

# Compassion

ISSUE 6

## The Falun Gong Factor

Why unsung acts of courage, from banners to broadcasts, are so important to understanding today's China

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

**Olympics unworthy?**

**China's Gestapo**

**Chinese courts**

**A defector's confessions**



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## About This Edition

For several years now, participants in one of the largest grassroots campaigns of civil disobedience the world has known have quietly informed fellow Chinese citizens about the brutal persecution unfolding in their own backyards. They are the practitioners of Falun Gong (or “Falun Dafa”), and at great personal risk have labored to right a tremendous wrong.

Part of the Falun Gong’s effort has been to provide the outside world, on a daily basis, with priceless eyewitness accounts from inside China. These accounts tell of a suppression that permeates every facet of Chinese society. What emerges is a uniquely candid look at how the suppression of Falun Gong, as with the group’s determined resistance, impacts the Chinese people and nation, if not larger world.

This edition of *Compassion* tells a tale at once sobering and hopeful. As the distinguished historian Arthur Waldron points out in his introductory essay, the campaign, for all its brutality, is failing to crush the Falun Gong. The campaign has seen new, horrific twists in recent times, however, as argued in unsettling detail by David Matas; chief among them is organ harvesting from living Falun Gong adherents. Sarah Cook sheds much-needed light, meanwhile, on the little-known entity charged with executing the nationwide suppression—the 6-10 Office.

Yet we have occasion for optimism, in spite of all this, in the movement of astounding size and vigor that has emerged in China among the Falun Gong, as described in “Righteous Resistance.” And this, despite enormous, yet seldom described, legal challenges set before the Falun Gong; Clive Ansley unravels for us the dubious system that is China’s courts. The writing of Gao Zhisheng is also presented here, giving a ground-eye view of these matters as seen by a prominent Beijing attorney.

Edward McMillan-Scott, who conducted clandestine interviews with the Falun Gong in China, raises the question begged by all of this: What of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, then? Chen Yonglin offers an altogether different vantage point on the persecution: that of participant. Chen details his time working at the Chinese Consulate of Sydney and the orders he followed, before defecting. How such belligerent acts, both in China and beyond, could go unreported is the subject of Leeshai Lemish’s timely analysis.

Rounding out the picture is a look at the Falun Gong as practice. Matthew Kutolowski’s essay situates the Falun Gong in its historical context of Chinese “biospiritual” cultivation, while profiles of the Falun Gong experience give a textured sense for just how exactly the practice is lived out.

I would like to add that the Falun Dafa Information Center’s operations are carried out entirely by volunteers. These are individuals who generously contribute their own time and resources to do this, much like our contributing authors. It is also likely that whoever handed you this edition of *Compassion* paid for it him or herself.

To the extent that this publication might, by fostering greater awareness, hasten an end to the awful events that plague untold millions in China, we enjoy the highest form of compensation—an inner satisfaction. We hope that you, the reader, might enjoy a similar reward for having taken a step towards these ends in reading this magazine.



*Levi Browde, Executive Director  
Falun Dafa Information Center*

## ON THE COVER

A banner reading "Falun Dafa is good" hangs in a village in Heilongjiang province, China, August 2004. Small acts such as this, done at great personal risk, are part of a larger campaign to raise awareness in the face of state suppression.

**Compassion** is a journal that was started in response to the persecution of the Falun Gong in China. It is produced entirely through the efforts of volunteers and paid for by donations to the Falun Dafa Information Center. The views in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of Falun Gong, or Falun Dafa.

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**Compassion** is published and distributed by:

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331 West 57th Street, #409  
New York, NY 10019 USA  
Toll Free: 888-842-4797  
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ISBN: 1-931035-01-6

Founded in 1999, the **Falun Dafa Information Center** is a New York-based organization that documents the rights violations of adherents of Falun Gong (or "Falun Dafa") taking place in the People's Republic of China. Millions have been detained or sent to forced labor camps in this persecution. The Center has verified over 3,000 deaths and over 63,000 cases of torture in police custody.

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## FOREWORD

- 4 THE FALUN GONG FACTOR**  
*By Arthur Waldron*

## INSIDE CHINA

- 7 LOST IN TRANSPLANTATION**  
*By Robert Misik*  
Harvesting Organs from Executed Prisoners
- 9 ORGAN HARVESTING ATROCITIES**  
*By David Matas*  
A New Form of Evil on this Planet
- 13 CHINA'S SECRET 6-10 OFFICE**  
*By Sarah Cook*
- 17 RIGHTEOUS RESISTANCE**  
*By Levi Browde*  
A Grassroots Movement, Like No Other in History, is Growing in China
- 27 CASES OF DEATH AND TORTURE IN CHINA**  
*By Brian Marple*

## INTERNATIONAL

- 31 OLYMPICS UNWORTHY**  
*By Edward McMillan-Scott*  
China's New Tyranny Does Not Befit the Games
- 33 CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER CONSULATE OFFICIAL**  
*By Chen Yonglin*
- 37 BRIBES, SPIES, AND POLITICS**  
*By Matt Gnaizda*  
How U.S. Student Groups Are Controlled by Chinese Consulates
- 39 UN-PEACEFUL RISE ON CAMPUS**  
*By Gerard Smith*

## LEGAL CORNER

- 41 A CHINESE "COURT" IS NOT A COURT**  
*By Clive Ansley*
- 44 BEIJING'S LIONHEARTED LAWYER**
- 45 A CHINA MORE JUST**  
*By Gao Zhisheng*
- 48 OPEN LETTER TO THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS**  
*By Gao Zhisheng*

## MEDIA LENS

- 49 OUT OF THE MEDIA SPOTLIGHT**  
*By Leeshai Lemish*  
Why We Aren't Reading About Falun Gong in the Papers
- 54 BEIJING'S PROPAGANDA ASSAULT**  
*By John Augustyn*

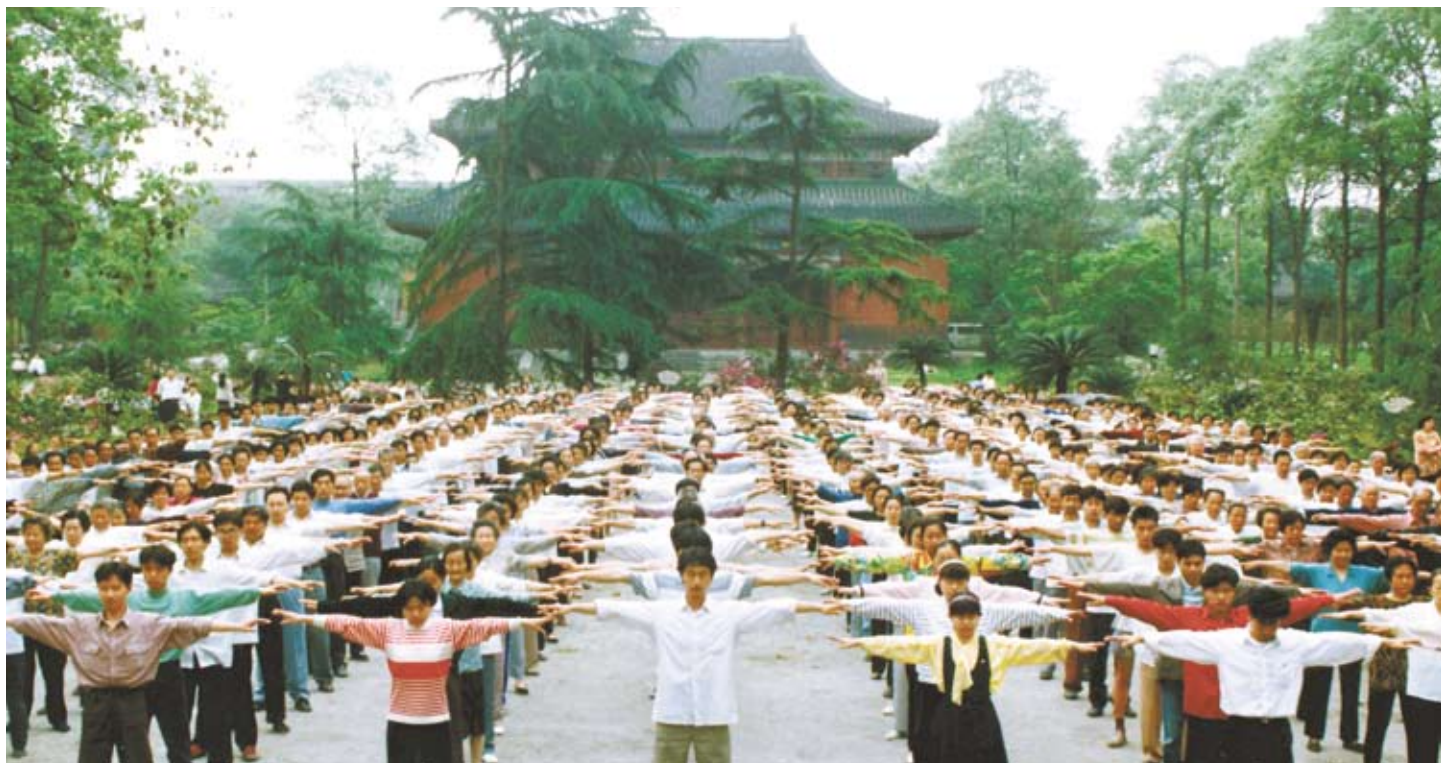
## THE PRACTICE

- 55 TRANSCENDING THE MUNDANE**  
*By Matthew Kutolowski*  
Falun Gong and the Age-Old Chinese Belief Behind it
- 59 FROM MEDIA TO THE ARTS: JOEL CHIPKAR AND CECILIA XIONG**  
*By Sarah Cook*
- 61 RESCUED FROM HELL: LI WEIXUN**  
*By Jan Jekielek*
- 63 MAN ON A MISSION: DR. SEN NIEH**  
*By Court Pearman*

## THE ARTS

- 65 OF HOPE AND HORROR**
- 67 A PARADE OF CULTURE**  
*By John Augustyn*

## FOREWORD



# The Falun Gong Factor

*By Arthur Waldron*  
*Lauder Professor of International*  
*Relations, University of Pennsylvania*

When one opens a journal such as this one, having more than half a dozen articles that paint a dark and discouraging picture of the state of human rights in China, one of the first questions likely to be raised is: What about the publisher? Isn't this magazine put out by practitioners of the spiritual discipline of Falun Gong? Indeed it is. No question about it: Falun Gong practitioners are the publishers, editors, and supporters of *Compassion* magazine. Sadly, that fact alone is enough to lead many who should read the articles published here instead to set the journal aside.

I am not a Falun Gong practitioner. However, any difference in opinion over spiritual matters is, I feel, of little import when it comes to human rights.

The excessive caution many people show with respect to Falun Gong has the same source as the non-appearance of politicians when the Dalai Lama visits. That source is fear of what the Chinese authorities may do to them. For an Amer-

ican like myself, probably the worst possible is a harassing phone call from the Chinese embassy or denial of a visa. Since my research is about China, I value the opportunity to go there. But I do not believe that a free person in a free country should act differently than they would be inclined to, out of fear of a foreign autocracy. But many do.

For Chinese the possible penalty is, of course, death.

I have the privilege of knowing many outstanding Chinese—the sorts of people who make you reflect, after you get to know them, “China must really be an outstanding civilization to have produced human beings of such quality.” Indeed, one reason I went into the field of Chinese studies was my admiration for several Chinese friends I made as a teenager.

Some of my friends who are Falun Gong practitioners give me the same impression. These are outstanding people by any standard: intelligent, well-educated, hard-working, moral in their behavior, courageous, and so on. Yet the fact that they are Falun Gong practitioners leads some people to shun them. One of them, a Chinese born man of extraordinary intellectual gifts, described to me how he visited one of the top Ivy League universities in America, hoping to discuss possible graduate work with the professor of Chinese politics.



When the professor learned that my friend was a Falun Gong practitioner, not only did he discourage him from applying—he quite literally fled, running away from my friend lest an encounter with him might somehow ruin the professor’s academic life.

The professor is not all wrong. Writing this piece and expressing the views I do, over my own name, as is my rule, may cost me something with respect to the People’s Republic of China—perhaps a visa or two or more. The reason is this.

Falun Gong is not simply on Beijing’s blacklist. Its name is recorded in the blackest of black letters, for the Chinese authorities have undertaken to crush it. Its continuing existence and growing strength are among the most prickly and difficult problems facing the authorities in Beijing today. This is not because of anything Falun Gong practitioners themselves have done. Rather, it is because of what Beijing has tried to do to them—and failed.

Until 1999 Falun Gong was simply one of many of the traditional Chinese-style disciplines that were rapidly filling the spiritual vacuum left by the collapse of genuine belief in communism, which had long sustained China’s party and many of its people. To religious believers from the West—“people of the book” above all, which is to say Jews, Christians, and Muslims—Falun Gong teachings seem unfamiliar and exotic. But anyone who knows Asian religion will instantly see that Falun Gong fits into a tradition that extends back before the beginning of recorded history. This is the tradition of disciplining the body by physical exercises that are combined with the cultivation of the mind and soul through meditation. The approach is a cousin to Buddhism and a cousin to Daoism, with elements of traditional Chinese science and medicine included as well. It is furthermore rooted in China. Unlike communism, which was invented in Europe and imported to China from the USSR, the whole Falun Gong teaching is of Chinese origin—though it has made many foreign followers. In 1999, as it became popular in China, its followers therefore sought official recognition and toleration.

On April 25, 1999, to the shock and astonishment of the Chinese authorities, some 10,000 practitioners peacefully gathered outside the governmental compound at Zhongnanhai in Beijing with their appeals. Not so much the appeals, but rather the fact that such a crowd could have assembled, terrified the rulers. So the then Party Chief Jiang Zemin decided to teach a lesson about who was in charge by a scorched-earth campaign that would destroy Falun Gong once and for all. Violence was unleashed, numerous practitioners were arrested, many were tortured, some perished. But Jiang Zemin and the apparat had underestimated the group they sought to crush. He expected the campaign to wrap up within a year. Today, eight years later, Falun Gong still exists inside China and flourishes outside. Jiang Zemin and the Communist Party have failed. This is a fact that humiliates them, but also reminds them of the limits of their power to coerce. And if they cannot coerce, how are they to stay in power?

Reports of unrest, repression, rights abuses, and so forth,



come from China today in what is effectively a nonstop flow. But oddly, few observers draw the obvious implication, which is that the regime’s control is slipping and its grip on power is loosening. The People’s Republic of China has already entered, in my opinion, a period of flux and possible disorder comparable to that which brought down the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991.

Mainstream China watchers by and large discount the parallel with the USSR and the idea that the communist regime in Beijing may be wobbling. Therefore it is worth bearing in mind that on the eve of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, most Soviet specialists still did not believe what they were seeing was real.

I started out my training as a Russian specialist and I was not surprised at all. I studied Russian language in the United States and then at Leningrad State University. I traveled all over the USSR. I met lots of Russians and read all sorts of publications. The publications of the dissidents—then dismissed by most professional Soviet specialists as marginal and unrepresentative and wrong in their assessments—I found refreshingly clear and intellectually persuasive. Of course in the Soviet case, the dissidents turned out to be exactly right about the future of communism, while the famous professors at American universities were, almost without exception, wrong. I have carried that lesson over to the study of China.

The Chinese government is one that attempts to conceal what it does both from its own people and from foreigners. It is a closed elite of only a few dozen at the top that attempts above all to preserve its own power. Knowledge of what goes on within this elite is almost impossible to obtain. The elite also tries to project a certain image of what China is like abroad.

But these tasks are more difficult, not least owing to the activities of the Falun Gong. I read the Chinese language press daily. I always find *The Epoch Times* (*Dajiyuan*) particularly striking, for to me it is obvious that its reports are drawn from a network of correspondents inside China, a network that the authorities have not been able to destroy. We have all heard

## FOREWORD

of the Great Firewall of China, designed to keep Chinese off the worldwide net in favor of a net run by Beijing. Falun Gong practitioners, among them geniuses in the fields of computer sciences and electrical engineering, have made a great contribution to China by using their skills to break holes into this firewall, and allow Chinese access to the world. (At least one such person, living in the United States, was beaten almost to death in his home by unidentified assailants whom I believe were certainly sent by the Chinese authorities).

Nor is Falun Gong the only group working for freedom in China. So much activity is now under way that it is difficult to envisage the authorities ever being able to claw back the sort of control they once took for granted. That being the case, change is going to be difficult to stop.

So, far from being “marginal” as many commentators seem to imagine, the Falun Gong and other “dissident” groups in China are in fact as central to that country’s future as the Soviet dissidents of the 1970s and 1980s were to the future of Russia. Rather than flinching away from contact with them and tossing their publications aside out of a vague sense that they are irrelevant, not quite Kosher, and in any case likely to involve one in difficulties with the authorities, foreigners (and Chinese) who want to get a sense of what is really going on in China should pay at least as much attention to *The Epoch Times* as they do to the *People’s Daily*. (Of course they should read lots of other things too, as much as they can and from as many different viewpoints as possible).

Alexander Solzhenitsyn once remarked, correctly, that Soviet power would collapse if only Russians would cease absolutely to lie. Anyone who knows China today will be aware that everything from government to society to personal relations is shot through with lies, big and small, wicked and harmless. Officials give speeches they do not believe to audiences that also do not believe them, but applaud and point out their importance. It is a kind of theatre of the absurd, I suspect approaching the end of its run.

Falun Gong activities and publications are doing much to end the lying in China. Their writings are forthright, not couched in ambiguities. They do not pay the traditional homage to the achievements of communism. They call things exactly as they see them. They also espouse cures to the pathologies of communism, in the traditional Chinese values of truthfulness and human heartedness. Such behavior should be admired by free men, and feared by all despots.

This issue of *Compassion* magazine is not in fact about Falun Gong. Many of the authors are not practitioners. It is about the state of human rights and the plights of real human beings in a China that few foreigners or diplomats or even

ordinary Chinese ever see—the China of the secret police, of Nazi medicine, of cruelty, beatings, torture, and murder. The authorities do all they can to keep this ugly China invisible. We are all in debt to those Chinese who, sometimes not just at the risk but actually at the cost of their lives, have helped to make it public knowledge.

Now that this information is public, we should read it and digest it, not credulously of course, but with the same respect and the same queries we give any other source. We must not permit intimidation alone to smother facts or inhibit free speech—and freedom of conscience.

**“Falun Gong’s continuing existence and growing strength are among the most prickly and difficult problems facing the authorities in Beijing today. This is not because of anything Falun Gong practitioners themselves have done. Rather, it is because of what Beijing has tried to do to them—and failed.”**

The fact that Falun Gong practitioners are involved in this publication is, on the level of truth or falsity, of no importance.

But one has to ask, whence do people draw the courage to speak the truth and how are groups formed in China that are bonded by an iron trust that the authorities cannot break? In Nazi Germany and in the old Soviet Union, we know that spiritual strength was usually a major factor. The same would appear to be the case in China today, across the range of spiritual beliefs, from Roman Catholicism to Islam to Daoism—to Falun Gong.

My own belief, as a China specialist first and a human rights advocate only second, is that the reports in this journal are as important as anything you can read on China today. Why? First, because I believe the reports are largely or completely accurate, though I may be wrong. Second, because the fact of their appearance, in spite of every effort by the Chinese authorities to destroy the people who are publishing them, is in itself a very important fact.

Out of the fiery furnace of communism, destroying so much that was once the proud and morally admirable Chinese civilization, slowly dribbles a stream of liquid metal melted out of the wreckage—a metal that is an alloy that is so hard, owing to the heat in which it was created, and when forged so sharp—that it can cut through even the thick armor of communist disinformation and intimidation. We have seen that same process of evil processes producing the heroes who will put an end to them, in the West in a Solzhenitsyn or a John Paul II, both tempered by the horrors of Nazism and Soviet Communism, and both historically decisive.

People made of similar stuff are now being produced in China. This small magazine is testimony to that very important fact.

*Arthur Waldron, one of the world’s leading scholars of China, is the Lauder Professor of International Relations in the Department of History at the University of Pennsylvania. He has authored three books in English, and edited four others, including two in Chinese. Professor Waldron testifies regularly to both U.S. House and Senate committees.*



Somporn Lorigeranon (left), who underwent a kidney transplant in China, testifies before Congress in 2004. Lorigeranon discovered that the kidney he received was from an executed prisoner.

BY ROBERT MISIK, PROFIL MAGAZINE

HARVESTING ORGANS FROM EXECUTED PRISONERS

# Lost in Transplantation

*'Am wealthy, ill and looking for a kidney.'  
The global business for body parts is booming.  
Especially bizarre—executed prisoners are  
officially disemboweled in China. At this  
time, Manfred Nowak, the UN Special  
Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel,  
Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment, is  
taking a deep look at this macabre practice.*

## ALSO IN THIS SECTION

9 A New Form of Evil on This Planet

12 We've Got Falun Gong in Stock

11 China's Secret 6-10 Office

15 Righteous Resistance

25 Cases of Death and Torture in China

MABLE WU didn't pay any attention to her medical specialist's concerns. This 69-year old lady from Northridge, a quiet suburb in Los Angeles, traveled against her doctor's advice to the booming South China city of Dongguan in Guangzhou province. She was going to buy a new kidney for \$40,000.

Soon after her arrival, she was told that the donor of the kidney was a 30-year old man. There were another four patients at the Dongguan hospital, all from Taiwan, who already had their kidney transplant. Wu returned to California after the transplant, happy with the new kidney.

Chinese hospitals gloat without feeling embarrassed about their extravagant services. One reads on the official website of China's International Organ Transplant Center, "If you are inquiring about an organ, please transfer \$5,000. It will take no more than a week to find a suitable donor for you most of the time, once we confirm receipt of the funds, and at the most only one month."

The \$5,000 is only the down payment. One can expect at least 30,000 Euro for a kidney, 70,000 Euro for a liver, and a heart is 140,000 Euro—quite a bit more expensive.

The patients are told under complete secrecy that the organ donors are mostly executed prisoners, who are still alive at the time the recipient arrives in China.



At the same time, the Chinese contacts brag about their bizarre practice: “We do not remove organs from humans who are brain dead, because that would affect the condition of the organ.”

Lately, the highest-level Chinese entities confirm that prisons and concentration camps are used to store human parts. Juang Jeifu, the Deputy Minister of Health, admitted last year, “Besides a very few accident victims, most of the organs come from executed prisoners.” He said that those organ donors have “agreed” beforehand to be organ donors.

David Matas and David Kilgour are quite certain that this is far from the truth. Matas, a noted Canadian human rights attorney and Kilgour, the former Secretary at the Canadian Foreign

Ministry, have painstakingly investigated Chinese organ harvesting practices, and disclosed details in a report that has caused quite a stir.

The two arrived at the following: During the past six years, China’s transplant enterprise, which scarcely existed before that time, has taken a lucrative upswing. Most notably, the non-transparent transplant business began to boom after the massive repression of Falun Gong adherents—the practitioners of an esoteric sect, which Chinese officials persecute cruelly.

According to Matas and Kilgour, “several hundreds” of ill people travel to China annually for an organ transplant that is necessary for survival.

The evidence presented thus far by the two is so tight that even the United Nations has demanded a formal investigation. Manfred Nowak, a human rights lawyer from Vienna and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment, gave the Chinese regime a deadline to come clean concerning the allegations.

The issue is “definitely a case that requires investigation,” as much of the evidence points out that “humans are executed who had not even been convicted

of anything, and are killed for their organs,” he says.

In plain language: Sick people from the U.S., Canada, Saudi Arabia and many other countries are the reason people in China are executed—people who most likely would never have been executed were there no demand for organs.

There are many more executions in China than in any other country worldwide. It is unknown just how many are executed. Official numbers are not available. But a moderate guess is that

there are 1,700 executions yearly. There were over 60,000 organ transplants during the past six years. Even if each candidate for execution were to be the donor of

more than one organ, the executions would not even come close to the number of actual transplants performed over those years. This raises the suspicion that besides the “regular” executions, people are being murdered solely for their organs—to satisfy market demand.

The reason for this explosive demand is naturally the shortage of donor organs worldwide—though the demand is in some countries more dramatic than in others. Those who are waiting for a heart or an organ, but must wait in line in one’s home country and might not receive one, thus have to rely on China’s execution system.

Manfred Nowak’s office is on the fourth floor of the Schottenstift, a peaceful corner in Vienna’s first district. The Ludwig-Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights just moved there and Nowak sits there as he goes through his correspondence with the Chinese officials.

“The marketplace demands cheap organs and looks for bargains,” said the UN Rapporteur. From a moral standpoint, it sounds rather awful. “But, the accusations against China are a totally different issue. In this case, the market mechanics are coinciding with a state sanctioned suppression mechanism.”

“*The question: “Is the organ from a healthy Falun Gong practitioner?” The answer, “Correct. We will choose only a good one, because we guarantee the quality of our transplants.”*”

The market, authoritarianism, and global disparities—a fatal mix.

Novak looks unbelievably at one of the letters from the Chinese regime where they categorically deny the accusation. It’s all of two pages long.

“This is just not enough,” says Novak. “The evidence documented in the Canadian Matas-Kilgour report is much too sound [for such as short response].”

From time to time one’s breath stops when reading the report. Chinese members of the Matas-Kilgour research team called hospitals in China and identified themselves as potential clients. When asked for the availability of young and healthy organs from Falun Gong adherents, the medical head of one transplant team replied, “Yes, they are generally available to us.”

The next question by the researchers, “And what about now?” was answered with “Yes.”

Another surgeon suggested to the pretend-patient that she should approach Guangzhou’s hospitals.

“Could you find organs from Falun Gong practitioners?” “Correct” is the answer.

Next question: “Is the organ from a healthy Falun Gong practitioner?” The answer, “Correct. We will choose only a good one, because we guarantee the quality of our transplants.”

Another question, “Usually, how old are the organ suppliers?” was answered with “In their thirties.”

Client and supplier discussions such as the above are commonplace where a market system and a state-sanctioned repressive apparatus commit to a macabre relationship. In China the clinics advertise without any shame the perfect cooperation between medical people, government, and “the courts.” The old banners with the communist rallying cry that hang outside the hospitals look like a sick joke.

One of the slogans that waves in the wind reads, “Keep humans in the most important place.”

*Robert Misik is an award-winning author and political commentator based in Vienna. This article is an abridgement of the original, which was published in German on March 12, 2007.*





BY DAVID MATAS, ESQ.

A NEW FORM OF EVIL ON THIS PLANET

# Organ Harvesting Atrocities

*Mounting evidence tells a terrible tale of mutilation and murder in China. David Matas, a renowned Nazi hunter, set out to assemble it. The finding: Communist officials have acted in cahoots with surgeons, police, prison authorities, and the military to systematically carve up Falun Gong adherents for their tissues and body parts. As many as 36 such camps are said to exist, the largest holding up to 120,000 people.*

IS China harvesting organs of Falun Gong practitioners, killing them in the process? A Japanese television news agency reporter and the ex-wife of a surgeon in March 2006 claimed that this was happening in Sujiatun, China. Are those claims true?

The Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of the Falun Gong in China, an organization headquartered in Washington D.C., in May asked former Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific David Kilgour and me to investigate these claims. We released a report in July 2006 and a revised report in January 2007 which came to the conclusion, to our regret and horror, that the claims were indeed true.

The repressive and secretive nature of Chinese governance made it difficult for us to assess the claims. We were not allowed entry to China, though we tried. Organ harvesting is not done in public. If the claims are true, the participants are either victims who are killed and their bodies cremated or perpetrators who are guilty of crimes against humanity and unlikely to confess.

We examined every avenue of proof and disproof available to us, 33 in all. They are as follows.

## General considerations

China is a systematic human rights violator. The overall pattern of violations makes it harder to dismiss than any one claimed violation.

Notably, the Government of China has reduced substantially financing of the health system. Organ transplants are a major source of funds for this system, replacing the lost government funding.

The Government of China has given the military the green light to raise money for arms privately. The military is heavily involved in organ transplants to raise money for itself.

Corruption in China is also a major problem. There is huge money to be made from transplants and a lack of state controls over corruption.

### Considerations specific to organ harvesting

Technology has developed to the point where organ harvesting of innocents for their organs has become possible. Developments in transplant surgery in China fall prey to the cruelty, the corruption, the repression which pervades China.

China harvests the organs of prisoners sentenced to death without their consent. The Falun Gong constitute a prison population who the Chinese authorities vilify, dehumanize, depersonalize, marginalize even more than executed prisoners sentenced to death for criminal offences.

Also noteworthy is that there is no organized system of organ donations in China. There is a Chinese cultural aversion to organ donation.

Waiting times for organ transplants in China are incredibly short, a matter of days. Everywhere else in the world, waiting times are measured in months and years. Hospital websites post self-incriminating information boasting short waiting times for all organs for big payments.

Donor recipients whom we have interviewed tell us about the secrecy with which transplant surgery is undertaken and the heavy involvement of the military. Information given to



David Kilgour, former Canadian Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), speaks alongside Matas at a press event.

patients is kept to a minimum. Transplants are performed in military hospitals and, even in civilian hospitals, by military personnel.

There is huge money to be made in China from transplants. Prices charged to foreigners range from USD\$30,000 for corneas to \$180,000 for a liver kidney combination.

There are no Chinese transplant ethics separate from the laws which govern transplants. China does not have a self-governing disciplinary body for transplant

professionals. There are huge gaps in foreign transplant ethics. It is rare for foreign transplant ethics to deal specifically with either transplant tourism or contact with Chinese transplant professionals or transplants from executed prisoners.

The practice of selling organs in China was legal until July 1, 2006. Even today, the new law banning the selling of organs is not enforced.

Foreign transplant legislation everywhere is territorial. It is not illegal

for a foreigner in any country to go to China, benefit from a transplant which would be illegal back home, and then return home. Many states have travel advisories, warning their citizens of the perils in travel to one country or another. But no government has posted a travel advisory about organ transplants in China.

Organ transplantation surgery relies on anti-rejection drugs. China imports these drugs from the major pharmaceutical companies. No state prohibits export to China of anti-rejection drugs used for organ transplant patients.

Some state administered health plans pay for health care abroad in the amount that would be paid if the care were administered in the home country or pay for after care of patients who obtain transplants abroad. Where that happens, there is not, in any country, a prohibition of payment where the patient obtains an organ transplant in China.

### Considerations specific to Falun Gong

The Communist Party of China, for no apparent reason other than totalitarian paranoia, sees Falun Gong as an ideological threat to its existence. Yet, objectively, Falun Gong is just a set of

“*Falun Gong practitioners in prison are systematically blood tested and physically examined. Yet, because they are also systematically tortured, this testing can not be motivated by concerns over their health.*”



exercises with a spiritual component.

The threat the Communist Party perceives from the Falun Gong community has led to a policy of persecution. Persecution of the Falun Gong in China is officially decided and decreed.

Falun Gong practitioners are victims of extreme vilification. The official Chinese position on Falun Gong is that it is “an evil cult.” Yet, Falun Gong shares none of the characteristics of a cult.

Falun Gong practitioners are also victims of systematic torture and ill treatment. While the claims of organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners has been met with doubt, there is no doubt about this torture.

Falun Gong practitioners have been arrested in huge numbers. They are detained without trial or charge until they renounce Falun Gong beliefs.

There are thousands of named, identified Falun Gong practitioners who died as a result of torture. If the Government of China is willing to kill large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners through torture, it is not that hard to believe they would be willing to do the same through organ harvesting.

Many practitioners, in attempt to protect their families and communities, have not identified themselves once arrested. These unidentified are a particularly vulnerable population.

Falun Gong practitioners in prison are systematically blood tested and physically examined. Yet, because they are also systematically tortured, this testing can not be motivated by concerns over their health.

Traditional sources of transplants—executed prisoners, donors, the brain dead—come nowhere near to explaining the total number of transplants in China. The only other identified source which can explain the skyrocketing transplant numbers is Falun Gong practitioners.

The money from organ transplants to be made has led to the creation of dedicated facilities, specializing in organ transplants. The Chinese authorities must have the confidence that there exists into the foreseeable future a ready source of organs from people



A re-enactment of forcible organ harvesting, meant to raise awareness

who are alive now and will be dead tomorrow. Who are these people? A large prison population of Falun Gong practitioners provides an answer.

In a few cases, between death and cremation, family members of Falun Gong practitioners were able to see the mutilated corpses of their loved ones. Organs had been removed.

We had callers phoning hospitals throughout China posing as family members of persons who needed organ transplants. In a wide variety of locations, those who were called asserted that Falun Gong practitioners (reputedly healthy because of their exercise regime) were the source of the organs. We have recordings and telephone bills for these calls.

We also interviewed the ex-wife of a surgeon from Sujiatun who had said her husband personally removed the corneas from approximately 2,000 anaesthetized Falun Gong prisoners Sujiatun hospital in Shenyang city in northeast China during the two year period before October, 2003. Her testimony was credible to us.

There have been two investigations independent from our own which have addressed the same question we have addressed, whether there is organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners in China—one by Kirk Allison of the University of Minnesota, another by European Parliament Vice

President Edward McMillan-Scott. Both have come to the same conclusion we did. These independent investigations corroborate our own conclusion.

The Government of China has responded to the first version of our report in an unpersuasive way. Mostly, the responses have been attacks on the Falun Gong. The fact that the Government of China, with all the resources and information at its disposal—resources and information we do not have—was not able to contradict our report suggests that our conclusions are accurate.

It is easy to take each element in isolation, and say that this element or that does not prove the claim. But it is their combination which led us to the chilling conclusion to which we came.

Our report has 25 different recommendations. Virtually every precaution one can imagine to prevent the harvesting of organs of Falun Gong practitioners in China is not in place. All of these precautions should be put in place.

But there is one basic recommendation we make which must be implemented immediately: Organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners in China must stop.

*David Matas is a leading international human rights lawyer based in Winnipeg,*



# Chinese Doctors: We've Got Falun Gong in Stock

*Perhaps no evidence of the killings described herein is greater than the admissions of physicians in China's own hospitals. The following are transcripts from conversations recorded during the Kilgour-Matas investigation by undercover researchers.*

## June 8, 2006: Mishan City Detention Center, Heilongjiang province

**M:** Do you have Falun Gong [organ] suppliers? ...

**Mr. Li:** We used to have, yes.

**M:** ... what about now?

**Mr. Li:** ... Yes.

.....

**M:** Can we come to select, or you provide directly to us?

**Mr. Li:** We provide them to you.

**M:** What about the price?

**Mr. Li:** We discuss after you come.

.....

**M:** How many [Falun Gong suppliers] under age 40 do you have?

**Mr. Li:** Quite a few.

.....

**M:** Are they male or female?

**Mr. Li:** Male

.....

**M:** Now, for ... the male Falun Gong [prisoners], how many of them do you have?

**Mr. Li:** Seven, eight, we have [at least] five, six now.

**M:** Are they from countryside or from the city?

**Mr. Li:** Countryside.

## March 16, 2006: Shanghai Jiaotong University Hospital's Liver Transplant Center

**M:** I want to know how long [the patients] have to wait [for a liver transplant].

**Dr. Dai:** The supply of organs we have, we have every day. We do them every day.

**M:** We want fresh, alive ones.

**Dr. Dai:** They are all alive, all alive...

**M:** How many [liver transplants] have you done?

**Dr. Dai:** We have done 400 to 500 cases... Your major job is to come, prepare the money, enough money, and come.

**M:** How much is it?

**Dr. Dai:** If everything goes smoothly, it's about RMB 150,000... RMB 200,000.

**M:** How long do I have to wait?

**Dr. Dai:** I need to check your blood type... If you come today, I may do it for you within one week.

**M:** I heard some come from those who practice Falun Gong, those who are very healthy.

**Dr. Dai:** Yes, we have. I can't talk explicitly to you over the phone.

**M:** If you can find me this type, I am coming very soon.

**Dr. Dai:** It's ok. Please come.

**M:** ... What is your last name?...

**Dr. Dai:** I'm Doctor Dai.

## March 14, 2006: Zhengzhou Medical University Organ Transplant Centre in Henan Province

**Dr. Wang:** ... For sure, [the organ] is healthy... If it's not healthy, we won't take it.

**M:** I've heard that those kidneys from Falun Gong practitioners are better. Do you have them?

**Wang:** Yes, yes, we pick all young and healthy kidneys...

**M:** That is the kind that practices this type of [Falun] Gong.

**Wang:** For this, you could rest assured. Sorry I can't tell you much on the phone.

**M:** Do you get [them] out of town?

**Wang:** ... We have local ones and out of town ones.

.....

**M:** What is your last name?

**Wang:** Wang. ■





Beijing plainclothes police forcefully remove a Falun Gong demonstrator from Tiananmen Square

BY SARAH COOK

# China's Secret 6-10 Office

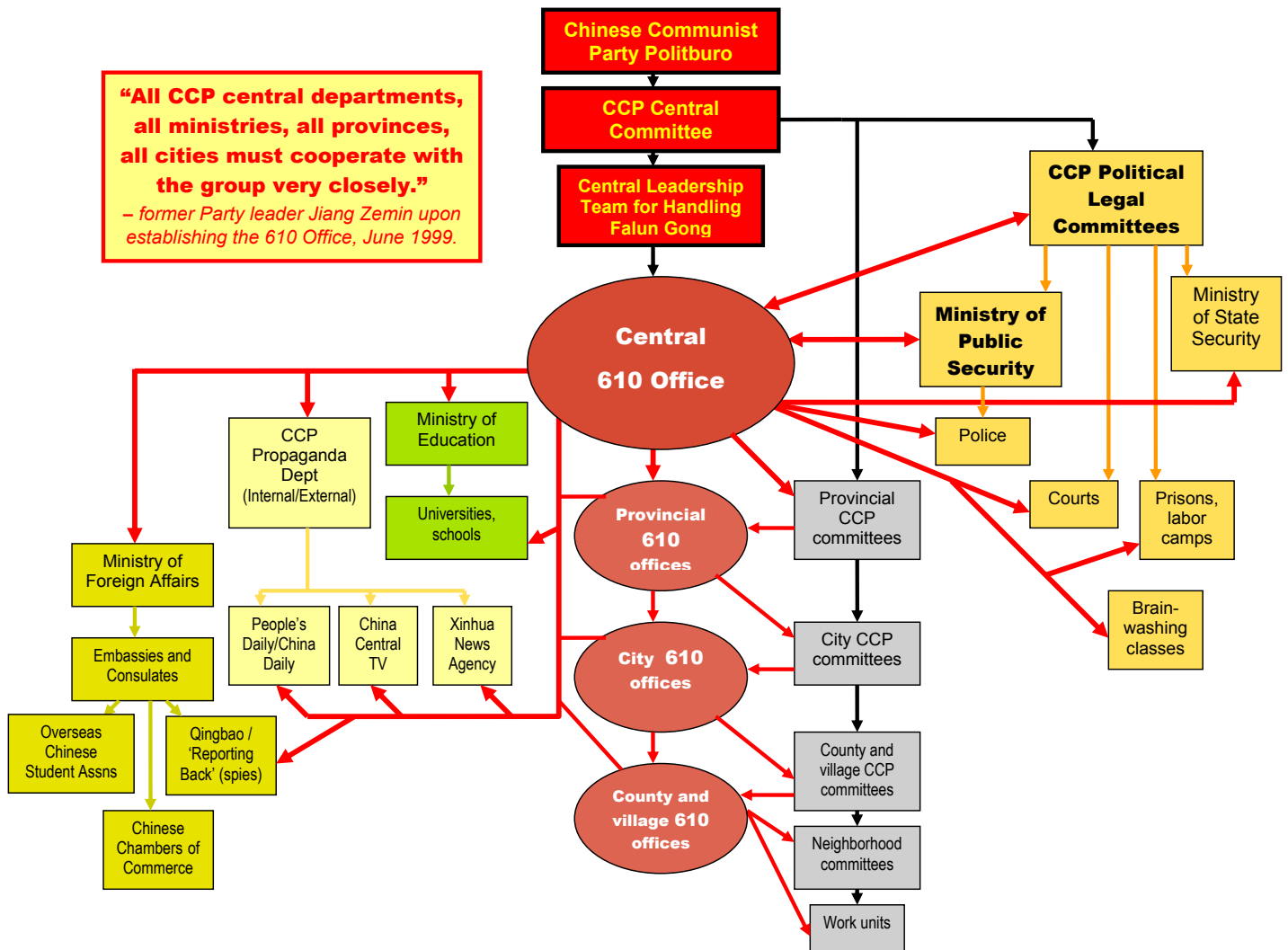
*Most persons, including policy makers, know little to nothing about China's ultra-secretive 6-10 Office. But the Office's mandate—to “eradicate” the Falun Gong of China—should place it firmly atop most anyone's list of concerns. Created on June 10, 1999, hence the name “6-10,” the operative has been given extraordinary powers to coerce, threaten, and punish, and exercises them daily.*

CHINESE officials deny it exists. Western media and scholars barely mention it in passing. And Chinese lawyers compare it to the Gestapo. It is called the 6-10 Office, and it is the extra-legal police task force responsible for carrying out the mission of eliminating Falun Gong.

There is no legislation establishing the 6-10 Office—named after its June 10, 1999 date of creation—nor are there laws delineating its powers. Instead, it was established by former Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin and announced in his speech to elite cadres over a month before Falun Gong was officially banned. Jiang's orders for the new bureau? “Immediately organize forces,” “form battle strategies,” and “get fully prepared for the work of disintegrating [Falun Gong].”

Copies of Jiang's speech about the 6-10 Office were immediately circulated to every level of China's bureaucracy, telling cadres they “must cooperate” closely with the 6-10 and its affiliates. Aided by the fact that all Chinese judges were Communist Party members, Jiang essentially placed the agency above the law, in violation of Article 5 of China's constitution.

As the persecution intensified, so did Falun Gong adherents' determination to continue practicing and to demand redress. The regime's response



was to grant the 6-10 Office increasingly wide-ranging powers. Jiang gave orders to use “every means necessary,” a mandate that led to what the 6-10 Office soon became most notorious for—the use of extreme torture.

Along with beatings to the face and body with heavy objects, some of the most common torture techniques that 6-10 personnel administer or supervise include sleep deprivation for days and weeks, shocks to sensitive body parts with up to six high voltage cattle prods simultaneously, the prying out of fingernails, and force-feeding human excrement.

“The immoral act that has shaken my soul most is the 6-10 Office and policeman’s regular practice of assault-

ing women’s genitals,” wrote Beijing human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng after a 2005 investigation into abuses against Falun Gong in northeastern China. “Of those persecuted, almost every woman’s genitals and breasts and every man’s private parts have been sexually assaulted in a most vulgar fashion. Almost all who have been persecuted, be they male or female, were stripped naked before being tortured.”

The aim of such methods is to extract forced confessions and “transformation,” marked by denunciation of Falun Gong. But for thousands, the result has been death.

In addition to torture, 6-10 agents administratively sentence Falun Gong

adherents directly to labor camps, detention centers, and brainwashing classes—where they can be locked away for three years without a day in court.

### The puppeteer

With such over-arching authority, one would expect the 6-10 Office to have an enormous staff, but available evidence indicates its manpower is surprisingly limited. According to an official webpage belonging to the municipality of Penglai, a Shandong province city of 490,000, the 6-10 Office there consists of only seven people.

The 6-10 Office’s real power lies in its ability to force the hands of other Party and government bodies. Tian-



jin's central 6-10 branch, for instance, employs 50–60 staff who can directly order the city's 30,000-strong police force, with one 6-10 officer often supervising over 100 ordinary policemen, according to the city's former 6-10 operative Hao Fengjun.

Thus, it was the Central 6-10 Office that directed the arrest of over 5,000 Falun Gong practitioners in Changchun in March 2002. "Every day the police 'interrogated' all of the practitioners on the 6-10 Office's blacklist," said Wang Yuhuan, who was arrested at the time and later spoke with Gao.

Similarly, when Gao and another lawyer tried visiting their client, a Falun Gong practitioner held in a labor camp, Gao recalls being told that administrators could approve requests to see any inmate. But to see a Falun Gong practitioner, "we would need special approval from the 6-10 Office," camp officials said.

Guo Guoting, another Chinese rights lawyer, tells of a similar experience when he sought permission to see a Falun Gong practitioner imprisoned in Shanghai. When it comes to Falun Gong prisoners, the 6-10 Office calls the shots, he said in an interview from Vancouver, Canada, where he now lives in exile. "As for the prisons themselves, they have no power."

This reach also extends to courtrooms, Guo says. "I know that the Falun Gong cases are not decided by the judge, but according to the 6-10 Office's instructions. They handle these cases."

How does the 6-10 Office pull this off, then? How has it managed to garner such power? The answer lies in its structure and the way it has latched onto existing Chinese Communist Party machinery.

After a Leadership Team and 6-10 Office were established under the CCP's Central Committee, corresponding bodies were created at every administrative level as well as in major social organizations, large companies, work units, and universities. Each branch is closely linked to the local Party committees, the political-legal committees, or Public Security Bureau offices.

The above-mentioned Penglai 6-



A woman surnamed Cao is helped by neighbors after being beaten in the street by 6-10 Office agents of Laishui county, Hebei province, China.

10 Office, for example, is listed under the political-legal committee, part of a national network of CCP organs that oversee arrests, interrogations and prosecutions. Such connections are what enable the 6-10 Office to manipulate the criminal justice system.

The website of the Public Security Bureau assigned to Qingdao's Ocean University of China reports that the school established an office for the purpose of "disposing of the Falun Gong problem, namely the 6-10 Office, within the school's public security [bureau]." The Women's Federation in Jinan flaunted on its website that a study it conducted after monitoring local residents who practice Falun Gong was published in 6-10 Office newsletters.

But it is through a still-pervasive Party structure that the 6-10 Office is able to penetrate down to the most basic units of Chinese society. An internal memo dated April 21, 2001 was addressed to all "working committees, village and town committees, and neighborhood committee offices," in west Beijing's Mentougou district. It relays orders to increase local surveillance of Falun Gong and for "every work unit" to integrate "inspecting and controlling... with the current re-

education work."

The circular further instructs township and neighborhood committees to "closely cooperate with the work launched by the public security organs," as they search door-to-door for Falun Gong adherents.

Neither the close surveillance nor the Party's belief in its imperative-ness appears to have faded with time, either. A different memo dated April 2006 gives the same instructions, almost verbatim, to Party committees at the township and county levels.

### Quotas and cash

While some local officials have enthusiastically followed such instructions, others are hesitant to act against their neighbors. Indeed, when Falun Gong was first banned, there were reports of public indifference or even silent opposition to the campaign. Under such circumstances, the 6-10 Office developed various incentive mechanisms to pressure lower officials and ordinary citizens to cooperate.

In 2000, *The Wall Street Journal's* Ian Johnson, who won a Pulitzer for his coverage of Falun Gong, described a "responsibility system" that the 6-10 Office instituted. Under this arrangement, local officials were fined poten-



tially ruinous sums for every practitioner from their jurisdiction who reached Beijing in order to petition the central government.

Such evaluation became more formalized over time. A 2002 chart from Guangzhou shows a complex system for awarding and deducting points based on collaboration with the 6-10 Office.

The table is to be completed by each township and neighborhood in the Tianhe district as part of its year-end assessment. Among the items listed are: "Deduct 8 points for every practitioner who has not been transformed"; for failing to "establish a personal dossier for every Falun Gong practitioner... deduct 3 points per person"; and "for every time a group of more than three people gathered to exercise together in public, deduct 5 points."

Another common 6-10 technique is imposing quotas on each level below. A typical quota includes the number of practitioners that need to be arrested over a certain period of time.

Officers who fail to meet their annual quota face demotion or may even lose their jobs. Hao Fengjun, the former

Tianjin 6-10 officer, says he had a change of heart after he witnessed how a woman named Sun Ti, who practices Falun Gong, was tortured as part of the "transformation process." As his disillusionment with the 6-10 Of-

ficework increased, so did the severity of the measures used to keep him in line.

Hao tells of one episode in February 2004 when he was placed in solitary confinement, made specifically for policemen, for 30 days after calling the state's anti-Falun Gong propaganda "lies."

The former policeman says that during his detention he was not allowed to call his family. The cold temperature in the cell made his hands "swollen like steamed buns" and his ears emit pus. After being released, he was moved to the mailroom until he fled to Australia in 2005 with a bundle

of smuggled 6-10 documents.

Though he says many of his colleagues disapprove of their work, plenty others were quick to tap into the 6-10 Office's system of rewards. "There were people who worked very hard because the more Falun Gong practitioners they arrested, the more bonuses they would get," says Hao.

Even more lucrative than arresting practitioners in China is collecting intelligence on overseas adherents; basic information about practitioners' personal lives, if deemed valuable, typically fetches as much as 50,000 yuan (over \$6,000). Through a system of informants otherwise leading ordinary lives overseas, the 6-10 builds entire profiles of overseas communities. Hao says he "personally received intelligence information about Falun Gong practitioners in Australia, the United States, and Canada" so detailed as to reveal where people worked and which activities they joined.

#### Is it working?

Since Falun Gong protests on Tiananmen Square died down in 2002, a prevailing sentiment among many Western journalists and scholars is that the Communist Party has succeeded, perhaps brutally, in crushing the group.

Yet Party documents and insiders tell a different story. In 2006, 6-10 Offices were still concerned that Falun Gong banners were being too visible. In 2005, Chinese authorities reportedly confiscated 4.62 million items of Falun Gong material. The Party still ranks Falun Gong as first among the "five poisons" it fears most (democracy advocates, Taiwan independence supporters, Tibetans, and East Turkistan activists being the others).

"We were all clear," Hao says, "that our internal communication was all about how the persecution is failing."

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“[The Party] set up a bureau called Office 610...whose job was to mobilize the country's pliant social organizations. Under orders from the Public Security Bureau, churches, temples, mosques, newspapers, media, courts and police all quickly lined up behind the government's simple plan: to crush Falun Dafa. Within days, the first arrests were made.”

*Ian Johnson,  
The Wall Street Journal*





BY LEVI BROWDE

# Righteous Resistance

*A grassroots movement, like no other in history, is growing in China*

It used to be you could hardly turn a corner in China without a taste of Falun Gong. Practitioners filled the nation's parks at the break of dawn for their Tai-chi-like exercises. Its texts, regularly bestsellers, lined the shelves of Wangfujing's bookstores. And in the summer of 1999, countless adherents filled the streets of China's capital in protest of an unlawful ban that would soon to morph into what leading human rights attorneys have called "genocide."

If in the 1990s Falun Gong was in the Chinese public's eye, as the new century approached so too was it in the West's: in 1999 and 2000 reports of bold Falun Gong pro-

tests on Tiananmen Square as well as, often, their tragic consequences, were daily news in the Western press. Most any avid news reader could claim at least some inkling of familiarity with the group and its ban.

But since then, as told in the essay here by Leeshai Lemish (page 17), Falun Gong has largely disappeared off the media's radar, if not the public's consciousness. And indeed, gone are the days of thousands assembled in protest at the symbolic heart of the Chinese state; the trademark yellow banners, shouts of protest, and open shows of police violence in response have largely been absent over the past five years.

Then where has the Falun Gong gone, if anywhere? And what has become of it? Has the world's largest communist state—a Goliath against a David by any reckoning—pulled off its proposed "solution" to the "Falun Gong problem"—that is, "eradication"? Many have read the absence of public protest as a tacit "yes." However, little could be further from the truth.

The force, or inspiration, behind Falun Gong's early protests has not died out, and much less has its following. Quite the opposite, it has only grown, matured, and evolved. With a tenacity born of spiritual conviction, the group has weathered eight years of brutality to today stand as a catalyst for social and political change in China on a scale few could have imagined. At present it is waging a human rights effort comprised of everything from phone calls to flyers, public exposés to cable splicings, underground print shops, and even the arts. And daily, a chorus of non-Falun Gong voices is joining in, tired of oppressive rule, to demand change.

As little-known as this is in the West, it likely amounts



## ANALYSIS

to the single largest grassroots movement in the history of China—if not the world. Never has Chinese history seen a movement of the sort, blending as it does nonviolence, high-tech, and religious conviction.

This is a story that, once complete, will likely be told in China for generations to come.

### Coercion and Crisis

By late 2001, China's Falun Gong found themselves at the receiving end of a Maoist-style campaign designed to "eradicate" the meditation group. For many the darkest days of communist rule had returned.

It was in that year China's leaders officially sanctioned "the systematic use of violence against the group," according to the *Washington Post*, combined with "a network of brainwashing classes" and a campaign to "weed out followers neighborhood by neighborhood and workplace by workplace... No Falun Gong member is supposed to be spared." The *Post* told of James Ouyang, a 35-year-old electrical engineer, and other adherents like him "being beaten, shocked with electric truncheons, and forced to undergo unbearable physical pressure." One Party official who had advised the regime on the suppression stated that, "All the brutality, resources and persuasiveness of the Communist system is being used—and is having an effect."

And so it seemed. Ouyang, as the *Post's* story recounted, had by the time of his release from labor camp confinement denounced Falun Gong's teachings and rejected the practice. He had joined the ranks of the "reformed," as Party officials call them. Statistically, his break from the practice meant one less student of the Falun Gong.

But was this what Ouyang really wanted? Was it an expression of his own will, of free choice, or of some realization? Hardly.

The *Post* story tells in heart-wrenching detail how Ouyang was "reduced to an 'obedient thing'" over the course of ten days of torture. He was stripped and interrogated for five hours at a time. Any failure to reply "correctly" (with a "yes") led to repeated shocking with electric truncheons. He was ordered to stand still facing a wall; for any movement, he was shocked; for collapsing of fatigue, he was shocked. By day six Ouyang couldn't so much as see straight—the result of staring at plaster three inches from his face all that time. He was then shocked yet again, his knees having buckled, after which he finally gave in to the guards' demands. For the following three days he denounced Falun Gong's teachings. Still officers continued to shock him, causing him to repeatedly soil himself. Only by day 10 was the de-

nunciation deemed "sufficiently sincere" by authorities. He was then transferred to brainwashing classes, where after 20 days of 16-hour sessions and a formal, videotaped rejection of Falun Gong, Ouyang finally "graduated."

Cases of "reform" like Ouyang's are quickly held up by Party officials as models of success. Hence the videotaping. To the larger world outside the labor camp, or those tucked away in Beijing's central leadership compound, it looked indeed as if the Party-state was scoring "victories" against the Falun Gong.

But lost upon onlookers was—and often still is—the

tenuous nature of such "successes." Few have considered how terribly forced, and fragile, they are. They are predicated upon the regime's ability to coerce. They demand of people statements they do not believe in, and do so, often, with stunning displays of cruelty. The "transformed" individual, once back out in the world, is always a liability for the state. He must be made to continually feel threatened, to be reminded of the pain and brutality once felt. He must be isolated, lest interac-

tions with other, "unreformed" adherents rekindle that original affinity with the practice. And he must be deprived, in terms of access to the written teachings of the practice, or even dissenting (non-state controlled) information about what is being done to its followers. Failing any of these coercive measures, the "transformation" might well wear off.

This has of course been a dangerous proposition for a government that cannot afford to provide basic education or health care to hundreds of millions of rural citizens who suffer abject poverty, or that witnessed some 87,000 riots and "mass incidents" just two years ago. Does it really have the resources, or the charisma, to pull off such tactics forever? As one *New York Times* correspondent put it, writing in 1999, "Has it come to this: that the Chinese Communist Party is terrified of retirees in tennis shoes who follow a spiritual master in Queens?"

Nor would it seem China's rulers have considered the long-term stakes of the campaign. What does it mean for the world's largest political regime to outlaw and try to "eradicate" a group of meditators who aspire to live a life of virtue? The Xinhua News Agency, the official mouthpiece of China's Communist Party, affirmed what the Party was up against in an unwittingly candid commentary just one week into the campaign. Xinhua declared that, "In fact, the so-called 'truth, kindness, and forbearance' principle preached by [Falun Gong's teacher] Li Hongzhi has nothing in common with the socialist ethical and cultural prog-

“China's Falun Gong found themselves at the receiving end of a Maoist-style campaign designed to "eradicate" the meditation group. For many the darkest days of communist rule had returned.

ress we are striving to achieve.”

Others, such as China-analyst Willy Lam, soon observed the deadly fruits the Party was reaping. Writing in the same year of Ouyang’s ordeal (2001), Lam declared that, “China is on the brink of a *chengxin* crisis that threatens not only to tear asunder its moral fabric, but derail economic and political reforms.” “*Chengxin*,” Lam explains elsewhere in his essay, is the Chinese term for “honesty” and “trustworthiness.”

Today, nearly a decade into the campaign against Falun Gong, the *chengxin* crisis has sunk to new depths as witnessed in the by-now daily revelations of tainted goods issuing forth from China. Few have connected poisoned toothpaste to the plight of Falun Gong, but the connection seems hardly a stretch. Knock out of the picture 100 million of your country’s best citizens, and scare witless anyone who would try to live similarly to them, and you have a recipe for disaster. Or poisoned cough syrup, if you will.

### Returning

Many persons like Ouyang never really came to loathe Falun Gong. The denunciations for the vast majority of “reformed” adherents were wrung out of them, quite literally, with torture and threat. What they did learn to loathe, however, was the Party-state. Ouyang told the *Washington Post*, “Now, whenever I see a policeman and those electric truncheons, I feel sick, ready to throw up.” The professions of Party loyalty secured in the bowels of China’s gulag, in other words, did not quite amount to Revolutionary zeal.

Instead, witnesses from China suggest, they bred a deep resentment of the oppressor. And questioning. As the title of an essay by Falun Gong’s teacher put it, “Coercion cannot change people’s hearts.” Falun Gong had given so many so much—vibrant health, newfound meaning, mended relationships, and a positively contagious sense of optimism. To renounce the practice was for many a return to a state of brokenness.

It wasn’t long, then, before public declarations nullifying the forced recanting began to appear. Titled “solemn declarations,” the statements started appearing on Falun Gong’s main website, *Minghui.org*, *en masse*. Hundreds of adherents were writing professions every day. Tong Shixun, who was abused by authorities in a Shandong province labor camp, wrote in September of 2001 that he wished to “solemnly declare as null and void everything I said and wrote while I was not in my right mind as a result of intense persecution.” Like many others, his declaration was accompanied by a vow to resist the persecution. “I’m determined about my practice, and will seize this opportunity of time to expose the evil taking place,” Tong wrote. “I will redouble my efforts to clarify the truth and set right my mistakes.”

Today, six years later, a staggering 373,000 some state-



A Falun Gong adherent is arrested on Tiananmen Square for unfurling a banner.

ments have been received by the website. The figure gives a glimpse at the massive changes happening. Consider what goes into each single statement. First the individual must be willing to make a public declaration. This act alone can land, and has landed, one back in the gulag. Then the person must have access to the Internet; unlike in the United States, only 1 in every 26 persons in China owns a computer, let alone has Internet access. Additionally, just to reach the *Minghui* website—and know of the possibility of a declaration—requires access to sophisticated software, so tight is China’s Internet censorship. Finally, to communicate one’s statement to the website is itself a task, as a vast array of Internet filters and monitors are in place to prevent any communication about Falun Gong from taking place. We might imagine that for every person who issues a statement that makes it through and gets tallied, another 50 adherents exist who have returned to the practice unannounced.

Accounts from even remote, rural villages received by *Minghui*’s editors and the Falun Dafa Information Center confirm this sense. Many report that the vast majority of their locale’s pre-1999 ban practitioners have returned to Falun Gong, often with a commitment stronger for it.

In some cases taking up Falun Gong is not so much a matter of return, but beginning. Such was the case for 32-year-old Zhang Xueling, of Shandong province. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Zhang took up the practice after a chance encounter in jail. Zhang had been incarcerated for probing the death of her mother, Chen

## ANALYSIS

Zixiu, 58, who was murdered by Chinese police for her faith. In prison Zhang met a number of Falun Gong prisoners of conscience. They were the only persons kind to her in the prison, she observed. The experience moved her. After her release she herself began to practice Falun Gong.

"I used to be a materialist and believed that everything in life could be gained from hard work," Zhang told the *Journal*. "But Falun Dafa makes more sense. At its root are three principles: truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. If we adhere to these, isn't that a deeper meaning to life?"

Sources in China point out, however, that many have held to the faith right through, defying any attempts at Party "transformation." Some have simply gone untouched. Many have weathered the storm. Others, as in the case of Ms. Gao Rongrong, a 37-year-old accountant in Shenyang city, have paid the ultimate price. Gao was tortured to death in the grisliest of fashions for refusing to recant. To date more than 3,000 Falun Gong are known to have been killed in the persecution.

### Conviction

If the Falun Gong's mounting size has grown unnoticed to outside observers, so too has its strength. Particularly, its strength of conviction. If the greatest nonviolent movements of the 20th century are any indicator, however, this is an oversight. Gandhi once proclaimed that, "A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history." Much less one that is millions strong, tempered, and growing.

The first layer of conviction is the more immediate of

the two. From the fateful July day in 1999 when their faith was outlawed, the Falun Gong have considered their plight to be (quite rightly) a case of flagrant injustice. That is, the banning, and subsequent escalation to violence and killing, contravened China's constitution on multiple fronts as well as international covenants signed by China. Freedom of religious belief, at least on paper, is ensured in China. It was not until October that

China's legislature enacted laws that would legitimate the group's suppression—never mind that they were being applied retroactively. The practice had broken no laws with its quiet, placid gatherings in China's parks, nor even with its mass gathering to petition the central government near Zhongnanhai, the central leadership compound, in April of 1999 after several of its practitioners were physically assaulted by Tianjin city police. (In fact, it had been Tianjin authorities who directed them to the central petitioning office in Bei-

jing.)

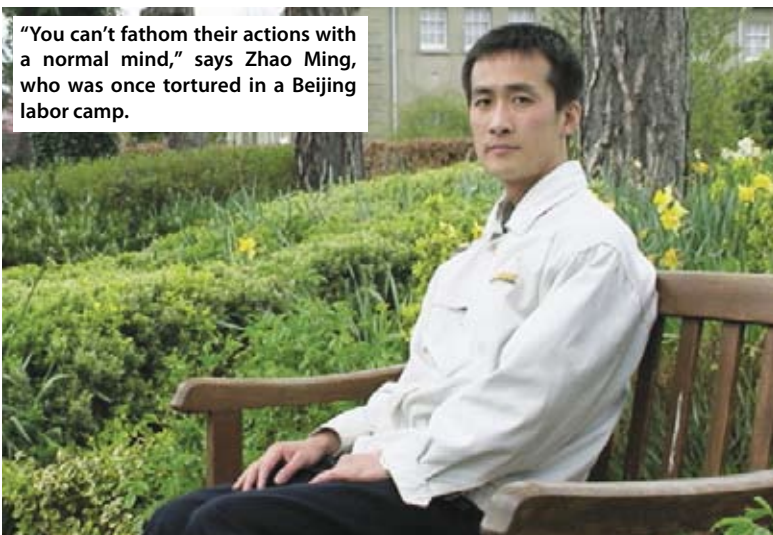
This is a conviction that runs deep, for it is shaped on a spiritual level. Many quickly realized the persecution was directed at not so much what they did, as what they believed—at who they were. The stakes were altogether different. What was on the line was not so much loss of rights, but of self, or soul.

One practitioner from China, Zhao Ming, has described this sense, saying, "My personal experience shows that the persecution of Falun Gong is completely targeting our belief." Zhao was tortured in a Beijing labor camp, where he was held for two years. "[It] is completely persecution of our spiritual belief. We didn't do anything illegal ... torture is used to 'transform' people into machine-like puppets without a conscience, who can be used as instruments to harm others." Indeed, if the whole basis of the Falun Gong is to become morally outstanding and healthy persons, one wonders what exactly China's rulers wish to "transform" them into instead.

But brainwashing is not easily enacted in this case, of course. For so many of the Falun Gong, the practice proved a wellspring of inspiration and goodness. For some it was a source of renewed health and vigor. For others it was a philosophy with deep resonances, a new lens through which to see and navigate life, at once empowering and ennobling. It also gave meaning to suffering, much as in the Buddhist faith; most came to see it as suffused with spiritual value. Thus, two things naturally followed with the onset of persecution. First, it was not something people were about to drop overnight. And secondly, they were willing to suffer for their faith. The persecution was not just an affront on politically-

**“Many quickly realized the persecution was directed at not so much what they did, as what they believed—at who they were. The stakes were altogether different. What was on the line was not so much loss of rights, but of self, or soul.”**

"You can't fathom their actions with a normal mind," says Zhao Ming, who was once tortured in a Beijing labor camp.





granted rights: it was a form of violence to humanity, or even to the cosmos. The process of self-cultivation, as they call it (see page 53), is a path of effacing self as much as anything, of putting others first, even at the expense of one's own welfare, when need be. The Party, in a word, had picked on something bigger than even its own size.

But conviction has also had a second layer for China's Falun Gong amidst all this, one that is more outwardly directed. This latter conviction is born of a sense of compassion, of outward concern, nurtured by the practice. Recall that the process of self-cultivation (see page 57) is a path of effacing self as anything, of putting others first, even at the expense of one's own welfare, if need be. In this case, though, it is not so much fellow Falun Gong that the adherent is concerned over (though this is certainly the case as well), but the average fellow citizen. Other citizens are caught up in the ordeal, and equally victims, the Falun Gong feel. That is, insofar as the individual has been misled by the Party's crusade against the Falun Gong, and learned, from it, to hate.

When practitioners of the Falun Gong speak of such persons as having been "poisoned" by Party propaganda, they refer to a form of harm and contamination to the soul. And as the Falun Gong teaches to love one's neighbor as oneself, few are the adherents not compelled to extend a helping hand to these persons. One member likened it to helping a sick child who, when infected, is compromised and at risk but oblivious to it. I have seen a number of persons speak similarly of such folk, the "other victims," with tears in their eyes. History supports Falun Gong's perspective here, for how else could one view, say, the youths of Germany who, through a daily diet of anti-semitic rants, learned over time to hate the Jew and even take part in his slaughter.

Though probably most of China's Falun Gong have never heard of Martin Luther King Jr., daily they would seem to testify to his pronouncement: "At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love."

### From Banners to Bandwidth

Of this conviction has arisen an incredible tale of unlikely, and unsung, acts of tremendous courage. And acts from those we might least expect—the elderly, the young, the broken—to be a force for change in China. What began as a simple call for a breathing space has grown into a massive rights effort involving a stunning array of participants and means. Few in the West have a sense for the history now in the making.

At first the Falun Gong's efforts were informed by a belief, perhaps at times naïve, that the persecution was in effect a colossal misunderstanding. That is, that the Communist Party leadership had somehow got it wrong; they didn't understand what Falun Gong was about, really. How else could this have happened, many recall



A banner espousing the tenets of Falun Gong—Truth, Compassion, Tolerance—hung publicly in China.

asking, when the group, which has no political ambitions, strove only to be the best of citizens and neighbors?

Thus it was off to the capital of Beijing and other provincial centers to petition authorities. Since the dawn of the Chinese empire a system whereby citizens can "petition" the ruler has been in place, allowing ordinary citizens a means to express grievances and seek redress. As many as 10 million petitions were filed in one recent year, reports Human Rights Watch, and at any given time some 10,000 such persons ("petitioners" as they're called) might throng Beijing's streets.

It was a natural first recourse thus when the ban was announced on July 22, 1999. And indeed, just a few months prior, on April 25, a happy resolution seemed to have come about when several thousand Falun Gong petitioned the central government; then-Premier Zhu Rongji had personally met with representatives of the group and given assurances.

What adherents could little have imagined, however, was just how disinterested authorities were in hearing Falun Gong's concerns. Untold thousands found themselves arrested for trying to petition, though it is a state-appointed right. Within a short time it was learned all petition offices had orders to arrest any Falun Gong who came through their doors. Jiang Zemin, who ordered the suppression, was said to have burned barrels of letters sent to him by beleaguered members of the group.

## ANALYSIS

Soon violence came into the picture, with increasing frequency and degree. Witnesses reported beatings in public. Deaths came to light. And the news media clearly had but one agenda—one that was set by the Party. By the end of the campaign's first month the *People's Daily*, the voice of the Party, had carried a staggering 347 articles denouncing the Falun Gong. Propaganda marathons piped into homes throughout the nation around the clock through state-run television, branding Falun Gong a menace to society. And merely seven days into the campaign, authorities boasted of having confiscated more than 2 million "illegal" Falun Gong books; some cities even witnessed book burning rallies, courtesy of the Public Security Bureau.

Now the group had not only a group of thick-skulled authorities to try to enlighten—the entire citizenry now stood to be confused. Adherents thus took their petitions public as it were. Prominent symbolic spaces like Tiananmen Square became the site of contestation. Farmers, businesspeople, nurses, scientists, and even young kids could be seen unfurling yellow banners. Meant to educate, as much as anything, the message often declared "Falun Gong is Good!" or "Restore Falun Dafa's Name."

Party authorities proved no more amenable, predictably, to these acts. Typically the demonstrator would meet with fists and feet from Chinese police, followed by interrogation and then jailing or three years in a labor camp. The toll was heavy, and palpably felt.

With the year 2002 a changing of the guard took place, so to speak, followed by a new era of efforts that were more sophisticated and realistic, if not more determined. It was that year that a group of 50 some Western followers of Falun Gong traveled to Tiananmen and declared, again with yellow banner, simply "Truthfulness, Compassion, Tolerance." By that time few Chinese followers were traveling to Tiananmen anymore, for various reasons, and even fewer would thereafter. It was the mark of a new era, though one in which Tiananmen would factor very little, oddly enough. Now the efforts would spread out to every city, street, alley and home.

By March of the same year, Falun Gong adherents in the northeastern city of Changchun (the practice's birthplace, notably) managed to tap into the lines of a major cable network and replace normal programming with an informational video about Falun Gong. The feature ran on eight different channels and lasted fully forty-five minutes. For thousands of city residents it was the first time in three years they were privy to independent depictions of the practice and its plight; simply trying to read about Falun Gong online could land one in jail.

**“For thousands of city residents it was the first time in three years they were privy to independent depictions of the practice and its plight; simply trying to read about Falun Gong online could land one in jail.**

So shaken was the government—local as well as central—that marshal law was ordered in Changchun and a manhunt begun. Orders were to “shoot to kill” and “shoot on sight” any seen attempting another tapping. Those involved in the episode were tracked down eventually, tortured, and killed.

Reports of similar feats of engineering soon came in from other provinces, such as Sichuan and Liaoning, with parallel Party reactions. The stakes on both sides had raised exponentially.

Around this time as well underground print shops, called “materials sites” by those involved, began mushrooming throughout the country. These were China’s closest answer to grassroots media in an informational landscape monopolized by the Party-state. Humble and roughly hewn, the sites were often tucked away in the corner of a Falun Gong adherent’s home. At their most basic, they would involve a printer of some sort; some, perhaps, a copier and possibly a computer.

Here, in cramped quarters, the determined would assemble an array of homemade media—typically flyers, pamphlets, and VCDs.

Then, usually under the cover of night, teams of practitioners (or sometimes lone individuals) would set out across a given locale to distribute the goods. By the break of dawn flyers could be seen resting in bicycle baskets and posted on city walls; VCDs slipped under front doors; or pamphlets tucked under wiperblades or perhaps in a mailbox. By March 2002 the *Washington Post* had reported that thousands of VCDs were appearing in major cities. Meanwhile, one woman who has since escaped from China, Wang Yuzhi, describes in her memoir *Chuanyue Shengsi* (*Crossing the Boundary of Life and Death*) that as early as mid-2001, she had in one three-day span printed several hundred thousand flyers, which others in Heilongjiang province then distributed. For others, as with Wang, all expenses come out of their own pockets.

With time, the materials sites have grown only more robust, as has distribution. Several cities now report regular, non-Falun Gong citizens getting into the act of printing and distributing these materials.

Banners still unfold in support of the Falun Gong in China, but in a far less geographically focused manner than in the first two years. Whereas before Tiananmen was where all good banners went to serve, in recent years they have multiplied and spread to a creative array of places and spaces. On any given morning one might awake to see banners hung from bridges, apartment balconies, trees, telephone poles, and even the walls of the local police station.

It's not just affirmative slogans that hang of late, however. Posters exposing persons, or entities, responsible for persecution now plaster targeted locales when problems come to light. Falun Gong practitioners will often canvass a given area after learning of rights abuses, often torture, at the hands of a certain police officer or official. The idea is to "expose locally," as it's called, and the effect is often immediate and palpable. An abusive prison guard might awake one day to see flyers posted on the walls of his building detailing his acts of evil at the local detention center; neighbors will likely have received the flyer, as will have relatives, co-workers, and a host of others. In a country where "saving face" reigns supreme, experience is showing that thugs can be "shamed straight," so to speak.

Such exposure gains added weight, however, when put online and brought to the attention of the outside world. While it's no simple feat to get such information out of China, volumes of it still manage to get through. A formidable part of the package is the "Fawanghuihui.org" ("Vast Net of Justice") website, which at any given time might offer profiles of as many as 51,000 "evildoers." A typical entry includes the authority's name, work unit, gender, position, and phone number.

The last part—a phone number—is critical, and ties in to another grassroots effort of incredible proportions: phone calls. With petitioning offices sealed for the Falun Gong, and no recourse through the courts, adherents have had to become a legal system unto themselves. If websites such as Fawanghuihui.org and Minghui.org serve as virtual courts, phone calls to perpetrators are certainly one of the sentences. Across China and from countries around the world, adherents have been placing volumes of calls—staggering in quantity—to those most directly responsible for the group's suffering.

But what's the hope? Not so much "shaming straight" in this case. Rather, it goes back to the convictions shared by practitioners of Falun Gong. Principal among them is that every human being, no matter how base his actions, contains within the seeds of goodness, and on this account, is to be cherished. Reaching out is seen as an act of compassion; the perpetrator is harming himself, ultimately, as he harms others. Many describe their telephone conversations as attempts to "awaken" the "good" side of the perpetrator, to stir his or her conscience. Some authorities have declared openly over the phone: "I will never harm your people again—I was wrong." Victories in life come in many forms.

Given that there is no public space allowed to China's Falun Gong, be it physical or social, victories such as these are shared in virtual spaces, such as the Internet. No entity is of greater importance here than the Minghui.org website. Now in its eighth year, the site bridges communities both within China and around the world, and much more. It produces a range of publications



Falun Gong practitioners from around the world have traveled to Tiananmen Square in supportive protest.

ready for printing and distributing in China, even offering brief videos to burn to CD, with a choice of various, discreet labels. There one can find even the nuts and bolts of successful nonviolent protest: one of the web pages diagrams the parts and assembly of a banner-slingshot (for lack of a better term) by which one can hurl and unfurl a banner high above in treetops or over telephone wires—well out of harm's reach.

The site's daily online publication, meanwhile, has become a veritable goldmine of information and inspiration. Reports of persecution in China document torture and identify victims in need of help; accounts of activities around the world provide hope and awareness; forums provide a venue for the exchange of ideas; personal essays narrate individuals' growth in the practice and fortitude in the face of oppression; and of course, "solemn declarations" allow those who have been broken by torture and brainwashing to begin anew. On any given day the site might receive communications from several hundred individuals.

This is not, of course, as easy as it sounds: Minghui.org and all of its kin are banned by the Chinese regime, and a mere visit to their webpages from inside China—should you manage to elude internet blocks—could mean a trip to prison.

Again, a coordinated international effort proves critical. Falun Gong practitioners in the West have since the earliest days of the persecution worked painstakingly to develop and deploy Internet technologies that break through the regime's censorship, and achieved astounding success. Consider this: In 2005, websites unblocked by Falun Gong's software received on average over 30 million hits per day from Chinese users. Websites such as Voice of America and Radio Free Asia have become available to Chinese through these technologies, as have the uncensored versions of search engines such as Google. No other group of Internet activists has managed to come remotely close to this degree of success.



## ANALYSIS

And again, this despite almost everything being self-funded and done on a voluntary basis.

Indeed, “a small body of determined spirits” can, if “fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission” alter the very course of history. Gandhi knew firsthand.

Internet support is just one of several helping hands from abroad, however. Falun Gong practitioners in the West have matched the sacrifices of their mainland China counterparts in their own ways, you might say. For example, while some in China were calling jails and labor camps to talk with abusive guards, those outside of China were making such calls as well. By 2005, an estimated 30–40 million had been made. Phone lines were given a workout by means of the fax as well, with overseas adherents sending an average of 300,000 faxes to China every month. So too has the larger body mailed informational VCDs and assorted publications into China.

Other efforts from the overseas community have included heavy use of Internet chatrooms as well as the broadcasting of both radio and satellite television programming into China. All, again, done without any financial compensation and on a voluntary, spare-time basis. Such is the power of conviction.

### Leaving the Party

After nearly a decade of brutality, humiliation, and privation on account of their spiritual beliefs, China’s Falun Gong have come to see the workings of the persecution apparatus in vivid relief. A sharpened assessment has come about with time, one far less optimistic, you might say.

Whereas originally certain key figures behind the awful mess could be identified (e.g., Jiang Zemin, Luo Gan, and Li Lanqing), and clearly many officials disagreed with the hamhanded measures (e.g., Zhu Rongji), with time that distinction became ever less clear; strong-arm tactics and repeated purges gradually weeded out dissent from the Party’s ranks, solidifying the apparatus. To disagree was to risk one’s career. Those most vigorous in carrying out the suppression rose quickly through the ranks, with incentives being tied to obedience at every level of the system.

The very Communist Party system itself, it became clear, was the problem. “It was rotten beyond repair,” says Erping Zhang, a spokesperson for the Falun Gong based in New York. “To change or try to fix any one part, for instance the courts, is meaningless, when everything from the media to the educational system to the labor camps is controlled by the Party and made to serve the Party. The problem is systemic beyond belief.”

Zhao Ming, who was tortured in Beijing’s Tuanhe Labor Camp, echoes Zhang’s interpretation. “They have been doing this all through the history of the People’s Republic of China. During the ‘Cultural Revolution’ they destroyed and wiped out all Chinese traditional beliefs, including Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. No Westerner can understand this. I would say you can’t fathom their actions with a normal mind.”

For many, the intensity of the cruelty and hatred they saw foisted upon them by the Party fomented, as for Zhang and Zhao, a reexamination. Was it just Falun Gong? Or had the Party done this before, and in other forms?

The answer was spelled out in a nine-part critique of the Communist Party, titled “*Nine Commentaries on the Chinese Communist Party*” or “*Jiu-ping*” (“*Nine Commentaries*”) for short af-

ter the Chinese name. The series was published by a Chinese newspaper named *Dajiyuan* (*The Epoch Times*), to which a number of Falun Gong persons contribute time. Within just one month of its release (November 2004), veritable shockwaves had been sent throughout the halls of China’s rulers and throughout the land. By that time Meng Weizai, the former director of China’s Bureau of Art and Literature, along with Huang Xiaoming, an Olympic medalist, had declared they were quitting the Party. A flood of resignations soon began that received the strongest inadvertent verification in the form of official denials from the likes of the state-run Xinhua news agency. Other Party actions, otherwise baffling, soon followed, such as mandatory study sessions and campaigns to increase “Party discipline” and to “preserve the cutting-edge nature” of the Party. Was the leadership nervous? Interest in the *Commentaries* was only piqued by this.

In a short time what were originally 100–200 daily withdrawals from the Party had swelled to thousands; on the day of this writing a total of 33,613 quit, while for June 2007 the tally was 958,587. (It should be noted that “quitting” refers to the Party itself and its two affiliate organizations—the Youth League and Young Pioneers, which many join in China with “blood oaths” at a young age.)

But why such a dramatic response, and from so many? Stephen Gregory, an editor at *The Epoch Times*, offers this: “After 55 years of lies and terror, the people of China now have the chance to know their true history. For the first time, they can share with one another the tremendous losses they have suffered under the Chinese Communist Party. For the first time, they can step back from the Communist nightmare and consider the beauty and significance of the ancient civilization that

“For the first time, they can step back from the Communist nightmare and consider the beauty and significance of the ancient civilization that the Communist Party has worked so hard to destroy.

—Stephen Gregory



Thousands have rallied globally, as depicted here in Taiwan, to support mainlanders' quitting the Party.

the Communist Party has worked so hard to destroy.”

Gregory's remarks suggest two important points, then. First, that for many, the *Commentaries* and the chance to break from the Party is almost cathartic, a cleansing of the soul, and an occasion for healing and reconciliation with self and past. Second, it is also a reclaiming—a reclaiming of Chinese culture and history, both of which have been captive to the whims and caprice of the Party for nearly six decades. Communism, as the *Commentaries* make poignantly clear, is the product of 19<sup>th</sup> century European thought, not traditional China.

The *Commentaries* in this light might be said to represent an act of *unpoliticizing*, rather than the reverse. That is, they seek to disentangle the specter of Communism from all things Chinese that it has grafted itself onto and politicized in the vilest of ways—picture Confucius being branded a “counter-revolutionary” or kids being made to smash Buddhist statues for their being “feudal superstition.” Similarly, for the Falun Gong, it is the ultimate act of *unpoliticizing* insofar as the *Commentaries* are a personal invitation to renewal and recovery of self—a self free of Party politics, free of arbitrary abuse, free of terrible cruelty. It is the ultimate in nonviolent resistance: resistance, or change, at the level of the soul.

### Impact

If banners aren't necessarily a good gauge of things, public statements from the people, by contrast, are. A growing chorus of voices from throughout China suggest that all of the Falun Gong's efforts are having an impact, and an enormous one, at that.

As early as 2000 China's prominent figures had begun to cite the example of the Falun Gong's nonviolent efforts. According to a September Reuters report, the Chinese poet Huang Beiling had “called on the country's intellectuals to follow the example of Falun Gong meditators by fighting government oppression through widespread civil disobedience.” The article quoted

Huang saying, “They have been doing this peacefully. When they're beaten, they don't hit back. The intellectual community should do the same thing.”

Liu Binyan, often called “China's conscience” and the country's most important journalist in the last 50 years, described the Falun Gong as having “unprecedented courage,” explaining that, “these people have insisted on exercising their rights even though they know perfectly well that they will be arrested and some could even face the death penalty. This kind of attitude is unprecedented in the 50-year history of the PRC.”

That attitude, and the efforts by China's Falun Gong to convey it to others, is fostering an admiration not seen in the early years. This past New Years, for example, hundreds of season's greetings to Mr. Li Hongzhi, Falun Gong's teacher, were published online, but this time with a twist. Namely, they came not from Falun Gong adherents, but from supporters and observers who found inspiration in Falun Gong's conduct. Mr. Hu Ping, a leading Chinese intellectual and author, described Falun Gong's cable-splicing as a “stunning feat,” and described the main figure, Liu Chengjun, as a “Falun Gong hero” and “a martyr in the fight for freedom of speech.”

The impact of the *Commentaries* has been particularly visible. Take for instance the call put forth more recently by Gao Zhisheng, a Christian and one of China's most prominent attorneys. “As for how to bring about nonviolent change, I would say that the Falun Gong have succeeded at finding a means to change that will not lead to the shedding of one drop of blood. That approach is, to persuade people to quit the wicked Party—a party that has done every form of evil imaginable in this world. My suggestion is to quit the Party and be closer to God!” Gao, for the record, has referred to his own quitting of the Party as “the proudest day of my life.”

Recent years have witnessed a number of defectors from China, each with a tale involving Falun Gong and

a change of heart. Chen Yonglin for instance, who was Consul for Political Affairs of the Consulate-General of China in Sydney, grew sick of his job there, which consisted largely of spying (unlawfully) on local Falun Gong devotees. One repentant defector (to Canada), Han Guangsheng, was Chief of the Shenyang [City] Justice Bureau, and oversaw camps where Falun Gong were tortured. Another who defected to Australia, Hao Fengjun, had been a police officer in China's notorious 6-10 operation—charged with eradicating the group.

Each has come forth out of a mix of conviction and regret, knowing full well the risks of going public.

All three of them have stated that it was reading the *Commentaries* that inspired their break.

While Party authorities have tried to downplay the impact of the *Commentaries*, the move is born of fear, not confidence. Consider this: A 2005 study by the OpenNet Initiative—a collaborative project between institutes at the University of Toronto, Harvard, and Cambridge—discovered that 90% of tested Chinese websites containing references to the “*Nine Commentaries*”

(*Jiu-ping*) were blocked in China—one of the three highest ratios found in the study.

Perhaps most dramatic of all turnarounds has been that of the masses of Chinese people who were coerced into mistreating Falun Gong. Chinese citizens—regular, non-Falun Gong citizens—are themselves writing “solemn declaration” statements, like those discussed in this article earlier, for publication on Minghui.org. Piece after piece describes having been intimidated, coerced, and threatened into opposing Falun Gong.

In one moving account, a man surnamed Feng described how state-run propaganda television shows demonizing Falun Gong left him terrified. So scared was he of the Falun Gong book in his house at the time, he decided to burn it. Shortly afterwards he became gravely ill. A chance encounter with a friend landed one of the Minghui.org's publications in his lap, which Falun Gong adherents in China had printed out after accessing the site through anti-web-jamming technology. It was then that he realized the television shows programmed him to hate, as had state-run newspapers. “Falun Gong shouldn't be persecuted,” Feng thus declared in his statement, and vowed to change himself for the better; he began silently reciting “Truth, Compassion, Tolerance”—Falun Gong's guiding virtues—to himself, only to discover, a few days later, that “all my ailments were gone!” Feng ends his letter by asking forgiveness.

To date more than 55,000 public statements like Feng's

have been published online, with several hundred more being submitted each week.

Even those who haven't mended their ways have given tacit affirmation to this growing momentum. History, they would seem to know, is not on their side. Chen Yonglin has indicated, for example, that many Party officials of high rank have begun anxiously sending family members abroad. Jiang Zemin and Zeng Qinghong, major figures in the genocide's orchestration, have tried to

gain certification of immigration status in Australia, Chen says—for themselves. “We're going to see the Party's collapse in the near future,” Chen confidently says.

Another unlikely nod came in 2005 when several sources inside China told of unlikely orders given within the state security apparatus. The plan this time? To begin destroying documents related to the anti-Falun Gong campaign. The move was described as “cover up work” in advance of an anticipated reversal on Falun Gong policy.

Or perhaps a larger reversal: of political rule. According to sources in China, on March 25, 2006, Heilongjiang province's Party headquarters issued a circular ordering all classified documents issued by the Party's central or provincial offices destroyed. This time, it was not just a matter of Falun Gong, but of communist operations more broadly.

Has the course of history already changed, then?

Hu Ping's assessment, again, seems prescient. Writing in 2004, Hu weighed in declaring that, “Falun Gong cannot be defeated. The Communist government of China is one of the most powerful and dictatorial political regimes in the world; for five years it has mobilized the entire nation as one machine to destroy Falun Gong, but it hasn't succeeded. Falun Gong has sustained its integrity during this unprecedented and horrendous trial.”

“Even the slightly informed have no doubt that the suppression will end in total failure. The vitality of Falun Gong cannot be underestimated, and its prospects for the future are bright.”

But how does that bode for China? Need change be threatening? Hu's assessment is reassuring: “Falun Gong is going to play a major role in the revival of moral values in China.”

For all of us in the West who use toothpaste, or have pets to feed, that alone is reason to celebrate.

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“*Falun Gong has sustained its integrity during this unprecedented and horrendous trial. Even the slightly informed have no doubt that the suppression will end in total failure. The vitality of Falun Gong cannot be underestimated.*”

—Hu Ping





BY BRIAN MARPLE



### Young Woman Disfigured, then Killed

GAO RONGRONG, 37, ACCOUNTANT (ABOVE & ABOVE LEFT, BEFORE & AFTER PERSECUTION)

Gao Rongrong, an accountant at Shenyang city's Luxun Fine Arts College, was fired from her workplace in 1999 because she was a Falun Gong practitioner. She began lodging petitions with authorities in Beijing calling for an end to the persecution campaign. Authorities then detained Gao, holding her for several months.

In July 2003, Gao was sent to the Longshan Forced Labor Camp, where she was brutally tortured. On May 7, 2004, No. 2 Brigade leader Tang Yubao and team leader Jiang Zhaohua tortured Gao for seven hours straight, sources say, leaving her with a disfigured face and nearly blind.

Gao escaped captivity on October 5, 2004, but a massive manhunt—led by politburo member Luo Gan—ensued after Gao's case was exposed online. She was again captured on March 6, 2005. Authorities kept details about her arrest under strict secrecy, and when her family members were finally able to reach her on June 12, 2005, she had already lost consciousness, her organs were atrophying, and she was hooked up to a respirator. This once attractive woman was now mere "skin and bones," they said. Gao died four days later.

# Cases of Death and Torture in China

*Behind closed doors, hidden from the world's view, a program of terrible human rights violations rages on at the behest of China's communist regime. The drive is to "transform" Falun Gong prisoners of conscience—i.e., to force them to recant their beliefs via torture and extreme coercion. The deaths of over 3,000 from police abuse have been documented, as have more than 63,000 cases of torture; possibly millions are now held unlawfully in labor camps, where they are at risk of torture and death. The following are representative cases.*



### Man Who Exposed Persecution on TV Tortured to Death

**ZHANG ZHONG, 35, EMPLOYEE OF CHEMICAL FACTORY**

Zhang Zhong, who lived in northeastern China's Daqing city of Heilongjiang province, worked for the local Lամadian Chemicals Company.

Along with a few other Falun Gong practitioners, Zhang managed to successfully tap into cable television in Changchun city to broadcast evidence of the persecution of Falun Gong to hundreds of thousands of viewers in 2002. The event reportedly shocked top Party officials—sources say that upon hearing the news, former leader Jiang Zemin flew into a rage and ordered police to “kill [those responsible for the broadcast] without pardon.” Zhang was arrested in 2002 and sentenced to 10 years in prison for his part in the incident.

At the Daqing City Prison Zhang was tortured severely. Once, guards bashed his head until he lost consciousness. They then stabbed his head and hands with needles; when he did not respond, they kicked him in the stomach. After that, he spat blood and vomited whatever he ate for a period of six months.

After nearly two years of torture, which left Zhang unconscious and paralyzed, he was released on July 23, 2004. But when he was strong enough to do so, Zhang posted on the Internet details of the torture he had suffered. Daqing Prison authorities then dispatched a pursuit team. At first, Zhang evaded them by living away from

home, but he was finally rearrested on August 10, 2006, along with 18 other Falun Gong practitioners, and tortured severely. Zhang was transferred to the Harbin City Police Hospital, where he eventually died on October 16, 2006. His parents went to the hospital that day but were not allowed see his body, and authorities refused to issue a death certificate.



### Elderly Woman Killed, Organs Stripped from Corpse

**ZHAO CHUNYING, 54**

Zhao Chunying began practicing Falun Gong in 1998, and from then on began feeling relief from the dizziness and other chronic health problems that had plagued her for decades. The next year, Zhao went to Beijing to petition for an end to the persecution of the practice she felt had been a great boon in her life. She was detained and then sent to the notorious Wanjia Forced Labor Camp in Harbin.

After leaving the labor camp, she wrote about her ordeals on the Internet. For this she was again arrested on April 15, 2003 and sent to the Jixi



City Number 2 Detention Center. Zhao began a hunger strike to protest the illegal detention. Using a pair of scissors and a screwdriver,

prison doctor Wang Lijun force-fed her with a strong salt-water solution. Zhao soon began coughing severely and ran a fever, but Wang again force-fed her with the saline solution. Zhao fell unconscious from the severe pain, and died on May 10, 2003.

An autopsy of Zhao's body not only revealed a variety of bruises, broken bones, and even a head knife wound; Zhao's heart, spleen, pancreas, and other organs were removed, possibly for sale in the organ industry.



### Young man Dies After Variety of Tortures

**WU CHUNLONG, 30, BARBER**

Wu Chunlong, also from Heilongjiang province, was sentenced to three years of forced labor at the Jiamusi City Labor Camp on November 3, 1999. He was tortured in a number of ways, including by having to sit without moving on a tiny iron stool known as the “tiger bench” for seven days straight.

Wu was released at the end of 2002, but was detained yet again on November 11, 2003 and administratively sentenced to three years of forced labor. To protest the detention, Wu went on hunger strike but was force-fed and injected with unknown drugs. He soon lost all feeling from his lower back to his knees. Unable to ingest food, he quickly became emaciated. Prison guards still continued torturing him, such as by dousing him in cold water and stuffing his mouth with a towel contaminated with human feces.

On the brink of death, Wu was released on April 30, 2005. But his mental and physical faculties had already been irreparably damaged—he could barely eat and could no longer recognize his family. On August 20, 2005, Wu passed away at the age of 30.







## Man Escapes from Torture to the US; Doctors Amazed He is Alive

**TAN YONGJIE, 27, FACTORY WORKER  
(ABOVE PICTURE)**

On the night of April 26, 2001, Mr. Tan Yongjie, of Bao'an city, Guangdong province, was arrested and beaten by the policemen for distributing Falun Gong flyers. Mr. Tan was then subjected to repeated torture sessions for refusing to disavow his beliefs. At one point Tan was hung him up by handcuffs for over five hours. Guards beat Tan many times.

On June 2, 2001, Tan was tied to a post while three guards burned his legs 13 times with a red-hot iron rod. Guards repeatedly demanded that Tan renounce Falun Gong. During the torture Tan screamed in pain, his legs shook uncontrollably, and he lost control of his bladder. Afterwards, Tan was detained in a small cell where he could not sleep or rest because owing to the extreme pain in his legs. Since he was unable to do hard labor, he was sent to an orchard to do work near the labor camp. From there Tan escaped and fled to Hong Kong, from which he stowed away in a cargo ship, and managed to reach Long Beach, California.

Tan later managed to reach Houston, Texas, where he finally underwent medical treatment. The doctors were amazed he had survived.

## Two Women Die Within Weeks of Arrest

**XU HONGMEI, 37, AND SHEN ZILI, AGE UNKNOWN (NOT PICTURED)**

Xu Hongmei and Shen Zili, both from Heilongjiang province, were arrested on January 13, 2007 for practicing Falun Gong and sent to the Qinglong Street Prison.

The two women suffered horribly in custody, particularly during one five-day period. During that time, Xu was reportedly hung in the air, suspended only by handcuffs; in one instance, her hands were cuffed behind her back then pulled up toward the ceiling, and she was left hanging in that position. Xu was also tied in a spread eagle position and locked in a metal cage. When she lost consciousness because of the pain, police doused her with ice water and resumed torturing her. Xu went on hunger strike in protest. Too weak to walk, guards shackled her to a bed.

In the same facility, Shen was bound to a chair with adhesive tape. At one point police repeatedly slammed her head against a wall, until she lost consciousness, only to continue the torture after Shen came to.

On February 17, Xu and Shen were evacuated to the No. 2 Hospital of Qiqihar City. Blood was seen coming from both women's mouths. Both later went into convulsions, their bodies swelled severely, and they lapsed into comas. Sharing the same fate to the end, the two women passed away on February 27, 2007.

## Retiree Dies from Illness, Torture

**LUAN FUSHENG, 56, RETIRED GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (BELOW PICTURE)**

Luan Fusheng, from Shanxi province's Shijiazhuang city, traveled to Beijing a number of times to try to petition the government to stop the persecution of Falun Gong, but was recurrently detained and then released as a result. His fourth arrest, in October 2003, led to his being given an 11-year prison sentence for carrying out the petition act, a guaranteed right under Chinese law.

In jail, Luan was not allowed to practice the Falun Gong exercises and was repeatedly tortured. The illnesses that had disappeared when he began practicing Falun Gong returned. The complex diabetes syndrome, hypertension, and other health problems in the end led to his transfer to the Taiyuan No. 109 Military Hospital in Shanxi. He was not released, however, as prison authorities said that "Falun Gong practitioners are not eligible for medical parole."

By February 2007, Luan contracted tuberculosis and was on the brink of death. Fearing that they would have to take responsibility for his death, prison officials sent him home on March 21. Luan Fusheng passed away on April 8, 2007.





## Oil Worker Emaciated from Torture

**AN SENBIAO, 38, OIL EXTRACTION PLANT EMPLOYEE (ABOVE PICTURE)**

An Senbiao, who worked in the resource-rich Daqing city, was arrested on January 24, 2005 for telling others about the persecution of Falun Gong. At the Longfeng Detention Center he faced a wide range of torture methods, such as being forced laundry detergent powder, jolted and burned with electric batons, pricked with needles, and sexually assaulted.

With An on the edge of death, prison officials released him to his family on July 13, 2005. Once 184 lbs, An now weighs less than 95 pounds and remains extremely weak. His family has asked hospitals to treat him, but have been rejected for his association with Falun Gong.

## Justice Denied to Family of Tortured Woman

**CAO AIHUA (NOT PICTURED)**

Cao Aihua, from Aksu city in northwestern Xinjiang province, said she had a remarkable story of recovery from breast cancer due to practicing Falun Gong. After the Party launched its persecution of Falun Gong, therefore, she remained determined to stand up for the practice and began distributing leaflets in her city about abuses fellow practitioners were experiencing.

Because of her civil activity, Cao was

detained in August 2006 and sent to a women's labor camp on November 1. Twelve days later, she was proclaimed dead. Though the exact cause of her death remains unknown, bruises and scars on her body suggest she had been severely beaten.

Ms. Cao's husband, son, and other relatives have called upon the Chinese government to bring the perpetrators to justice, but have been firmly rejected. The government finally issued an order to forcibly cremate Cao's body, destroying all evidence regarding her death.



## Music Prodigy and Family Sentenced to Prison

**WANG BO, 26, MUSIC STUDENT; WANG XINZHONG & LIU SHUQIN, PARENTS**

From youth, Wang Bo had a love and aptitude for music. She enjoyed listening to the piano playing of her kindergarten teacher, and at the age of six, she was extolled by her tutors as a musical genius. She continued diligently studying the piano and was admitted into the prestigious Central Conservatory of Music.

Her studies were interrupted when, after the persecution of Falun Gong began, school officials tried pressuring her to write a statement guaranteeing she would no longer practice Falun Gong.

Wang decided instead to withdraw from school, but officials from the 610 Office—established exclusively to deal with Falun Gong—continued to track her, sending her for long-term brainwashing.

By the end of the session, Wang divulged the whereabouts of her father, who had fled home to avoid persecution; he was subsequently arrested. Wang was also convinced to accept media interviews in which she attacked Falun Gong and its teachings.

After being released, Wang felt she had been brainwashed and deceived. She thus made a video recording that she sent to international media outlets recanting her past statements and explaining how the Communist Party lied in order to persecute Falun Gong. The Party then conducted a blanket search for Wang and her family. All three members were arrested on July 26, 2006, and have each been sentenced from two to four to five years in prison.

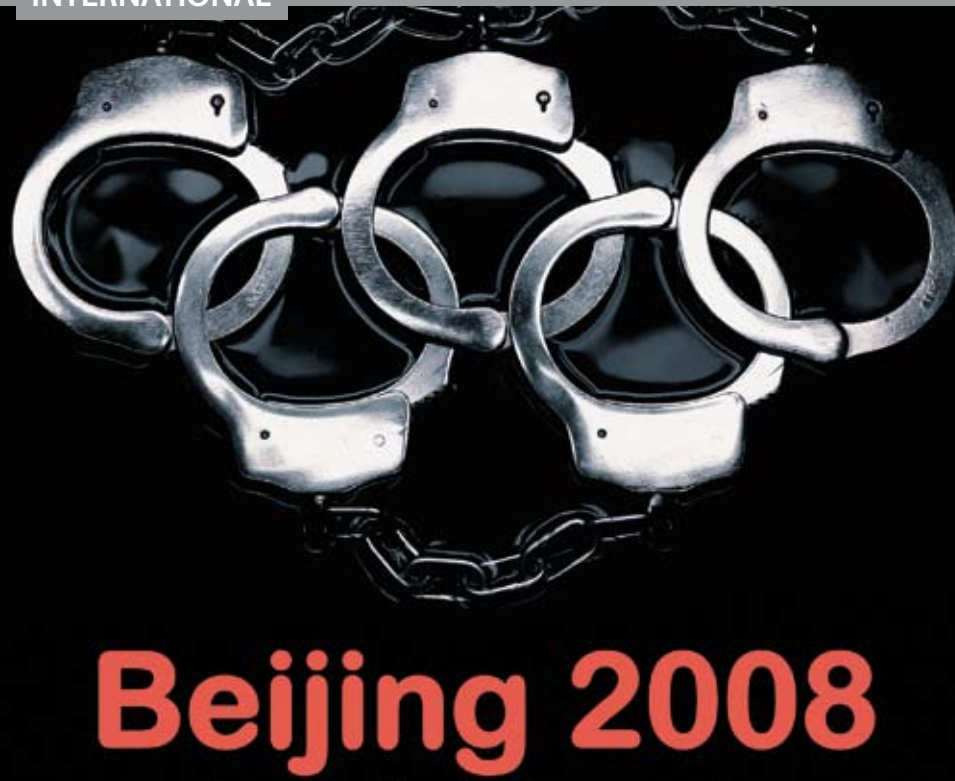


## 70-Year-Old Man Tortured Nearly to Death

**SHI ZHIMIN, 70, RETIRED FACTORY WORKER**  
In December 2004, Shi Zhimin was distributing informational materials about the persecution of Falun Gong in Henan province when he was accosted by local police and arrested. Police tortured him by tying him to the "dead man's bed"—Shi was stretched out on a cold metal bed frame and not allowed to move for several days. Each day, Shi was also force-fed with an unknown substance. By the end of the torture, he could barely walk and had a repugnant wound on his backside from the prolonged contact with the bed.

By May 2005, officials were prepared to put Shi on trial, but he was too weak to say a word. Afraid of having to take responsibility if he were to die, prison and hospital officials sent him home, where he has been recovering. ■





BY EDWARD McMILLAN-SCOTT

CHINA'S NEW TYRANNY DOES NOT BEFIT THE GAMES

# Olympics Unworthy

*Will the 2008 Beijing Olympics be remembered as a whitewash of tyranny and suffering, a rerun of 1936 Berlin? Distinguished European parliamentarian Edward McMillan-Scott speaks out after clandestinely investigating human rights violations in China. Those interviewed suffered retaliation: One individual has since been sentenced to five years in prison for “disrupting social order,” and the wife of the other has been beaten into a coma.*

## ALSO IN THIS SECTION

33 Confessions of a Chinese Consular Official

37 Bribes, Spies and Politics

39 Un-Peaceful Rise on Campus

BEIJING is preparing to host the 2008 Olympics. But if what I was told there recently by former prisoners is true, the civilized world must shun China.

In a dingy hotel room with the curtains drawn, the men I met told of brutal persecution of their spiritual movement and worse, the sale of living organs, to order. Along with my interpreter, the men were rapidly arrested, detained and questioned for the “crime” of meeting me. One practitioner is still missing and it is feared that he is being tortured.

A few days before the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre—June 4—I visited Beijing to pin down a terrifying new development: reports of “organ harvesting.” Organs from prisoners are literally being marketed with the waiting time for a transplant often now being a matter of days. Nearly 400 hospitals in China share the booming trade in transplants with websites advertising new kidneys for \$60,000. Administrators tell inquirers, “Yes, it will be a Falun Gong, so it will be clean.”

As the founder of the European Union’s Democracy and Human Rights Initiative I wanted to find out why the Communist regime which has dominated the world’s largest





Cao Dong, 36, and wife Xiaojing. Cao was sentenced to five years in prison for meeting with McMillan-Scott and disclosing illegal organ harvesting.

country since 1949 had now descended to genocide.

In 1992 Falun Gong—a new Buddhist Tai chi-like movement—had begun to sweep China. When I first visited Beijing in 1996 every open space was filled with people practicing its slow exercises and meditation. By 1999 it had some 100 million adherents. Because of its self-discipline and healthy approach—practitioners do not smoke or drink alcohol and have a rigorous moral code—it was encouraged by the authorities.

Then in 1999 the regime decided Falun Gong could become an organized force and began a ruthless crackdown, organized by its notorious “6-10” office, named after its foundation date. I had heard that practitioners were harshly treated and persecution by other prisoners is encouraged, but it was reports of transplants from liv-

ing prisoners—a ghastly reward for their healthy lifestyle—which took me to China.

Sitting on the hotel bed in front of me was Niu Jinping, 52, and his two-year-old daughter. Niu had served two years in prison for practicing Falun Gong and his wife was still in prison. The last time he saw her, in January,

her entire body was bruised from the repeated beatings she took as the torturers tried to make her denounce Falun Gong. She is now deaf.

Niu was in despair: The beatings his wife suffered lasted sometimes 20 hours. He told me that 30 of the Falun Gong practitioners in his prison had died through beatings. When the crackdown began, Niu lost his work permit and had to sell his house to live. He earns about \$90 a month guarding the cars of China’s new rich. Was there anything about Falun Gong which

*“The last time he saw her, in January, her entire body was bruised from the repeated beatings she took as the torturers tried to make her denounce Falun Gong.”*

was seditious, dangerous to the regime? No, said Niu bleakly.

Falun Gong is not a membership organization and charges no fees. In response to the crackdown, practitioners began a peaceful “truth” campaign against the regime which has so far triggered more than 20 million resignations from the Communist Party and its affiliations.

According to the many diplomats, journalists and other observers I met, it is not just Falun Gong, but other Buddhists—especially Tibetans—Christians and Muslims who are being persecuted as well. Yet sadly, China’s vast economic boom makes the same diplomats and visitors turn an official blind eye to the hundreds of thousands in “administrative detention.”

One man who has spoken out is human rights advocate Gao Zhisheng. His Beijing law office took up the cases of desperate people until the authorities put him under house arrest in February: He had advised Niu Jinping. Gao, a Christian, told me I was the only politician in seven years to meet Falun Gong ex-prisoners in China, and criticized Western diplomats for walking by on the other side of the street.

The other ex-convict I interviewed was Cao Dong, 36, who had been in prison with seven Tiananmen Square protesters and told the same story. With tears he told me he saw the cadaver of his friend—a fellow Falun Gong practitioner—with the holes where organs had been removed. I have just heard that the secret police have used his apartment key to collect his computer material and private papers. They had already interrogated his roommate for five days: He is now in hiding, while Cao Dong has been missing since the interview. I have demanded an urgent meeting with the Chinese ambassador to the European Union. If people in Beijing think this is the way to prepare for the Olympics they have made the wrong call.

*Edward McMillan-Scott, MEP (Yorkshire & Humber, Cons) is a Vice-President of the European Parliament.*



BY CHEN YONGLIN

# Confessions of a Chinese Consular Official

*Chen Yonglin made headlines in 2005 by defecting from the Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney, where he was First Secretary and Consul for Political Affairs. His principal assignment there? To spy, harass, and deprive the rights of various dissident groups in Australia—especially the Falun Gong. Chen's revelations, backed by documents smuggled out of the Consulate, paint a chilling picture of espionage and intrigue. The following is adapted from testimony Chen gave to the U.S. Congress's Committee on International Relations on July 21, 2005.*

I testify today regarding how the Chinese missions abroad, and specifically in Australia, carry out their policy of persecuting Falun Gong adherents.

According to my knowledge, the persecution of the Falun Gong by China's Communist Party (CCP) is a systematic campaign. All authorities—and especially those in Public Security, State Security, and Foreign Affairs—are involved.

In each Chinese mission overseas there must be at least one official in charge of Falun Gong affairs. The head and the deputy head of the mission will be responsible for the Falun Gong affairs. I am aware of there being more than 1,000 Chinese secret agents and informants residing in Australia, and they have partaken in efforts to persecute the Falun Gong. The number in the United States should be higher, I believe.

During my time at the Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney, some 100 or so delegations headed by senior Chinese officials, ranking above the level of Vice Minister, toured Sydney. This was of course at the Chinese taxpayers' expense. I often had to look after these corrupt officials. I thus had a chance to hear much internal information about how Falun Gong followers were being captured; all resources available were being used.

Inside the Consulate I read a great deal of confidential background papers on Falun Gong members who were killed in custody. These persons were always accused of being “uncooperative” or said to have “committed suicide,” when in fact they had died of inadequate handling or police brutality.

### War on Australian soil

Waging war against the Falun Gong is one of the main tasks of Chinese missions around the world.

In February 2002, the Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney set up an entity called the “Special Group for Struggling Against the Falun Gong,” which was headed by the Consul-General and Deputy Consul-General. It consisted of representatives from all sections of the Consulate, including the Political Research Section, Cultural Propaganda Section, Overseas Chinese Affairs Section, Trade and Commercial Office, as well as Education Office. The Special Group held a meeting once every two weeks.

In 2002, as I came to assume the responsibility for coordinating the Special Group, the said meeting was being held every other month; the following two and a half years, it was held quarterly. The “Falun Gong problem” is the priority for the Consulate, and it is a daily, ongoing affair. The Special Group is part of the 610 Office system—a system designed to persecute the Falun Gong. The model used in Australia for “war on the Falun Gong” is identical to that used in the United States and other countries where the Falun Gong is active. The Falun Gong policy of the Central CCP for overseas missions is “to combat one on one, attack wantonly, attack aggressively.”

Some of the measures taken to deprive the Falun Gong of “breathing space” are as follows.

### Large-scale propaganda

In the first half of 2002, the missions in Australia managed to each “successfully” hold anti-Falun Gong photo exhibits. The Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney held its exhib-

## “Intensify the Struggle Overseas”

With this order, in 2000 China’s communist ruler ordered the persecution of Falun Gong brought overseas—beyond China’s borders. The effort has led to discrimination, vandalism, and even physical violence in the democratic West. Most actions have been linked to PRC Consulates. A sampling:

- Hiring of immigrant gangs to physically assault and mug
- Using spies to infiltrate groups of practitioners
- Organizing hate campaigns, including marches and rallies
- Vandalization and destruction of property
- Spreading hate literature, esp. in print media and television
- Death threats to individuals and families
- Petitioning government to legislate against the practice
- Using economic threat to pressure elected officials
- Cyber attacks, espionage, and identity fraud
- Sending targeted email viruses, often impersonating practitioners
- Setting up anti-Falun Gong exhibitions inside Consulates
- Blacklisting Falun Gong adherents who wish to visit China
- Refusing to renew Chinese nationals’ visas, confiscating passports
- Manipulating college student club elections, activities
- Spreading hate speech on campuses, inciting discrimination
- Mobilizing students to protest or harass the Falun Gong
- Assigning students to spy on Falun Gong students
- Harassing phone calls, sometimes numbering dozens per day

So serious have the infractions grown that in 2004 Congress unanimously passed H.Res. 304, calling on the PRC regime to “immediately stop interfering in the exercise of religious and political freedoms within the United States, such as the right to practice Falun Gong” and to “cease using the diplomatic missions in the United States to spread falsehoods about the nature of Falun Gong.”

it in the name of “Promoting healthy Chinese culture and opposing the cult.” The Consul-General is quick to preach the Communist Party’s line on Falun Gong whenever he hosts or attends any function.

Consulate staff, meanwhile, frequently send anti-Falun Gong letters, news bulletins, notes, and other print materials to governmental officials; they also do this through various “friends” when necessary. For example, the website of the University of Wollongong displayed in 2004 a photo of a Falun Gong informational booth. However, after a complaint from the Chinese Students Friendship Association, which is controlled by the Con-

sulate, the photo was killed within hours.

Every year the Consulate distributes countless bundles of anti-Falun Gong materials to all levels of the New South Wales (NSW) governments, non-governmental organizations, libraries, schools, and Consulate visitors. Even when the Consulate staff visits remote areas of New South Wales, anti-Falun Gong materials are brought along for distribution.

China Central Television (CCTV) paid Sydney Chinese Television (service offered by Channel 31) for a prime time slot in order to broadcast a CCTV program, “Focus Interview,” that criticized Falun Gong. Certain lo-



cal Chinese media in Sydney, such as *Singtao Daily*, *Australian Express Daily*, the former *2AC Chinese Daily*, and the website "Chinatown Online," are all pro-Party in their reporting and in matters related to Falun Gong.

Once, a Falun Gong practitioner successfully bid for "Half-hour Interview of Your Choice," which is produced by 2AC Mandarin Radio. However, a Consulate official who attended the bidding immediately afterwards asked the station to lay down certain restrictions for the interview, with the outcome that the Falun Gong practitioner had to give up the interview.

### Economic coercion

Those in Australia who have been subject to economic pressure and incentives include the New South Wales state government, the state parliament, and city councils, as well as the state Labour Party and Liberal Party. Facing huge pressure, Bankstown, Rockdale, Hurstville, Burwood and other city councils have struck down motions in support of the Falun Gong or done things supportive of the CCP's policy of suppression. The Consulate's work has been very successful, with the outcome that only a handful NSW parliamentarians and councilors are willing to meet with the Falun Gong or speak at their rallies. There are no longer any city councils that dare to issue appreciation letters to the Falun Gong.

Economic approaches have been quite successful. In 2002, China's communist leaders decided to give the contract for the Guangdong province liquefied natural gas terminal to North West Shelf. This was part of China's "Grand Border Concept" strategy, meant to gain both natural resources and political compromise from Australia. The Consulate in Sydney has cultivated intimate relations with many federal and state officials



"Anti-Falun Gong" propaganda materials such as these are used by Chinese consulates to "wage war" on foreign soil.

by inviting them to China for visits, advancing the officials' personal business interests in China, and hosting dinners in their honor.

Each year numerous Chinese officials visit Australia. They are given the task of using every possible official occasion to denounce the Falun Gong. Mr. Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the National People's Congress of the Chinese Communist Party regime, visited Sydney in May

2005. Sure enough, he didn't forget to denounce the Falun Gong as an "evil cult" when addressing pro-communist figures in the Chinese community; this was despite the fact that there were no Falun Gong protests during his visit.

### Fighting "one on one"

The Consulate successfully thwarted the Falun Gong's attempt to join a Chinese Spring Festival parade. The Consulate has repeatedly forced the New South Wales Railway Author-

ity and the Sydney International Airport Company to take down large lit billboards emblazoned with "Truth, Compassion, Tolerance" (Falun Gong's main virtues).

In order to prevent a Chinese after-school program (the Minghui School) whose principal is a Falun Gong practitioner from getting sponsorship from the NSW Department of Education and Training, the Consulate put enormous pressure on the Department of Education and Training, and the case is still stuck there.

Meanwhile, after Consulate members spoke with the Fairfield City Council, an initial plan to establish a "Truth, Compassion, Tolerance" stone-engraving was canceled.

There is also a wide-reaching "black list" kept by the Consulate, which contains the names of Australian Falun Gong practitioners. This is used for border checking and surveillance in Australia.

However, not all Consulate complaints are successful. In May 2003, the Consulate's representation to the NSW Government and the Sydney Council protesting a Chinese cultural performance, which was organized by Falun Gong practitioners, ended in vain. Many Chinese community orga-

“ Each year Consulate officials attend hundreds of functions... In each instance, the Consulate demands of the host a guarantee that 'no Falun Gong will be present' ”

专门小组会纪录（一）  
（2001年2月23日）

一、上两周所做的工作：

- （一）廖总宴请、拜会新州总理、副总理、上下议长、帕拉玛塔市长、南悉尼市长、莱德市长，伺机就“法轮功”问题做工作。
- （二）2月8日 施副总在馆内见澳洲新报吴承欢总经理和吴惠权总编，就该报刊登“法轮功”广告事做工作。他们表示将慎重处理，并表示将刊出我推荐的有关文章。
- （三）向华文媒体推荐了十多篇人民日报和新华社揭批文章。
- （四）2月9日 与新州警方联系，就“法轮功”在我馆入口处树旗，在我馆前马路上超时停车，并强行向行人发传单事提出交涉。
- （五）2月10日 根据来信及要求，向新州议员 KEVIN MOSS (MEMBER FOR CANTERBURY) 及 STRATHFIELD 市长 VIRGINIA JUDGE 寄送了揭批“法轮功”材料。
- （六）2月16日、18日 就狮子会声明事分别与中新社和新华社联系。他们均就此发了稿。
- （七）2月20、21日，新州大学和悉尼大学新年入学仪式，教育组均派人察看，新州大学未发现“法轮功”活动，但悉

Minutes from a meeting of the "Special Anti-Falun Gong Task Force," held inside the Sydney Chinese Consulate-General on February 23, 2001, that were smuggled out by Chen Yonglin. Item #7 describes how Consulate staff were dispatched to monitor a student activity fair at a college campus and, upon spotting "Falun Gong activities," assigned Chinese students to gather intelligence on those involved.

nizations had been mobilized to write or call the Mayor and councilors. The Consulate went so far as to prepare a scripted letter for people to sign and deliver to the Council. The Council did buckle somewhat, in that it stated it would not send any official to attend the event. But it insisted that the Falun Gong had the right to rent the Sydney Town Hall under a commercial contract.

### Mobilizing the Chinese community

Each year Consulate officials attend hundreds of functions held by the local Chinese community. In each instance, the Consulate demands of the host a guarantee that "no Falun Gong" will be present. Many times the Consulate has discussed with the community how to oppose the Falun Gong, and even initiated campaigns wherein people sign complaints against the Falun Gong.

The Consulate has also paid the ex-

penses of certain scholars of China for their travels to China, hoping to encourage them to speak out against the Falun Gong on television or write an op-ed. Some visa applicants have been asked to swear at the Falun Gong demonstrators stationed outside the Consulate.

### Controlling and monitoring

The Consulate has twice shared with the Russian Consulate-General in Sydney its main list of Falun Gong practitioners. The latter then helped to intercept a number of Falun Gong practitioners who had wanted to enter Russia during a visit by Jiang Zemin, who was then China's president.

All Chinese language schools in New South Wales, with one exception, are allowed to use the textbook that was issued by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council: Sydney's Minghui School, which has a "Falun Gong background."

Each year, more than 20 Falun Gong practitioners meet with difficulty at the Chinese Consulate when they seek to have their visas or Chinese passports renewed. Chinese nationals who wish to extend their passports typically have them confiscated, rather than renewed.

Some local persons of Chinese descent and students from China have been encouraged to mingle with the Falun Gong, with the purpose being to gather information on them. The reward is tickets to cultural performances, free dinners, gifts, or cash.

These are just a few examples of what the Falun Gong is subjected to by China's Communist Party in the state of New South Whales, Australia. Activities of the same sort are carried out in other countries wherever Falun Gong is active.

There is no freedom of religion or belief under the dictatorship of the Chinese Communist Party. The Party's persecution of the Falun Gong and other religious groups must be stopped.

*Chen Yonglin was formerly First Secretary and Consul for Political Affairs at the Chinese Consulate-General of Sydney, Australia, before defecting in 2005.*





Chinese student groups, such as that of Columbia University (pictured here), are typically directed—or even paid—by the nearest PRC consulate to carry out espionage and/or interfere with activities such as that of the Falun Gong.

BY MATT GNAIZDA, THE EPOCH TIMES

HOW U.S. STUDENT GROUPS ARE CONTROLLED BY CHINESE CONSULATES

# Bribes, Spies and Politics

*There's a new agenda on campus, one neither Left nor Right. It's the political program of China's communist state—the world's largest dictatorship—and it is being forwarded in the West in unlikely, and often overlooked, ways. Key are student false-front clubs which engage in espionage, intimidation, and harassment against groups targeted by Beijing, such as the Falun Gong.*

(July 11, 2007) The long arm of Beijing is reaching into U.S. universities and grasping control of student organizations, according to recent reports. A web of bribes, spies, and political pressure is leading dozens of Chinese student groups across the United States to carry out the directives of their local Chinese Consulates to suppress and slander groups not to the liking of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The list of universities affected is long and diverse: Columbia University, New York University, the University of Rochester, U.C. San Diego, U.C. Santa Cruz, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These schools and many more all have a Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) or its equivalent with a political or financial connection to their local Chinese Consulate.

The University of Tennessee's CSSA financial statement from 2005 showed that 80 percent of its budget, or \$1,400, came from funds disbursed by "PRC Embassy." There are at least 109 CSAs across the United States, and now questions are being raised whether any others have similar connections to consulates.

The CSSA at Columbia University is a case in point. Its constitution boasts: "Reviewed by: Consulate General of

the People's Republic of China in New York." Until a few weeks ago, its advisory board had only two members: Fanglin Ai and Da Yao, both officials from the Chinese Consulate in New York.

At some point in the last several weeks, after an article in *The Epoch Times* noted its suspicious advisory board, the club added two non-Chinese advisors from the university.

The Chinese Consulate appears to lead CSSA members to disrupt activities that may embarrass the communist regime.

For example, on April 20, 2007, Columbia University held a forum entitled "China's New Genocide." Among the speakers was renowned Canadian human rights lawyer David Matas, whose report entitled "Bloody Harvest" details 31 pieces of evidence showing that adherents of the persecuted spiritual practice Falun Gong are having their internal organs forcibly removed in China's state-controlled hospitals and sold illegally for transplants.

Two dozen members of Columbia's Chinese Students and Scholars Association came to disrupt the forum, attempting to refute the speakers. They carried signs with communist slogans and hate speech. Two of the students had to be removed by campus police for unruly behavior. (CSSA advisor Consul Da Yao would not comment, and hung up when telephoned by *The Epoch Times*.)

In addition, Columbia's CSSA Web site has nine articles that were posted after the April 20 forum. Each one slanders Falun Gong, and each is reposted from the Web site of the Chinese Embassy in Washington.

Columbia's CSSA and its members also receive funding from the Chinese Consulate, according to a series of e-mails forwarded to *The Epoch Times* by a student on the CSSA mailing list. An e-mail from April 23, 2002 promised that members would be paid \$30 each to join a welcoming group for Hu Jintao. Four years later, before Hu Jintao was scheduled to speak at Yale University, CSSA list members received an e-mail promising a free bus trip to New Haven, Connecticut, free breakfast, free lunch, and a free shopping trip to the Woodbury Outlet Mall. The busses alone would

have cost more than \$1000, and were not covered by Columbia University.

New York University has a similar situation. Its Chinese Culture Club, similar to Columbia's CSSA, tried to stop a Chinese classical dance competition from being held at NYU's Skirball Center.

The reasoning behind Chinese students trying to stop the cultural event lies with the dance competition's producer: New Tang Dynasty Television, a nonprofit Chinese TV network that often reports critically on China's communist regime. The Chinese regime sees the TV network as such a threat that it has tried to disrupt nearly every major event the New York-based network has held in the past five years. The dance competition (which, after much ado, was held successfully last weekend) was no exception.

An investigation by the World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong shows that the NYU's Chinese Culture Club was acting under the advice, if not direct control, of the Chinese Consulate to disrupt the event.

### Bribes and spies

A decade ago, Ms. Yanping Lu served as chair of the CSSA at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. She told *The Epoch Times* that, at the time, she did not fully realize the Chinese Consulate was using her for espionage. She accepted small gifts from the consulate—on the order of \$300 each—as a matter of routine and did not think about it further. Eventually, the consulate asked her to collect data on fellow students.

"Once, the consulate wanted me to collect information on all the students and scholars to compile a list. At first I felt this was a good idea because people could get to know and help each other," said Lu. "Later, I felt more and more uneasy. When I think about it now, I realize that was actually spying."

Mr. Yunqing You was elected president of the University of Minnesota CSSA in 2002. Soon he was introduced to a Chicago consular official named Ji-cai Cheng. During the year that You was president, Cheng mailed him \$3,000 in checks under his name.

"In fact, the so-called activity funds given by the consulate were not given

to the student association," You told *The Epoch Times*. "Instead, the funds were given to the president individually... The checks are a direct bribe to the president. The consulate withholds checks if their directives are not followed by the president."

According to a former visiting professor at Yale University, Dr. Yuming Zhang, the Chinese regime has a large number of spies in the United States. An acquaintance of his working in the Chinese Consulate, who wishes to remain anonymous, disclosed to Dr. Zhang that, "The Chinese Consulate has placed people inside all student associations, Chinese churches, Chinese newspapers, Chinese communities, democratic organizations, and Falun Gong groups around New York. Their responsibilities are to gather information, propagandize the Chinese Communist Party's ideology, and sow discord."

Mr. Jianzhong Li was president of the Caltech Chinese Association in 1996. In an article submitted to *The Epoch Times* last month, he wrote, "At the time, nearly all the Chinese students' activities in southern California were organized by me and a college classmate of mine under the orders of the Chinese Consulate in L.A."

In 1998, after leaving the Chinese student organization, Mr. Li learned that the FBI had been monitoring his activities, and continues to monitor active members of numerous Chinese student groups across the country believed to be under Chinese Communist Party control.

Mr. Lixin Yang, a three-term vice-president of the CSSA at a university in Brussels, Belgium told New Tang Dynasty Television in an interview that he feels sorry for the students who get caught up with the Communist Party's politics. "Many Chinese students studying overseas think that maintaining a good relationship with the Chinese Consulates is a way to show their patriotism; they love their country, but have erroneously equated the Chinese communist regime with China... I think that in reality Chinese students oftentimes may not know the orders issued by the consulates and the real purpose behind those orders, most of which have political goals." ■



# Un-Peaceful Rise on Campus

By Gerard Smith

**W**HAT was meant to be a look at an egregious human rights violation turned into a stunning show of incivility—a breakdown of all values and practices that New York’s most prestigious university holds dear. For two hours last Friday, the Columbia University community was given a chilling glimpse at one Chinese export America can decidedly do without: hatred.

The event—a panel discussion on forcible organ “harvesting” from Falun Gong prisoners of conscience in China—sought to explore the grim findings of two Canadian investigators. David Matas, a prominent human rights attorney and one of the two, was to be the main speaker, joined by two Chinese medical doctors. One of the doctors, Charles Lee, was himself a prisoner of conscience in China, having been arrested for his association with the Falun Gong. Along with the indignity of being forced to assemble Christmas tree lights for export, Lee was subjected to torture and a variety of deprivations while held for three years in a Chinese labor camp.

Little did the panelists expect—and nor should they have—that they would be met with a vitriolic contingent of CU Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CUCSSA) members, bent on unleashing a mindless, seething entity referred to by some as “China’s new nationalism.” (CUCSSA is comprised of Chinese foreign nationals.) In the words of CUCSSA’s own Working Committee, which circulated a veritable call to arms via email the night before the event, “facing this demonization [of China] we cannot hold back!”

The “demonization” referred to, of course, was the exposure of human



Many Chinese students study at leading Ivy League institutions yet never shake the yoke of communist thought, living in a self-segregated “virtual reality” of sorts.

rights violations happening in their country. Chinese students, after years of education engineered by the Party-state, have difficulty, scholars observe, discerning between “China” as a place or a people and the one-party regime that rules it.

In language that could have come straight from the mouth of Chairman Mao some four decades ago, the email further enjoined the group’s loyal membership, declaring, “we will use the sea of [Chinese] flags, dyed with blood, to strike hard against the [group’s] arrogant fervor, and to resolutely defend the honor and dignity of the Motherland!” Physical confrontation is elsewhere indicated in the message—the implied recourse should “Americans” fail to “listen to us.”

In the aftermath of the bizarre protest—a mix of childishness (chucking paper airplanes at the podium?), disruptions, and hate speech—CUCSSA posted on its website a so-called “news report” on the event declaring it had therein “exhibited its formidable cohesive force and combat effectiveness” and “sent a vivid warning to other organizations” that holding similar activities would “only accelerate one’s self-destruction!” Would that include, then, those documenting the CCP’s practice of forced abortions? How about those who tried to publicize SARS when the regime sought to hide it? CUCSSA students, the letter openly declares, “share bitter hatred of the enemy”—referring to the Falun Dafa club, whose members do meditative exercises on a small

plot of grass on campus each morning. And then there are the numbers: the one-page article calls the Columbia club “evil” no less than 17 times.

Hardly the discourse of China’s “peaceful rise” we are usually treated to by Chinese officialdom.

The question is begged, then, as to just who exactly is this “we” that is invoked in the email and report. And why speak of “Americans” rather than, say, “classmates”? After all, aren’t we all part of the same campus community, bound by a common, higher pursuit? And is violence really a legitimate option when people don’t accept your opinion at their panel discussion? Why threaten with doom and “destruction” people who have different opinions?

The answer lies first and foremost in the education today’s Chinese receive. From cradle on up, everything comprising their living environment is carefully engineered by the Party-state. It is an ersatz, Orwellian world if ever there was, with most everything—from textbooks to toys, television to theatre—regulated by communist rulers so as to either boost or maintain their power. It is an air-tight system that defies all but the occasional, slight puncture. As one IT friend who grew up in China told me after watching *The Matrix*: “That’s China.” He would go on to watch the film four more times, so unsettling was the realization it sparked.

It is a bizarre world, populated by conjured villains (e.g., landlords), enemies (Japanese), bullies (America), and threats (Falun Gong). Things are inverted here. AIDS activists like 80-year old Dr. Gao Yaojie are labeled “trouble makers” and arrested. Human rights attorneys who try to reign in corrupt officials and uphold the law, such as Gao Zhisheng, are charged with “subversion” of state power. Activists, like Chen Guangcheng, who is blind, are arrested and beaten for documenting things like forced sterilization and abortion campaigns. And of course, peaceful meditators are cast by state-run press as “disruptive” and “dangerous,” and tortured to death.

Thus many of China’s twenty-something generation are so inundated with

this communist vision of the world, they seldom realize it even when they have moved into other realities, such as that of democratic America. CUCSSA students I spoke with at the forum, I found, did not read newspapers published in the free world. “They’re all anti-China,” one student confidently explained. When I asked if by “China” she meant the communist party, or the people there—who the Party does not allow to vote—it seemed the difference was lost upon her.

Upon the student’s arrival on democratic shores, entities like the Chinese consulate quickly swoop in, chiefly through the form of puppet organizations. For example, some greet incoming students at the airport, quickly bringing them into the fold of a very like-minded community. Some never voyage yonder. One young Chinese acquaintance of mine didn’t know what a “sandwich” or “Kleenex” was, despite having lived in the U.S. for over 10 years and having attended Columbia.

The Consulate then orchestrates a virtual-reality on campus as it were, complete with social events, career advising, shopping trips, and of course, a host of occasions to help you remember how to “think” while on dangerous soil. Student club leaders eagerly clamor for positions in these organizations, knowing well the privileges tied to obedient performance; after a term as president, a plush job is as good as guaranteed. There is an intoxicating element of power I observe. These leaders, endorsed and guided by the largest political regime in the world, get to tell students what they (or “we”) think and do. A sense of impunity naturally follows.

All of which is tragic, on at least two accounts.

First of course is that here are rare, privileged students who have unimaginable freedoms before them in America but don’t even realize it, much less dare enjoy them. A Columbia education means little in this context. In fact, it might just be credentialing China’s next dictator.

And second, is the risk this scenario

poses to the welfare of our communities, such as at Columbia. When others, such as CUCSSA’s select few leaders, share little in the basic, undergirding values and beliefs of the greater community, hurtful, abusive eruptions of incivility like that seen at the recent forum are possible. One needn’t go to China anymore to feel the sting of communist hate.

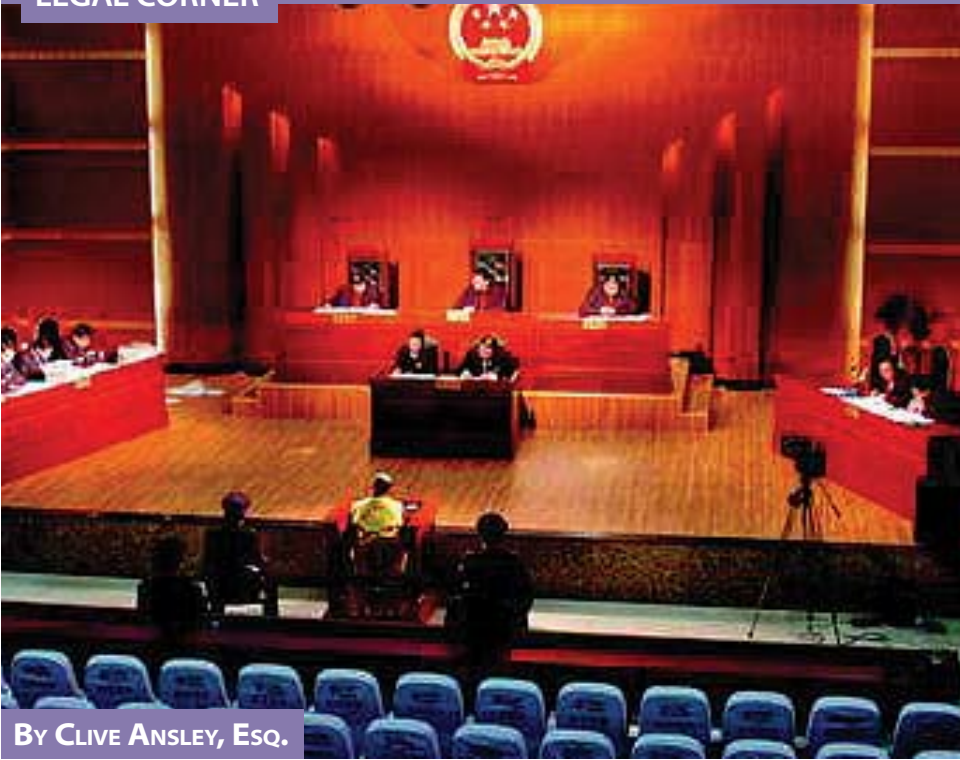
China’s communist rulers, of course, are not doing anyone a favor by creating this sordid predicament. In the aftermath of a similar incident last year at MIT, fomented by its version of CUCSSA, one professor poignantly remarked that, “the PRC government is doing their citizens no service by constructing and supporting a nationalism of victimization and conditioning them to respond with a childish wounded pride” to any imagined offense.

Nor is the regime helping matters by coordinating systematic efforts on U.S. soil to intimidate, harass, and silence folks like the Falun Gong or Chinese human rights activists. So serious has the infringement become that Congress passed Resolution 304 in October, 2004, calling on the Attorney General to investigate these affairs, and calling on PRC officials to “immediately stop interfering in the exercise of religious and political freedoms within the United States” or face possible legal repercussions.

Institutions such as Columbia University can be part of the solution, or part of the problem. Congress has entreated them to be counted among the former. But, insofar as their funds and institutional name might be used by certain persons to alienate, hurt, and squelch the freedoms of other members of the community, they might have a ways to go.

*Gerard Smith (a pseudonym) is a graduate of Columbia University who lives and works in New York*





BY CLIVE ANSLEY, ESQ.

# A Chinese “Court” is Not a Court

*Is China’s legal system, while “not perfect,” marching inevitably toward normality, or “Rule of Law”? One leading scholar and practitioner of Chinese law argues otherwise, insisting this is but self-serving myth. Rule of Law will never be realized on the Party’s watch, as revealed in stark terms by the State’s genocide against the Falun Gong. If anything, China’s courts have backslid over the past 20 years.*

## ALSO IN THIS SECTION

44 Beijing’s Lionhearted Lawyer

45 A China More Just

48 Open Letter to the National People’s Congress

WESTERN citizens with little or no knowledge of how China differs from countries governed by the “Rule of Law” typically react naïvely and inappropriately to reports about the Beijing regime’s suppression of Falun Gong. Some suggest that Falun Gong practitioners have contravened Chinese laws and therefore have only themselves to blame for their problems; others ask why practitioners do not hire Chinese human rights lawyers to defend them or even to bring lawsuits on their behalf against officials who have illegally seized their property or inflicted torture upon them.

Such optimistic assumptions about and images of the Chinese “judicial” system can in large measure be traced back to the deliberate misrepresentations by leaders of Western democracies to their own citizens.

Motivated by a desire to protect their national economic interests in China, and sometimes even to protect their own individual economic interests there, some Western leaders have consciously whitewashed the Beijing regime’s appalling record of gross and bestial human rights abuses. Now that the shocking reality of mass scale organ theft from living and unwilling donors, for profit, has been revealed, it remains to be seen whether Western politicians, in the countdown to what



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has now been termed the “Bloody Harvest Olympics,” will continue to mouth the craven apologies for Beijing which their predecessors mouthed for the Third Reich in the countdown to the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

### Progress?

The fundamental tactic used to divert criticism of the indefensible Chinese “judicial” system is to assert that Beijing’s “legal” system, while not perfect, is moving in the right direction. The favorite cliché is “Rome wasn’t built in a day.” The clear implication is that although it will take years to educate the hundreds of thousands of police, prosecutors, and judges throughout the country, the *leadership* is determined to do so. The *leadership* is committed to protecting human rights and to implementing the “Rule of Law.” In a nutshell, “Rule of Law” is purported to be a policy of the Beijing Regime; it simply has not yet succeeded in educating the lower level functionaries and in converting them to the cause.

The Beijing leadership is not committed to implementing the “Rule of Law” in either the short term or the long term; on the contrary, China’s unelected leaders are fundamentally, irrevocably, and absolutely committed to ensuring that the “Rule of Law” is never implemented in China—ever.

Chinese “courts” today are worse than they were 20 years ago, by most meaningful measurements. For example, there was a time when judges in Chinese courts actually tried to apply law to the facts of a case irrespective of the nationality of the parties. And they were sometimes even prepared to resist demands from higher authorities that they disavow judgments in favor of foreign parties and substitute in “home town decisions.”

Judges in the early years frequently assumed China would implement the “Rule of Law” and they were prepared to play a serious role in the process. Today, “judges” are demoralized, many are totally corrupt, and “home town decisions” are virtually mandatory. In cases involving Chinese and foreign parties, or even a local Chinese party against a Chinese party from another area, there is not even a pretence of due process.

The Communist Party-ruled government is *homicidal*; it most assuredly is not, and never has been, *suicidal*. But implementation of the “Rule of Law” in China would mean just that—the end of the Party’s monopoly on political power. This Party is not about to commit suicide.

The purported creation of a legal system has thus been a charade, designed to comfort Foreign Direct Invest-

tors and lull them into thinking that China has a functioning “judiciary” to protect their investments.

Implementation of the “Rule of Law” is fundamentally anathema to the Chinese Communist Party. It would mean that the Party could no longer stand above the law and the “courts” as it does today; real courts could annul Party actions and laws as unconstitutional, which no “court” in China can do today.

Moreover, the worst human rights violations and atrocities committed in China today result from orders emanating from the highest echelons of the Beijing leadership; they do not result from failure by lower level minions to understand and implement the protection of human rights.

Human rights and the “Rule of Law” have not been delayed in China by the necessity to educate lower level officials. On the contrary, they have been prevented by decisions taken at the apex of government because the Party vehemently opposes the “Rule of Law.” At stake is its very survival.

“Rule of Law” means that the law itself is the ultimate authority and no person or entity may stand above the law. It is important to distinguish this concept from that of “Rule by Law.” China has not implemented, and under the leadership of the CCP *never will* implement, the “Rule of Law.” But it has implemented to a degree “Rule by law”. Overall, this means that the individual CCP leadership constitutes the ultimate authority and can change or ignore the law at will. However, it uses written statutes and regulations as a means of exercising its rule over the population.

The essential point is that these statutes and regulations are invested with no authority of their own; the leadership may hold any citizen or entity to account under the “laws” the leadership has enacted without oversight of any kind; but no citizen, entity, or “court” may hold the leadership to account for violating its own laws. There is no such thing as constitutional law practice in China, because no “court” has the power to enforce the constitution against the leadership.



### What Falun Gong reveals

The so-called “laws” used by the Beijing regime to launch the genocidal campaign against Falun Gong are illustrative. Prior to the decision by the CCP to declare war on Falun Gong, the only item remotely resembling a statute on which the Party could hang its hat was Article 300(1)(2) of the Criminal Code—a piece of atrocious drafting replete with subjective and undefinable terms effectively outlawing “evil cults” and superstitious fallacies. The article is a superfluous admonition that anyone who “uses cults” to commit any of various crimes already prohibited under the Criminal Code will be charged under that Code. It begs the question: Are non-“cult” members exempted?

From 1996–1999 several anti-Falun Gong campaigns were launched; all were conducted without benefit of any statutory authority. They were ostensibly justified on the basis of arbitrary edicts issued by assorted bureaucratic agencies, and in at least one important case by an internal (“neibu”) edict, which means a prohibition not even made public.

Ultimately, by October of 1999, Beijing had managed to enact a “law” (the “Evil Cult Law”) to justify its pogrom against Falun Gong. The subjective and meaningless generalities set out in the language of this “statute” would embarrass any legitimate jurist.

But most important was the fact that the Beijing regime officially deprived Falun Gong practitioners of all their constitutional rights as citizens. “Courts” were forbidden to accept lawsuits on behalf of Falun Gong victims; Chinese lawyers were forbidden to provide legal representation to Falun Gong defendants; employers were forbidden to employ Falun Gong practitioners. All these edicts were illegal and unconsti-

tutional under Chinese law.

There are Chinese human rights lawyers and lay advocates who have courageously stood up for Falun Gong practitioners. I would like to cite two, whose experiences have been representative of all those who have stood fast for the “Rule of Law” against this lawless Beijing regime.

Guo Guoting, after firmly defying the threats of the CCP and defending a fellow lawyer against specious charges by the Party, took on a lawsuit on behalf of a Falun Gong practitioner imprisoned and tortured for his beliefs. His licence to practise law was confiscated and all his files and computer records were removed by the police. He was kept under house arrest in Shanghai for an extended period and threatened with criminal prosecution until arrangements were made to bring him to Canada, where he lives in exile today.

Gao Zhisheng, whose writing appears in this publication, is a lawyer of unbounded courage and unshakeable principles. Because he wrote two open letters to the Beijing dictatorship, accusing it of crimes against humanity, and because he argued that Falun Gong practitioners were citizens of China and should enjoy all constitutional rights, and because he met with the U.N. Rapporteur on Torture, Gao

too was stripped of his licence to practise law and his law firm was closed down. In the aftermath, there were three attempts on his life and he was

detained incommunicado for months, while his wife and 13-year-old daughter were beaten by Chinese police. Today, he remains under house arrest after being given a three year suspended prison sentence

“ *The fundamental tactic used to divert criticism of the indefensible Chinese “judicial” system is to assert that Beijing’s “legal” system, while not perfect, is moving in the right direction ... China’s unelected leaders are fundamentally, irrevocably, and absolutely committed to ensuring that the “Rule of Law” is never implemented in China, ever.* ”

in a one-day trial.

A neighbour suing another neighbour in a dispute over the ownership of chickens might receive justice in a Chinese “court,” problems involving the systemic bribery of “judges” in such cases notwithstanding. But in criminal cases and cases involving a foreign party against a Chinese party, “judgements” of Chinese “courts” are politically, rather than judicially, driven.

In cases involving Falun Gong, the “courts” are normally not even involved. The mere fact that a practitioner admits to his or her beliefs is sufficient cause for immediate dispatch to a labour camp, involving no “judicial” process whatsoever. In the light of the revelations flowing from the reports produced by David Kilgour and David Matas, it seems clear that an administrative order for shipment to a labour camp may today amount to a death sentence for a Falun Gong practitioner.

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“ *But most important was the fact that the Beijing regime officially deprived Falun Gong practitioners of all their constitutional rights as citizens ... All these edicts were illegal and unconstitutional under Chinese law.* ”

# Beijing's Lionhearted Lawyer



*A human rights lawyer with an amazing personal story, Gao Zhisheng became famous after setting precedents in nationally-prominent cases in China. He was named one China's top-ten lawyers in 2001 and has worked for the gamut of China's vulnerable groups—coal miners, home-demolition victims, and house church members.*

*But it was when Gao, a Christian, started tackling the persecution of Falun Gong that he ran afoul of the regime. In a series of open letters to Party leaders, Gao expressed outrage at the illegality of the campaign against the group and the ghastly torture of its adherents—abuses he discovered when investigating in China's northeastern region. Gao had hoped that once the top leaders discovered what was happening at local levels, they too would be outraged and act to stop it. What he found instead was that the persecution ran through the entire system and that this machinery would later retaliate against him.*

*Rather than recoiling, Gao became defiant. He quit the Communist Party and urged others to do so. While facing surveillance, house arrest, detention, interrogations, threats and even attempts on his life, Gao managed to rally China's activists and legal community around the human rights cause like never before, leading a relay hunger strike that swept through the country and united dissidents abroad. He has been featured on the cover of the New York Times, was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and is beginning to garner honors such as the American Board of Trial Advocates' Courageous Advocacy Award.*

*As Gao remains under house arrest in China, an English translation of his book—which describes his story, his cases, and the range of social issues China faces—has been published. On the following pages is an excerpt from Gao Zhisheng's *A China More Just: My Fight as a Rights Lawyer in the World's Largest Communist State*.*





Gao Zhisheng meets with beleaguered petitioners in his Beijing law office.

BY GAO ZHISHENG

# A China More Just (an excerpt)

THE government's flagrant persecution of our fellow countrymen who practice Falun Gong has continued for six years since it began on July 20, 1999. As the 6th anniversary approaches, Falun Gong practitioner Hao Qiuyan from Shijiazhuang city has been unlawfully detained for over half a year now by the local government, and her husband Huang Wei, who also practices Falun Gong, is being unlawfully detained as well. This is the second time the local government has detained Huang Wei; he has suffered in detention for over five of the past six years. This is the current reality and there has yet to be any sign

of change.

Both the young husband and wife have a good university education, and those who know them speak highly of the two. Ever since meeting them separately, the qualities that they both exhibited—calmness, well-cultivated character, magnanimity, and faith in living a noble life—have lingered in my memory.

When talking with them, one senses that they aren't down on society, despite having been persecuted. When speaking with Huang Wei, I was brought to tears by his deep and tender feelings for his family. He told me that whenever he heard the sound

of children playing outside the high detention center walls, he would close his eyes for a long time and imagine the "happy scenes" of being with his wife and child. When he talked about his parents and his in-laws, I saw tears in his eyes. He told me he was pained not because he could not show filial piety toward them, but because it was his and his wife's income that had kept the entire family going. Both his and his wife's parents are elderly and in poor health. They don't have enough income even to take care of their basic needs. In addition, because of the young couple's detention, the grandparents now have to look after their young child. Huang said he would never understand how the government could benefit from detaining people like him or his wife. As he told me, "Long-term detention is a huge disaster for us and for our families, and it offers no benefit to the government. Moreover, such detention violates the Chinese constitution and basic legal principles."

In today's China, as many as one hundred thousand Chinese citizens who practice Falun Gong have been held in long-term detention like Huang Wei and his wife.

In February, I carried out a fact-finding investigation into the government's persecution of the Falun Gong, which has brought harm to the people



Gao mobilizing people for a series of relay hunger strikes against human rights violations

since 1999. The facts are stifling. What I found so truly horrifying was not only that such atrocities, which are offensive to God, had taken place, but that you could really feel and see that those disasters were continuing. Not long before we arrived in Yantai city, which looks rather nice on the surface, another ten innocent Falun Gong believers were arrested and sentenced. The reason for their arrest and sentencing? Someone had published on the Internet a list of the names of the wicked perpetrators who persecute Falun Gong people. The local government became panic-stricken, as if faced with a formidable enemy. Therefore, in the name of “national security,” it began carrying out large-scale arrests, and a group of Falun Gong adherents who had long been labeled as “stubbornly resistant to being ‘transformed’” were once again put into prison.

For Chinese citizens, especially those who practice Falun Gong, their personal freedoms, and even their very lives, are under constant threat; as soon as the authorities feel a little

“unsafe,” these persons may face imminent disaster. The history of our current regime reveals that whenever the authorities or a particular leader feels unsafe—regardless of whether this feeling has any basis in reality—the habitual reaction is to arrest a large number of people from the group being perceived as a “hostile force.” This is known as “eliminating unstable elements in their embryonic stage.” Whenever the authorities feel fearful or construct some kind of assumption about a particular group, they arrest people. In today’s China, the days on which the authorities do not feel fearful are few and far between. Thus, very few days in a year pass by without mass arrests.

What has really made people feel desperate and helpless in recent years is the way

in which the authorities have been using any possible excuse to arrest Falun Gong believers. Hao Qiuyan was arrested simply for trying to obtain legal representation to deal with her husband’s wrongful imprisonment; the explanation for her arrest was that she

**“This regime’s twisted undertaking of brutally suppressing people of faith is not something that started a mere six years ago. However, the cruel nationwide persecution of Falun Gong believers has seen no precedent...”**

not only “refused to be transformed,” but was also “very active.” Hao Qiuyan is still jailed. Some Falun Gong practitioners were detained and interrogated, even beaten and tortured, simply because they had agreed to cooperate with my investigation. Several practitioners’ homes were savagely ransacked just a few hours after I interviewed them. Because of all this, I was left with no choice but to end the investigation with a pained heart.

This regime’s twisted undertaking of brutally suppressing people of faith is not something that started a mere six years ago. However, the cruel nationwide persecution of Falun Gong believers has seen no precedent both in terms of the number of people unlawfully detained and killed, and in terms of the degree of brutality. Six years have passed, and yet there is still no sign of even a modicum of good intent on behalf of local governments to abandon their evildoings and change for the better. The ongoing unlawful detention of Huang Wei and his wife, along with the simultaneous arrest of twelve Falun Gong practitioners from Yantai and another six from Chongqing, is the latest confirmation that local governments refuse to stop doing evil and to act humanely.

Although Falun Gong practitioners have been suffering for six years under an inhuman officialdom that refuses to stop persecuting, this period of time has seen some changes. More and more people around me, including professionals, scholars, government staff members, and ordinary Chinese citizens have begun to question the rationale behind the campaign against these believers. This has been a palpable change: People used to keep dead silent when it came to Falun Gong, but now, calling into question the government’s persecution of Falun Gong practitioners has become a natural topic of conversation for more and more people. These people have come to realize how unjust, inhumane, and lawless the government’s violent persecution of the Falun Gong people is. This rapid, widespread change in attitude stands in stark contrast to the government’s



static, outdated practices. It is really quite thought-provoking.

Well-known progressive thinker Guo Feixiong has written an article titled: "To Trample Freedom of Religion is to Trample the Heart of Human Civilization." Over the past twenty years, the state of Chinese society, as well as Chinese people's ways of thinking and concepts, have undergone great changes and are now completely different from what they were during the Cultural Revolution. This is undeniable. The gloomy reality is that the current clique that is in power still uses the outdated means adopted during the Cultural Revolution to control our society. The whole world should clearly recognize this.

Over the past six years, what the Chinese people have again witnessed is another Cultural Revolution-style campaign—an organized, systematic and persecutory campaign. The government, through its terror organization—the 6-10 Office—persecutes tens of millions of Falun Gong practitioners with a policy of "ruining their reputation, cutting off their sources of income, and destroying them physically." They unscrupulously arrest, beat, detain, fire, and punish Falun Gong believers and try to force them to "transform." They use the entire state machinery to spread deceptive propaganda, imposing their misconduct upon the whole nation, creating hatred, and trying to force the Chinese people as a whole to oppose Falun Gong.

The 6-10 Office is similar to the Party's notorious "Central Cultural Revolution Group" and is a Gestapo-like organization. It possesses special powers to control and manipulate all levels of the Party and administrative departments, the courts, the labor camps, the public security and national security systems,

and all media in China. The 6-10 Office is the headquarters overseeing the systematic persecution of Falun Gong by means of state terrorism. It orders local police stations to brutally torture, sexually assault, and even murder Falun Gong practitioners, while it also orders political-legal committees across the country to set up brainwashing centers for the purpose of forcibly "transforming" those Falun Gong who refuse to give up their spiritual practice. The effort to establish rule of law in China, a project sufficiently botched in its own right, has now been thrown into total chaos by the establishment of the 6-10 Office.

As the persecution of Falun Gong reaches its six-year anniversary, it is necessary for us to use various means to speak up about the facts we know. The purpose of speaking up is not simply to criticize the government (not

that the government does not deserve criticism). Rather, speaking the truth and facing what has taken place—or what is still taking place—is absolutely necessary if ours is to be a civilized society that resolve disputes with rationality. Our government is trying to put the idea of "building a harmonious society" into practice. But until this disastrous and shameful situation that involves tens

of millions of people who practice Falun Gong comes to a complete end, that wish will remain only a dream.

To declare war against people's faith is a stupid thing to do, as this is no different from

declaring war against humanity. There has never been a force in history that has successfully vanquished humanity, nor will there be one in the future. Six years ago, those who persecute Falun Gong

**“...those who have suffered persecution and mental torment are not only the tens of millions of Falun Gong believers and their families. All the people of China, and even all the people of the world, are victims. It is a type of intangible injury sustained from being on the receiving end of all the lies used to bolster the persecution.”**

stupidly decided to take evil actions to fight humanity, and yet, humanity has never been defeated by any power, no matter how mighty. Factually speaking, the persecution of Falun Gong has already failed. Rather than continuing along this failed course, it would be better for the persecutors to return to the track of humanity, face reality, and do one or two humane things instead of continuing to view humanity as an enemy.

In this campaign that began six years ago and is still being carried out by all local governments, those who have suffered persecution and mental torment are not only the tens of millions of Falun Gong believers and their families. All the people of China, and even all the people of the world, are victims. It is a type of intangible injury sustained from being on the receiving end of all the lies used to bolster the persecution. The whole truth will become known in the near future. And, in the process of learning the truth, governments and people around the world will realize how their morality, mental well-being, financial economy, and more have incurred tremendous losses.

We have a responsibility to let the world know the truth. ■

**“They use the entire state machinery to spread deceptive propaganda, imposing their misconduct upon the whole nation, creating hatred, and trying to force the Chinese people as a whole to oppose Falun Gong.”**

# Open Letter to the National People's Congress

BY GAO ZHISHENG

*Excerpted from a letter of December 31, 2004.*

THE prison terms and fines imposed on Falun Gong people are in complete violation of basic legal principles and contemporary legal norms, for the following reasons:

1. Under any country's statutory law, the penal code dictates that laws cannot be applied *ex post facto*, that is, to behavior that occurred prior to the laws' enactment. But on October 30, 1999, the National People's Congress Standing Committee promulgated the "Decision to Eradicate Evil Cult Organizations and to Prevent and Punish Evil Cult Activities" ("the Decision"). After this formality was put in place, the majority of criminal punishments citizens who practice Falun Gong received were aimed at their actions prior to the Decision's promulgation. That is, it is under the circumstance that our country's basic legal principles have been violated that they are being thrown into jail.

2. The penal code can only target people's actions, not their thoughts or group identity. HuangWei's case [the first Falun Gong case I took] is only one example of how scores of citizens who practice Falun Gong have been punished simply because of their identity as Falun Gong adherents.

3. The Decision failed to provide any legal definitions for proper judgments regarding Falun Gong. It did not address, for instance: What is the relationship between the Falun Gong organization and "evil cult organizations"? What is an "evil cult organization"? In what ways do the actions of Falun Gong adherents fall under the category of "evil cult" crimes? Falun Gong believers are accused basically across the board of "using an evil cult organization to undermine the implementation of the law." Yet there is a lack of evidence that any "evil cult organization" exists in this case.

4. The very existence of forced labor camps, and the way in which people are sentenced to them, clearly violates multiple articles of our constitution

(such as Articles 5, 10, 33, 37, and 38). Forced labor deprives a citizen of his personal freedom, usually for years, yet there is no official channel for him to appeal the decision to relegate him to it. When he is notified of the decision to send him to a labor camp, he may be detained right on the spot and shipped off to the camp. This would be unimaginable in any civilized society. After a person is sent to a labor camp, every step of any "appeals" process requires painful means such as hunger strikes, perhaps for days, if one is to achieve anything. All citizens, including the police, know that the labor camp system violates the constitution and basic laws, but the system has continued, and the country is paying an increasingly high price for this.

5. The systematic and conniving way in which the national and local governments are handling the above-mentioned matters has brought about another consequence: Legal personnel are being encouraged to behave cruelly. With Huang Wei's case, the irresponsibility of legal personnel and their corrupt, unprofessional conduct reached an alarming level. Most terrible of all is that they did not even see anything wrong with their behavior. Judges and courts of justice are the gatekeepers of legal values, and their professional code of ethics should instinctively alert them to deviations from these values. But with Huang's case, we have seen the exact opposite. These legal personnel attack anyone who attempts to uphold legal values. Although they are gatekeepers, they haven't a trace of responsibility nor morality, and have no respect for the sacredness of their profession. This really pains me.

The nations in the world today whose governments do not adhere to the rule of law are closed, underdeveloped, unstable, and uncivilized. The citizens yearn for stability every bit as much as the government does. But the capricious use of the slogan, "maintaining stability is top priority," and thereby discarding the rule of law has become one of the greatest sources of instability in Chinese society today. ■



BY LEESHAI LEMISH

AP

WHY FALUN GONG IS NOT IN THE PAPERS

# Out of the Media Spotlight

*The following is adapted from a paper given at the University of Westminster's China Media Centre conference, London, June 2006.*

"Concentration Camp for Falun Gong Disclosed; Prisoners Killed for Organs," read the headline of a March 9, 2006 Falun Dafa Information Center release sent to

foreign news bureaus in Beijing. The article went on to describe China's Sujiatun camp, said to have secretly held some 6,000 practitioners of Falun Gong. According to one witness, three quarters of them had already been killed. Like all foreign media with offices in China, The Associated Press (AP) then chose not to report the story.

But on March 28, 2006 AP did pick up a statement on the same story from a very different source—the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Curiously, AP, which did not find the concentration camp allegations worth reporting in the first place, deemed the CCP's denial of the story newsworthy.

Not that CCP denials are new. The regime denies the use of torture, denied the spread of SARS, and to this day denies gunning down protesters in 1989. So why did AP make these decisions about what to report and what to ignore?

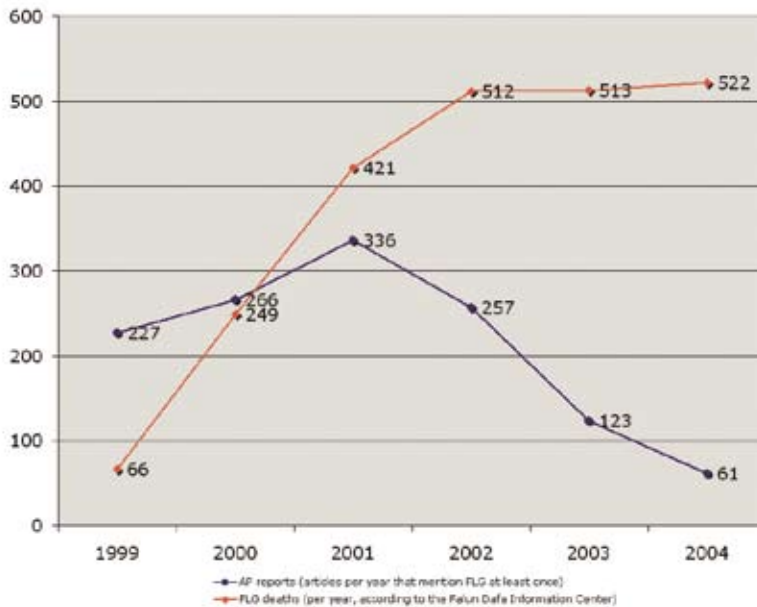
In many ways, the AP report, "China Denies Falun Gong Allegations of Organ Harvesting," is typical of biases often found, with a few notable exceptions, in Western media articles about human rights in China and the campaign against Falun Gong in particular.

In one study, I examined 1,879 articles about Falun Gong that appeared in the leading newspapers and wire services of the English-speaking world (such as the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*, AP and Reuters). Among the research findings, which I presented at association of Media Studies conferences in Taipei and in London, are the following.



## ANALYSIS

## AP Reports vs. Falun Gong Deaths



### Coverage of Falun Gong has decreased, even as torture and killing increase

Like most Western media, AP first reported on Falun Gong in late April 1999 when over 10,000 adherents of the spiritual practice gathered quietly in Beijing. Prior to that, the story of tens of millions suddenly practicing Falun Gong exercises in Chinese parks during the 1990s, like the CCP's escalating suppression of the discipline leading up to the now-famous gathering were all but completely ignored by Western press.

On the eve of the Party's 1999 Falun Gong ban, therefore, Western journalists (and scholars) were caught off guard. Their knowledge of Falun Gong was limited, with the earliest reporters not even sure what to call it in English.

Soon reporters were faced with a new challenge—a massive, violent, and often bizarre campaign against the equally foreign group. Falun Gong became a headline item, as journalists told of meditators on Tiananmen Square being beaten and loaded onto police vans.

Initially, a single case of a Falun Gong practitioner being tortured to death was considered newsworthy. Yet as the documented death toll climbed into the thousands, Western media grew increasingly silent. Coverage has markedly declined since 2001, to the point where articles on Falun Gong from correspondents in China are now rare. *USA Today* and the

*London Guardian* for instance, have not reported from China on Falun Gong in over six years.

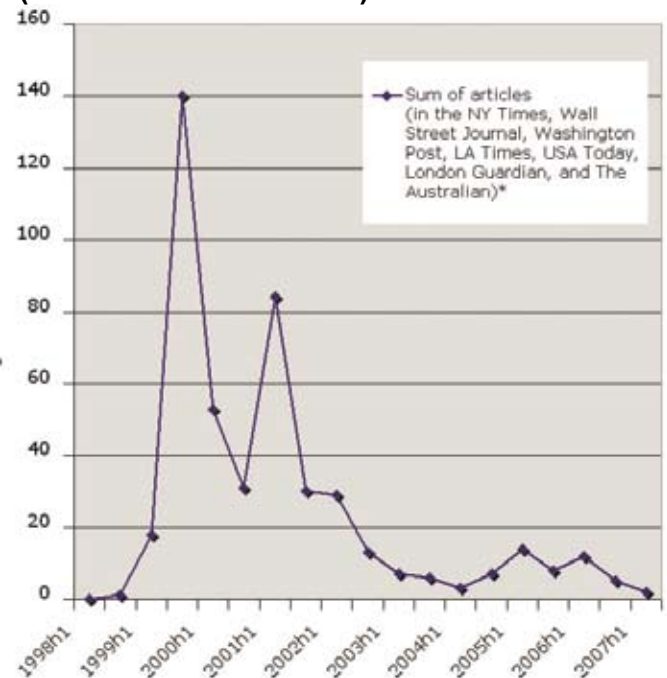
### Articles that do appear are often sparked and framed by the CCP

Scholars who study media have long known that powerful governments have tremendous influence over the production of news, whereas human rights and community-based groups struggle to get any attention. It is a variation of the "might-makes-right" approach: "might-makes-newsworthy."

AP's article about the organ harvesting charges epitomizes this dynamic. Weeks of press conferences concerning the allegations and protests in over a dozen countries were ignored, yet one short denial from a CCP spokesperson promptly generated an AP report.

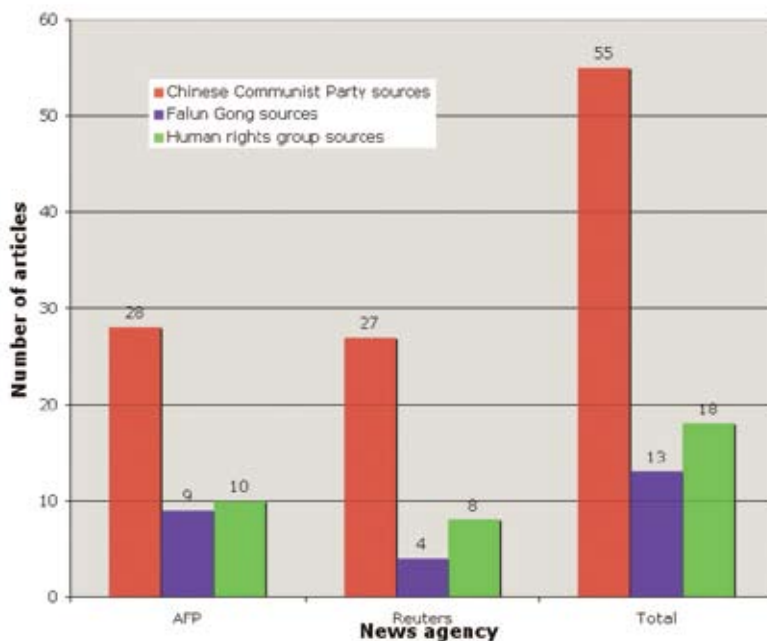
Other news services, such as Agence France-Presse (AFP) and Reuters, follow this pattern as well. My study found that Party officials, Chinese court officials (who are ultimately subordinated to the Party in these cases), and state-run media (like Xinhua) were cited as the main sources of news in the headline or opening paragraphs of articles about Falun Gong four times as often as Falun Gong sources and three times

### Newspaper Coverage of Falun Gong (at six-month intervals)



\* Data collected using the LexisNexis database. News pieces counted mentioned "Falun Gong" a minimum of three times anywhere in the text. Editorials, briefs, and calendar items were excluded.

Prominently Featured Sources for News about Falun Gong



Note: Data based on a sample that consists of each agency's first ten articles per year from 1999-2004.

as often as rights organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. In other words, for every article with a headline like: "Falun Gong Woman Says She was Tortured," four articles had a headline like: "China Sentences Sect Member."

It is not surprising, then, that Western media articles sparked by a Chinese government action also bear the marks of the Communist Party's spin—for instance, using terms with negative connotations to describe Falun Gong, such as "sect," or worse, "cult."

### The Communist Party and its critics receive unequal chances within articles

Reporters often contend that their articles must be balanced. If, say, they quote Falun Gong practitioners making certain claims, they will then seek quotations from CCP officials to balance out the charges—to be "fair" to both sides. In this relativistic approach it matters not if one side is making fact-based claims and the other is blatantly lying. The distinction is left up to the reader to determine. An analogy makes clear the problems with this approach. Imagine the following: "Jewish activists accuse Hitler of arresting millions of their people and carrying out an extermination campaign in concentration camps. A German Embassy spokesperson said the allegations were a complete fabrication and part of a Jewish conspiracy

to rule the world"—that is the model.

Setting aside for the moment ethical concerns about this model of "balance," this approach is further troubled by an uneven application—tilted toward those in power. For instance, the AP article about organ harvesting allegations quoted CCP spokesperson Qin Gang. For Falun Gong's side, however, AP simply referred to online information and did not consult or quote a representative of the group.

Again, this is part of a pattern. My study examined 1,308 AP articles that mentioned Falun Gong at least once. In articles that included Falun Gong's claim that adherents have died from torture in custody, the CCP was given a chance to directly respond 50.2 percent of the time.

By contrast, when AP cited one of the CCP's major accusations toward Falun Gong—i.e., that practitioners died from refusing medical treatment or suicide—Falun Gong was given a chance to respond only 17.9 percent of the time.

In other words, if this were a televised debate, the CCP spokesperson would be given the microphone to respond to every other FLG accusation, whereas the FLG spokesperson would be allowed to respond to one out of every five.

Further, the data shows AP stating that Falun Gong's allegations of torture could "not be verified" nine times as often as it qualifies CCP claims about Falun Gong. Falun Gong's "allegations," however, are backed by reports from Amnesty International, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture, among others, while the Communist Party has never allowed an open investigation of its accusations; they have yet to be substantiated by a single neutral organization. This fact seems to have been lost on AP.

In short, there is a double bias: First, articles are more likely to be triggered by a CCP action (e.g. it is not news if Falun Gong claims it, but it is news if the Chinese government denies it). Then, within the pre-framed report, the CCP is consistently given a more dominant position. Particularly problematic in this case is that the entity prompting the articles and influencing their tone is the one responsible for the documented torture and killings these articles ostensibly discuss.

Before proposing some explanations for this double bias, I should first qualify my critique. To be fair, there have been some excellent, comprehensive articles about Falun Gong in China. Some journalists have gone to great personal risk to cover this story, and it is thanks to their work that we have many key details about the persecution Falun Gong has faced; the *Wall Street Journal's* Ian Johnson with his Pulitzer-winning pieces on torture and the 610 Office, and the

## ANALYSIS

*Washington Post's* Philip Pan's exposé about the immolation come to mind. Also, I recall personally observing and being impressed with how then-AP reporter Chris Decherd handled a sensitive Falun Gong story in Phnom Penh five years ago.

But these are exceptions. Chinese diplomats and some overseas Chinese who insist on defending the Beijing regime claim that Western media regularly blow China's abuses out of proportion. The reality, at least in Falun Gong's case, is that the issue of human rights in China is increasingly disappearing from newspaper columns.

There are other patterns. Articles are often decontextualized, a recurring phenomenon according to a 2002 report by the International Council on Human Rights Policy in Geneva. Less than one in five AP articles, for instance, mentions that it is possible the communist regime in Beijing has killed Falun Gong practitioners. A 2006 *Los Angeles Times* editorial referred to the persecution of Falun Gong as "harassment." Such a portrayal hardly suggests the horrors certainly involved in 3,000 people having been tortured to death.

### Why is Falun Gong out of the media spotlight?

If operating under the assumption that media in democratic societies impartially reflect world realities, the easy explanation would be that the Falun Gong issue has gone away—either the Communist Party is no longer persecuting Falun Gong or, on the contrary, it has more or less completely crushed the group. But as the rest of this volume demonstrates, that is not the case (although the latter is a common misconception). More likely, a range of factors and dynamics have created what is often referred to as a media bias.

Critics from Noam Chomsky on the left to L. Brent Bozell III on the right have censured mainstream media over a range of biases. John Patrick Kusumi of the China Support Network, for instance, argues that Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw, and Peter Jennings for years grounded the bias of not seriously discussing human rights in China on U.S. television. Laurell Leff's *Buried by the Times* (Cambridge, 2005) even details how America's top paper obscured one of the twentieth century's biggest stories—the Holocaust.

Below, then, are a few explanations for Western media's above patterns and biases in covering Falun Gong.

#### 1. Falun Gong became less visible in China

From 1999-2001, Falun Gong practitioners were prominently visible in the heart of Beijing when they called for help on Tiananmen Square. But when they left Tiananmen, the media spotlight quickly faded out. Gone were the images of men and women sitting cross-legged in meditation and policemen pouncing

on them before dragging them away, leaving blood stains on the square's concrete slabs. Gone, too, were the police troops swarming around Beijing, the show trials, and the burning heaps of Falun Gong books.

Practitioners were now engaged in less conspicuous forms of localized resistance—hanging banners, distributing leaflets, calling prisons. The bloody scenes were behind the high concrete walls of distant labor camps.

Even as protests mounted overseas, as refugees told of large-scale torture, and as Falun Dafa Information Center press releases poured out of their Beijing bureau fax machines, Western editors found Falun Gong to be too far from sight.

#### 2. Falun Gong became old news

As the data here demonstrates, coverage of Falun Gong has decreased dramatically over time. The killing of adherents, like starvation in Africa, has become old news, and old news does not sell. With the exception of events that could be deemed sensational—like the interception of Chinese television broadcasts or a woman yelling in the middle of Hu Jintao's speech in Washington—Falun Gong is no longer considered newsworthy.

On MediaChannel.org Beatrice Turpin describes how, when she worked at Associated Press Television News, her superiors were less than supportive of her journalistic inquisitiveness. "There was a lack of will in my office to move the story further," she says. "I was told to keep in touch with Falun Gong members through my beeper and public phones in case any further 'spectacular' events were planned but was strongly discouraged from trying to get interviews or trying to go deeper with the story."

As a result, even regular media consumers can read their morning papers for years without knowing much at all about the persecution of Falun Gong in China.

#### 3. Reporting from China is difficult, reporting on human rights in China is harder, and covering Falun Gong has at times been incredibly hard.

Even if journalists wish to closely follow the story and have the blessing of their editors, they still face tremendous obstacles. Labor camps are faraway and impossible to enter with the exception of a rare guided tour. Journalists based in China have stood to lose their work permits and have been physically assaulted for trying to report on Falun Gong.

The BBC's Rupert Wingfield-Hayes, one of the more daring Western journalists during his time in China, describes being followed, attacked, and interrogated for trying to cover a Falun Gong demonstration. Foreign reporters were often arrested with Falun Gong



practitioners and saw the films ripped out of their photographers' cameras.

According to the *Washington Post's* Edward Cody, a manual published by the Ministry of Public Security in preparation for the Olympics instructed policemen to respond to foreign journalists wishing to cover Falun Gong as follows: "It's beyond the limit of your coverage and illegal. As a foreign reporter in China, you should obey China [sic] law and do nothing against your status." "Oh, I see. May I go now?" the hypothetical reporter replies. "No. Come with us."

While Chinese authorities announced the lifting of restrictions on foreign journalists last December in preparation for the 2008 Olympics, it remains to be proven that the new freedoms also include reporting on Falun Gong.

Conscientious journalists, moreover, are keenly aware that the danger to their informants is even greater. In *Wild Grass* (Pantheon, 2004), Johnson describes how he had to disguise himself and hop taxis just to meet adherents without getting them arrested. The counter example is that of Ding Yan, a Falun Gong practitioner who was seized for attending a secret press conference in Beijing and later tortured to death in custody.

#### 4. Assisted self-censorship

Strengthening the image of an increasingly free China, concealing the extent of the ongoing campaign, and pretending Falun Gong has been successfully handled are obvious international public-relations priorities for the Communist Party. It is only natural, therefore, that it will use leverage over foreign press whenever it is able to. With media conglomerates like Time Warner, Disney, and News Corp. vying for footing in the China market, the Party has largely been able to negotiate on its terms (*à la* Google's well known affair of self-censoring its Chinese search engine).

The foreign press has been given limited freedom to cover certain previously taboo topics, along with what appears to be a tacit mutual understanding that in-depth coverage of Falun Gong and a handful of other sensitive topics remain off limits. Foreign media know that if they go too far, their magazines will be removed from stands (as was Time after carrying articles by the Dalai Lama and Chinese dissidents), their shows will be taken off the air (as happened to the BBC after it aired an item about Falun Gong), or their websites will be blocked if they are not already.

Self-censorship further extends to the sources journalists rely on. Scholars and officials figure prominently as sources in Western media coverage. Yet, to the best of my knowledge, not a single academic or bureaucrat in China has been willing to go on record opposing the CCP's Falun Gong policy as of July 2007.

The risks are simply too high, and so the very courageous ones do so anonymously. Finding prominent individuals willing to speak in support of the Party's campaign, of course, has never been a problem.

In fact, there are few Western scholars of China who have gone on record expressing strong critique of the campaign. Most China scholars remain deeply concerned with maintaining their access to the mainland, and some have expressed to me in private their mixed feelings about needing to self-censor their work, an issue Perry Link discusses with specifics about Falun Gong in his illuminating article, "China: The Anaconda in the Chandelier" (NY Review of Books, 2002).

5. *Combine effective propaganda saturation with "compassion fatigue" and the result is the idea that Falun Gong practitioners are "unworthy victims."*

While few critically minded journalists would accept the Party's Falun Gong blood libels at face value (Human Rights Watch calls them "bogus"), the propaganda blitz did create an environment that, when combined with the unfamiliarity of the new group, led to many observers not knowing who or what to believe. As a result, derogatory terms used to describe Falun Gong and its founder—all of which can invariably be traced back to CCP rhetoric—have crept into Western media reports.

Moreover, all the negativity aimed at Falun Gong has accelerated the process known as "compassion fatigue." The example of the Tiananmen "self-immolation" incident in 2001 is most telling. Danny Schechter and others believe the event was highly manipulated, if not outright staged, by the CCP. Still, the propaganda succeeded in generating much negativity, or at least doubts, about Falun Gong. Why would reporters risk their careers in China to cover a group they considered controversial? Falun Gong practitioners were now seen as "unworthy victims." It is no coincidence that coverage of Falun Gong began tapering off dramatically in the incident's aftermath, even as the rate of killing in custody was accelerating.

These patterns continue and may have become even more accentuated recently: In the first half of this year, the sampled seven of the most prominent newspapers in the English-speaking world produced a total of two articles that had more than a passing mention of Falun Gong. One final question might then be asked: Could there possibly be a causal relationship between media's decreased coverage of abuses and the increase in persecution?

*Leeshai Lemish researches Chinese politics, human rights, and Western media in China, and has a master's degree in International Relations from the London School of Economics.*

# Beijing's Propaganda Assault

By John Augustyn



THE Xinhua News Agency—official mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) government—had a rare, if not startling, moment of candor on July 26 of 1999, four days into the official suppression of Falun Gong.

“In fact, the so-called ‘truth, kindness and tolerance’ principle preached by Li Hongzhi [Falun Gong’s founder],” Xinhua proudly declared, “has nothing in common with the socialist ethical and cultural progress we are striving to achieve.” Especially the “truth” part, it seems.

Central to the genocide perpetrated against Falun Gong is a propaganda campaign of enormous proportions. “Beijing has ratcheted up the campaign to a fever pitch, bombarding citizens with an old, communist-style propaganda war,” The *Wall Street Journal* reports.

The bombardment began on July 22 of 1999, under the direction of the aptly-named Ministry of Propaganda. State-run television launched disinformation marathons, broadcasting “exposés” on the meditation group 24-7. Radio stations flooded the airwaves with the government’s official rhetoric denouncing

the group.

Not to be outdone, state-run newspapers condemned the Falun Gong with unchecked bravado, led by the *People’s Daily*—the official paper of the CCP—which ran a staggering 347 “articles” on the group, in but one month. Over time the CCP would extend the scope and reach of its propaganda, erecting billboards, issuing comic books, printing posters, and producing movies, a TV series, exhibits, and even plays.

Clive Ansley, Esq., a renowned lawyer who has practiced and taught in China for 14 years (see page 39), was residing in China at the time. He has described the media barrage as “the most extreme, and totally unjustified, campaign of unmitigated hatred I have ever witnessed.”

The propaganda crusade was soon carried overseas. The past seven years have seen a deluge of propaganda here in the West. Carried out by Beijing’s overseas arms—consulates and embassies—the slander is usually given to policy makers, prominent public figures, and businesses.

Its effects are often palpable in the West, where Falun Gong and its cultur-

al background are unfamiliar. It often breeds distrust, distance, or even dislike. It is meant to scandalize, to taint, rather than to inform.

The effects in China, meanwhile, are often violent. According to Amnesty International, “the official campaign of public vilification of Falun Gong in the official Chinese press has created a climate of hatred against Falun Gong practitioners, which may be encouraging acts of violence against them.”

Few in the West realize that not one of the Party’s claims has been confirmed by third-party investigation; in fact, Chinese authorities have arrested journalists who have tried to investigate, and denied international investigators (including even the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture) access.

We are left to wonder: What is the regime hiding?

They say those living in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones. *TIME* magazine (Asia edition) has rightly turned the tables. In one poignant news article (June 2001) it noted that the Falun Gong are a peaceful bunch, whereas, “in its 51-year history ruling China, the Communist Party has been responsible for the death of tens of millions of innocent citizens, including its own supporters.”

The implication? “Perhaps the evil cult is Jiang’s own party,” *TIME* says.

In 2003 Ferdinand Nahimana, founder of a Rwandan state radio station, and Hassan Ngeze, the owner of a Hutu extremist newspaper, were convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The grounds? Inciting hatred that sparked the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The Judge proclaimed, “Without a firearm or machete you caused the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians.”

If the Rwanda ruling is any indicator, China’s propagandists are going to have a lot of answering to do one day. ■





BY MATTHEW KUTOLOWSKI

# Transcending the Mundane

ALSO IN THIS SECTION

59 From Media to the Arts: Joel & Cecilia

61 Rescued from Hell: Li Weixun

63 Man on a Mission: Dr. Sen Nieh

## *Falun Gong and the age-old Chinese belief behind it*

It is an idea with staying power. A belief as old as Chinese civilization itself, having resonated with a stunning range of dynasties, provinces, and personalities. To generations has it spoken. In the very substrate of China's culture is it firmly embedded.

The idea has, if not moved mountains, at least ennobled them: China's celebrated "Five Sacred Peaks" were christened as such for their connection to this idea. It was a defining pursuit in the life of Wang Wei, one of China's most beloved and celebrated Tang poets, as it was in that of the reputed founder of China's fabled Shaolin Monastery, Boddhidharma.

And today the idea lives on in important ways, as seen in the Falun Gong phenomenon, where it is a central component. I would even argue Falun Gong can't be understood in its absence.

The idea is this: that a human being can, through disciplined spiritual practice, transcend this ordinary existence. A higher state of being is envisioned, one having its own privileged joys and knowledge. In the Chinese model the ingredients of this transformation have primarily been a life that is morally robust and the use of special meditative exercises. The successful disciple of these arts is called variously "a transcendent," "one who has attained the Tao," "an Enlightened one," or more commonly, "an Immortal."

As early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the traits of the transcendent were taking form. It was perhaps Zhuangzi, the play-



ful Taoist philosopher, who first wrote of such figures. In one of his best known passages, he tells of how “on Miaoku-yi Mountain there lives a divine one, whose skin is white like ice or snow, whose grace and elegance are like those of a virgin, who eats no grain, but lives on air and dew, and who, riding on clouds with flying dragons for his team, roams beyond the limits of the mortal regions.” This higher state, the text seems to insist, is not to be read as fiction or fantasy, but as a prospect.

By the time of the Han Dynasty a couple of centuries later, the image of the Immortal was firming up and in increasingly wide circulation; the possibility was now held out, as it were, that human and heavenly qualities were not altogether separate, the goods of different realms; rather, they were on a continuum. Most importantly, there were methods to cultivating the latter. Programs existed.

#### Means and ends

This idealized entity, which we’ll call the Transcendent for simplicity, has from his (or occasionally “her”) inception been marked and made by his physicality. That is, just as it has long been certain physical traits (e.g., radiant health or relics) that signify some form of higher spiritual attainment in the Chinese tradition, similarly it has been physical means that secure them.

One leading scholar of Chinese religion, Livia Kohn, has explained that in the Chinese tradition, “Physical exercises are the first active step taken toward the Tao [or “Way”]. They serve to make the body healthy, to extend its lifespan, and to open it up to the free flow of the Tao.” China’s Taoists have thus for centuries made the body “the basis, the root, the foundation of the cultivation process, [a way to] anchor oneself in physicality and transform the very nature of bodily existence as part of the divine undertaking.”

Put another way, the idea of a mind-body connection is old news in the Chinese context. Scholars such as Russel Kirkland have aptly dubbed this approach to self-transformation “biospiritual cultivation.”

To this end, a rich host of physical-spiritual disciplines have been developed over the centuries in China. Generally these practices have involved controlled breathing, special diets and fasting, visualization, medicinal drugs, and gymnastics-like exercises (called by many “Chinese yoga”). Any program involving these is thought to recalibrate, as it were, the invisible landscape of the body. The body in this worldview is seen as an amalgam of vital forces and essences, the disequilibrium of which, or compromised circulation of, leads to illness.

At their simplest, then, programs of proper breathing and diet could bring the movement of subtle bodily energies into balance, ensuring good health. They also readily

found application in other arenas, such as the martial arts, archery, and even calligraphy or landscape painting.

But applied in a more focused manner, and for higher ends, these were the very fodder for self-actualization and biospiritual transformation. Such efforts are generally referred to by scholars as “self-cultivation,” or simply “cultivation,” for short. In their fullest, they often combine physical discipline with moral rectitude of the strictest order. Kohn writes that, “cultivation means action and forward motion, progress and enhancement. Once begun, it is a continuous process, an ongoing movement of transformation. It requires that one challenges basic assumptions

about self and world, becomes a new person with every phase, and is never quite satisfied, done, or finished. There is always the divine ideal looming above...”

Such approaches, grounded in the locus of the body, could be contrasted with the more “devotional” traditions familiar to us in the West. There the body, in all its carnal and cavorting ways, is more burden than boon.

It stands between oneself and spiritual realization, rather than being grist for the latter.

This is not to say, of course, that the mind or spirit was not essential in the Chinese aspirant’s work of self-cultivation. Indeed, the severing of desires, the clearing out of attachments, defilements, and other spiritual clutter, have long been critical ingredients; the ability to restrain one’s thoughts and desires has been fundamental in this process. Moral self-mastery is indeed often fundamental. Cleanliness here too is close to godliness.

Rather, for the Taoist and many others, the two oft went hand in hand. As the famous 7<sup>th</sup> century physician Sun Simiao once wrote, “If you wish to calm the spirit, first refine the primordial energy. When this energy resides in the body, spirit is calm and energy is like an ocean. With the ocean of energy full to overflowing, the mind is calm and the spirit stable.”

#### Of discipline and caves

With all due respect to Denise Austin, this was not “Yoga Buns,” to be sure. The level of discipline and commitment such practices took when directed toward higher, spiritual ends, was so drastic as to exclude most all but the privileged elite of traditional China. The demands made upon one’s time, resources, and—perhaps most of all—willpower, would be enough to make even today’s most extreme of athletes shudder.

Consider how some old-time aspirants gave a whole new meaning to “do or die.” The person would climb into a cliff-side cave with the help of a rope, only to then cut the rope, determined to either cultivate to enlightenment or perish—slowly and certainly hungrily—trying. Others

“A rich host of physical-spiritual disciplines have been developed in China ... thought to recalibrate, as it were, the invisible landscape of the body.”

took often-toxic alchemical potions, knowing their risks. These were not escapist, however, but persons intensely devoted to confronting the most pressing facet of reality they knew: the human condition. Mortality was not so much a given, as a challenge.

The image of a carefree Taoism and warm-fuzzy Buddhism, popular in the West, belie this fact. According to Kirkland, this has to do with a series of botches. Taoism and similar Eastern spiritual arts were “deeply misunderstood” and “falsely imagined” in the West, he claims. Narcissistic, commercially minded folk have misrepresented such practices as teaching “going with the flow” and “just being spontaneous.” Indeed, books purportedly on Taoism and Zen often read remarkably like “Chicken Soup for the Soul.” The result is a growing literature on Taoism and its kin that amount to “mindless fluff,” in Kirkland’s opinion.

“In Taoism, achieving the spiritual goal has never been something that happens ‘spontaneously,’” Kirkland says, but “rather, it emerges out of a demanding personal process, which requires work, dedication, and a sacrifice of self-centeredness.”

The goal of such practices was “to attain an exalted state of existence through diligent cultivation of the world’s deeper realities,” according to Kirkland, and not, thus, stress relief, a good night’s sleep, or trim abs, though these might be byproducts of the practice. “Such attainments were generally predicated upon a process of personal purification and an enhanced awareness of reality—i.e., a process of moral, spiritual, and cognitive growth.”

Another scholar, Akira Akahori, echoes this appraisal, both in terms of the means and their fruits. He writes that, traditionally, “One can only become immortal by being singularly dedicated to the work, renouncing the common world completely, and being fearless even in the face of death.” This often meant, in practice, hours of dedicated practice each day. Some adepts would perform their gymnastics and meditations for more than a dozen hours a day, and this atop the study of scriptures and consumption of carefully concocted foods and medicinals. Such programs, practically speaking, could only be commenced in a monastic setting or the isolation of a mountain hermitage. Or cave. Just one disruption at the wrong time could prove disastrous.

The promise, then? “Utter freedom of body and mind is the ultimate reward, an immortality equal to that of heaven and earth,” according to Akira.

### Into the parks

In 1980s China, shortly after the death of Mao, all of this would give way more or less to a new incarnation of the classical pursuit. This was to be a modern version of immortality, complete with all the trappings of progress—scientific credentialing, State approval, and available to the masses. It was almost the complete inverse



of the private, religious, elite pursuit of immortality. For this, the *qigong* craze, was thoroughly public, secular, and mundane.

“*Qigong*” (literally, “working qi-energy”) was the term fashioned for this new version of biospiritual cultivation. Coined in 1951, the very name would suggest a break with the past: The emphasis was now on *qi*, a quasi-material form of energy, and the health it could bring; the intangible spiritual goals of yore were a sort of embarrassing, or at least problematic, remnant, branded by many “superstition.”

In the words of the Japanese scholar Kunio Miura, in this era “the average *qigong* practitioner would not ... connect any spiritual aims with the techniques. Good for health and therefore for the family and fatherland, fun to do and a nice way to meet people informally. A new sport for the masses—that’s what it seems to boil down to.” Call it Yoga Buns, Chinese style.

What is important to note here is that this domestication of a once rough, demanding, and quixotic pursuit meant for the first time that the general public could taste of its fruits, even if not its highest ideals. In other words, the pleasant health benefits of Chinese gymnastics and their ilk were remarkably accessible now. By the break of dawn, indeed, most every inch of China’s parks would by the late 1980s be filled with *qigong* and *tai-chi* enthusiasts. Some 2,000-plus forms of *qigong* were reportedly being practiced, with over 200 million daily participants. “*Qigong* Masters,” as they were called, came forth in droves during this period, offering what were previously private lineages of transmission. In Chinese parlance, they “came forth from the mountains.” For many, their remarkable feats of strength, healing, and magical powers cast them as transcendents in their own right. Whatever the case, *qigong*, in granting health, gave millions a taste of things greater: By changing the course of illness, one could change destiny.

## ANALYSIS

**Enter Falun Gong**

It is in this context, transcendence past and present, that we do well to place Falun Gong. Few analyses have done so, surprisingly, despite a burgeoning body of scholarship on Falun Gong and *qigong*. The focus thus far has been largely at the social level, or, if historical, focused on the group level and in terms of movements.

But for the many members of Falun Gong I have spoken with in Beijing, Taiwan, and North America, the practice is first and foremost a deeply personal affair, and only secondly, if at that, a social thing. This wasn't another "nice way to meet people" or a healthy "sport," as post-Mao *qigong* had become for China's masses. It was rather a movement inwards, a deepening, that reached toward the infinite; "inward cultivation" many call it. For many, the practice introduced them to an inner world—that of one's own mind. It was taste of something greater, even divine.

In Falun Gong many found the transcendent ideal rekindled. Combining both the bodily and spiritual in a disciplined program of Buddhist self-cultivation, Falun Gong's approach to perfection was a throwback. A 6th century Chinese monastic would have been at home with the practice.

For the majority of adherents, certainly health benefits served as an entrée; many took up the practice on account of aches and ailments. Word got out early that Falun Gong was unusually "effective," and efficacy, more than anything, was what had come to decide success or failure for a *qigong*. Even the Chinese state weighed in, such as when the *People's Public Security News*, a publication of the Ministry of Public Security, praised Falun Gong's founder for giving *qigong* healings to disabled crimefighters. The publication declared that, "After the treatments, they unanimously agreed upon their amazing improvements."

What has proved defining is that in Falun Gong health is not an end in itself, as in most if not all other *qigong* forms, but rather a byproduct along the path of biospiritual cultivation; at best, it might be a means to an end. Healing in contemporary Chinese *qigong* has after all been largely a secular, disenchanted thing—the stuff of *qi*.

In Falun Gong, by contrast, the "message is profoundly moral" according to David Ownby, a historian of Chinese religion who has written extensively on Falun Gong. Indeed, one's moral state is understood here to inform wellness or its absence; debts of wrongdoing, or "karma" in the Chinese vocabulary, translate into suffering or misfortune. As in the early Taoist communities, physical health is ultimately a statement having to do with one's overall moral and spiritual state.

The positive bodily effects of Falun Gong have translated, many tell, into a spiritual epiphany of sorts: that there

is something more, a beyond. Beyond *qi* and bodily conduits are much larger, and *deeper*, things. Cosmic laws are here every bit as real as flesh and blood, and as such, can be studied as one would a science and even abided by. The promise is, as in days of yore, far-reaching: transformation of the bodily-spiritual self, or even "enlightenment."

With Falun Gong, however, the offer is extended to all. It has always been made accessible and immediate, asking only the individual's willingness to invest effort in his or her own personal growth. The practice has always made its teachings available for free online, and attached no conditions to their study (e.g., age, fitness level, fees).

Ownby has remarked that, "when you talk to Falun Gong practitioners, over and over and over again they come back to the notion of being good, that the universe itself is good ... what I have found when I talk to people is that there is [for them] a great pleasure in being able to devote oneself to being good."

I believe this bespeaks of what might be called the joys of self-discipline. In the quest for self-mastery that China's religious aspirants have narrated so well, there is more than pain and peril. To be able to sit, legs crossed in "full-lotus" position for an hour is a physical feat, and one requiring a certain form of mastery; it's one the Falun Gong enact daily. Similarly, there is the self-restraint practiced—the harnessing of wild, once undetected thoughts and desires. If we are to believe Sun Simiao and others, with such mastery comes an "ocean of energy full to overflowing." I find the claim to ring true, having sampled these arts. Inner stillness, as with self-control, amounts to a kind of subtle joy that may be worn as a smile, but perhaps never fully expressed.

For many then, "doing" Falun Gong amounts to a form of positively becoming, a process of assimilating to higher laws of nature and cosmos (summarized as "truth," "compassion," "tolerance") and a cleansing of body just as of soul. It is in this light that so much of the group's activities in the face of state-suppression become intelligible—the disciplined response, the patience, the optimism, the dogged tenacity. These are people who daily imbibe of other realms. They are people who feel, by their account, nothing short of the cosmos coursing through their veins. Theirs is a grounding of a different sort, not likely to be supplanted by the whims of the day.

This then is a sensibility, an orientation, that runs through and undergirds so much of Chinese culture. If history is any indicator, it is here to stay. Some ideas are transcendent.

*Matthew Kutolowski is a Ph.D. student at Columbia University studying Chinese religion and culture.*

“When you talk to Falun Gong practitioners, over and over and over again they come back to the notion of being good, that the universe itself is good.

— Prof. David Ownby





BY SARAH COOK

# From Media to the Arts: Joel Chipkar and Cecilia Xiong

When Canadian Joel Chipkar first came across Falun Gong in 1998, he wasn't looking for a spiritual practice and didn't have time for a human rights cause.

Across the globe, Cecilia Xiong had just moved from China to Belgium, bringing her belief in Falun Gong with her.

They didn't know that four years later, they would be by each other's side, opposing a brutal persecution—

each in their own way.

"The stress from my business caught up to me so I followed my mom to a local [Falun Gong] practice site one evening, where she guided me through the exercises," says Chipkar, a successful real estate broker of 19 years. "That night I had the best sleep I'd had in years."

The next morning, he started to read Falun Gong's teachings, reaching a section that emphasized following

Truthfulness, Compassion and Forbearance. When it was time to leave for work, he put the book down and got in his car.

"As I rolled onto the highway, a red convertible swerved in front of me. I raised my fist and opened my mouth to swear at the driver. Then, from out of nowhere, a word popped into my head—'Forbearance.'"

He put his fist down and started to laugh, amazed at his quick change in perspective. He's been practicing ever since.

Meanwhile in Belgium, Xiong was studying economics, having said goodbye to her parents back in China, where they practiced Falun Gong every morning.

"I started practicing in 1998," says Xiong. "At first I joined just to please my mom, but then I felt the exercises started to help my spinal problems so I started to take it more seriously."

She never thought that a year later, their lives would be turned upside down when the spiritual discipline they shared in would be violently suppressed.



Cecilia Xiong, center, feels that traditional Chinese dance can convey “the beauty and dignity” of Falun Gong.

### Shock and resistance

“The day I heard about the ban, I was in shock,” says Xiong. “I couldn’t understand why the government would do that. When I heard people were getting arrested, I was afraid for my parents.”

Her fears turned out to be well founded. In 2000, Xiong learned that her parents had been detained.

“My dad was put in jail and my mother was beaten until she was blind and deaf,” she says. “They shocked her with electric batons until her body was black and blue.”

Xiong started appealing for her parents’ release, traveling across Europe to seek help from Western governments. Eventually, her parents were released, but they remain in hiding, living in exile in their own country.

Back in Canada, Chipkar experienced the persecution more indirectly—as a victim of hate incitement.

“After I learned the practice, I stuck a poster in my office window advertising, ‘Free Falun Gong classes on Monday nights,’” he says.

For a year the poster hung in the window without incident. Then, in July 1999 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) banned Falun Gong and launched a vitriolic propaganda campaign against it.

After that, Chipkar’s coworkers began to look at the poster, and him, dif-

ferently. They echoed statements by the communist regime that were being quoted in the Western press.

“I was shocked at how people in my own community started to become poisoned by the CCP’s hate propaganda,” says Chipkar.

Chipkar then volunteered to be a media spokesperson for Falun Gong to help expose the realities of the CCP’s campaign. This made him a further target, this time by the Chinese authorities themselves.

In 2003 the local Chinese Vice Consul General wrote a letter that was published in an English-language paper. The letter, in strong terms, attacked Chipkar for his belief in Falun Gong. He decided to sue for defamation.

“I have never been so scared in all my life,” says Chipkar. “But I was determined. I felt that this was not only about protecting my dignity, but about stopping Chinese officials from attacking people in North America as if it were China.”

A year later, in a landmark ruling, a Canadian judge ruled in Chipkar’s favor noting that the Vice Consul could not claim diplomatic immunity because he acted outside of his official capacity when he attacked Chipkar. The judge then awarded damages. A few weeks later the Vice Consul fled the country to escape paying.

Not receiving the damages was of little concern to Chipkar. “I didn’t care about the money. It was all about principle,” he says.

Not long before Chipkar’s lawsuit, he and Xiong met at a Falun Gong conference. They were later married.

As Chipkar spoke to media and other organizations, Xiong discovered an alternative way to counteract the CCP-spread animosity toward Falun Gong—performing Chinese classical dance.

“Ever since I was young I loved to dance,” says Xiong.

When she moved to Canada, she auditioned with Divine Performing Arts, a Chinese classical dance company known for its international sell-out shows of traditional Chinese culture.

“We want to give people a glimpse of some of the finest traditions of China’s 5,000 year-old culture,” she says. “The shows we do are about the spirit of ancient China.”

For Xiong, dancing has also become part of her journey of self-discovery—and resistance.

“Performing these dances is a learning experience for me too because I’m exploring my true heritage,” she says. “Growing up in China, you’re not exposed to it.”

“Instead, the CCP teaches that their culture of social and political ‘struggle’ is Chinese culture,” she remarks. “Our dances show people that’s not true.”

Her dance company not only celebrates tradition, but tackles social issues such as the persecution of the Falun Gong. “I hope those who see our show will also appreciate the beauty and dignity of Falun Gong and see through the CCP’s lies about it,” Xiong notes.

Still, she wishes her parents could be in the audience, sitting beside Chipkar and his mother, watching their daughter realize her childhood dream.

“I haven’t seen them in a long time,” she says. “I hope to be reunited with them soon. But for now they’re in my heart when I’m on stage.” ■





BY JAN JEKIELEK

# Rescued from Hell: Li Weixun

One morning in late 1999, the workers of Shengyang Heavy Machine Factory were met with a surprise. Instead of relaying the usual announcements, the company loudspeakers were on the warpath. "Traitor!" they yelled. "Evil!" they screamed. The object of their malice was junior sales manager Li Weixun. The workers who knew her could not believe their ears.

To those Shenyang Factory workers who were old enough to remember, the day was an eerie throwback to the 60's and 70's, to the Cultural Revolution. Only a few months earlier, Weixun, or Xiaofu as she is known to friends, was by all accounts viewed as model citizen.

"Mao Zedong said that we should serve the people. I was an obedient

child, so I listened, followed the Party. I wanted to be a good person," she says from her apartment in New York City. She arrived in the United States in September 2005, a U.N.-protected refugee.

After Mao's death, she got a college degree, married her childhood sweetheart, and gave birth to a son, Yiping. She took work in sales and marketing. She was a Communist Party member until that morning in 1999, when the loudspeakers announced she had been sacked from the factory and purged from the Party ranks. But, Xiaofu was not there to face her accusers.

She was being detained by police in a deep, underground cell where she was being severely beaten and subject to around-the-clock propaganda videos. Police demanded that she sign a little piece of paper, after which all of this ill-treatment would go away. How had Xiaofu so offended the system that she had previously embraced?

In 1996, Xiaofu discovered Falun Gong, the spiritual discipline that was spreading like wildfire across China. It changed her life. An illness that had plagued her for years was gone, and



she felt uplifted. Millions of Chinese were experiencing something similar.

"She changed a lot. She was getting rid of a lot of heavy burdens [and]... was looking at the world in a totally different way. There was more love in the family," says her son Yiping, who later started to practice himself.

Everything changed on July 20, 1999.

"I went to the practice site as usual, only to find that we were not allowed to practice anymore. Many police came to say that it was banned. My first response was disbelief. Such a good practice, how can you outlaw us?" recalls Xiaofu.

Within hours, hundreds of thousands of practitioners around the country were heading to their local governments to appeal the decision, a directive from then-Chinese dictator Jiang Zemin. Xiaofu and Yiping were among them.

Mother and son were arrested and taken to a large stadium. They were shown videos slandering Falun Gong and police demanded they sign a document certifying that they would give up practicing. They refused and were released with a 'warning.'

Two months later, Xiaofu was arrested again after going to appeal to the national government in Beijing. Police escorted her into custody back in her hometown. It was soon after this arrest that the Shengyang Heavy Machine Factory loudspeakers attacked her in her absence. Despite beatings and brainwashing tactics, Xiaofu continued to refuse to renounce Falun Gong. It took four months and 20,000 Yuan (USD \$2500) paid in extortion money for her family to secure her release.

Xiaofu made up her mind to expose what had happened to her and to other practitioners, some of whom had met even more grisly fates. She became active distributing printed materials that

debunked the state hate-propaganda that was saturating the Chinese media. It was her moral obligation, she insists.

Officials from the 610 Office, the bureau created to destroy Falun Gong, laid a trap for her at home in May of 2000, but friends alerted her to it in time. She left, expecting that it might be

for good. Whenever she called, Yiping recalls, he was too afraid to mention her name, lest she be tracked down.

In mid-January 2002, almost two years since she left her family, the 610 Of-

fice raided an underground materials site, housing a cache of leaflets exposing the atrocities committed against practitioners.

Xiaofu was one of the practitioners picked up. She was interrogated and tortured for 96 hours leaving her partially paralyzed from the waist down. By mid-February, still in detention, her arms were swollen black and blue. In early March, totally paralyzed from the waist down, she was sent to hospital. By mid-march, she was catatonic, and doctors deemed her terminally ill. She was released to her family, the police forcing them to pay another 50,000 Yuan (USD \$6500). Even then, police kept her under constant surveillance.

Incredibly, over the next 20 days, Xiaofu began to recover, being careful to not alert the guards to her increased strength and mobility. She credits this miracle to focusing on Falun Gong teachings in her mind, and to middle-of-the-night meditations.

Gradually the police let their guard down. With the help of her older brother, Xiaofu escaped. Family members were interrogated, beaten and put under house arrest as punishment.

"When a person is faced with a choice between a family and spiritual beliefs, it's like a choice between losing your left arm or losing your right arm," she says, with tears in her eyes.

“She was interrogated and tortured for 96 hours, leaving her partially paralyzed from the waist down. By mid-February, still in detention, her arms were swollen black and blue.”

None of Xiaofu's family members have escaped persecution, even the non-practitioners. Nine of them were either arrested or forced to leave their homes to avoid police. Party officials from the Machine Factory pressured Xiaofu's husband, who worked there as well, to seek a divorce. He asked her for one on two occasions, but in the end, love prevailed—he could not do it.

Yiping, refusing to sign the required pledge against Falun Gong, went to engineering school only because of his father's personal relationship with the university dean. Yiping practiced in secret. For two years, one of his dorm mates spied on him.

Given her circumstances, and the pressure on her family, Xiaofu decided that leaving China was the best option.

"In hiding, I couldn't really visit family members in their homes. They were worried sick about my safety. Other practitioners also told me that that way I could expose the persecution to the public," she says.

Xiaofu's older brother obtained passports for his sister and several others. On August 8, 2002, she received a panicked phone call: Someone had exposed the operation. The next day, she flew to Bangkok, to safety. Her brother, however, was sentenced to eight years for "disrupting the implementation of laws."

In Thailand, the U.N. accepted Xiaofu as a refugee and began the process of finding her a permanent home. Almost three years later, after graduating from university and now under the radar of the 610 Office, Yiping joined his mother. Their reunion was short lived. Not two months after Yiping's arrival, Xiaofu received papers to resettle in America. Yiping, also a U.N. refugee, is still in Bangkok hoping for a more lasting reunion.

While in Thailand and in the U.S., Xiaofu has worked tirelessly to expose the cruelty of the Chinese Communist Party's ongoing campaign to destroy Falun Gong. Indeed, this article is part of her efforts.

"Don't give up," is Xiaofu's message to persecuted practitioners. ■



BY COURT PEARMAN

# Man on a Mission: Dr. Sen Nieh

"I don't know if I should do this interview," Dr. Sen Nieh says as we sit down to chat. "I don't want to show off."

Certainly, Dr. Nieh has a lot to show off if he were so inclined. Throughout his 24 years of teaching Mechanical Engineering at the Catholic University of America, he has received numerous

teaching and research awards, both in Taiwan and abroad, all while committing himself to supporting disadvantaged students in his program.

What has made Nieh a fixture in his university community and in the Chinese human rights movement, though, is his newfound commitment to spiri-

tual growth and religious freedom. Falun Gong, he says, is what impressed upon him the importance of spiritual life and gave him some answers.

Nieh, originally from mainland China, grew up in Taiwan. He remembers how, when he was young, he and his family would bring fruit and incense to important festivals. They would kneel with them and kowtow north, "towards our original hometown, to remember the land and the family [we] left behind," he explains.

"We always wanted to get rid of communism and return home."

This dream motivated Nieh to attend prestigious National Taiwan University to study engineering—a popular subject in the small island living in the PRC's shadow. "We wanted to learn technology so we could build airplanes and submarines to defend our country."

But when Nieh, by then a motorcycle-riding, American-country-music-

singing rugby champion from Taiwan arrived at the University of Illinois in 1980 excited about studying for his PhD, he discovered that his defense track was not open to foreigners. He decided to focus on energy and the environment instead, and after being hired at Catholic University eventually became chair of his department.

At that time, his work on China's modernization made him a frequent guest speaker on the mainland. Nieh—whose expertise included not only combustion sciences and propulsion systems but also pollutants control and waste treatment—was made honorary professor at three PRC universities. In 1992, he received the Lectureship Award of the United Nations.

Yet when personal tragedy struck, leaving him alone with three children to care for, his successes fell into stark relief.

"Suddenly I realized I was nobody," Nieh says. Feeling that material success alone could not fulfill him, he turned to traditional Chinese philosophy, studying Buddhism and Taoism. Then, in the summer of 1997, a friend gave him *Zhuan Falun*, the teachings of Falun Gong—Nieh says he was immediately drawn to the practice and its principles of truth, compassion, and tolerance.

"I started trying to incorporate truth and compassion into everything, family, work, everything," Nieh says. He recalls that one of the most important lessons he learned from Falun Gong was that "it's not so much what you say, but how you say it," referring to the idea that it is one's sincere intention that matters, not the superficial mix of words. "Purity can penetrate different levels of people's hearts."

He felt this principle proven to him time and again in his office during his tenure as chair of the Mechanical Engineering Department. "People always come to you with problems, never happy," he says. "At that time I enlightened to the power of language. Applying truth, compassion, and tolerance, even



with tough cases, in 10–20 minutes people would leave happy."

Just as Dr. Nieh felt he had once again found harmony, his life took another turn on April 25, 1999. Following escalating suppression of Falun Gong on the mainland, over 10,000 adherents petitioned their government in Beijing that day, hoping that once it took the time to understand what Falun Gong was really about, China's leaders would reverse their policies and worse persecution could be evaded.

Nieh decided to support the mainland efforts by appealing for the rights of Falun Gong practitioners at the Chinese Embassy in Washington. The response Nieh received would quickly become typical among overseas Chinese.

"In the past I was an honorable guest at the embassy," he says. "As soon as I stepped forward [for Falun Gong], I

was blacklisted. But it was a righteous thing to do, and I was very happy to do it."

Nieh has since become a local champion

for Chinese human rights, his initial and primary motivation being to stop the Chinese Communist Party from taking away the spiritual practice that gave him the happiness he had longed for.

"In the past, people of persecuted faith-based groups—be it Christians or

Catholics of house churches, Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, or Falun Gong practitioners—have been very sad and, to some degree, hopeless," Nieh said at a 2005 forum in Sweden. But The Epoch Times' *Nine Commentaries* awakened Chinese people to the idea that the Communist Party's persecution is a systematic problem. "We are now able to see hope—the hope of a China without communism."

Over the past eight years, Nieh has been busy lobbying Congress, organizing rallies and marches. He became board director for the Global Alliance for Democracy and Peace, co-founded an organization that helps Chinese people to sever their ties to the Communist Party, and shook hands with the U.S. president at the dedication of the Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington this past June.

Amazingly, despite his new commitment to voicing dissent, Nieh's work at Catholic University has not missed a beat. He is the most experienced person



in his department, having published 70 scientific papers on eight patents of invention. More importantly to him, he has developed a knack for motivating students from disadvantaged economic backgrounds to finish their degrees. As a result, earlier this year Dr. Nieh won the university's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

When asked about this new accolade, Nieh laughs. "I know if I never had gone through that life tribulation, I would still be busy with fame and fortune stuff," he says. "I now know that life is for us to improve ourselves and strive for purity, not to squeeze it for every drop of happy times."

"We should be responsible," he says, "and take some time to learn what it is we are supposed to do in a more profound, spiritual way." ■

“Applying truth, compassion, and tolerance, even with tough cases, in 10–20 minutes people would leave happy.”





# Of Hope and Horror

## A TRAGEDY IN CHINA

*oil on canvas*

A young woman is stricken with grief as her husband lies dead by her side, slain by torture in a brainwashing center. In his hands are documents that authorities demanded he sign, disavowing Falun Gong; they are torn in half. For many, refusal to sign leads to torture and even death.

For 63-year-old artist Kunlun Zhang, the New York showing of “Uncompromising Courage” has special meaning. Much of the anguish—as with the hope and valor—depicted in the art exhibit, it turns out, Zhang experienced first hand.

Zhang (*pictured on right*) was for months a prisoner of conscience in China, where he was arrested and tortured for his practice of Falun Gong meditation. Zhang was crippled for months from repeated beatings and electric shocks by prison guards.

After international pressure won his early release, Zhang joined forces with 22 other artists to give artistic expression to the terror and anguish many face in Chi-



na. The artists created more than 40 pieces that depict not only the suppression of Falun Gong in China, but also the peaceful defiance of those who practice it and the spiritual depths of their journey.

The pieces (several of which are shown here) comprise a traveling art show that has been displayed in Washington, D.C., Toronto, Korea, and New York City—at the National Arts Club.

“There is an incredible courage and resolve captured in these works,” says Julia Xu, a coordinator of the show. “It’s hard not to be moved by what these people have faced and endured. It’s incredibly tragic, but equally inspiring.”

True to form, Chinese Embassy and Consulate officials have pressured potential venues not to display the show. Chinese officials do not want their human rights violations to be exposed.



### TORTURE OF A WOMAN

*pastel on paper*

Women of Falun Gong, such as the one depicted here, tell wrenching tales of physical and sexual abuse in captivity. They have been beaten, sodomized, gang raped, and sexually humiliated. The coloring of the police in this scene suggests the inhumanity of their acts.



### LIU CHENGJUN

*oil on canvas*

Bathed in a warm, golden light that represents resilient faith is Liu Chengjun, shortly before his torture-inflicted death. Ghastly images animate the floor, suggesting the horrors he endured in police captivity. Liu was arrested in March of 2002 for his part in a defiant television broadcast that exposed human rights violations against Falun Gong and the culpability of government officials.



### SMOKE AND ASH

*pastel on paper*

Irons and cigarettes are among the implements used to burn and torment captive Falun Gong followers; some, such as red-hot iron rods, burn to the bone. Such cruelty has been sanctioned by China's former ruler, Jiang Zemin, who declared that "no means are too excessive" to eliminate the popular meditation.



**IN HARMONY**

*oil on canvas*

A young woman sits in Falun Gong meditation, an inner harmony melding her into the natural landscape and its balance of soft, gentle hues. Cherubs frolic above, conveying a feeling of lightness and innocence.



**LOTUS CANDLE***oil on canvas*

Lotus flowers and candles merge in a message of hope and mourning; candlelight vigils around the world remember the loss of Falun Gong practitioners in China and call for change. Scenes at the bottom depict torture and maltreatment by police.

**BANNER***oil on canvas*

A young mother sews a banner emblazoned, in affirmation, with "Falun Dafa is Good." The scene is one of anticipation, as typically such banners are used across China in daring protest of suppression and slander. The healthy baby suggests that life—and faith—continue in the face of tyranny.





By JOHN AUGUSTYN

# A Parade of Culture

*Through Falun Gong, people are rediscovering their heritage, and finding joy in sharing it*

Bright, boisterous floats. The thumping of drums. Colorfully costumed lads, prancing about.

If these are the marks of a parade, then a parade is about the last thing you would associate with a meditation practice. Much less a meditation being ruthlessly suppressed in its homeland of China.

But with growing enthusiasm, followers of Falun Gong are taking to the streets, and not just to protest. There is also something to celebrate. Even something to share. Here, it's good news all the way.

It's a tale told, in a sense, by the smile on Tracey Zhu's face today. She's performing a Chinese "fan dance" in the annual Chinatown New Year's parade, seemingly impervious to the nipping winter cold that has others bundled in layers of down and wool.

Zhu's smile, like the dance, runs deep.

"When I'm performing, I really en-

joy sharing with people the beauty of ancient Chinese traditions," she shares. "From practicing Falun Gong I've come to hold them dear to my heart."

"It's not just about doing some dance, but an act of sharing. I want to share that dignity, grace, and harmony with the audience."

For many Falun Gong practitioners like Zhu, cultural performances like this one bespeak of a renewal—of a return.

"Learning Falun Gong, I came to value my own culture more," says Ying Chen, a systems director from Marlton, New Jersey. "I was born in China right during the Cultural Revolution and never had much of a connection to Chinese culture."

The Cultural Revolution, which took place from 1966–76, sought to destroy China's cultural traditions and any who dared continue them. It was an uprooting of China's very soul, some say.

For Chen and others, Falun Gong has been a new grounding of sorts—a replanting, or nurturing, of cultural roots.

"It was Falun Gong that did it for me," Chen says. "After practicing it a while I discovered that I was getting more in touch with my roots, and I've felt empowered by this connection. It not only allows me to excel here in America, but to do so as a Chinese-American who is grounded in my own culture's traditional values."

"It's the best of both worlds."

Chen thus took up the flute again recently after years of time off, newly inspired. Others, like Zhu, have similarly found new meaning in arts they had long since dropped, such as dance, calligraphy, music, and even poetry.

But this time around, the performance is different they say. It's not so much about "self" anymore, but something greater. It has to do with new depths and realms. "It's about achieving a state of purity and virtue," Zhu tells—things she relates to doing Falun Gong.

And that, Zhu says, is what makes their arts so different.

"Before when I performed I didn't really have soul... Now, when there are deeper, traditional values behind it, the performance really has heart."

"People feel that."

### Bridging hearts, cultures

In New York, Falun Gong has swelled in popularity over the years. That's how some 400 practitioners came to march in this year's Chinatown parade.

But things haven't always been easy.

"We realized a few years back that many people in Chinatown didn't understand us. They had read and heard too much nonsense from China's government, which is trying to wipe out Falun Gong," says Yun Song of Manhattan.

"I think they were confused, and led to think Falun Gong was something weird, or bad. They lost sight of the ancient culture that it comes from."

In that past culture, however, lay the answer to present tensions.

"So we wanted to show people the beauty and depth of Falun Gong, and that it's a part of our shared culture. Parades were a nice, friendly setting to do that."

And so it was that the two parties' shared heritage proved just the right bridge. Importantly, that heritage is what



Falun Gong is all about.

"The practice is deeply rooted in the ancient Chinese world," offers Erping Zhang, a Mason Fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. "The idea that a person can do 'self-cultivation' to physically and mentally remake himself into someone more whole, healthy, or enlightened—that idea is very basic, and key, to Chinese culture."

Many have made the same connection. Irwin Cotler, Canada's former Minister of Justice and Attorney General, declared once that, "Falun Gong represents the very best of Chinese culture and values."

But tragically, before Falun Gong came along, much of that traditional culture was lost, Zhang explains. Beijing's Communist rulers felt threatened by it.

"They wanted to do away with tradition and Chinese heritage, because to them it undermined or competed with their [European] Marxist ideology, which was not in any way Chinese."

### A lost splendor renewed

The parades began with drum troupes, one interviewee recalled. Waist drums, dating back over a millennia in China, were a natural choice: They resonated with people.

Soon, along came traditional dress and costume, with styles tracing back to China's legendary Tang Dynasty—a period of tremendous cultural ferment. Their colors and elegant design bespeak

of a noble, upright sensibility, participants say.

Dance, often choreographed by the performers and rehearsed for weeks, was a natural extension.

With time many in New York's Chinatown and beyond have come to see their Falun Gong compatriots anew. Not only fellow Chinese seemed to appreciate the rich cultural performances. So too did Americans.

"This group is bringing the entire parade to a much higher level. They're bringing the whole thing up," said one African-American spectator recently.

Another parade-goer mirrored that sentiment. "They're bringing people together, to be peaceful... the world needs more of this."

Perhaps the most unlikely affirmation, though, has come in the form of accolades. Close to 30 times now Falun Gong groups have won parade honors. From first prize in San Diego's St. Patrick's day parade to "best art design" in Boston and multiple awards in Minnesota, the support has been a welcome surprise.

"What's really meaningful about it," says Song, "is that it says we're part of this [American] culture too, and have something to share with it as Chinese, and as Falun Gong. I think Falun Gong has made us all more giving, and people can sense that energy." ■





Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong

<http://cipfg.org/en/>

Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong (CIPFG) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to probing crimes committed against Falun Gong practitioners in China, particularly the crime of organ harvesting. We invite you to join the many government leaders, legal experts, physicians and others who make up CIPFG. Your support is vital to us, be it as an investigator or observer, consultant or organizer.

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A woman, whose only crime was following the tenets of Falun Gong, is "reeducated" through forced labor.

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Friends of Falun Gong USA (FoFG) is a nonprofit human rights organization founded by Americans concerned about the persecution of Falun Gong. Its mission is to support the freedom of belief of persons who practice Falun Gong. FoFG's efforts include activism campaigns, rallies in Washington DC, lawsuits against the architects of the persecution, and smaller, targeted projects. FoFG chapters exist around the world.

# Falun Dafa Information Center

Monitoring the Falun Gong Human Rights Crisis in China



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