

# Western perspectives of the COVID-19 in China

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**Abstract**—The first outbreak of COVID-19 happened in Wuhan, China, which has made a tremendous impact on Chinese society during the winter of 2019. China has taken timely quarantine measures after realization to stop the spread of the virus, also provided experience about epidemic prevention and how to control the situation to the rest of the world. However, under the analysis of western medias, China's behaviour has become a manifestation of backward sanitary conditions and expansionism. As a matter of fact, China's prevention and control measures have won countless lives for China. In the west's blind smears and falsification of facts, the only thing waiting for the West is the out of control of COVID-19.

**Keywords**- Western perspectives, COVID-19, the measures in China, news and media.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Spring of 2020 was the time when COVID-19 broke out on a large scale in the world. China first got an attack at the end of 2019. On November 17, 2020, the first coronavirus case was made a definite diagnosis in Wuhan, China. On March 11, 2020, WHO identified COVID-19 as a "pandemic". COVID-19 had been defined as a highly contagious infectious disease after China first suffered a serious blow. On March 19, however, 31 provinces in China recorded zero new confirmed cases and zero suspected cases for the first time after the broke out of COVID-19. We issued a prompt warning for the rest of the world after that. However, until now (November 1.2020), other countries are still bearing momentous economic losses. At the time while the epidemic in China was in relative remission, we started to lend a hand to the other countries, releasing up-to-date information on our epidemic quarantine and control. Admittedly, as an infectious disease that threatens human life, the spread of COVID-19 has put forward an alert to the public health safety of the world vastly. How do westerners think about China during the epidemic time according to the reports of western media?

Because of the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the whole world seems to be in chaos in 2020. According to the data, the world's GDP growth has become negative, most shops have closed down, and a great number of people have lost their jobs in various countries. Till now, a year has passed since the first time. Many countries questioned the role of masks at the beginning, but they gradually realized the significance of it. However, only China has managed to contain the epidemic successfully, but the measures it has taken have not been widely accepted in the world. During the epidemic year, actually, China has lost much goodwill among foreigners during the outbreak period

## II. BACKGROUND

Initially, the news title below illustrates the mainstream opinion of the western media

### A. China in western perspectives

“They owe trillions’ – Steve Bannon says China must be held accountable for coronavirus spread” wrote by CNBC in April 30, 2020.[1]

“Bannon: China must be held accountable for coronavirus spread” wrote by CNBC in April 30, 2020.[2]

“Coronavirus hits China’s economy twice as financial contagion spreads across the globe” wrote by CNBC in March 20, 2020.[3]

“Covid-19 antibody tests can help people rejoin society, but some are stuck in China” wrote by CNN in April 17, 2020.[4]

“Nuns emerge, Missouri sues China, soldiers sew: News from around our 50 states” wrote by USA TODAY in April 22, 2020.[5]

“China must pay Africa for its COVID-19 Mistakes – Ezekwesili” wrote by The Guardian in April 18, 2020.[6]

At least, from those news report, China does not try its best to keep from the spread of the coronavirus. China in the western media is such a chaotic country, and the media even conveys the illusion that China should take the guilt because it was too late for China to take action. When the COVID-19 first broke out in China, western medias queried whether China was hiding the truth and why did not take any steps about it. After China published its emergency quarantine measures, people were asked to stay at home, which makes enormous progress in preventing the spread of the virus. Nevertheless, this has been reported by western media as a kind of measure that does not work but violates human rights. Western media does not consider China's quarantine measure as an effective mean of protection, and they argued China should take responsibility for the pandemic. News media is a channel of information that inseparably from people's lives. They should report the epidemic situation of COVID-19 objectively and honestly. No matter for what purpose, they must take on the social responsibility of the media[8]. Unfortunately, western media does not follow their professional ethics in reporting China, China is a country with weak epidemic prevention measures and who trying to evade responsibility in their perspectives.

Because the western media humiliate China wantonly, the foreigner also believes that the situation inside China is supposed to be dire, and China's apparent improvement is spurious. When China built the quadrille hospital in Wuhan,

some people in the west believed it was a "concentration camp"; when China shut down cities and countries, stopping all economic activities, they consider the measure was a poor, unhygienic representation of China. Taking data from a US pollster as a detailed example, Americans' bad feelings towards China have been growing since 2017 and peaked in 2020. Two-

thirds of Americans said in March that they had a contravening view of China when the COVID-19 assaulted America continent [9]. Table 1 shows American's negative impressions towards China. China's response to the coronavirus is considered by foreigners as the representation of a country with inferior sanitation and insufficient medical care condition.

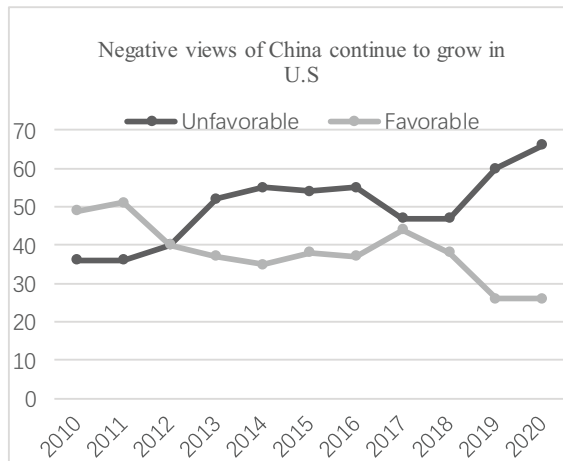


Figure 1. American's negative impressions towards China

As the epidemic in China has abated and production lines in the country gradually resumed, China started to help other countries which still amid the severe epidemic, providing them with many supplies. What does this look like in the western perspectives? Most western media have promoted this as a political ploy by China [10]. They believe that China's foreign aid is motivated by selfishness rather than to ameliorate the epidemic situation in the recipient countries, and China's aid methods do not follow the aid rules that have been agreed by the western society, which affects the effectiveness of the aid [11]. However, some western countries woke up when they received medical supplies from China, such as Italy and Serbia. China's equipment was the first shipment to arrive in that country. After turning to other western countries for help in vain, they finally recognized the sinister essence of American and its adherents. In a word, it is obviously to know whether China's assistance to other countries is for humanitarian purposes or its interests and unknown political purposes. Finally, complete content and organizational editing before formatting. Please take note of the following items when proofreading spelling and grammar:

### III. THE REASONS WHY CHINA GOT SUCH A IMPRESSION

Nevertheless, why is the west always willing to analysis China's actions with malice? First of all, the western attitude towards China is not just from these ten or even one hundred years. It can be traced back to the first large scale connect between western and eastern, that is the Mongolian War. The arrival of the Mongol army was like a hurricane to the West world. The western world was so psychologically shocked by the extremely strong fighting ability of the Mongolian army at that time, and since them, Western society has started to be on guard against China to keep from the next risk. Nowadays, while the west is still in turmoil, China has recovered from the

COVID-19 for a few months. In order to reduce China's influence in the international community and guide domestic public opinion at the same time, the western media chose China as an emotional outlet for western citizens.

The first reason is the long-standing national prejudice [12]. This prejudice first appeared after the Mongol army's westward march to Europe. The Mongol army's westward march not only dealt a severe impact to the traditional theology of Europe but also planted a seed of fear in the western world [13]. Later, in the enlightenment, this fear developed into prejudice against China. The German scholar Johann Gottfried held said in the 18 century that: "(Chinese) they could never become Greeks or Romans. Chinese they were and will remain: a people endowed by nature with small eyes, a short nose, a flat forehead, little beard, large ears and protuberant belly." [14] The idea of racial discrimination was deeply rooted in the minds of westerners three hundred years ago. In modern times, this idea has become a practical action and a slander against the Chinese people. The "sick man of East Asia" of the 19th century, the "yellow peril" of the 20th century as the United States called it, these made a mark on China before it finally got chance to manifest itself. As a result, China has long left a rooted lousy impression on the west. The west will not imitate China's actions, although China makes an excellent response to dispose of COVID-19. On the contrary, in order to maintain the dignity of the west, even if China is doing the right thing, the west is also dismissive, and try to find the vulnerability [15].

Another reason is that China's actions may shake up the western-led global situation. Rajiv Tandon wrote (2020): "Even as there is a critical need for the world to collectively engage with the virus SARS-CoV-2 and the COVID-19 disease it causes, there is a discernible lack of leadership at a global level." (p.92) When the epidemic broke out in Europe and America, China was able to guarantee the domestic medical

supplies while delivering much-needed supplies to the rest of the world at the same time. This behavior undoubtedly shook the leadership of western countries. Unfortunately, in COVID-19, there is a significant lack of coordination and assistance among the nations of the world, with most countries simply scolding each other, incoherent, and isolating others [15]. China has taken the lead in breaking this global isolation, what the west considers as a challenge to its leadership. As a result, China's foreign aid from the perspective of western countries has become a malicious behavior, and China is once again confronted with difficulties.

The third reason is by shirking responsibility to China to guide domestic consensus, to prevent the rule of their government from being attacked. Most western countries have pursued freedom and protected civil rights since ancient times. However, western people must feel resentful when their countries' anti-epidemic measures have fallen far backward of China's, and when their treatment has not kept pace with the needs of their patients. In coronavirus hard-hit cities, China has alleviated the shortage of hospital beds by building FangCang hospitals to give more space for the patients. At the time when nucleic acid testing was not widely available in other countries, Chinese citizens were already free to do the nucleic acid testing and even Chinese do not need to wait so much time for the test. At this point, the pursuit towards freedom in western people's spirits will turn into incomprehension for being isolated at home, and the seeking towards civil rights will generate a complaint that the lack of hospital beds and the nucleic testing cannot be guaranteed. At this juncture, in order to protect their dominant position and prevent mass protests and demonstrations happen in cities, western governments must find an outlet to vent their dissatisfaction for the domestic public, and that cannot be their government. Therefore, it is an acceptable choice to poured everything to China and even ask for compensation, making use of China to channel public opinion and degrades China's international status. Once again, China is being a channeled tool by the west. The West has nothing to lose, but the Chinese people and the image of China have been blamed for spreading the virus.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Now, China's social order has been gradually recovered. Chinese people can travel freely on holidays, wearing masks on weekdays and maintain a social distance. These achievements cannot be unseparated from China's effective isolation measures. Sometimes, even if COVID-19 cases still occur occasionally in China, with strong government control Chinese can prevent the outbreak from spreading to another province, and keep the virus in local places. Besides, Chinese universities have fully resumed classes, which not only indicates that the epidemic situation in China has been sufficiently controlled but also that Chinese society is gradually returning to the situation before the COVID-19 epidemic.

In conclusion, the situation of COVID-19 in China, was deliberately led by western countries and western media which influenced the thoughts of most western people, achieving the attempt to guide and control climate of opinion. Therefore, China in the western perspectives of COVID-19 is a hypocritical, sinister country and still in danger. In order to

change the western countries' prejudice against China, China should insist to develop its economy, improve its public confidence and promote the influence of Chinese cultural soft power. Only when China is strong enough will its image in the west become inviolable and then the west stops making indiscreet remarks toward China. Furthermore, no matter how much foreign media report on China, China should not give in. At last, China is no longer the prey in the 19th century, and the west no longer dominates the world as the 19th century.

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