Chinese slavery in the 21st century cultural studies essay

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Introduction

My project is about the slavery in China in the 21st century. If you think of slavery, maybe you think this is history, but it's still going on nowadays. When I was reading about slavery in China, I was very shocked. Especially because we in the Western World don't realise how bad it is in China. It makes you think about why we buy all these cheap products. ' Made in China' can mean that it's made by a slave, even a child or a mentally handicapped person. Also you can be send to a prison labor camp because of your religious views. This project is about the story of Mrs. Zeng, who wrote an autobiography about her life as a slave. First I will tell something about the Chinese gouvernment, and how they treat people of the Falun Gong. Mrs. Zeng is a member of this religion. She was sent to a labor camp and wrote a book about her experiences.

About China

The " People's Republic of China" is a Socialist state. You can also call it Communist state. This means it's a one party system, the CPC, communist party of China. This state was founded by Mao Zedong in the 20th centuryIn China there is not the freedom you have in a democracy: There is only one party, which rules the state. The gouvernment is called the national people's congress. There is no real opposition. There is no freedom of speech, no free acces to Internet, there is a one child policy and there is no freedom of religion. There are many very poor people. The General Secretary (CCP) of the Communist Party of China is called Xi Jinping.

Falun Gong

Falun Gong means " Wheel of Dharma" It is a religion that was founded by Li Hongzhi. It has many elements of Taoism in it. It is a combination of meditation and Qigong exercises. Falung Gong emphasizes " the cultivation of Virtue" This means you will gat a better health and spiritual enlightenment when you follow their rules in your life. Falun Gong is a religious movement but for a long time the government supported it because it is a peaceful movement. At the end of the 20th century the movement became so big that the government felt it was becoming to big, there are millions of followers who became independent from the views of the state. In 1999 there came a big campaign to destroy the practice of Falun Gong, it was called a " heretical organization". Their websites were banned from the Internet, even if there is only the word " Falun Gong" in it. Human Rights groups report that hundreds of thousands are believed to have been imprisoned and send to labor camps without a trial. There they have to work as slaves. They are also tortured.

Story

My story is about Mrs. Zeng. She believes in the Falun Gong religion and wrote a book about her life and how members of the Falun Gong are treated. She uses her personal experience to tell about the progress of the repression of the Falun Gong, about the arrests and after that to labor camps where the‘ slaves’ are forced to make sweaters and toys for export to the U. S. market. Mrs. Zeng has studied on the University if Being, she even was a member of the Communist Party. But she was also a member of the Falun Gong and she was sentenced without a trial. She was send to a prison camp where she was

beated, starved and kept from sleeping. She suffered very badly. In the end she was released because she said she lost her faith. She was very sorry for that later because it was not true but she could not live in the camp anymore. She fled to Australia and wrote a book about her experience in the labor camp called " Witnessing History" Here are some quotes from an interview with her:" You must remember that China is a one-party autocracy in which every aspect of society is tightly controlled by the Communist Party." Since the CCP's intention is to stay in power, this religion was seen as a threat to their grip on power." A local police officer Wu warned mrs. Zeng and her husband of what was coming for those who continued to wanted to make an end to the CCP's oppression of the Falun Gong." For the next day or two things would be a little chaotic outside, he said, so it would be best if we didn't go out." Another policeman spoke openly with mrs, Zeng even as he was arresting her."'Do you know why the government is so afraid of you?' he asked.'No, why?' 'Because your Falun Gong is too genuine; you are too cohesive a force.'" Amazingly, he admits that he would have practiced Falun Gong had he encountered it earlier, but it was now too late for he had much to lose in his career and his life". Mrs Zeng wrote her book because she wants to let other people outside China know how bad the oppression is.

Conclusion

In China there is more slavery than you think. I was really shocked about what the Chinese government does to stay in power. After I read a few reviews of the book, on Amazon I really want to read the book itself to learn more about how live is when you are supressed and have to live as a slave. I think it’s really important to let people know about what’s going on there,

and that they have to care more about where things are made and how the living conditions are of the people who make it. It makes you realise how much freedom we have in our society!

Reflection

It was difficult to write about China because there is so much to read and it is hard to know what to choose especially with Wikipedia. But the subject of slavery is very interesting. I had to make the project in one day because I did not understand before the holiday that I had to do it before tuesday. I worked for many hours, it would have been much better to have more time. My mother was a little bit angry and she has helped me but she wants me to use my own words. I like history because I want to know how people have lived and especially I like to read about peoples life in different cultures to compare it with our life here.

Sources:

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