

## Refugee Review Tribunal

### AUSTRALIA

#### RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

**Research Response Number:** CHN30903  
**Country:** China  
**Date:** 10 November 2006

Keywords: CHN30903 – Falun Gong – Shanghai – Li Hongzhi – Travel

This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

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#### Questions

**I am wondering whether there is any documentary evidence of Master Li Hongzhi being in Shanghai in 1995. Was he free to travel or was he out of the country?**

#### RESPONSE

- 1. Is there any documentary evidence of Master Li Hongzhi being in Shanghai in 1995?**
- 2. Was Li Hongzhi free to travel or was he out of the country?**

No information concerning Li Hongzhi being in Shanghai in 1995 or information restricting his travel was found in the sources consulted. However, in 1995 Li ceased to give lectures in China and travelled overseas for the first time.

According to Dr. Benjamin Penny, Li Hongzhi gave Falun Gong classes “all over China” during 1993 and 1994. In 1994 Li published his second book *Zhuan Falun* (Falun Gong’s main text). In April and May 1995 he gave lectures in Stockholm and Paris and in 1996 in Sydney, Houston and New York City. Penny noted that during 1995 and 1996 “Li clearly spent a lot of his time outside China”. In February 1997 he applied for asylum in New York (Penny, Benjamin 2001, *The Past, Present and Future of Falun Gong* (paper presented to a seminar at the Refugee Review Tribunal in Sydney Australia), 4 May – Attachment 1; Penny, Benjamin 2003, *Falun Gong: What was it? and what is it now? A talk for the Refugee Review Tribunal National Members’ Conference*, 29 August – Attachment 2).

A report accessed on a Falun Gong website stated that for two and a half years after Falun Dafa’s public introduction in May 1992 Li Hongzhi lectured “on invitation in almost every major Chinese city”. The source noted that “All instruction at that time was overseen by the Chinese government’s top qigong organization, the China Qigong Scientific Research Society”. It was also reported that Li gave his last series of lectures [in China] at the end of

1994 (Wang, Tao, Browde, Levi and Loftus, Jason (undated), 'Jiang Zemin's Personal Crusade: Why the Chinese Communist Party Leader Moved Against Falun Gong and How His Anti-Falun Gong Campaign Has Come to Dominate His Agenda', <http://faluninfo.net/specialreports/jiangspersonalcrusade/JiangsPersonalCrusade.doc> – Accessed 8 November 2006 – Attachment 3).

The Falun Gong associated *Epoch Times* reported that Li Hongzhi concluded teaching his practice on mainland China in 1995. Also, the UK Home Office published a timeline which indicated that Li stopped teaching Falun Gong in 1995 ('Anything for Power: The Real Story of China's Jiang Zemin' 2005, *The Epoch Times*, 24 July <http://www.theepochtimes.com/tools/printer.asp?id=30542> – Accessed 7 November 2006 – Attachment 4; UK Home Office 2002, *Revolution of the Wheel – the Falun Gong in China and in Exile*, 2nd edition, November, para. 2.4 – Attachment 5).

On Li's lectures overseas, a Falun Gong source states that between 13-19 March 1995 Li gave Dafa classes in France; between 14-20 April 1995 he gave classes and lectures in Sweden; and on 13 May 1995 he gave Fa lectures in Hong Kong ('A Chronicle of Major Events of Falun Dafa (3rd Edition)' 2004, Pure Insight website, 15 March <http://www.pureinsight.org/pi/index.php?news=2097> – Accessed 7 November 2006 – Attachment 6).

Of interest is the 1997 publication *Zhuan Falun Fajie (The Law of Zhuan Falun Explained)* by Li Hongzhi. In the chapter entitled 'Teaching the Fa and Answering Questions in Yanji', Li answered a question from a person from Shanghai. Although the publication is dated 16 July 1997 (Li would have been outside China at this time) the date of the Yanji session is not stated in the publication. The question and answer is as follows:

*Question: I am from far away Shanghai. If I have questions in my practice, whom should I contact?*

Teacher: Shanghai isn't that far away. It's better if our students can discuss some things together. That is because although some people have attended the lectures, I have taught so much that it is impossible to remember it all. You may record the lectures and try to listen to the recordings as much as possible. As for Shanghai, the closest assistance center is in Hefei. Shanghai has sent an invitation, but quite a while has passed and it still hasn't been finalized. There are many people from Shanghai who have learned it, and many have come to learn. You can improve by sharing experiences amongst yourselves. Shanghai, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Zhengzhou, Chongqing, Chengdu – many, in fact nearly all major cities across the country – have Falun Dafa assistance centers. Feel free to contact any of them. In fact, with some things, if you act according to this Fa, I think you will be able to come to the right understanding. That's because I have explained them all systematically. In the future, we will publish books and provide greater convenience for cultivation (Li, Hongzhi 1997, *Zhuan Falun Fajie (The Law of Zhuan Falun Explained)*, 16 July, p.113 [http://www.falundafa.org/book/eng/pdf/zfl\\_fajie.pdf](http://www.falundafa.org/book/eng/pdf/zfl_fajie.pdf) – Accessed 8 November 2006 – Attachment 7).

## List of Sources Consulted

### Internet Sources:

#### **Search Engines**

Google search engine <http://www.google.com.au/>

#### **Library Networks**

Lu, Yunfeng 2005, '[Entrepreneurial Logics and the Evolution of Falun Gong](#)', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp.173-185

Penny, Benjamin 2003, '[The Life and Times of Li Hongzhi: Falun Gong and Religious Biography](#)', *The China Quarterly*, September, Vol. 175, pp.643-661

Yang, Fenggang 2006, '[The Red, Black, and Gray Markets of Religion in China](#)', *The Sociological Quarterly*, February, Vol. 47, Iss. 1, pp.93-122

### Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

RRT Library Catalogue

## List of Attachments

1. Penny, Benjamin 2001, *The Past, Present and Future of Falun Gong* (paper presented to a seminar at the Refugee Review Tribunal in Sydney Australia), 4 May.
2. Penny, Benjamin 2003, *Falun Gong: What was it? and what is it now? A talk for the Refugee Review Tribunal National Members' Conference*, 29 August.
3. Wang, Tao, Browde, Levi and Loftus, Jason (undated), 'Jiang Zemin's Personal Crusade: Why the Chinese Communist Party Leader Moved Against Falun Gong and How His Anti-Falun Gong Campaign Has Come to Dominate His Agenda', <http://faluninfo.net/specialreports/jiangspersonalcrusade/JiangsPersonalCrusade.doc> – Accessed 8 November 2006.
4. 'Anything for Power: The Real Story of China's Jiang Zemin' 2005, *The Epoch Times*, 24 July <http://www.theepochtimes.com/tools/printer.asp?id=30542> – Accessed 7 November 2006.
5. UK Home Office 2002, *Revolution of the Wheel – the Falun Gong in China and in Exile*, 2nd edition, November, para. 2.4.
6. 'A Chronicle of Major Events of Falun Dafa (3rd Edition)' 2004, Pure Insight website, 15 March <http://www.pureinsight.org/pi/index.php?news=2097> – Accessed 7 November 2006.
7. Li, Hongzhi 1997, *Zhuan Falun Fajie (The Law of Zhuan Falun Explained)*, 16 July, pp.100-132 [http://www.falundafa.org/book/eng/pdf/zfl\\_fajie.pdf](http://www.falundafa.org/book/eng/pdf/zfl_fajie.pdf) – Accessed 8 November 2006.