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Title:  
Fighting Fire with Fire: Falun Gong vs the Party-State

### **Abstract**

Since the suppression of Falun Gong in 1999, an increasingly ideological tone has entered the propaganda battle, at least from the Falun Gong side. What began initially as an argument with certain particular figures in the leadership – Jiang Zemin, Luo Gan, Zeng Qinghong, etc – then became in the middle 2000s a denunciation of Communism, and specifically the Chinese Communist Party. At about the same time, Falun Gong launched the first of its so-called New Year Spectaculars, song and dance shows modeled none too subtly on the New Year Extravaganzas on CCTV. As these transformed into world-touring publicity weapons under the title Shen Yun, Falun Gong also launched a series of artistic and cultural competitions for “Classical Chinese Dance,” “Chinese Martial Arts” and so on. This paper examines these activities as a kind of counter soft power based on the implicit assertion that an essential characteristic of the Chinese Communist Party is the destruction of traditional Chinese culture, and that Falun Gong is its true custodian.