Abstract

The Chinese population is heavily brainwashed by the monopoly control of the media by the Chinese government. It pushes a hyper nationalist, anti Japanese, anti Guo Min Dang, pro Communist party message relentlessly, that turns a billion Chinese minds into jingoist morons.

1. Introduction

The two most popular mass media of our times and around the world are television and the internet, with the proportion of time spent by people on the internet growing at the expense of the number of hours watching television.

The Chinese government is one of the most brutal and repressive on the planet and keeps close monopolistic control of the media to control the thoughts of its population. If one is critical of the “manufacture of consent” phenomenon (as described by Chomsky) in the west, namely the television messages given to the “ad-masses” in western countries to buy the corporations’
products, and not to question the distribution of wealth between the corporate leader class and the consumer classes, then one should be far more critical of the messages passed on by the Chinese government to the Chinese people, which can only be described accurately as brainwashing (as seen by a non Chinese multi).

Preserving the Chinese Government’s Dictatorial Rule

The top priority of the Chinese government is its own survival. It therefore uses its monopoly control of the media to feed the messages it wants to the Chinese public. These messages (or the lack of them) take the following form, and have the following consequences.

a)  Pro government and zero anti-government

Chinese television is full of quasi historical soaps, i.e. pop dramas loosely based on historical realities. One version of these is based on the civil war in the 1930s and 1940s between the Guo Min Dang (People’s Party) led by General Jiang Kaishek, and the Chinese Communist Party, led by Mao Zedong. In terms of the “good guys” and the “bad guys”, you will never see the communists portrayed as bad guys. Imagine what effect this has on the minds of a billion Chinese over their lifetimes. They unreflectively look upon the Guo Min Dang as evil, whereas in reality, if Chiang had been just a slightly better general, he could have wiped out the few remaining communists in the early 30s (as he almost did, before the communist long march) so that
China today would be a big Japan, a lot richer, and as a result of that, probably democratic.

There is absolutely NO criticism of the government on the media. This is powerfully enforced. Keeping China government critique free is called “harmonization” by the government. Harmonization measures include the world hated laogai system (i.e. the Chinese equivalent of the Stalin gulag system, i.e. slave labor camps for political prisoners. There are over a thousand of them in China, according to Harry Wu, founder of the Laogai Museum in Washington DC (laogai.org) containing from half a million to two million Chinese prisoners, and that about 50 million people have been through them. Any Chinese who stands at a street corner and criticizes the government is picked up by the police. If he persists, he will be sent to a laogai. Hence the Chinese intellectuals are afraid of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

In the 1950, the greatest tyrant in history, Mao Zedong, the leader of the CCP invited China’s intellectuals to criticize the CCP. The avalanche of criticism that followed made him turn on them. He then killed about half a million of them and sent many more to the laogai. China’s intellectuals are today a passive fearing group, unworthy of the label. Western intellectuals ignore them, because the Chinese intellectuals have nothing to say. They are impotent and useless. The few exceptions are locked up in laogai and kept isolated from world news, e.g. the Nobel winner Liu Xiaobo, who got an 11 year prison sentence for
helping to write the Charter 08 political manifesto for a democratic China.

One thing I need to do is really talk to some Chinese (US PhD trained) political science professors to get them to tell me how it feels to live as a Chinese intellectual in such a climate of fear and intellectual sterility. This sterility manifests itself in China’s appalling Nobel Prize record, which could not be worse. China is the most populous country in the world, yet it has won the least number of science Nobel Prizes, namely zero, a truly pathetic record and a source of great Chinese shame and dishonor. I blame the CCP for that.

b) Anti- Japanese distraction

Another kind a soap drama very common on Chinese television depicts valiant Chinese villagers fighting the hated Japanese invaders in the 1930s and 1940s. Now admittedly, the Japs (a label I use consciously to punish a criminal unrepentant Japan) killed some 20-30 million Chinese in their colonization of China, including the notorious “Rape of Nanking” in which 300,000 Chinese were massacred in one of the great atrocities of WW2. It is not surprising that the Chinese people feel traumatized by this Japanese invasion and have many television programs about it.

But these soaps serve a far more negative purpose. They deflect the frustration the Chinese people feel towards the CCP instead towards the Japs. This deflection then
diminishes the strength of critical feeling of the Chinese have towards their own government. Hence there are many many such antijap soaps. The Chinese population has grown up with them. The consequence is that the Chinese have a reputation in Japan, of being so tourist unfriendly, that Japanese choose not to visit China. Also, getting China and Japan into an Asian Union is decades behind the Europeans, Africans, South Americans, etc.

c) Chinese Jingoism

I use the term jingoism deliberately, because it is stronger than nationalism. Jingoism is an extreme form of nationalism, stronger even than chauvinism. Every day, the CCTV (Chinese Central TeleVision) pumps out a strong form of national pride, showing off its status as a space power, its high speed train network, it Birds Nest, its tall buildings in Shanghai, its Great Wall, etc. The Chinese flag is shown to stirring music to instill a strong form of Chinese nationalism in the population. This happens day after day after day. Why does the government do this?

One reason is that the Chinese people actually want it. They need to overcome the bitter sense of inferiority they felt in the 19th and 20th century when the Europeans, Americans, and Japanese in turn, attempted to colonize them. Chinese culture is 5000 years old, hence has a very long memory. For a millennium, between the fall of the Roman empire and the beginning of Europe’s renaissance, the Chinese economy and culture was the world’s most advanced. This was only 500 years ago, only 10% of
China’s history, so by Chinese standards, China’s humiliation was recent. The Chinese want to feel pride again, and this is very advantageous to the Chinese government, which then pumps the Chinese population full of jingoistic pride.

I have felt the consequence of this jingoism several times with the Chinese. You cannot criticize China to their face. They will get extremely verbally hostile. They have been so powerfully brainwashed on this point that reality goes out the window.

From a top worlder’s point of view, China is a shithole. It’s 10-15 times poorer than the rich countries. Its dirty, corrupt, disorganized, intellectually lazy, intellectually sterile, won zero Nobel Prizes, profoundly dishonest, mean spirited, does not respect the rights of the individual, and has a government that is a brutal dictatorship, that 90% of people who live outside China, who live in democracies, hate. In short, for a top worlder, China is by world standards a shithole. But you cant get a Chinese to see that. Its like going up to a priest, to someone who has committed his whole life to his religious belief, and telling him to his face, that there is no god, that his idea of god is a human invented fiction.

This typical Chinese rejection of any criticism of China serves the CCP very well. It means that if a non Chinese starts to list the major crimes committed by the CCP (e.g. the 70 million Chinese Mao Zedong killed, the 1000+ laogai, the censorship of the internet, etc) to a Chinese, that
Chinese will interpret the non Chinese person’s critique to be a criticism of China in general, and hence, due to his lifelong brainwashing, will react very emotionally. Hence this makes it difficult for western criticisms of the crimes of the CCP to penetrate the Chinese mind, which increases the number of years the CCP can stay in power, before eventually, China catches up with the rest of the world and finally democratizes (perhaps becoming the very last country in the world to do so.)

2. Counter Brainwashing

a) The Untraveled Chinese

China is a poor country, with a $4000/person standard of living. This is not enough yet to make traveling to a rich western country, where everything is so wildly expensive to a Chinese tourist, a widespread occurrence. The result is that only a small percentage of the Chinese middle class has had the experience of freedom of speech, an uncensored internet, international satellite television, etc as a result of experiencing life in a democratic nation. In China, putting up an international satellite dish to receive non Chinese TV stations is illegal. The Chinese government employs 30,000 programmers to censor the internet, mainly against criticism of the CCP and against erotica. It is a well known psychological phenomenon, that dictatorial governments are usually also puritanical.
Once millions of middle class Chinese have an experience of an uncensored internet, international satellite TV, listening to criticisms of the governments of the countries they are visiting (if they can understand English) they will be influenced by this and want to have the same when they return to the shithole. They will increasingly see the shithole for what it is. Their jingoism will have been punctured.

There is not much the Chinese government can do to stop a flood of Chinese tourists visiting neighboring democratic counties. Two thirds of Asian countries today are democracies. Increasingly, China is becoming isolated as the last big dictatorship, and is having a more difficult time in maintaining that status. Personally, I calculated, based on the rate of the rise of the Chinese middle class, that China will democratize within a decade. There are just so many factors pushing in that direction.

b) Global Democratic Pressure

Soon (the IMF thinks by 2016) China will be the largest economy in the world, overtaking the US. Since 90% of non Chinese live in democracies today, it will become intolerable for the rest of the world to have the world’s largest economy being the world’s most brutal dictatorship. The moral pressure against Chinese leaders at international meetings will be enormous. The world democratic community will become increasingly and openly hostile towards the Chinese leaders and will pressure them to modernize politically. Global internet campaigns will be
directed towards the Chinese population, to teach them how to use proxy servers so that they can circumvent the Chinese government’s censorship of the internet, to get access to the freedom of speech of most of the rest of the world, and be made conscious that they are truly living in a shithole. They will then have their eyes opened, become bitter at being lied to, and then push hard for change.

c) Growth of China’s Middle Class

There are about 200-300 million Chinese middle class today. Within a decade, that number will have grown to over 500 million. They will have traveled internationally, they will have the internet and many of them will be using proxy servers. They will learn that most of the world is democratic and be wondering when it will be China’s turn. They will be conscious that it is their role to force that change.

History shows that it is always the growth of the middle class that is the primary factor in the push for democracy. This phenomenon is well documented by a branch of political science called “transitology”, which studies the transitions of one party dictatorships to multi party democracies. Sooner or later, some political crisis will spark the Chinese middle class to assert itself and then quickly, like a forest fire in a very dry forest, the democratic flame will spread, and China can start crawling out of its shithole.