

History of Geochemistry in mainland China

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Geochemistry is a young subject with short history in mainland China. There was nearly no geochemistry research before the founding of the People's Republic of China. Since 1950s, driven by the economic demands on natural metal resources, geochemistry had been increasingly developed. Many universities and institutes (such as the Institute of Geology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and Nanjing University) studied geochemistry of rare earth elements. In 1958, the first department of geochemistry was founded in the University of Science and Technology of China. The first Institute of Geochemistry of the CAS was founded in 1966 in Guiyang, where the first PhD students majoring in geochemistry graduated in 1989. The Institute of Guangzhou Geochemistry of the CAS was founded in 1994.

Since the reform and opening-up of China in 1978, there has been continuously rapid growth in Chinese geochemistry community for more than 40 years. International communication and collaboration were encouraged and supported by the government, which fundamentally shaped every aspects of geochemistry studies. Many talented students and scholars went to world-class universities and institutes in America, Europe, Japan, and Australia for collaboration or pursuing high degrees in geochemistry. Since the 1980s, joint field investigations on the Chinese Loess Plateau, Bayan Obo REE deposit, Tibet Plateau, Dabie orogeny, and North China Craton have benefited both Chinese and international geoscientists for years.

With the continuous economy booming, increasingly financial investment from the Chinese government dramatically improved the research facilities and funding for geochemical research and education. The total budget for Earth Sciences from the National Natural Science Foundation of China increased from ~\$29 million in 2001 to ~\$582 million in 2020. In the whole 21st century, *Geochimica Cosmochimica Acta* only published 28 papers with Chinese institutes as corresponding affiliations, but 102 research articles were published in 2020. Hundreds of students obtain their degrees annually in geochemistry in China. Many of them will continue their academic career on various topics from planet formation and inter-disciplinary researches to ore exploration and environment remediation. Geochemistry will have a promising future in China, and make more contributions to the international community.