In its early history Chinese landscape painting was not infused with “poetic” values. It began to be so only in the Song dynasty (11th-13th centuries), when a marked stylistic shift took place. This talk explores the reasons for the Song period transformation of the way landscape was painted, tracing it to a range of separate factors, each with its own dynamic and ideological aims. The lasting effect, in later art history, of the new closeness of painting to poetry is also examined.

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