

FEATURE

China Comes to Tech: 1877-1931

Maihaugen Gallery exhibit examines Chinese students at MIT

<https://libraries.mit.edu/exhibits/exhibits/china-comes-totech-1877-1930/>

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In 1877, the first student from China matriculated at MIT. By 1910, China was sending more students to MIT than any other foreign country. From these beginnings, the Institute became one of the most popular overseas destinations for Chinese students, many seeking to contribute to their country's modernization through engineering, science, and commerce. These students played a key role in bringing new technology and science back to China during an era of rapid modernization, while also promoting American understanding of China and its people.

Early Chinese graduates of MIT produced numerous inventions, from the world's first Chinese typewriter to the Model C training seaplane, and pioneered work in fields from microwave spectroscopy to nonlinear control theory. These students left a legacy of strong ties between China and "Tech" that profoundly influenced the course of globalization.

Organized for the Maihaugen Gallery by Emma J. Teng, T.T. and Wei Fong Chao Professor of Asian Civilizations at MIT, *China Comes to Tech: 1877-1931* commemorates 140 years of Chinese students at the Institute. Taking the 1931 Chinese Students' Club publication *Chinese Students Directory: For the Past 50 Years* as a launching point, the exhibit chronicles the history of this MIT community through the Institute Archives.

Professor Teng has also created chinacomestomit.org with a wealth of images and information.



chinacomestomit.org