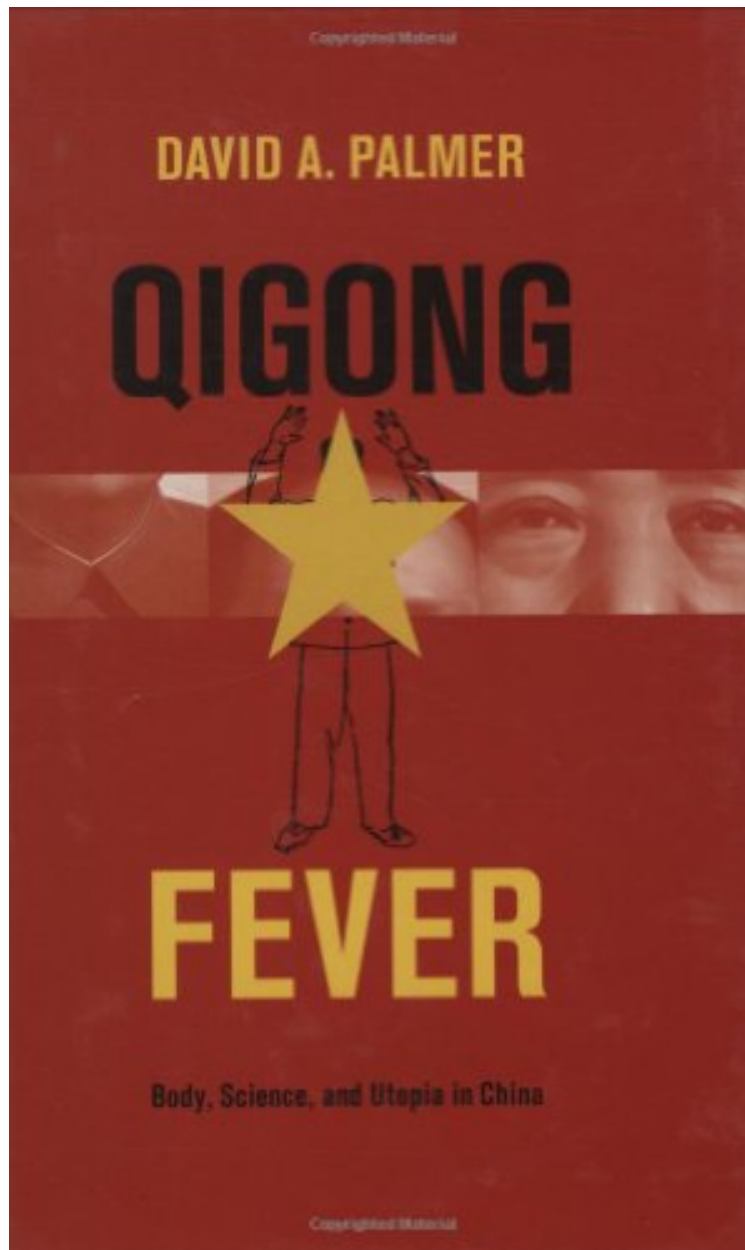


Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China

David A. Palmer

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#171913 in Books 2007Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.69 x 1.08 x 5.811, 1.32 #File Name: 0231140665320 pages | File size: 21.Mb

David A. Palmer : Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Profoundly thought provoking. Provides a deepening respect as well

as some cautions in the pursuit of QiGong. By Quadradox Short of tracking each of David Palmer's references to see whether they hold up to scrutiny, a task for the next authors in this field, this work appears to be a very carefully researched and balanced presentation of the modern struggle in China with its ancient roots in a meditative, energetic and health practice previously known by other names and now more popularly by QiGong. It also reads very well, not just data ... but a powerful communication of the story as well. Though I finished reading it several months ago, its concepts and the questions raised still linger on -- which is to me the sign of a well written book which reached my own roots. I appreciated the author's efforts to paint the social picture of motivations to revive the ancient practices and the subsequent multi-layered governmental and social struggle from 1949 to 1999 to deal with their misrepresentation for commercial or political gain. I felt the deep desire for a verifiable scientific basis underlying a long cherished cultural heritage, a means to restore world-wide recognition, a promise for better health while simultaneously promoting individual responsibility, and that never ending thirst to possess secret knowledge. I felt the deep frustration, at times fear, despair and danger when the tools of science, sometimes used rightly, sometimes perhaps used wrongly given their present limitations and political implementations -- cast doubts and genuine risks onto the spiralling mountain of hopes and aspirations erected in the name of QiGong. Overall, it was a very helpful perspective. I came away deciding I would really need and want to see some of what these practices -- especially "medical Qigong" do for me and my acquaintances, when performed safely and responsibly. Yet, I would simultaneously need to maintain a perpetual skepticism about overly grandiose claims and would-be masters. This requirement to remain personally responsible for evaluating data, knowledge, or experience is not unique to Daoism or QiGong -- it is a part of any philosophical, scientific, or religious pursuit. But as a westerner I have found it initially quite hard to see a big enough picture, with sufficient detail and accuracy when it comes to Chinese medicine, spirituality, martial arts and related practices. For me, this balance is somewhat easier to achieve when I have gained more of the broader historical context from which these practices emerged. Thus, I appreciate the diligence and fairness with which the author intentionally approached this very substantial historical documentation -- and I realize there will also be other points of view presented in the future. I am very grateful to have read this as a starting point.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. In my opinion this book does a wonderful job of putting into context a modern history of ... By Keni Lee Burgess No book can be an alpha and omega of a subject. Although, in my opinion this book does a wonderful job of putting into context a modern history of Qigong. Just like the modern version of "physical" Yoga, that is erroneously believed to be a direct transmission from the ancient past, Qigong today is a blend of many present day perceptions and scientific advancements. There are far too many misconceptions associated with these practices. If you are a Kung Fu, Qigong, or TCM student, although it may shatter your strongly held romantic dreams of temple monks and their paranormal abilities, it will bring a realistic clarity into a practice studied by multitudes of devotees that retains many real life benefits. Highly recommended. Readable. Not a dry academic tome.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very valuable. By Neale Povey THE outstanding documentation on Qigong Fever. There is no comparison in my experience to this book Qigong Fever. The cultural identity of China is deeply tied to Qigong and this is fleshed out so well in this book. Without hesitation I endorse this book and thank Dr. David Palmer for his creative work.

Qigong regimen of body, breath, and mental training exercises was one of the most widespread cultural and religious movements of late-twentieth-century urban China. The practice was promoted by senior Communist Party leaders as a uniquely Chinese healing tradition and as a harbinger of a new scientific revolution, yet the movement's mass popularity and the almost religious devotion of its followers led to its ruthless suppression. In this absorbing and revealing book, David A. Palmer relies on a combination of historical, anthropological, and sociological perspectives to describe the spread of the qigong craze and its reflection of key trends that have shaped China since 1949, including the search for a national identity and an emphasis on the absolute authority of science. Qigong offered the promise of an all-powerful technology of the body rooted in the mysteries of Chinese culture. However, after 1995 the scientific underpinnings of qigong came under attack, its leaders were denounced as charlatans, and its networks of followers, notably Falungong, were suppressed as "evil cults." According to Palmer, the success of the movement proves that a hugely important religious dimension not only survived under the CCP but was actively fostered, if not created, by high-ranking party members. Tracing the complex relationships among the masters, officials, scientists, practitioners, and ideologues involved in qigong, Palmer opens a fascinating window on the transformation of Chinese tradition as it evolved along with the Chinese state. As he brilliantly demonstrates, the rise and collapse of the qigong movement is key to understanding the politics and culture of post-Mao society.

"A powerful historical, political, cultural, and sociological analysis of the Qigong movement and its relationship to the state... Essential." -Choice (Choice) A brilliant piece of scholarship... it is to be hoped that this excellent book reaches a wide readership. (David Ownby Pacific Affairs) The most comprehensive volume published on the Qigong movement in contemporary China. (Gareth Fisher Journal of Chinese Religions) [A] remarkable study... the best work in its field. (Journal of Social History) Qigong Fever provides original and profound insights into Chinese social and political

history over the last 60 years. (Georges Favroud *China Perspectives*) David Palmer's fascinating and solidly researched *Qigong Fever* represents the first serious English-language history of the qigong explosion that rocked China over the course of the 1980s and 1990s (Patricia M. Thornton *History of Religions*) *Qigong Fever* is well written, engaging, and extensively researched. It is a landmark in the study of qigong and an indispensable resource for anyone attempting to understand Chinese society in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution. (Scott Lowe *International Journal for the Study of New Religions*)

About the Author David A. Palmer is adjunct professor of anthropology and religious studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and research fellow at the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient. He obtained his Ph.D. at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Sorbonne, Paris) and was the Eileen Barker Fellow in Religion and Contemporary Society at the London School of Economics.