in imperial yellow</td>
<td>46 pages; 12*8.5cm</td>
<td>after 1850</td>
<td>Manuscript route map from Donghua Gate of the Forbidden City in Beijing to the Western Qing tombs, and back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>东陵细路程/Dongling xi lu cheng</td>
<td>Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo 東洋文化研究所</td>
<td>manuscript, bound in imperial yellow</td>
<td>33 pages; 12.5*9cm</td>
<td>after 1850</td>
<td>Manuscript route map from Donghua Gate in Beijing to the Eastern Qing tombs, and back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>東華門到興京路程圖/Donghua men dao Xingjing lu cheng tu</td>
<td>Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo 東洋文化研究所</td>
<td>manuscript, bound in four fascicles</td>
<td>142 pages, no author, preface, or date; 13.5*11cm</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Manuscript route map from Donghua Gate of the Forbidden City in Beijing to Xingjing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>盛京路程圖/Shengjing lu cheng tu</td>
<td>Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library, U of T (加拿大多大鄭裕彤東亞圖書館)</td>
<td>manuscript, bound in blue silk-cloth covers</td>
<td>14.5*9.2cm</td>
<td>1805 (嘉慶十年)</td>
<td>Manuscript route map from Donghua Gate of the Forbidden City in Beijing to Shengjing, and back.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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These various cheng tu listed in the table all appear to be related to the Qing’s ye ling practice, but had apparently been created in various formats at different times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many of the other cheng tu in the table appear to be more exquisitely prepared and bound. This may indicate that this modest Tu in the Mu collection was not intended for the sight of the emperor or senior court officials, but more likely had been prepared as a functional copy for lower-level officials who needed the Tu for its pragmatic information rather than aesthetic appreciation or ritual significance.

Another interesting observation is concerning the uneven quality of ink used and the inconsistent styles of handwriting in the daily itinerary sections when recording information about the date, the counting of distance, and the porter information (Fig. 4). Such “consistent inconsistency” leads to the speculation that the daily itinerary information was not part of the original Tu, but was added in later on. The hypothesis is that, when the Tu was drawn, the routes and stations had been planned ahead of time and were indicated in the manuscript by its original creator, possibly the Qing court; and on that basis, additional notes concerning the dates, distances and porters might have gradually been “compiled in” later on by its actual user, who might be an official or court servant participating in the ye ling trip and who might have used the Tu as his workbook to record details of the trip as it happened along the way. A comparison between such daily itinerary information and the official records of the Qing Veritable Records (Appendix I) has shown that the information of the Tu is rather reliable and accurate, possibly attesting to its “primacy” as a historical travel record of the Qing court.

**Conclusion:**

The present article is the result of a preliminary study of the “Shengjing lu cheng tu” in the Mu collection in order to understand its origin, nature, and age. This particular Tu at the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library not only provides a valuable example for route maps of the late Qing period, but also allows a glimpse into the design and possible use of ancient cheng tu in general. As a historical artifact, it exemplifies traditional Chinese cartographic representation from the perspective of traveler. Such an indigenous tradition of map-making was later weakened and

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17 For instance, at least two of the cheng tu in Table 1 are bound in imperial yellow which was the restricted imperial color reserved exclusively for the emperor, empress and high-ranking consorts.
replaced by Western cartographic techniques in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This “Shengjing lu cheng tu” in the Mu collection also adds to the few extant copies of Qing court-made cheng tu. We hope that the set will contribute as a source document to the further understanding of traditional Chinese route books and map-making in future.
Appendix I: A date-by-date comparison of the stations recorded in the "Shengjing lu cheng tu" in the Mu collection with corresponding information from “Renzong Rui Huangdi shilu”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日期</th>
<th>驻蹕</th>
<th>仁宗睿皇帝實錄18 （Volume 147）</th>
<th>仁宗睿皇帝實錄18 （Volume 148）</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>七月十八日</td>
<td>燕郊行宮</td>
<td>嘉慶十年乙丑七月丁卯 &quot;上以詣盛京恭謁祖陵，先期袛告奉先殿。&quot;</td>
<td>嘉慶十年乙丑八月辛巳 &quot;是日駐蹕燕郊行宮。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>九日</td>
<td>白潤行宮</td>
<td>戊辰 &quot;是日駐蹕燕郊行宮。&quot;</td>
<td>王午 &quot;是日駐蹕白潤行宮。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十一日</td>
<td>柳新莊大營</td>
<td>己巳 &quot;駐蹕燕郊行宮。&quot;</td>
<td>己未 &quot;是日駐蹕柳新莊大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十二日</td>
<td>八里鋪大營</td>
<td>甲午 &quot;是日駐蹕柳新莊大營。&quot;</td>
<td>王申 &quot;是日駐蹕柳新莊大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>三十一日</td>
<td>天台山大營</td>
<td>甲戊 &quot;是日駐蹕八里鋪大營。&quot;</td>
<td>癸酉 &quot;是日駐蹕天台山大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十六日</td>
<td>深河村西大營</td>
<td>乙亥 &quot;是日駐蹕八里鋪大營。&quot;</td>
<td>丙子 &quot;是日駐蹕深河村西大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十七日</td>
<td>文殊庵備用房大營</td>
<td>丁丑 &quot;駐蹕文殊庵行宮。&quot;</td>
<td>戊寅 &quot;是日駐蹕文殊庵備用房大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十八日</td>
<td>中前所東大營</td>
<td>己卯 &quot;是日駐蹕中前所東大營。&quot;</td>
<td>乙亥 &quot;是日駐蹕中前所東大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十九日</td>
<td>周家村西大營</td>
<td>乙子 &quot;是日駐蹕周家村西大營。&quot;</td>
<td>戊辰 &quot;是日駐蹕周家村西大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>三十日</td>
<td>沙河所東大營</td>
<td>己丑 &quot;是日駐蹕周家村西大營。&quot;</td>
<td>丙寅 &quot;是日駐蹕沙河所東大營。&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 *Da Qing shilu* 大清實錄 (*The Veritable Records of the Qing Dynasty*). Reprinted in 94 volumes under the title 大清歷朝實錄 (Taipei: Taiwan huawen shuju, 1964). The citations included in the appendix are excerpted from volumes 147-150 of this work, which is organized by the individual reign titles of Qing emperors (in our case, Rende rui huangdi shilu 仁宗睿皇帝實錄).
丁酉  "駿蹕尚家河西御營。"
戊戌  "駿蹕蓮花套御營。"
己亥  "諭內閣，朕謁盛京，親至克勤郡王，及揚古利，費英東，額亦都等墳園賜奠
......（揚古利-費英東墓之間，御道不利，繞行事件）
庚子  "上恭詣福陵——臨宏毅公額亦都墓，賜奠
......是日駐蹕馬關橋御營。"
辛丑  "上恭詣昭陵，行大饗。禮成，即恭詣昭陵
......臨武勳王揚古利，直義公費英東墓，賜奠
......是日駐蹕馬關橋御營。"
壬寅  "上恭詣昭陵，行大饗
......至盛京，詣太廟尊藏冊寶前行
......又諭，朕恭謁三陵禮成，本日駐蹕盛京，以次舉行一切
典禮，渥敷愷澤，吉事有祥
......是日駐蹕盛京舊宮，至丁未皆如之。
癸卯  "世宗憲皇帝忌辰，命皇次子旻寧祭泰陵。"
甲辰  "上詣清寧宮祭神
......詣天壇，地壇，堂子行禮。詣文明
廟瞻禮。臨克勤郡王岳讬墓，賜奠。
乙巳  "上御大政殿
......行慶賀禮。禮成，頒昭天下
......"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>十八日</th>
<th>八里舖大營</th>
<th>丁卯</th>
<th>“是日駐蹕八里舖御營。”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>十九日</td>
<td>隆福寺行宮</td>
<td>戊辰</td>
<td>“是日駐蹕隆福寺行宮。”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十日</td>
<td>桃花寺行宮</td>
<td>己巳</td>
<td>“是日駐蹕桃花寺行宮。”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十一日</td>
<td>白澗行宮</td>
<td>庚午</td>
<td>“上恭謁昭西陵，孝陵，孝東陵，景陵，裕陵，是日駐蹕白澗行宮。”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十二日</td>
<td>燕郊行宮</td>
<td>辛未</td>
<td>“是日駐蹕燕郊行宮。”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二十三日</td>
<td>東華門</td>
<td>壬申</td>
<td>“上還宮。”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>