



Evolution of Traditional Chinese Medicine Discourse in British Newspapers: A Corpus- Based Diachronic Study

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Outline

- Introduction
- 19th century
- 20th century (earlier)
- 20th century (later)
- Conclusion





THE
IPSWICH-JOURNAL,



The Weekly-Mercury:



With the ... Foreign and Domestic

British Library C19 News

- [British Library C19 News: The Era/0](#)
- British Library C19 News: Glasgow Herald/3/1888
- British Library C19 News: Hampshire/Portsmouth Telegraph/2/1889
- British Library C19 News: Ipswich Journal/0
- British Library C19 News: Northern Echo/0
- British Library C19 News: Pall Mall Gazette/1
- British Library C19 News: Reynold's Daily/0
- British Library C19 News: Western Mail/0

The Pall Mall Gazette, 22 May, 1897

- Chinese medicine is **a standing joke**. The dullest of missionaries can make us laugh on that theme.
- But Robert Fortune, whose name is a household word with botanists the world over, **has another tale to tell**. More than once on his expeditions he was obliged to consult Chinese doctors, and he gratefully acknowledges his debt to them. Fortune "knocks the bottom" out of that standing jest, as one may say. Emphatically, rather indignantly, he denies that the **Chinaman** makes up his prescriptions with incongruous odds and ends."



The Times

1920s'	2	
1930s'	1	the " dragon bones " of the Chinese medicine shops
1940s'	0	
1950s'	2	he unhurriedly bought liver pills and Chinese medicine in a shop Dr. D. W. James gives survey of Chinese medicine
1960s'	26	It has, of course, been the great standby of traditional Chinese medicine for t housands of years
1970s'	7	the use of acupuncture in modern Chinese medicine reached the West

- **Acupuncture may be a fantastic and painful method** of dealing with emotionally determined illness, but its very fantasticalness as well as its novelty, combined with a persuasive and sympathetic practitioner of the art, may well bring some therapeutic value. Another, more plebeian explanation of its apparently successful use in rheumatic conditions is that it might well act as a method of counter-irritation—one of the recognized methods of dealing with many rheumatic aches and pains.

(The Times, 23 March 1961)

- Recent reports in the Chinese press have emphasized the importance in state hospitals of traditional Chinese medicine, including acupuncture and cauterization. *(The Times, 29 Oct, 1965)*

Period 2

- Discursive construction around Chinese medicine since 1980s'.

Data of TCM Corpus

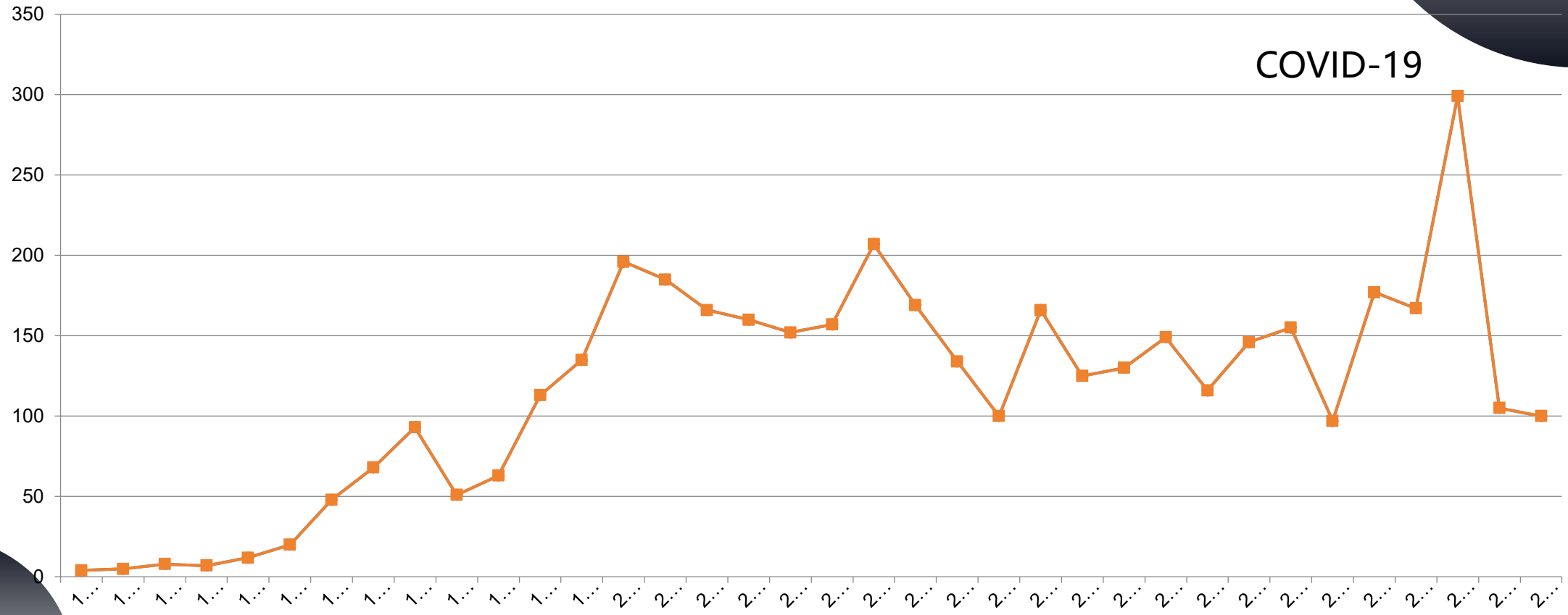
- **19** British National Newspapers (1984-2022)

Tabloids (10): *Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror, The Sun, Daily Star, Daily Star Sunday, Daily Express, Sunday Express, Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, The People*

Broadsheets (9): *The Guardian, The Observer, The Independent, Independent on Sunday, The Daily Telegraph, The Sunday Telegraph, The Times, The Sunday Times, The Business*

- **Search terms:** *Chinese medicine, Chinese herbs, Chinese medication and Chinese medical herbs*
- **Texts:** 4,377
- **Total tokens:** 4,094,838

Tendency of Chinese medicine mentioned in the TCM Corpus (1984-2022)



Examining the corpus data, the following factors may explain the reasons either positive or negative for the sustained news focus on Chinese medicine.

- 1) Treatment and efficacy (57.3%)
- 2) Animal parts used in CM (17.1%)
- 3) Royal and Official concern towards Chinese medicine (9.6%)
- 4) Other (16%)

- *The Independent* (29 January, 1991) published an article entitled “Dr Luo and **her Chinatown magic**; Hundreds of people queue at her surgery for relief from eczema. Now Western doctors are looking at her methods, says Mark Handscomb”.
- In 1994 the Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine, UK (ATCM) was founded.

Conclusion

- Since the late 19th century, there has been a notable shift in the perception of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), transitioning from outright scorn to comprehensive examination. Throughout the late 19th to the mid-20th century, TCM was occasionally derided as a '**standing joke**,' though it is important to note that such perspectives did not represent a universal consensus.
- Since the 1980s, Chinese medicine has gained acceptance as an alternative form of medication. However, despite this growing recognition, skeptical discussions persist in various texts. It is essential to acknowledge that these skeptical discourses may stem from differences in perspectives across disciplines and varying research methodologies, rather than a simple dismissal of TCM.

Thank you!