

” *Propaganda is to democracy what violence is to dictatorship* “ N. Chomsky

It is true that we live in an era of “information society”. Never has so much our lives have been influenced by the waves of new drained by what we call now, the information technology and communication (ICT). Newspapers, televisions, radios, mobile phones, computers: all spoof an inextricable tirelessly deluge of information. Internet, Tweeter, Facebook, Google, Youtube and other creatures of cyberspace have radically changed the way we communicate and inform us. Everything is scrutinized, reviewed, analyzed and disseminated in real time.

But there remains one constant that has not been affected by this technology boom: the lies, propaganda and media manipulation are still there, more present than ever, as these viruses become more sophisticated, so they are always more powerful than software that is supposed to protect us. The media lies (a term so dear to Michel Collon) proliferated as never before, especially in times of trouble like the one we now live.

### **ccc Small handbook of famous media lies**

propaganda and manipulation of public opinion are not new techniques. They are built around an omnipotent mediocracy leaving little room for different views of the single thought in the media age. Worse, when a view is slightly different from those imposed by “right-thinking”, it is always buried in a box on which is mentioned, “Conspiracy Theories”. History has shown that in many cases, it is rather thought that is imposed conspiracy.

A typical example of lies presented as fact by the media key is known as the “incubators Kuwaiti” “hoax global high-flying that took place in 1990 during the first Gulf War. I remember being shocked and moved by a young Kuwaiti in tears, called Nayirah, testifying before a congressional committee of the United States. She claimed, among other things, he saw with his own eyes, in a Kuwaiti hospital, Iraqi soldiers removing babies from incubators and left to die on the floor. This testimony, broadcast worldwide, had a considerable impact on public opinion and helped create a strong support to this war.

It turned out later that the lady in question was in fact the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to Washington and that this comedy was orchestrated by the U.S. public relations company Hill & Knowlton for the tidy sum of \$ 10 million [1]. The truth of the matter was not known until after the war. I thought at the time that this would Nayirah a bright future as an actress, so the theatricality of his speech was similar to that of the best actors of Hollywood or Broadway.

Other manipulations media of this size can be mentioned. One example, the case known as “graves of Timisoara”, held during the fall of the Ceausescu regime in December 1989, just before Christmas to accentuate the horror. The Western media, particularly French, have shown, images to support the bodies of victims of the Securitate. This is known as 4630 deaths in a single mass grave in Timisoara. It exposed the corpses in front of cameras including a baby placed on the body of a woman dead. The monstrosity of a bloody regime that kill as his own children unveiled at the big day! The world was horrified.

It turned out later that the bodies were dug up those dead in the cemetery of the poor, the baby was a victim of sudden infant death and the woman on which he lay was not his mother, but a person died of cirrhosis of the liver a few weeks ago. Necrophilia television in all its glory as was so aptly named Ignacio Ramonet [2].

Other examples could be cited but the list may be long. Let us remember the saga of imaginary weapons of mass destruction that Saddam Hussein was behind the invasion of Iraq or the genocide of Kosovo Albanians fiction (500 000 deaths!) That justified the intervention NATO in the Kosovo war [3].

### Case of the “Arab Spring”

The recent riots that have shaken the Arab street is not free propaganda, lies, manipulations and other media, far from it. Indeed, as in all serious political upheaval, major media have put their two cents. In addition, in this case, we must also take account of social media and the blogosphere have been in the game.

In my opinion, the media lie common to revolt “Arab Spring” is the spontaneous popular uprisings. Many documents show that it is not and that in most Arab countries, were cyberactivists i) identified, ii) networked among themselves and with experts of new technologies and iii) trained by organizations Western “export democracy”, particularly U.S. [4]. This ignorance of reality is as much a maljournalisme obvious for some media professionals as a lie by omission for others.

In Tunisia, the symbol of “jasmine revolution” was quickly debunked, just months after the flight of President Ben Ali. Presented as a university without a job, working as a street vendor, Mohammed Bouazizi set himself on fire outside the offices of the governor, a move that ignited the powder in Tunisia. Its spectacular suicide was explained by the fact that municipal police, Fayda Hamdi, would have not only confiscated his balance, but also administered a slap gesture even more intolerable because coming from a woman.

The survey Bouazizi showed that Mohammed was not an academic, he had insulted Fayda Hamdi after she had confiscated his balance and, above all, that the slap was a pure invention. Another disturbing accuracy: the brother of the police, trade union activist, participated in creating the legend around the icon of the “revolution” Mohammed Bouazizi, legend to which it is difficult to be immune and who wonderful fodder for a press that feeds on these stories [5].

“A Gay Girl in Damascus” is the blog of a young Syrian Amina Abdullah calls himself a homosexual Arraf. Opponent “online” President Bashar Al-Assad, his writings were followed for several months by thousands of people around the world and its stories have regularly been relayed in the world press. Major media like CNN and The Guardian reports on him without ever meeting her. Last June, the new grave. Amina does not exist: the blog is the creation of a Tom MacMaster, American student living in Scotland [6].

Maljournalisme, propaganda and “circular flow of information” have been of use in Libya. In March, all major media began again in a loop information that the loyalist forces of Qaddafi reportedly as many as 6,000 deaths in the civilian population. This number was the source of the justification of the resolution 1973 and then the NATO intervention in Libya. However, an Amnesty International report shows that number as well as those put forward by the CNT are greatly exaggerated: “While there is no doubt, therefore, that the loyalist forces have committed many crimes, the record of such crimes appears to have been overestimated, according to Amnesty. “The death toll was greatly exaggerated. We talked about 2000 dead in Benghazi. But the repression has done in this city from 100 to 110 dead and about sixty Al-Baida ” [7].

on charges of rape and the presence of mercenaries, the observer for Amnesty International noted: “There was a lot of information that circulated but there is no evidence today. We talked about example of systematic rape by the loyalists, but has never met a single direct testimony, we and other organizations. And of course there is the story of mercenaries, “she says.” We talked a lot but there was no evidence of that. When I left last week Libya, between Benghazi and Misrata, there were nine foreign prisoners about 350 prisoners and a priori it was mere workers “[8].

Television coverage Libyan and Syrian situation poses obvious problems of journalistic ethics. Indeed, Libya, the images tell the deeds of the rebels while the military pro-Gaddafi are absent

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Écrit par Ahmed Bensaada

Vendredi, 30 Septembre 2011 00:00

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from the screens. On the other hand, the thousands of bombing NATO forces are rarely filmed giving the impression of a war “surgical” without any burrs. In Syria, the images in the major media tend to present only the misdeeds of government forces. Never abuses of “rebels” are put forward while on the subject of testimony trustworthy were published in alternative media and many videos have been posted.

About NATO, we have recently learned that in addition to its military involvement in the conflict Libyan now she began to make and distribute free videos of Libya peaceful, wonderful and where it is live. Pure propaganda, “just ask the video footage to the press department of NATO or download them directly to relay sites for journalists and professional researchers. A priori neutral images, without the presence of military spokesman of NATO .... The system is practical. The editors have access to free content, perfectly formatted for broadcast reporters without having to hurry on up and fund their travel. NATO and discreetly distills its communication with the turning of well chosen images “[9].

In this large company of lies and manipulations of the media, Algeria has had its share. In the case of Libya, for example, she was accused by the CNT for sending mercenaries to fight alongside forces loyal to Gaddafi. The “crispy” news made the rounds of the world’s media, not without causing reactions inflamed and Byzantine discussions. However, this charge has been challenged by Amnesty International, an organization that has no particular sympathy for Algeria.

Although it is new, it is clear that the “Arab spring “is already proving full of manipulation, propaganda and lies. And it’s probably just the tip of the iceberg.

While we live in an era of “information society”, you have to go to the Obviously we also live in the more insidious, disinformation.

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*Non official traduction by BEEB* This article in [french](#)