

Chapter 1 Falun Gong and its Origins

The story of Li Hongzhi and Falun Gong began in 1988 in Changchun city, Jilin province. Li Hongzhi was working for a state-owned grain and oil company in Changchun and caught up in the post-Mao nationwide promotion of qigong, took classes in two of its disciplines. He later combined them with elements of Thai dance to create in the early 1990s the esoteric school notoriously known as the Falun Gong.

Before December 1994, Li Hongzhi had established his reputation as a qigong master with healing powers. The fees Li Hongzhi charged for his healing sessions ranged between scores and hundreds of Renminbi. Tickets to his training courses sold for RMB 30 to 50. At that time, Falun Gong practitioners were ordinary qigong enthusiasts.

Treating diseases with his qigong brought huge profits to Li Hongzhi, but his credibility was soon challenged.

Li Hongzhi was forced to refund a treatment fee of RMB 30 at the 1993 Qigong Expo in Beijing, at the insistence of Expo staff, when he failed to cure a particular case.

Another loss of credibility occurred at one of Li Hongzhi's training courses in Liaoning province in August 1994, when Falun Gong adherent Li Shulin suffered a cerebral thrombosis. The qi that Li Hongzhi sent out failed to revive Li Shulin; he died a few days later.

December 1994 was the date of publication of Li Hongzhi's *Zhuan Falun*. It signified Li Hongzhi's elevation to spiritual leader of what was to become the Falun Gong cult.

Li Hongzhi thus transmogrified from qigong master to "greatest Buddha of the universe." *The Introduction to Li Hongzhi* compiled by the Falun Gong organization states: "At age 8, Li Hongzhi learned the essence of Buddhism and attained the supernatural powers of telekinesis, the ability to mend things, controlled thinking and the ability to become invisible. He understands the truth of the universe has insights into life and can see both the past and future."



Each Falun Gong practitioner was required to buy and make twice daily obeisance to the above "Fa Photo" of Li Hongzhi, in which he wears a costumier-obtained robe and stands on what are actually paper-cuts of lotus leaves against a "Buddhist Light" backdrop.

Falun Gong thus evolved from *qigong* to "*Dafa*" (great law) wherein, as explained by Li Hongzhi in his preface to *Zhuan Falun*: "The Buddha Fa is most profound; among all the theories in the world, it is the most intricate and extraordinary science...The Buddha Fa enables humankind to understand the immeasurable and boundless world. Throughout the ages, only the Buddha Fa has been able to perfectly provide a clear exposition of humanity, every dimension of material existence, life, and the entire universe."

After publication of his book Li Hongzhi stopped teaching *qigong* and giving mass personal healings. He focused his energies instead on lecture tours, which enabled him to expound his theory to a wider audience. Li Hongzhi thus elevated Falun Gong's purpose from within the temporal sphere of physical health to a means of escape from earthly woes to eternal life on another plane thereafter — as a Buddha, Dao or God. Li Hongzhi guaranteed Falun Gong practitioners immortality in 10 years. Shortly before the 2002 "deadline," however, he informed his followers that enlightenment was still a decade away.

Li Hongzhi illegally published 21 books in the *Zhuan Falun* vein which "give guidance to practitioners in their cultivation of vital energy" prior to July 1999, when the Chinese government banned Falun Gong. The bulk of Li Hongzhi's adherents bought all 21 of his books, along with their meagerly revised editions. The Falun Gong merchandising business also continued to flourish on sales of Li Hongzhi photos and cushions.

Police investigated, from 1992 to the end of 1999, the illegal publication under the name of Falun Dafa Research Society of 10.57 million Falun Gong books, 5 million of the organization's audio and video products and 1.29 million pictures. Sales of Falun Gong merchandise were found to have grossed RMB 1.61 billion and generated illegal profits of more than RMB 41 million.

Craig S. Smith's article *American Dream Finds Chinese Spiritual Leader* (Wall Street Journal, November 1, 1999) discloses Li Hongzhi's purchase, for several hundred thousand dollars, of a home in New Jersey, near Princeton University, within one year of arrival in the US. Also that Li Hongzhi earned \$10,000 or more in one lecture during his tour of 1994.

It was at this point, however, that potential profits began being superseded by grave events.

More than 1,400 persons, directly or indirectly, died as a result of Falun Gong prior to its being banned by the Chinese government in July 1999.^①

The main causes of death were:

— **Practitioners refusing medical treatment, which resulted in their rapid deterioration and eventual death.**

※ Huang Haoxiang, a retired worker from Shanghai and hypertension sufferer, refused to see a doctor or take medicine after May 1998, when he took up Falun Gong. It was untreated hypertension that led to Huang's death, from a cerebral hemorrhage, in June 1999.

This obdurate refusal to seek medical advice originated in Li Hongzhi's contention that: "Taking medicine while practicing Falun Gong

^① CCTV, *17 Selected Murder Cases of Falun Gong Obsessed Followers* (May 31, 2001)

indicates a lack of faith in Falun Gong's power to cure illness. If you truly believe, why take medicine?"

— **Belief by practitioners with schizoid tendencies that, on basis of the Falun Gong theory, committing suicide was a viable shortcut to Consummation.**

※ In January 1998, Wang Chengxiang, a 66-year-old retired worker from Heilongjiang province, jumped six floors to his death in the belief that he would fly straight to heaven.

Li Hongzhi once said: "If you can let go of life and death, you're a God; if you can't let go of life and death, you're a human."

— **Adherents being denounced as demons and killed by their fellow Falun Gong practitioners.**

※ In February 1998, Falun Gong practitioner Wu Deqiao from Wujiang city, Jiangsu province stabbed his wife to death, utterly convinced she had become a demon when she criticized his obsession with the cult.

Li Hongzhi said: "You cannot practice when distracted by devils," and "the wretched demons just deserve to be killed."

— **Sieges by practitioners and threats leveled at the more than 20 media organizations who had publicized the dreadful harms Falun Gong had inflicted.**

Beijing TV aired a report on May 24, 1998 on the severe psychopathic disorders suffered by Falun Gong practitioners. It prompted a furious siege on the TV station by thousands of Falun Gong practitioners.

Shortly after, Li Hongzhi published his tract, *Digging out the Roots*, in which he called on Falun Gong practitioners to emulate their fellows in Beijing.

Falun Gong, at Li Hongzhi's command, gathered together more than 300 adherents that surrounded and attacked Party and governmental organizations, and other public institutions, notably the Guangming Daily Press Office. These acts seriously threatened social stability and legal order.



Ten thousand Falun Gong followers illegally demonstrate on April 25, 1999, surrounding the Chinese central government compound of Zhongnanhai.



Falun Gong adherents besiege the Henan Provincial Government office building in mid-July 1999.



Falun Gong followers lay siege to the Hubei Provincial Government office buildings in 1999, at a crucial point in the province's flood relief measures.



The July 22 demonstration outside the Guizhou Provincial Government office building in 1999.

On July 22, 1999, the government, in response to voices from the masses, particularly religious circles, legislated an official ban on the Falun Gong organization.

The Chinese government later made successful use of the mass media to convince two million or more followers to give up Falun Gong. This was achieved through portrayals of the early history of Li Hongzhi and Falun Gong, and reports on the deaths of 1,400 or more devotees. The campaign also included insider accounts of the organization by those who had managed to escape its clutches, as well as warnings from experts. Li Hongzhi's core members in China, namely, Li Chang, Wang Zhiwen and Ji Liewu, meanwhile, were sued and convicted for causing mass deaths by their violation of China's laws prohibiting cults.

The US became the new Falun Gong headquarters soon after the Chinese government had banned the organization. But Li Hongzhi continued to manipulate his remaining followers into violent acts that caused their death, disfigurement and spiritual enslavement.

On January 23, 2001, seven Falun Gong practitioners, five of them women including a 12-year-old girl, set fire to themselves on Tian'anmen Square. One woman died on the spot. A month later, her 12-year-old daughter also died from her horrific burns. Li Hongzhi had shortly before this act warned practitioners that time was tight, and that they should rapidly cast aside the temporal world and "towards the final Consummation."



Young, pretty Chen Guo, student at the Central Conservatory of Music, before her self-immolation



And after



Burns covered 80 percent of Chen Guo's body

On June 23, 2002, the Sino I satellite transmitter of scores of TV channels was attacked by Falun Gong signals from Taiwan province. This onslaught on civil satellites that included Sino I, Asia Pacific Sat VI and Asia 3S, when 252 attacks occurred over a period of 160 hours, lasted until August 7, 2007.

The Chinese American man who attempted to destroy a communication cable in Yangzhou, Jiangsu province claimed in court that his activities could not be deemed as violations of law as long as they successfully disseminated "Dafa."

In recent years, Falun Gong behavior has changed considerably. The organization now plays the role of victim of persecution.

Li Hongzhi said at the *Teaching and Explaining Fa at the Metropolitan New York Fa Conference*: "Dafa disciples should now focus on just three things: clarifying the facts; sending out righteous thoughts...; the third is cultivating yourselves and studying the Fa well."

"Clarifying the facts" encompasses "discovering" and "circulating" the facts. One instance of the latter took the form of an article in the Falun Gong paper, Epoch Times, in March 2006. It told of a concentration camp

in Shenyang, Northeastern China where the article alleged, more than 6,000 Falun Gong practitioners were held. After periodically harvesting their vital organs for commercial purposes, a full two thirds were regularly cremated there. Local media, however, proved this story to be an unfounded. The findings of an investigative report by the US embassy in Beijing and consulate in Shenyang, published by the US Department of State also refuted the existence of any such camp. This is an example of the essential Falun Gong concept of "speaking the truth," whereby hearsay evidence of large scale persecution of Falun Gong members is disseminated in China in order to win sympathy.



The Sujiatun Thrombosis Treatment Center of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine in Liaoning province.



The so-called crematory mentioned by Falun Gong media.

The rumor about the Sujiatun crematory was eventually quashed. But the organization continued to fabricate similarly damning stories. A subsequent article spoke of cases in other areas of China of "live harvesting of organs from Falun Gong practitioners." Two Canadians, David Kilgour and David Matas, who had never been to China, published on July 6, 2006 a terrifying "Case Study Report" on the harvesting and sale of vital organs. But in January 2007 the pair stated in an amended "Report" that the evi-

dence upon which that of July 6, 2006 had been based was little more than speculation. Also that it was unclear and riddled with inconsistencies, to the extent that it failed to support the allegation.

This is a further example of the Falun Gong concept of "clarifying the facts," whereby the organization fabricates and spreads tales of unspeakable persecution suffered by followers of Falun Gong in China.

"Sending forth righteous thoughts" is a kind of curse, whose use is strictly defined by Li Hongzhi. In practice, it is the constant public voicing of condemnation of any organization or individual that criticizes the organization. Li Hongzhi has also been known to circulate grim accounts of the deaths of Falun Gong critics consequential to "sending forth righteous thoughts" or of answering for what they have done to Falun Gong.

Foremost to those who still believe in Falun Gong, however, is their study and sustained wholehearted belief and trust in the organization, as well as wholesale rejection of negative media reports that inhibit the "practice of no other manner of cultivation" as defined by Li Hongzhi. Falun Gong devotees genuinely believe that straying from the organization's stricture means ruination along with the rest of humankind. Minghui net, the main channel of communication for Falun Gong in China, does not have much new content in its website, the most updated news is that the promised time for Consummation will be postponed for another ten years.

An unimaginable change has occurred out of China in Falun Gong taboos. Believers now feature largely in cultural events such as art exhibitions, choral and dance concerts, as well as in movies and on TV. All these cultural pursuits, however, fuse into the ultimate intention of generating a more positive, mainstream "Dafa" PR image. Falun Gong's New Tang Dynasty TV (NTDTV) has since 2004 constituted the main cultural medium through which to disseminate Dafa, not least by means of its annual New Year spectacular.

The Falun Gong-organized "human rights torch relay," signifying disapproval of the Beijing Olympic Games, occurred in August 2007. The event, and its complete absence of foreign state government support, was

barely mentioned in the western mainstream media. Another example of attempted Falun Gong-style veto is that of the New Year 119th Rose Float Parade of 2008, sponsored by the US city of Pasadena. On this occasion Falun Gong tried every means possible to ban the float celebrating the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, but the American sponsors were immovable.

That Falun Gong is intent upon keeping tabs on its government, NGO and individual critics until it amasses evidence enough to cause trouble is evident in the Falun Gong claim on March 5, 2008; that it was investigating Chairman of the IOC Jacques Rogge with a view to prosecution. He would thus be punished for his instrumental role in the Beijing Olympic Games, and avowed opposition to politicizing them.

Such are the origins and features of the Falun Gong organization, whose overseas adherents are given to believe that they are the latest generation in an age-old traditional Chinese cultural tradition.

Background:

The original intention of qigong was to synchronize mental and physical activity through breath control, thereby maintaining a healthy physique and high spirits.

Originally a master-disciple discipline enacted in small groups, the snowballing popularity of qigong among the broad masses during the late 1980s and early 1990s culminated in establishment of a special qigong research organization. Members of the organization made profits by teaching qigong, and some even broke away from the qigong mainstream to form their own schools to reduce the number of their competitors. Leaders of these "splinter" schools often assumed mystical, guru-style personas, claiming the power to heal diseases as serious as cancer without even touching a victim. These spiritual healing powers were demonstrated, for a hefty fee, at various mass rallies. Qigong training courses, which mainly comprised school leaders sending out healing, spiritually reviving qi to the multitude of disciples in attendance, were another money spinner.

Chapter 2 Conflicts between Falun Gong Teachings and Western Moral & Ethic Principles

US Whittier Daily News reported on December 29, 2007 that Bin Li, a local Falun Gong practitioner who was asking the Covina City Council to pass a resolution condemning the Chinese government's persecution of her group. Enthusiasm for the resolution faded quickly after Councilman Walter Allen quoted passages from the group's founder Li Hongzhi that condemned marriage and reproduction between races. After hearing those ideas, council members hastily voted the resolution down.^①

Here is a typical case where the Falun Gong experienced a back drop due to its teachings violating western moral principles.

Falun Gong originated from China and has been spread to many countries. Its founder Li Hongzhi has made many remarks totally incompatible with western public moral and ethic principles.

2.1 Remarks of Li Hongzhi on Homosexuality

Li Hongzhi, the founder of Falun Gong says that homosexuality is not good, it is incestuous, immoral and guilty. The queers lost their senses, are psychologically dirty and abnormal. They are bad people, thus will be eradicated by the God first.

Below are the statements by Li Hongzhi on homosexuality:

"People's moral standards have been perverted, they've gone through a change...All kinds of other messed-up things have come about, like homosexuality, free love, taking drugs, and all that."^②

"When I talked about homosexuality while giving classes in the West, I said, 'These wanton sexual practices in the West have gotten almost as bad as incest.' Someone then brought up that 'homosexuality is legally protected by the state.'...I told them [the students in the West], 'To be perfectly frank, your government may approve of it, but your Lord does not!' Each time mankind has reached this point, it has in fact been in grave

^① Whittier Daily News, *Falun Gong Activist Makes Appeals* (December 29, 2007)

^② Li Hongzhi, *Zhuan Falun*

danger and out of control. Now that it has become what it has, if it goes further, what will it be like next?"^①

"Repulsive homosexual behavior meanwhile bespeaks of a filthy, deviant state of mind that lacks rationality."^②

"If you look at today's society you can see that drug use, drug trafficking, drug making, sex changes, homosexuality, sexual freedom, organized crime, etc., emerge in an endless stream."^③

"Sexual freedom, which has mixed the human races and muddled human ethics, is absolutely forbidden by gods...You are committing a sin if you have sexual activity with someone who isn't your husband or your wife...organized crime, homosexuality, and the worship of violence what we've mentioned are only phenomena."^④

Here below is a verbatim record of Li's replies to his followers' questions when he held a Fa-teaching conference in Europe (Frankfort) on May 30 to 31, 1998.

Question: Can homosexuals who don't give up their behavior...?

Teacher: You mean, "Can he cultivate if he doesn't give up his partner in this behavior?"

I can tell you that I mentioned something yesterday: I said that gods no longer regard people as human. Even though you're still upholding religions, Jesus no longer looks after you. He didn't acknowledge religion in the first place — he only acknowledged human hearts that could become good again. Why doesn't he look after people anymore? Because people nowadays can't be called human. That's truly how it is. Never in history has society been in as big a mess as today. Yesterday I mentioned things like organized crime, drug addiction, perversion, sexual liberation, promiscuity, incest, and the shift in human values, as well as homosexuality... Think about it, everyone: Humans are created by gods. A man is given a

① Li Hongzhi, *Zhuan Falun II*

② Li Hongzhi, *Zhuan Falun II*

③ Li Hongzhi, *Falun Buddha Fa Lectures in the United States* (April 6, 1997)

④ Li Hongzhi, *Teaching the Fa at the Conference in Europe* (May 30 to 31, 1998)

wife. That was stipulated by gods. People now want to find a partner of the same sex. Gods think that people do that because they no longer have human values. You are wantonly indulging your thoughts. Your thoughts, like the ones I just mentioned, are not actually you. The mentality that makes you homosexual was driven by postnatally-formed bad things. But you yourself were numbed by them and went along with them and wallowed in the mud. You need to find yourself again and stop doing those filthy things. Gods view them as filthy. No matter whether a government permits it, the law of your government is not the truth of the universe. That's because the law of a government is made by humans, and when humans make laws, they have the intention to rule and punish others, or they make laws against their conscience in order to protect things and gain power or votes. So they are not made with good intentions... Gods would never permit a cultivator to do that kind of thing, nor would they permit everyday people to.

Question: Can homosexuals practice Dafa?

Teacher: Yes, but they have to correct this bad behavior, live nobly and upright like a human being, find themselves, and break out of that dark state of mind.

Here below is a verbatim record of Li's replies to his followers' questions when he held a Fa-teaching conference in Swiss (Geneva) on September 4 to 5, 1998.^①

Question: Why is homosexuality considered immoral?

Teacher: Think about it, everyone: Is homosexuality human behavior? Heaven created man and woman. What was the purpose? To procreate future generations. A man being with a man, or a woman with a woman — it doesn't take much thought to know whether that's right or wrong. When minor things are done incorrectly, a person is said to be wrong. When major things are done incorrectly, it's a case of people no longer having the moral code of human beings, and then they are unworthy of being human.

^① Li Hongzhi, *Fa-teaching conference in Swiss* (September 4 to 5, 1998)

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