



Mutable Inequalities: Meritocracy and the Making of the Chinese Academe, 1912-1952, A Data Analytic Approach

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**(The Hong Kong University of Science and
Technology)**

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This talk takes advantage of three new Big Historical datasets to identify four salient features of the early Chinese academe during the Republic of China. First, it was highly international in terms of training. Second, the proportion of female students was unexpectedly large. Third, there was a heavy emphasis on STEM. Finally, the social and spatial origins of China's university students and university faculty changed from a national population of civil servant families to business and professional families largely from Jiangnan and the Pearl River Delta. The datasets are the China University Student Dataset-Republic of China which includes almost half of all students to graduate from a Chinese university during the first half of the twentieth century, the China University Student Dataset-Overseas which includes the vast majority of all Chinese students to graduate from an American, European, or Japanese university during this same period, and the China University Employee Dataset which includes almost all university faculty in China 1941-1950.



James Z. Lee is Yanai Foundation Professor of Humanities and Social Science at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. A social scientific historian, he has served as John Simon Guggenheim Fellow in sociology at the University of Michigan 2004 and Changjiang Professor of Sociology at Peking University 2006-2009. Professor Lee is the author/co-author of 7 academic books and 70 articles. He is also the co-recipient of seven book and article awards from the Social Science History Association and the American Sociological Association, and from the Chinese and Japanese academe. Professor Lee is a founding co-editor of *Late Imperial China* (Johns Hopkins University Press) which he co-edited from 1985-2000. He teaches Social Science History regularly to a global audience through his Coursera course, *Understanding China, 1700-2000: A Data Analytic Approach*.