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HST 195

Overall well done. Take care in future papers to avoid the few problems explains in the notes below .

The Perseverance of the Vietnamese

War is a chess game played by "armchair warrior" politicians and leaders. They use people as pawns to destroy others so they can claim a checkmate and conquer a piece of land. Humans are caught in the middle of horrible situations and are forced to do whatever they can and lose their sense of humanity in the moment. The story of Tran Thi Gung caught my attention. Even though she was an enemy of the United States, her personal telling of her experiences during the war and reasons for joining the Trung Lap Ha Hamlet guerrilla force told me that she was human like everyone else. Her reasoning and emotions were very real.

Tran Thi Gung's father was a member of the communist party and Viet Cong soldier. When he was killed by the Saigon government the soldier showed no remorse or emotions. He told young Tran Thi Gung that her father was dead because of what he believed in and to "go fetch his body." Tran Thi Gung's hatred for the Saigon government brought out her vengeful side to carry on what she believed her family wanted, to live comfortably on their land and under a communist rule that they felt belonged. She was dedicated to her cause. Hearing her tell about killing GI's and watching American soldiers cry for their fellow mates, and how she was focused on taking their weapons that were left behind and going back into the tunnels showed me how dedicated she was. If American soldiers were that dedicated to our cause would we have lost the war? But, then again, Tran Thi Gung knew what she was fighting for. Were most of the American soldiers like George Watkins from the next story in the Appy book? "I just knowed that we was fighting over there against Communism, so-called" George Watkins ((Appy, Christian. "Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered from all sides" 2003. 22).

I believe her story to be very compelling because everybody wants to belong to something important. Tran Thi Gung, a small framed thin young girl, saw Americans as giants attacking her homeland and to be a great threat. It's her own modern version of David and

Goliath. She did not have a sense of guilt because what she was doing felt justified, or how she put it, "... I never felt guilty about the killing I did. It was war" (Appy 19).

The disappointment that was brought to light within me is, why can't the United States leave other countries alone? People just want to be happy and live life in their own way. The fear of Communism seems like a joke to me. Especially now, where in our country the rich are getting richer and the poor or getting poorer. Where would that leave us? Are we heading in the direction of being run by Communists or dictators? Unless there is an uprising soon, like that of a revolution, it may be so. **Very unclear point**

The story of Daniel Redmond made me think of how the war could have been diverted if it wasn't for the fear of Communism. Mr. Redmond was sent to Vietnam to help move the Catholics from the North to live in the South. He told a story of a woman who gave birth and didn't want any help. She bit the umbilical cord and washed the baby in dirty water. It's not what we think as sanitary or even up to living standards but it showed that the Vietnamese were happy with their way of life. Daniel Redmond also told about a man named Tom Dooley who was a self-righteous communist hater. Tom Dooley fueled hatred about Communism to his own means. He was a fabricator of lies seeking approval from higher ranking officers. Tom Dooley proves my point about his. It can be a work of fiction, like his story about a man that was supposedly tortured by the Viet Cong who was just born disfigured. It takes someone like Daniel Redmond to tell the truth.

There is much potential for good in these stories. Reading the story of Malcolm Browne it's hard to see any good on **either** side. Quang Duc's sacrifice of burning himself alive and how he didn't yell out once made me realize how passionate the people of Vietnam were about fighting for the greater good. Even though Quang Duc lived in Southern Vietnam which was ruled by Ngo Dinh Diem, an American ally who ruled the country as a Republic, was not a believer in of freedom of Religion. Quang Duc was a Buddhist Monk, peace loving people who believed in not harming anything. Quang Duc, with help from his fellow followers, killed himself in protest to stop anymore hatred of any one individual based on his or her religious beliefs. There seemed to be hope, due to perseverance which is displayed by the Vietnamese in the "Patriot" book. Unfortunately, when a fellow monk, Thich Tri Quang, was under house arrest thirty years later, he said that the human rights problem under the Communist rule was just as awful as under Ngo Dinh Diem's rule. **Ahhhh, yes!**

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- 1-1** Apr 22, 2011 3:40 PM
Or in this case, was it an "idea", instead of land?
- 1-2** Apr 22, 2011 3:40 PM
Very awkward wording
- 1-3** Apr 22, 2011 3:40 PM
Avoid hypothetical questions in academic writing? It reads as is you are asking the reader, me, to answer.
- 2-1** Apr 22, 2011 3:40 PM
Beware the fallacy of presentism. Communism WAS an issue at that time. The view from 2011 is quite different.
- 2-2** Apr 22, 2011 3:40 PM
Strange conclusion to draw here
- 2-3** Apr 22, 2011 3:40 PM
Do you mean an entirely different assignment? If it's not explained here, or at least cited, don't make that assumption.