

# **Historic Perspectives of Chinese Acupuncture Developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

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Chinese acupuncture has experienced the wax and wane within the past one hundred years. Although the imperial government banned acupuncture in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the late stage of Qing dynasty, acupuncture was still applied by the populous. When the Qing Dynasty ended, traditional Chinese medicine was still not in a position to exercise its abilities. Due to its distinguish therapeutic effects, well received by the populous, acupuncture was not destroyed and has still been handed down to this very day. In the 1930's, some scholars made lot of effort to educate and spread acupuncture to academics. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, acupuncture has been rapidly and extensively developed both in the technological reform and scientifically based research. I believe that in the history of Chinese acupuncture, this period is the another optimal time for development as it was in the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644).

I will emphasize the top events of what happened to Chinese acupuncture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the following.

## **Invention of Electro-Acupuncture**

One of revolutionary inventions for acupuncture profession was Electro-Acupuncture, which was first introduced by Shi-Chen Tang in 1934. In his thesis entitled “The Research on the Science of Electro-Acupuncture”, he introduced the invention of electro-acupuncture and the impact of electric current to the body's skin, nerve, vessels and sensory organs based on experimental research. During the 1950's,

Longyu Zhu and other scholars had done extensive research on this issue. After the 1960's, electro-acupuncture instruments have been widely used in the clinic. It really broadened the ranges of acupuncture indication and significantly increased the therapeutic effect on certain diseases such as neurological disorders. It also led to the possibility of successful acupuncture anesthesia and later scientific-based acupuncture research.

## **Success of Acupuncture Anesthesia**

On August 30, 1958, the first successful case of acupuncture anesthesia, in tonsillectomy, was completed in Shanghai. Almost at the same time, December 5, 1959, one more similar successful case was done in Xi-An. At the end of the 1970's, there were a total of ten thousand cases completed in the different operations, even pulmonectomy. It is due to the tremendous result of cooperation between China's traditional and Western-style

physicians, in which modern scientific knowledge and methods were used to arrange and study the ancient medicine. It is not only beneficial to the patient but also greatly lead to the further exploration of the mechanism of acupuncture anesthesia and acupuncture analgesia, which revealed the scientific base of acupuncture by the approach of physiology and neurobiology.

### **Scientific Research of Acupuncture**

Supported by the government, numerous clinical and experimental acupuncture researches started from 1950's. These distinctive researches under the "integrated medicine" prove the acupuncture efficacy, which described in the ancient literature, and develop the mechanism of acupuncture treatment. These really improve the development of acupuncture academics with the recognition of all biomedical fields.

### **Discovery of Channel-Sensitive Persons & Channel Transmission Phenomenon**

Channel transmission is known as acupuncture reaction, transmission of sensation induced during needling along the channels. The one interesting thing is in the 1970's was the discovery of Channel-Sensitive Persons, who are apt to experience channel transmission when being needled. From 1972 to 1978, more than thirty institutions in the different parts of China conducted a survey of Channel Transmission Phenomenon under the same criteria and methodology. The result revealed that in a total of 64702 cases, 20.3% of them presented these phenomena. The similar percentage was also found in different races such in Africans. The further researches revealed the bio-physical phenomenon of channels.

### **Development of Auricular Acupuncture, Scalp Acupuncture & Other Micro-Acupuncture System**

Beyond the classic acupoints system, the other micro-acupuncture systems were developed in the late half of the last century. In the 1950's, auricular acupuncture was applied clinically which expanded the scope of acupuncture. In the 1960's, Shunfa Jiao invented scalp acupuncture according to the reflection of the cerebral cortex. After that, other scholars such as Songyan Tang, Xuejian Lin, Yunpeng Fang and Mingqing Zhu presented the other scalp charts respectively. On the other hand, more acupuncture-related stimulating systems developed after the 1970's, such as Jingshan Peng's Ocular Acupuncture, Xinshu Zhang's Wrist-Ankle Acupuncture, and Yinqing Zhang's Hologram Acupuncture.

### **Formal Education of Acupuncture**

Apprenticeship had been mostly the way of acupuncture education for almost two thousand years. In the 1930's, Dan-An Cheng started his acupuncture education career. In the beginning, his Chinese Acupuncture Research Institute started acupuncture correspondence education and then recruited students in the Institute. In 1937, he established the Special School of China Acupuncture Medicine and the statistics showed

that more than ten thousand students trained including correspondence training. Acupuncture is one of the formal courses in the Shanghai College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (1931 – 1948), the first formal TCM school in the history. After 1956, several formal TCM colleges were established and acupuncture is also one of the major courses, and the first 5-year acupuncture program was established in 1965 in Shanghai College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (1956 - ). Now the acupuncture program developed in the different TCM universities and colleges including Master Program and Ph.D. Program.

### **Standardization of Acupoints and Its Nomenclature**

In cooperation with the World Health Organization, Chinese scholars had made extensive efforts to establish the standard of acupuncture nomenclature after the 1980's. Later in the 1990's, the National Standard of Nomenclature and location of acupoints and auricular points were published.

### **Exploration of Pain-Free Acupuncture**

In 1970's, laser acupuncture was invented and this non-invasive apparatus provide the possibility of pain-free acupuncture. Later on, other instruments were invented such as Microwave Acupuncture, Meridian Balancing Instrument, and Infrared Radiation Therapy, etc..

### **Internationalization of Acupuncture**

In the early times, some western missionaries brought back the acupuncture technique to their country. And other European specially came to China to learn acupuncture, the most influential person was Soulie de Morant. He learned from Shen-An Fang and other acupuncturists after that he wrote a book entitled Chinese Acupuncture, which has been the most important acupuncture book in Europe and America at that time. In 1950, many physicians from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe came to China for acupuncture training. In the 1980's, WHO established three Acupuncture Training Centers in China, which already trained thousands of physicians from more than 120 countries. In the 1980's and 1990's, more well-trained Chinese acupuncturists immigrated to different countries in the world. Having both TCM and western medicine training backgrounds, they brought the authentic Chinese acupuncture to these countries.

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