

Lessons to Learn from the Misfortunes of Wuhan

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Wuhan is one of the most famous ancient cities of China and has a magnificent historical and cultural legacy. One of the most famous events to have taken place there was the Wuchang Uprising of 1911, which led to the downfall of the Qing Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China—the first of its kind in Asia.

As a key transportation hub with a population of 11 million, Wuhan is also one of the economic hubs of Central China, earning it the nickname “China's Chicago.” It is home to over 350 research institutes, 1,656 high-tech enterprises, and numerous enterprise incubators backed by funding from 230 of the Fortune 500.

However, Wuhan has become a ghost town since the coronavirus outbreak. As the deadly pandemic has spread around the world, it has infected at least 15 million globally and accumulated a death toll of over half a million.

When we take a look at a few major events that have taken place in Wuhan during the reign of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), it may give us some clues as to how a once-glorious city devolved into a global epicenter of misfortune.

1958: Model City During the Great Leap Forward

After the Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 that sought to take down intellectuals, then-CCP leader Mao Zedong had the ambition for China to surpass Britain and the U.S. in industrial output within 15 years.

In response to Mao's call and its manifestation in the Great Leap Forward movement of 1958, many CCP leaders, local cadres and reporters in China all scrambled to beat each other at fabricating impossibly high farming production figures.

For example, a single Chinese cabbage in Hebei was reported as weighing 250 kilograms. On August 13, 1958, People's Daily published a headline claiming that Macheng, a city near Wuhan, had a rice yield of nearly 37,000 jin per mu (110 tons per acre), about 90 times higher than actual output at the time.

The news was quickly reprinted in the Soviet Communist Party's mouthpiece, Pravda. More than 100,000 people visited this "satellite field" to learn from the farmers' experience, including many experts from socialist countries such as the Soviet Union, East Germany, the Czech Republic, North Korea, and so on. China's then-premier Zhou Enlai also went in person and had a film made of his visit.

How did this seemingly ridiculous figure come into being? It turned out that in order to beat another commune, which had reported a unit yield of 10,000 jin per mu, the Jianguo No. 1 commune decided to weigh the same baskets of rice again and again until they reached the 37,000-jin mark.

When a young man on an inspection team asked how they managed to grow so many rice plants at such high density, the team leader accused him of being "too fussy" and "running counter to the CCP central government and Chairman Mao." The young man was pulled aside and criticized on the spot. He was later labeled as a rightist and punished.

This is similar to what happened at the beginning of the pandemic. When Dr. Li Wenliang in Wuhan shared coronavirus information on social media with his medical

colleagues on December 30, 2019, he was immediately reprimanded by the authorities and punished for “spreading rumors.” Sadly, Dr. Li died from the infection later on.

Less than a year after Jianguo No. 1 Commune’s glorious moment, China was hit by a devastating famine as a result of the CCP’s preposterous policies and local Party leaders blindly following the party line. There was little grain left in the village, leaving people with no choice but to eat wild herbs and tree bark.

Gong Zhentang, a survivor of the tragedy, said to a reporter in 2019, “It was really terrible. The deaths were too many to count.”

According to credible statistics, about 45 million people in China starved to death during the man-made famine lasting from 1959 to 1962. CCP leaders have never apologized for their wrongdoings to this day.

1967: Unknown Number of Youngsters Perished in the Yangtze River

Mao called upon the Chinese youth to “temper themselves” in rivers and lakes in 1962. A keen swimmer himself, Mao went for his last swim in the Yangtze river on July 16,

1966, at the age of 73. To commemorate Mao's swim in the Yangtze river, CCP authorities in Wuhan organized a "Crossing the Yangtze River" event on August 1, 1967.

For many, it would become a disastrous day.

Under Mao's cult of personality, he was hailed as someone beyond the gods. Young people, mostly from colleges and universities, participated in the river-crossing event with pride and honor.

Tens of thousands of spectators crowded along Hanyang's docks that day. It was blazing hot, and some people fainted from the scorching summer heat while bureaucrats made long speeches one after another. People started to panic.

Just then, the starting gun went off, and crowds of people rushed to get into the river. Thousands tried to get in at the same time from a 20-meter-wide entrance. A stampede began—some people were trampled to death, some were suffocated to death, some were pushed into the river and drowned.

A survivor recalled his ordeal later, "As soon as I jumped into the river, my head and shoulders were immediately pushed into the water by several hands. I instinctively

pulled and kicked to try to come up to the surface, but I felt I was surrounded by hands, feet and bodies that were tangled in the water. Finally, I managed to raise my head above the water, but all my friends were nowhere to be seen. I could only see countless heads squirming in the water, like a pot of dumplings bobbing up and down.”

The freezing chamber of the Wuhan Meat Processing Plant was stacked with bodies from this event, and so were the hospitals and funeral homes. Nobody knows the exact death toll.

1999: Crimes Committed by Wuhan TV Station, Education and Medical Sectors

The CCP began to persecute Falun Gong practitioners on July 20, 1999. Wuhan TV Station spearheaded the CCP’s persecution policy; even before the formal launch of the crackdown, Zhao Zhizhen, then-head of the station, followed the Party closely and produced a defamatory program on Falun Gong. The 6-hour film was later used as brainwashing material by the CCP to slander Falun Gong and was broadcast nationwide to incite people’s hatred of the peaceful spiritual practice.

Countless people began to harbor resentment against Falun Gong as a result. This act by Wuhan TV Station, headed by Zhao Zhizhen, would lead to serious consequences.

Regrettably, the education sector in Wuhan also followed the CCP closely and actively participated in the persecution of Falun Gong as hatchetmen. For example, Wuhan University set up a so-called “Hubei Anti-Cult Association” on its campus, compiled teaching materials to smear Falun Gong, and pushed disinformation about the practice to international society. Countless people, especially young people, were brainwashed by the libelous textbooks and so-called research outcomes into blindly siding with the CCP.

Worst of all, Wuhan's medical institutions have actively participated in a crime against humanity—live organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners. According to a report by the World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong (WOIPFG), Lin Zhengbin and more than 80 other doctors in Wuhan Tongji Hospital, as well as 48 others in Wuhan Union Hospital, had participated in forced organ harvesting. Investigators found in 2014 that Tongji Hospital alone performed nearly 3,000 kidney transplants, and by 2018, the number had reached a staggering 6,000, the most of any hospital in China. This atrocity still continues today.

In addition, Wuhan is one of the cities where the persecution of Falun Gong is most severe. There are over 60 brainwashing centers in its various districts, which in the past 21 years have persecuted tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners. These practitioners were beaten, chronically deprived of sleep, shocked with electric batons in sensitive areas, tied up in painful positions, and subjected to many other forms of physical torture and mental torment.

The 610 Office is a Gestapo-like organization set up on June 10, 1999, by the central CCP leadership for the express purpose of persecuting Falun Gong. It has branches at all levels of administration across China. The Wuhan 610 Office, the local police, and the judiciary have colluded to send practitioners to labor camps and prisons, and many of them have died from torture.

One of the victims was the 50-year-old Ms. Liu Lihua, director of the Hongshan District Farming Technology Service Center in Wuhan. Ms. Liu was persecuted numerous times for talking to people about Falun Gong and refusing to renounce her faith in Falun Gong's principles of "Truthfulness-Compassion-Forbearance."

First, she was detained for two years in Wuhan City First Detention Center and Hewan Forced Labor Camp, where she was tied onto a “death bed” and hung up in the air for doing Falun Gong exercises. She was later taken to another forced labor camp for a year, where she was beaten, forced-fed, and deprived of sleep for four months.

In April 2003, she was unlawfully arrested again by personnel from the 610 Office and taken to the Tangxun Lake Brainwashing Center, where she was further tortured. She became extremely weak and died on June 9, 2006.

Waking Up in the Face of Disasters

The coronavirus hit Wuhan first, and it hit very hard. The exact death toll in Wuhan and all of China still remain unknown due to the cover-up by CCP authorities. The official figure sits at over 4,000, but much evidence, including the number of urns released to families of virus victims, seemed to suggest a death toll of at least 60,000 in the city.

Many people have awakened because of the pandemic, both in China and abroad.

Tu Long, a young man born and raised in China in the 1990s, used to believe that as long as he didn't say anything out of line and became an "obedient citizen," he would be able to make his way upward. But his outlook completely changed after he learned the truth by reading information outside the CCP's firewall. Now, he can no longer keep silent, reported Voice of America on March 14, 2020, in an article titled "I Have the Obligation to Speak for the Dead."

"When they expelled the 'low-end population' [migrant workers] in Beijing, I said to myself, I worked very hard. I'm not part of the 'low-end population,' I would not be expelled."

"When they built the concentration camps in Xinjiang [for Uighurs], I thought, I'm not an ethnic minority, I don't have any religious beliefs, I would not be in trouble."

"I sympathize with the suffering of the Hong Kong people, but I thought I would not go on the street to protest [for democracy], so it has nothing to do with me," he said.

"This time it hit my hometown. Many people around me had already gotten sick, some had died, so I couldn't stand it any longer."

Tu Long was angered by CCP officials' behavior in dealing with the pandemic.

“Until today, not only did no [official] come out to apologize to the Wuhan people, they told us we should hate the United States, we should hate Japan, we should hate South Korea, we should hate Taiwan, and we should hate The Wall Street Journal. No one came out to take responsibility,” he said.

Tu Long found it absurd that officials started praising the CCP for its “wise leadership” and celebrating its “great success” when people were still sick and dying.

Tu Long also reflected upon himself when condemning the CCP: “The majority of Chinese, myself included, are not innocent. We condone [the CCP leadership] to do evil, and some have even assisted them in committing evil acts.”

What he said echos a well-known line by Edmund Burke, an Irish statesman and philosopher in the 18th century: “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

Tu Long represents a large group of people in China who no longer trust the CCP and are longing for freedom.

Internationally, a global coalition to hold the CCP accountable for its aggressive and criminal conduct is taking shape and expanding quickly. More and more politicians, business leaders, and other people have realized that the CCP would never abide by the same rules and values expected of a decent and responsible government, and that the “appeasement policy” taken in the past when dealing with the CCP would only lead to greater instability and chaos in the world. The CCP must be challenged directly, as they have come to realize.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo condemned the CCP’s persecution of Falun Gong: “Twenty-one years of persecution of Falun Gong practitioners is far too long, and it must end.”

More than 600 parliamentarians from 30 countries have also signed a joint statement supporting Falun Gong and calling on the CCP to stop the persecution.

Many people hold the view that this is not just an issue between Falun Gong and the CCP but a battle between good and evil and a test for us all. Perhaps when such a brutal persecution of the innocent comes to an end, it would be a turning point for Wuhan and China.

<https://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2020/8/3/186171.html>