

I. Traditional Chinese Forest Culture and Wisdom

Traditional Chinese culture emphasizes “*the unity of Heaven and humanity*” and “*coexistence of all beings*”. This worldview integrates Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist thought as well as the ecological values of ethnic minorities. Beliefs in “fengshui forests,” sacred mountains, and sacred trees illustrate both respect for and protection of forests. Since ancient times, people understood that excessive deforestation would cause springs to dry up, agricultural decline, floods, and social instability, leading even to national decline.

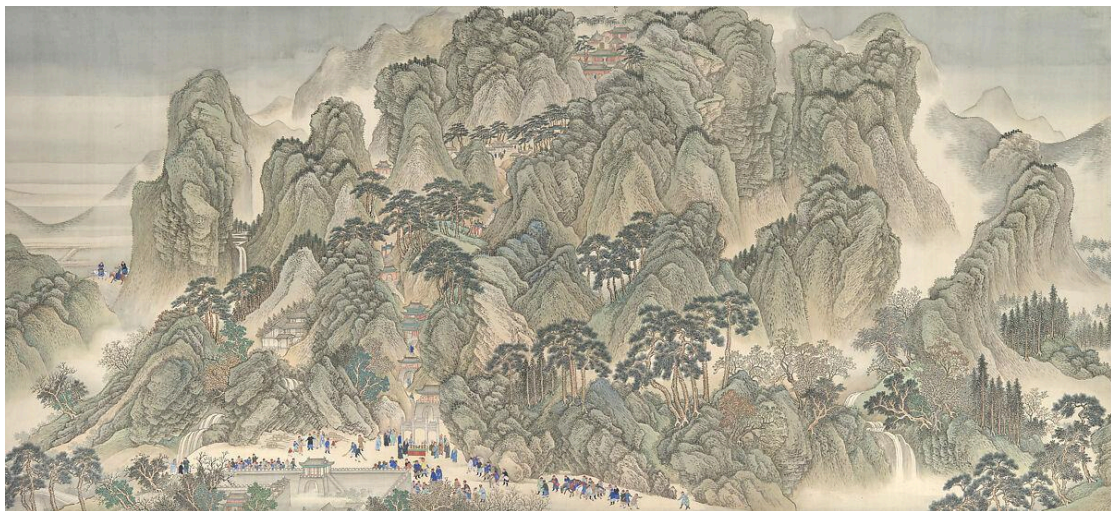
Chinese literature and art, including landscape painting (*shan shui hua*) and classical poetry, reflect profound appreciation of the beauty and ecological value of forests. Even the Chinese characters for “forest” (林, 森) are pictographs from oracle bone script built from the repetition of “tree” (木), two trees form a “grove,” three trees a “forest”, symbolizing an intuitive recognition of natural order.



Lu Han, Two of *Eight landscapes*, Qing dynasty, 1699. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Open Access).



Gong Xian, *Landscapes*, Qing dynasty, 1680s. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Open Access).



Gong Xian, *The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll Three: Ji'nan to Mount Tai*, Qing dynasty, 1698. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Open Access).



Zhao Yuan, *Landscape*, Yuan or Ming dynasty, late 14th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Open Access).



Xia Gui, *Pure and Remote View of Streams and Mountains*. Southern Song dynasty, about the 13th century. Wikimedia Commons



The writing methods of the characters "木", "林" and "森" in oracle bone script