

# History of Traditional Chinese Medicine

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## Abstract

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is considered as one of the world's oldest systems of medicine, originated out of the need for treating ailing patients. Compared to western medicines or many other alternatives TCM has many unique features such as its based on abstract ideas, it is complete and rational that follows prognosis and prevention. Traditional Chinese medicine can be used to treat all types of illnesses people can encounter. At the beginning of the traditional Chinese medicine system the knowledge was transferred verbally to the disciples or the family members, but as the time progressed the knowledge was systematically summarized and handed down in the form of medical treaties. The Yellow Emperor's Internal Medicine being first of these treaties which dates back to 800 B.C., a textbook that is still referred my many traditional Chinese practitioners. Traditional Chinese medicine has been developing since it started and still it is one of the important healthcare systems for the people of China. This review article provides an overview over the history of traditional Chinese medicine, as it has evolved over the last 5000 years.

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) which is one of the oldest systems of medicine originated around 3000 B.C. The aim of TCM is to cure disease by preserving Yin and Yang (The Chinese philosophy holds that there are two disparate forces in the universe, which are known as Yin and Yang, and try to overpower each other) (Jaeger, 2012) balance. *Shen Nung* (2800 B.C.) (Asiado, n.d.) is considered as the father of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). *Shen Nung* helped his people transition from non-vegetarian diet to one based on grains and vegetables. *Shen Nung* is known as the first person in the history of TCM (TCM History, n.d.), who as an herbalist,

experimented many drugs on himself and then prescribed to others. He is recognized to have tasted more than 70 different types of herbs believed to have medicinal values and selecting those which were suitable for remedies. A number of herbs were discovered by him which were used to cure many ailments, this knowledge was passed to the future generations orally. *Shen Nung* is considered as a Chinese God of medicine in most parts of China even today. *Shen Nung* is believed to have made the first charts of acupuncture, that is practiced even today. *Huang Ti* (circa 2700 B.C.) is known as the author of '*Nei Ching*', the first book of Chinese medicine. He is believed to

have discovered methods of making silk and introducing clothing made of silk. *Hua T'o* (Tubbs et al., 2011) is known as the first physician to carry out major brain surgeries under general anesthesia and on other parts of the human body. *Pien Chiao* is considered one of the most famous physicians in internal disease who was raised to the realms of gods. He is believed to have first used general anesthesia, which brought complete relaxation to his patients. He is also credited with carrying out world's first heart transplant using his magic anesthetics (Li et al., 2011).

Lei Xiao's *Liu Juanzi Guifang* around (500 A.D.) has provided information about the treatment of wounds caused by metals; he has also mentioned the use of mercury as a drug to cure many skin related ailments. *Liu Wansu* (1120-1200) is credited with emphasizing the importance of elements of fire and heat. Most of the times he used to prescribe herbal medicines with cold properties to treat various types of diseases. *Liu Wansu* founded the "school of cooling" (Sutori, n.d.). *Li Gao* (1180-1251) (Li & Liang, 2016) worked on the social factors affecting functioning of human body. According to him, the human emotions such as anger, jealousy, grief, sadness, happiness etc. could influence the qi. He mainly worked to cure psychosomatic diseases. Another physician, *Wei Yilin* (1277-1347) (Huang & Liang, 2019) wrote a medical textbook, "Shiyi Dexiaofang", which describes about treatments of bone fractures and joint dislocations. Actually, it can be considered as the start of orthopedics in traditional Chinese medicine. During the reign of Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) (Falun Dafa, 2020), a physician known as *Wu Youxing* (1580-1660) discovered many diseases caused by transmissible type of qi, which he named as liqi (pestilential qi). He found that liqi could enter the human body through nose and mouth though could be cured by using herbal medicines. The severity of the disease relied upon the intensity of the exposure and the body's immunity to resist. *Chen Shigong* (1555-

1636) (Zhang, 2007) a well-known Chinese physician explained and described various types of diseases which could be treated surgically, and post operation prescriptions. *Li Shizhen* (1518-93) (Sapaviva, n.d.) is credited to have contributed the most to traditional Chinese medicine by revising the classification of drugs, removing errors, created guidelines for collecting, preparing and using medicines. Compendium of Materia Medica consists of the work of *Li Shizhen* in 52 volumes, where a total of 1,900 drugs have been mentioned with 1,100 illustrations and approximately 11,090 remedies. The knowledge of anatomy was further developed during the reign of Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). *Wang Qingren* (1768-1831) published a medical textbook, named, 'Yilin Gaicuo' in the year 1830 A.D. He has included many observations related to various organs and the structures of the human body that were unknown to earlier physicians till that time.



Figure 1 Li Shizhen (1518-1593)

## The Chronology of traditional Chinese medicine

Usage and practice of Chinese medicine dates back to 3000 B.C. and evolved during the reign of Yin and Shan dynasties. During the reign of Yin Dynasty (1600-1046 B.C.), more than 20 disease types were identified, that have been recorded in the inscriptions. During Zhou Dynasty, the physicians were categorized into four different classes viz, physicians, dieticians, surgeons, and veterinarians. During 770-475 B.C. magic medicine was separated from pure medicine, and it was the period when the theory of Yin and Yang and the theory of five elements began to proliferate. It was the dawn of new era in the history of traditional Chinese medicine. These forms of medicines denied the supernatural powers for the cause of sufferings. This period saw the emergence of many famous physicians who contributed immensely in the growth and progress of traditional Chinese medicine, the few of were *Huan*, *Bian Que*, and *Wen Zhi*. Huangdi Neijing (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine) (Veith, 1949) is an ancient Chinese medical textbook based on health, disease and treatment procedures, which was written by Emperor *Huangdi* in the year 2600 B.C. Till date this book is being used as a reference textbook by doctors and other practitioners who are skilled in traditional Chinese medicine. The idea of this book is based on Taoist philosophy, wherein it advises to follow Tao considered to be the key to longevity and healthy life. This book explains that the imbalance in Yin and Yang and five elements are the causes of disease in the human body. The ancient Chinese had some understanding of the heart and pulse connections but had little or no knowledge of circulation of blood in the human body. Pulse reading was the main form of diagnosis, wherein the time of the day, month as well as season, and the sex of the patient was taken into consideration for accurate prognosis of the disease. Treatment of diseases included herbal prescriptions, healthy diet,

acupuncture, and advising the patients to follow Tao. Huangdi Neijing emphasizes to follow certain natural rules in order to keep the body healthy.

During the reign of Han Dynasty, one of the most important medical text written was the *Shenong Bencaojing* (Classic of herbal medicine) (Zhao, Guo, & Brand, 2018), one of the earliest Chinese pharmacopoeia reference book. The book enlists overall 365 medicines; 252 plant based, 67 based on animals, and 46 based on minerals. The medicines were classified into three categories: superior category had 120 medicines having non-toxic effects, second category included 120 medicines with mild toxicity, while the third category contained 125 inferior medicines which were considered to be toxic with side effects, specifically used for therapeutic purpose to cure ailments. During this period several prominent physicians rose to great heights. *Chunyu Yi* (215-167 B.C.) was the physician who started the practice of keeping medical records of his patients. Doctor *He* and *Fu Weng* had acquired great skills in acupuncture and moxibustion, and were very famous figures in this period. Zhang Zhongjing (150-219 A.D.) wrote a very famous medical textbook called '*Shanghan Zabinglun*' translated as "Discourse on Fevers and Miscellaneous Illnesses", which deals with the prognosis and remedies of various febrile conditions. The book is divided into six sections, each one representing a pair of meridians. Prognosis is based on symptoms of different pathological conditions. *Hua Tuo* (141-208 A.D.) was born in the same period as *Zhang Zhongjing*, and was a famous physician who traveled extensively throughout the country to treat ailing patients, and gaining immense knowledge from other physicians. He is famous for his surgery skills and use of anesthetics. He used to administer anesthesia (mafeisan) in a powdery form dissolved in a fermented drink before surgery. Physical exercises were highly recommended to the patients wherein the exercises were based on the movement of five different animals (deer, bear, monkey, bird, and tiger).



**Figure 2** Moxibustion wherein, Moxa, a soft woolly material prepared from mugwort leaves, is placed on the skin or held just above the skin, over acupuncture points or meridians. The herb is lit and as it burns slowly with smoke, the therapeutic heat of the herb permeates the skin, affecting the flow of "Qi" and the blood circulation.

During Wei and Jin dynasties, *Huang Fumi* emerged as one of the prominent physicians who wrote twelve volumes of '*The Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*'. He has a high academic status in the history of acupuncture. *Ge Hong* (281-341 A.D.) (Dinallo, 2019) was one of the most famous Daoist alchemist and medical expert, who advocated the application of acupuncture for his patients. Many medical textbooks were written by him, the most famous amongst them is 'Prescriptions from the golden chest', which contains 100 articles. In his handbook titled "Prescriptions for Emergencies," he has explained in detail about some of the more deadly diseases like tuberculosis and smallpox and also provides pharmacological prescriptions.

In ancient China, the skills of traditional medicine have always been inherited amongst family members or masters. They believed that common people, amateurs, and inexperienced disciples would destroy the secrets of medicine, and may use the knowledge to bring disgrace the

original knowledge of teachers and sages. In view of this, all ancient traditional Chinese doctors believed in imparting the family secrets to their family members or disciples.

During the Sui Dynasty, *Chao Yuanfang*, (Liang et al., 2016) together with other scholars compiled and wrote a medical textbook called '*Zhubing Yuanhou Zonglun*' or 'The General Treatise on the Causes and Symptoms of Disease', consisting 50 volumes, segregated into 67 classes, and enlisting 1,700 disorders. This medical treaty influenced the development of medicine in China in identification and analysis of various diseases, helping a great deal in case of surgery, gynecology, and pediatrics.

During the reign of Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.), Imperial Medical Academy was founded in 624 A.D. It served as the centre of learning for medicine and pharmacy where pupil graduated as doctors and herbalists who only served the emperor, royal family members, and the aristocrats of the kingdom. The students who studied medicine had to study subjects that focused on Chinese classics for example 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' ('*Huang DI Nei Jing*'), 'The Classic of Herbal Medicine' ('*Shennong Bencaojing*'), 'Manual on the Puls' ('*Maijing*'), 'The ABC of Acupuncture and Moxibustion' ('*Zhenjiu Jiayijing*') etc. Internal medicine, gynecology, surgery, pediatrics, ENT, acupuncture etc. were the clinical subjects studied by the students. On the contrary, students who studied pharmacy helped maintain the herbal garden and processing of the herbs at the Institute and in the royal palace.

During this period, there was great improvement in communication and transportation system of China, that helped introduce Chinese medicines to foreign cultures, in return the knowledge base of Chinese medicine increased that immensely helped in the advancement of traditional Chinese medicine. The Chinese doctors went for expedition to many

countries including India, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia etc. Many Chinese medical treaties were translated into the local language which greatly helped the understanding of Chinese medicine in the local physicians. Many medicines which were not known to Chinese were introduced into China and became part of traditional Chinese medicine, the most famous of them is Ginseng. Due to the popularity of Buddhism, Chinese monks frequently visited India which helped in the exchange of information between the two countries. Many Indian medical treaties were translated into Chinese that helped the expansion of the knowledge of Chinese traditional medicine. Advancements in ophthalmology is largely attributed to Indian traditional medicine experts. The Arab world was also influenced by Chinese medicine due to trade relations between China and many Arab countries. They introduced incense, myrrh, fenugreek and other herbal medicines to China. The fig which has good laxative properties came from Persia, and still used in Chinese medicine.

*Sun Simao* (581-682 A.D.) (Li & Liang, 2015) was a notable physician, renowned for his knowledge and practice of traditional Chinese medicine. He contributed immensely in the growth and development of traditional Chinese medicine as well as influencing many scholars and physicians to study and practice medicine. He was the first physician to follow and practice ethical code of conduct and had devised his own way of administering medicine; a new and unique method which had never been followed by his predecessors. He was offered the post of Imperial physician during the reign of *Tai-Zong* and *Gao-Zu* the Emperors of the Tang Dynasty, though he declined and devoted his life to serve the commoners. He believed, prevention was better than cure. He wrote '*Qianjin Yaofang*' (Precious Prescriptions for Emergencies), and '*Qianjin Yifang*' (Supplement to Precious Prescriptions). The former book has 30 volumes having 5,300

remedies. Similarly, the later book contains 30 volumes which enlists 2,571 medical prescriptions. He had the knowledge of causes and symptoms of cholera and diarrhea, and treated his patients accordingly. He identified many lung diseases including tuberculosis and successfully treated many patients. He is considered as one of the earliest experts of leprosy, who had successfully treated more than 600 leprosy patients. He also identified and treated deficiency disorders such as goiter. The treatment of goiter included medicines made from the thyroid glands of some specific animals such as sheep and deer as their thyroid glands were considered to have higher content of iodine. He prescribed pig, calf, and sheep livers to his patients to cure night blindness. He is considered to be the first physician in the history of medicine to document the prognosis of Beriberi; caused by lack of vitamin B1. *Sun Simao* made significant contributions in the area of acupuncture, and moxibustion as well as greatly contributed to the advancement of pharmacy. He advocated moxibustion prior to acupuncture, and determined many essential acupuncture points in the body to treat many body ailments.



Figure 3 Sun Simiao in the center showing off his total mastery of the tiger and dragon

During the reign of emperor *Tianbao* of Tang Dynasty, a very prominent physician named master *Jianzhen* (ChinaCulture.org, n.d.) travelled far up to Japan to treat the Japanese people suffering from diseases. He was called, *Shennong* of Japan due to his great knowledge of medicine. Master *Jianzhen* was instrumental in spreading the knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine to Japanese people and to other territories.

Li Quan (During Tang Dynasty) was a Daoist recluse. He studied *Huang Di Yin Fu Jing* (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Yin Talisman) and wrote numerous notes on this classic which he published later on to enrich the theories of Chinese medicine. *Hu Yin* was the contemporary of *Li Quan*, a nun and was an admirer of Lady *Wei*. She studied deeply and gained the knowledge from the book, '*Huang Ting Jing*' (Yellow Court Classic). After practicing medicine many years, she produced her own work known as '*Huang Ting Nei Jing Wu Zang Liu Fu Tu*' (Jinhua, 2015).

*Mei Biao* (During late Tang Dynasty) had very good knowledge of processing elixirs. In 806 A.D. he published his work named '*Shi Yao Er Ya*' (Pharmacopoeia of Stone Medicinals). He contributed to the growth and proliferation of elixir preparation knowledge and the development of traditional Chinese medicine in general. *Peng Xiao* (954 A.D.) was a court official, but later he became practicing traditional Chinese medicine. An "occult person" taught him the art of elixir preparation; he became proficient in the art of making elixir, besides that, he had skilled himself in using talisman and incantations to treat ailments. He wrote a medical textbook, '*Zhou Yi Can Tong Qi Feng Zhang Tong Zhen Yi*' translated as "True Purport of Each Chapter of the Anthology with Reference to the Zhou's Classic of Changes".

*Wang Huai-yin* (925-997 A.D.) was well known for his medical skills, and served as a physician in the royal palace. He compiled a

collection of formulas along with some other physicians and produced more than 100 volumes and compiled into a book known as '*Tai Ping Sheng Hui Fang*' (Great Peace Sagelike Prescriptions).

The Song Dynasty (Beijing Digital Museum of TCM, n.d.) was an important period wherein the Government showed great deal of interest, and encouraged people to study medicine. Noted physicians were appointed to segregate and compile significant and large number of prescriptions such as various formulas from the Benevolent Sage and Taiping Imperial Pharmacy. This was the period when printing technology was discovered and the knowledge was propagated which led to the publications of many medical books such as internal medicine, and 'Patterns and Formulas related to the Unification of the Three Etiologies' (*San Yin Ji Yi Bing Zheng Fang Lun*). *Liu Wen-shu* (1120-1200 A.D.) propagated theory of five movements and six qi, which according to him, was important in understanding pathology and devising treatment protocols. He compiled his work in, '*Su Wen Lun Ao*' (Treaties on the Esoterica in the Simple Question). *Wen Da-ming* was a contemporary of *Liu Wen-shu*, who compiled his main work in '*Zhu Dao Fang Fu Yao Zhi*'. It was later compiled and rechristened by *Xiong Zong-li* as '*Wen Yin Ju Hai Shang Xian Fang*' (Hermit Wen's On-the-Sea Immortals' Prescriptions). *Pang An-shi* (1042-1099) was born in family of physicians. He was taught '*Mai Jue*' (Verse on the Pulse) by his father when he was only a child. His main medical works are '*Shang Han Zong Bing Lun*', the '*Nan Jing Jie Yi*', and the '*Ben Cao Bu Yi*'. *Bao Guang Dao Ren* was a specialist in ophthalmology. His famous work includes '*Bao Guang Dao ren Yan Ke Long Mu Ji*' wherein he explained the importance of theory of five cycles and eight areas, an integration of trigrams and hexagrams considering the theory of viscera and bowels. He invented many surgical operations to treat eye disorders along with prescribing effective

herbal medicines and acupuncture procedures. *Cui Xi-fan* born in Southern Song Dynasty, compiled his work in a book titled the '*Mai Jue*' (Verses on the Pulse), regarded as one of the important and priceless contributions to the study of the pulse. Another notable doctor known as *Zhu Gong* was an official at the Court of the royal palace. Later he resigned from his post and became a hermit. He had good knowledge in the study of the '*Shan Han Lun*' (Treaties on Cold Damage) by *Zhang Zhong-jing*. In the year 1108, he wrote his first medical textbook titled the '*Nan Yang Huo Ren Shu*' (Nan Yang's Book of Saving Life).

During the Jin-Yuan Dynasties (1115-1368 A.D.) (Schottenhammer, 2013) several schools of thought developed, ascribing diseases to different reasons, and recommending entirely different approaches to treatment. This period saw a number of prominent physicians who had significant contributions in the growth and development of traditional Chinese medicine. *Liu Wansu* (1120-1200 A.D.) also known as Master *Hejian* founded the *Hejian* School. He contributed immensely in the development of traditional Chinese medicine. He has written many texts based on one of the medical classics *Suwen* (The Book of Plain Questions). He was an ardent follower of the theory of 'five movements'(Yun) and six influences (Qi). He prescribed herbs which had cold properties to his patients to cure them from the diseases caused by fire and heat. Another noted physician of this period was *Zhang Congzheng* (1150-1228 A.D.). He had different thought of treating patients, and believed in administering new medicines rather than giving medicines of yester years. Based on his years of research and observations, a medical textbook was written by him known as *Rumen Shiqin* (Therapies for Scholars), though he is best known for his theory of the "six doors and three methods".

*Zhang Yishui* (1151-1234 A.D.) founded *Yishui* School and wrote a well-known medical

text '*Yixue Qiyuan*' (Explanation of Medicine) which was printed in the year 1186 A.D. He had built a special and unique mosaic of his own practices and beliefs as he believed that the prescriptions of the past were not suitable for the diseases of the present. According to him an imbalance of zang and fu organs generally caused illnesses in the people, and through right understanding the pathological conditions of these organs, accurate prognosis of the illness was possible. *Li Gao* (1180-1251 A.D.) is known for his on the relationship between work lifestyle and its impact on the organs of the human body. He wrote a book called '*Piweiliun*' (Treatise on the Spleen and Stomach), which mentions the illnesses of spleen and stomach caused by inappropriate lifestyle. He extensively worked on psychosomatic diseases, and believed that balancing the qi was important to remain healthy. *Zhu Zhenheng* (1281-1358 A.D.) is known for his work '*Gezhi Yulun*' (Theories of In-depth Research) which mentions theory of "minister fire" or internal heat which induces physiological changes in the human body. This theory is still used today in traditional Chinese medicine.

Acupuncture and moxibustion were being used widely during this period, and the physicians were able to find various acupuncture points and their corresponding therapeutic principles to treat many ailments which were not possible earlier. *Dou Guifang* published four books on Acupuncture and Moxibustion (*Zhenjiu Sishu*) in the year 1331. The Mongol physicians also contributed immensely for the development of acupuncture and moxibustion during this period. This was the period when nomadic Mongols engaged in frequent military conflicts, which aided in the advancement of traditional Chinese medicine. *Qi Dezhi* wrote in his famous work '*Waike Jingyi*' (The essentials of External Medicine) about the medical achievements of that time in the year 1335 A.D. The book mentions the therapeutic remedies making use of pills, powders, decoctions, ointments

etc. Another famous physician contemporary of *Qi Dezhi* was *Wei Yilin* (1277-1347 A.D.) who had expertise in orthopedics and wrote a book called '*Shiyi Dexiaofang*' (Efficacious Remedies of the Physicians) where he has mentioned extensively about treating dislocations of the joints. Other noted physicians of this period include *Ge Kejiu* (1305-1352 A.D.) who is known for his work called the '*Shiyao Shenshu*' in 1348, which is based on the prognosis of tuberculosis. Similarly, *Zeng Shirong* wrote a medical textbook, '*Houyou Xinshu*' in 1294 which expanded the knowledge of pediatrics.

During Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) (Hanson, 2006) there were a number of medical schools, and few of them were, school of nourishing the yin, school of warming and vitality, and the school of academic disease. This period is also known for many famous physicians who wrote many medical treaties, that contributed in the development of traditional Chinese medicine. *Zhu Zhenheng* established the School of Nourishing the Yin. *Wang Lu* and *Dai Sigong* were disciples of this school who advocated *Zhu Zhenheng's* theory to treat ailments. *Li Gao*, who established the school of Warming and Invigoration, held that strengthening the spleen and stomach conserved the life-giving energy, or "qi," and helped ward off the majority of ailments. *Xue Ji*, *Zhao Xianke* and *Zhang Jiebin* were few of the most famous physicians of this school of thought.

*Xue Ji* (1488-1558 A.D.) was a notable physician of Ming Dynasty, who was a specialist in internal medicine and many other fields. Many medical treaties were published by him which include '*Neike Zhaiyao*', '*Waikeshuyao*', '*Waikeshufu*', '*Nuke Cuoyao*', '*Zhengti Leiyao*', and '*Kouchi Leiyao*'. Most of the times his prescriptions included rhizomes of *Atractylodes*, ginseng, liquorice, milkvetch root etc.

Ming period was marred with plagues and other epidemic diseases. In 1641 A.D., an epidemic exterminated a large percentage of the Chinese population. *Wu Youxing* (1580-1660

A.D.) was a prominent physician of this period who worked extensively on '*wenbing*'. In 1642 A.D. he published a book '*Wenyulun*' (On Pestilence), wherein he explained the specific symptoms of various kinds of epidemic disease. *Wu Youxing* proposed the theory of "LiQi", according to which pestilence is caused by infection by excessive influences and could be cured by herbal medicines.

Huge advancements were made in the field of surgery during Ming Dynasty. Development and achievements in the area of analgesics, asepsis, and hemostasis contributed to an improvement and advancements in surgical techniques. *Chen Shigong* (1555-1636 A.D.) was one of the most distinguished surgeons and dedicated his entire life to the development of external medicine. In the year 1617 A.D. his first medical textbook was published called '*Waikeshu Zhengzong*' (The Genuine Surgery) wherein he has explained various surgically curable diseases and has prescribed many effective drugs. The book has mentioned many surgical procedures to cure many wounds and diseases such as repairing of slit and cut throat, use of specific metal wire to remove nasal polyps, and surgical procedures to cure lip and breast cancers.

The academic system of traditional Chinese medicine had relatively been completed during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 A.D.) (Kuo, 2015; Unschuld, 1999). The beginning of the Qing Dynasty witnessed a publishing boom in terms of medical text in China. One of the most famous of these was, the '*Gujin Tushu Jicheng*' (Collection of Ancient and Modern Works), which was published in the year 1726 A.D. This book had 10,000 chapters, out of which 500 chapters deal with medicine. During Qing Dynasty, many physicians devoted their whole lives to refine traditional Chinese medicine for treating febrile illnesses. *Ye Gui* (1667-1746 A.D.) one of the prominent physicians of Qing Dynasty believed that febrile disease spread through respiratory

organs, and it used to become severe as the disease progressed from superficial to the deeper levels of body. Another well-known physician of this period was *Xue Xue* (1681-1770 A.D.) believed that febrile diseases were caused due to climatic factors, which were named exogenous pathogens. In his book titled '*Shire Tiaobian*' (Illnesses Associated with Heat and Dampness), he has explained the causes, development, diagnosis, and treatment of febrile diseases. *Wu Tang* (1758-1836 A.D.) a notable physician was able to specify nine different types of fevers, out of them he concluded that only one was contagious. He has described the as to how febrile disease progresses through various organs, and advocated that the prescriptions must constantly be readjusted to address the organs during febrile disease. Other notable physicians who dealt with febrile illnesses were *Wang Mengying* (1808-1866 A.D.) wrote the book '*Wenre Jingwe*', *Liu Baoyi* (1842-1901 A.D.) wrote the book titled '*Wenre Fengyuan*' (The Source of Fevers), and *Lei Feng* published a book on seasonal illness ('*Shibinglun*') in the year 1882. During Qing Dynasty there were constant medical interactions between China and other foreign countries, which immensely helped traditional Chinese medicine experts to get more insight in medicine, anatomy, surgery, and vaccination. The growth and development of traditional Chinese medicine was marred due to the introduction of Western medicine. Christian missionaries and the doctors were the major disseminators of Western medicine in China, wherein they introduced Western medical practices as well as translated Western medical texts into Chinese. The established a number of medical institutes throughout China, most of them were run by Chinese doctors.

After the independence of China from the British and establishment of the People's Republic of China, the traditional Chinese medicine has witnessed development in medical treatment,

teaching and research. Currently there are more than 34,000 types of literature available related to traditional Chinese medicine and more than 10,600 types of clinical literature. After independence the Chinese central government has promoted the development of traditional Chinese medicine by establishing many universities and research institutes which mainly focus on traditional Chinese medicine. There has been diverse and comprehensive development of traditional Chinese medicine which has helped to expand three traditional Chinese medicine systems such as foundation, classics, and clinical. A number of novel theories, accomplishments and disciplines have emerged. Doctors have been doing research and have been successful in developing new dosage forms of traditional Chinese medicine. They have demonstrated that encephalitis B, malaria, and other contagious diseases can effectively be treated using traditional Chinese medicines. The traditional Chinese medicine practices have been spreading fast to many other countries owing to its effectiveness and easy to use methods. The Chinese central government has signed MoU with many countries in terms of cooperation to disseminate the knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine. The Chinese government is working for the modernization, standardization and industrialization to promote traditional Chinese medicine to make it a global medical system. To ensure the safety and efficacy, the Chinese government has setup institutes where, toxicity and side effects of traditional Chinese medicines are evaluated as well as double blind clinical trials are conducted. Modern R&D analytical tools and pharmacological methods are being used to analyse the properties of many herbal combinations.

## Conclusion

Traditional Chinese medicine that started 5000 years ago has managed to resist time which has catered to the needs of people in terms of healthcare since its dawn. The traditional Chine

medicine has been accepted by World Health Organization (WHO) as a scientifically proven healthcare system. The traditional Chinese medicine is based on several important theories such as Yin and Yang, Qi, the theory of five elements as well as concept of meridians and parallels which are interconnected and represent the wholeness of the traditional Chinese medicine. Acupuncture and moxibustion are few of the most used forms of traditional Chinese medicine wherein acupuncture is most complicated which required deep knowledge of all five theories as well as knowledge of key points on the human body for the purpose of treating body ailments and for balancing qi as well as Yin and Yang.

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