

Ding Ning

Re-reading Li Gonglin's *Painting of a Country Retreat* (shan-zhuang tu) at Villa I Tatti

Li Gonglin's *Painting of a Country Retreat* is a milestone work in the history of Chinese painting, and Poet Su Zhe composed twenty poems for it. To some extent, the depicted landscape, figures and scenes of activity are associated with Taoist or Buddhist significance. However, the original piece is lost a long time ago, and now only four late copies are accessible. It seems that not all copies are completely faithful to the original work, and the Berenson's version is arguably the top one. Due to the misplacement when the hand-scroll was re-mounted, the intertextuality between images and poetic lines becomes quite puzzling. To re-establish the matching relationship between scenes and calligraphic texts is now a priority to understand this brilliant copy.