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U.S Media and the Vietnam War : Revisiting The Concept of Just War in the Context of Counter Culture Movement .

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To my dear parents to whom I feel abundantly beholden for their outright love and tireless support no matter what. To my other half, my caring sister Lylia who has truly been a pillar of strength for me. I also spare a thought for my grandmother who has always been there for me more than I can count.

ADANE Kahina

To my parents, family and friends

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Abstract

The overall idea surrendering the present thesis owes its origins to the Vietnam War as a conflict in which both the U.S government and media took part in the early 1960s. All along the collision that opposed North Vietnam to the South, Communism executed a pivotal role under the guise of promoting a just war by the American dominion in forming an alliance with the South to head the North off the worst scenario. In peering at this, we were certainly inclined to believe that U.S Officials used this hypothetical pacifism as a shield to get people on its side as it meagerly espoused a weak-kneed measure, i.e. propaganda to get by. Rapidly, things got out of control and took a wrong turn right after U.S media captured those piercing images of the Vietnamese civilian casualties on the frontline. Since then, the war has never been the same as the fully-fledged American army being sent on the battlefield instantly disobeyed orders and the public ceased worshiping the American authority and gathered massively against the war, bringing about the Counterculture Movement of the 1960s. Putting all our marbles on the Just War Theory, we have tried the best we could to demonstrate that the war was clearly and intelligibly unethical, creating a causal relationship as the American public opinion eventually changed giving birth to mass rallies. Through summoning up things, we could almost compare the American government in its superiority complex and strong belief in its legitimate cause to a clergyman who preaches the Gospel in the church. Accordingly, such self-confidence admittedly caused the Americans to lose the war.

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Introduction:

War, in general, has long been the subject of media coverage, and the Vietnam War (1954-1975), in particular, is the first noteworthy traumatic war to be brought on TV screens. What also characterizes this war is the fact that the Americans encountered a military defeat¹. Simultaneously, in interfering in the Vietnam War, the media obviously helped North Vietnamese won over the South and the U.S, under Ho Chi Minh's presidency, by exposing the dark side of the war through news sources. It is in this way that the ugly scenes that have been shown in the aftermath of war were seen as the major cause that reformed the American public opinion to stand against the war², a sudden ideological change that took place and played in favor of Communism. Speaking about Communism which was North Vietnam's main ideology, exerted strong influence on their neighbors; an impact that was esteemed "unacceptable to America"³. Being pro-Capitalists, the U.S command was bent on putting an end to Communism and spreading the capitalist ideology one way or another.

As a matter of interest, the distressing actualities of the war always come up on the surface as alarming images exposing the plight of North Vietnamese were broadcasted on TV News. These images resulted in the American public opposition to the war that their own government waged, followed by the eventual failure of the U.S army ⁴. On that account, it is now clear that the news coverage influenced the circumstances of the Vietnam War. This illusionary strategy increasingly raised an anti-war feeling among the American people, and tarnished the American government's reputation; putting their credibility at risk, and in the same way, coming out as a deceitful government. The U.S media had suitably shown the government's real agenda, which required the dispatch of a series of rumors to censor the news with a view to put the public off base, and then, rip the victory off North Communists' hands. They thus created an "Anti War Movement" to reject the fighting deemed definitely

wrongful. To this end, vast bulk of people gathered in public places to express their refusal of the American involvement in the Vietnam War.

These chain of events that were largely covered by the U.S media coincided with the Counterculture movement (1960's) which is, according to John Milton Yinger in a review named "Counterculture and Subculture, American Sociological Review" part of his book Countercultures: The Promise and Peril of a World Turned Upside Down (1982), "a set of norms and values of a group that sharply contradict the dominant norms and values of the society of which that group is a part"⁵.

It is, therefore, the aim of our study to provide a broader vision to the role that media held in the aftermath of the Vietnam conflict. We expect to furnish a more adequate explanation to the way news coverage awakened consciences among the American population, and caused the public opinion to turn against the war leaning on an anti-war movement to verbalize their frustration vis-à-vis the American taking part in the war. To carry out this task, we will pay heed to the manner this reversal of situation ultimately helped the Communists embrace a historical victory after American citizens considered the war unjust. This dissertation is basically to shed-light upon the mode by which the world of media shaped the public view about the war in the Pacific, as well as the set of events that triggered the triumph of North Vietnam over America.

Review of the Literature:

Many critics have studied the influential relationship that exists between the American media coverage and the Vietnam War. This connection is well demonstrated by Clarence R. Wyatt in his book entitled Paper Soldier: the American Press and the Vietnam War (1995). In this book, he analyses important newspapers, magazines and television coverage of the war, and also examines government and military documents. Throughout his book, Wyatt gets

engrossed in the subjectivity of media coverage during the Vietnam War adopted to oppose the U.S involvement in the war. However, he sees that the reporting of the different events during the war was a matter of ‘professional demands of journalism’ not an ideological matter. Meaning that journalists at that time needed a story to talk about to attract the public interest, and the public, in turn, needed media as a source of information. Therefore, the mutual connection between media and the U.S public pushes reporters to cover vivid and iconic images about the war⁶.

In an article written by Alan Rohn (2014) under the title of “Media Role in The Vietnam War”, he maintains that the relation between media reporting and the Vietnam war is evolutionary in the sense that television started to be familiar to the public during the Vietnam war, because during that period, most of the American homes owned a television. According to Alan Rohn, the most important source of information for the American respondents was television. He also estimates that the Vietnam war era witnessed a technological development. As a result, many materials were used to cover the brutalities of the war and to publish uncensored pictures⁷. The writer concludes that the war loses its public support significantly because of media’s tendency toward negative reporting. For him, news coverage played a vital role in the dramatic shift of the Americans opinion, and he supports his ideas by showing that “after the Tet Offensive, media coverage of the war became predominantly negative” because of the televised images of both civilian and military damages⁸. Additionally, “many iconic pictures of the war such as the napalm girl exerted a negative and lasting influence on the public feeling”⁹.

Angie Dahm, in his part, presents two theories to measure the role of media and its impact on the Vietnam War in his article entitled “Media and the Vietnam” published in 2017.

The first theory is the “Mirror” one it is based on the doctrine of the objective journalism whose main principles are: objectivity, independence, and balance. It suggests that media coverage during the Vietnam War was objective, and journalists exercised the fundamental principle of journalism by being objective and independent in reporting the real and the uncensored images of the war, meaning that the reporters believed that the coverage should be complete, balanced and honest regardless of the government interest¹⁰. The second theory is called the “Elitist Opinion theory”. The latter claims that media during the Vietnam War shed light only on the negative facts in order to influence the public opinion negatively and to show the bad side of the American implication in the war. This practice makes it responsible for changing the American support, which recognized that the American soldiers were fighting for something that is not their concern. As a consequence, this theory argued that media contributed to the American loss in Vietnam¹¹.

Issue and Working Hypotheses:

Giving allegiance to our review of literature, we noticed that the researches already undertaken tended to focus on the way the fighting was taking place and the nature of the American media coverage. However, our dissertation is devoted to the following issue: To which extent did media coverage shape the public opinion’s anti-war inclination and contribute to North Vietnam’s triumph over the South and the U.S .This issue will be analyzed in the light of the Just War Theory. It should be noticed that media was efficient in changing the popular opinion to take a stand against the U.S authority. It is no secret that the Americans suffered a clear defeat predominantly due to the popular opinion that was no longer up holding the war, but concretely what are those initiatives taken by the civilians in America to speak against their government’s entry in the war after media broadcasts ?

It seems that the subject remains unclear. For this purpose, it would be of interest to learn how the U.S citizens hindered the American attacks, since the war was no longer justified in their eyes. To suggest that the public contrasted the forces' entry in Vietnam may be incomplete. It would seem, therefore, that additional studies are needed to bridge the gap around the question already asked above. To do so, we hypothesize that not only the medium of television helped people stay in tune with Vietnam's concerns, but it also had a deep impact on the American community, inciting people to resist the American toughness over North Communists and revolt against this system. After a deep study of the subject matter, we suppose that, in fact, for the sake of being heard and effective in their struggle, the American public launched a massive anti-war movement called "Counterculture" towards North Vietnamese, who were unjustly persecuted. Their main goal in bringing into being this movement was to achieve their peaceful goals by urging their government to pull out from Vietnam.

Endnotes

¹Michael Mandelbaum, "Vietnam: the Television War", *Daedalus*, vol.111, no.(Fall1982).

Accessed March 25, 2009, URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20024822>

²Ibid, 157.

³Chris. N Trueman, "America's Involvement in Vietnam," History Learning site, Last updated: August 16, 2016, URL: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/vietnam-war/americas-involvement-in-vietnam/>

⁴Alan Rohn, "Media Role in the Vietnam war," The Vietnam War, March 22, 2014, URL: [http:// thevietnamwar.info/media-role-vietnam-war/](http://thevietnamwar.info/media-role-vietnam-war/)

⁵John Milton Yinger, Countercultures: The Promise and Peril of a World Turned Upside Down, (New York: Free Press, 1982): 3, URL: <http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/jyinger/jmiltonyinger/books/countercultures.htm>

⁶Clarence R. Wyatt, Paper Soldier: The American Press and the Vietnam War, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

⁷Alan Rohn, "Media Role in the Vietnam war," The Vietnam War, March 22, 2014 URL: [http:// thevietnamwar.info/media-role-Vietnam-war/](http://thevietnamwar.info/media-role-Vietnam-war/)

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Angie Dahm, "Media and the Vietnam," 2017, URL: <https://mckendree.edu/academics/scholars/issue3/dahm.html>

¹¹Ibid.

Methods and Materials:

To fulfill our established goal, our approach will rely on the Just War Theory. With this study then, the Vietnam War will be analyzed through whether the war was just or not to see at which extent the war was justified in the eyes of the Americans. One of the most influential approaches in relation to war is probably this theory, in which a set of conditions must be followed in order to justify a given war. According to St. Augustine of Hippo, in his book City of God:

Just wars are usually defined as those which avenge injuries, when the nation or city against which warlike action is to be directed has neglected either to punish wrongs committed by its own citizens or to restore what has been unjustly taken by it. Further, that kind of war is undoubtedly just which God Himself ordains ¹².

On the one hand, regarding the Christian view of the morality of war, the recourse to violence is legitimate as being a just cause. On the other hand, Pacifists' doctrine condemns any recourse to war and violence for opposing the principles which cover the law of war. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) continued Augustine's work by making a set of criteria for this theory. In his book The Ethics of War and Peace (1999), Paul Christopher writes that:

The Pacifist, abhorring the suffering caused by violence, concludes that war is consummate evil and rejects it under all circumstances. The Pacifist argues that wars can never be morally justified and that we should not result into war no matter what¹³.

The Just War Theory is the basis approach on which some nations all over the world rely to justify their involvement in wars and to legalize their actions against other nations. Apparently, The U.S is one of those nations that trusts on or recognizes the Just War approach before engaging in any national or international affair. But in the case of the Vietnam War, the American government had totally ignored this step because of its intervention in Vietnam without any just cause. Thus, the Just War principles are debatable when the concern is about the American war actions. Therefore, our attention will be addressed to the three principles that constitute the Just War Theory namely the Jus Ad Bellum that govern conflicts before launching in wars, the Jus In Bello that limits the legitimate targets in wars.

In the matter of methods of elaboration, we assemble out articles exploiting reliable primary sources collected by the New York Times newspaper, the articles to be analyzed are, “Vietnam: The Signs of Stalemate”(1976) written by Raymond Walter, “Vietnamese Say G.I.'s Slew 567 in Town”(1969) by Henry Kamm and “Congress Backs President on Southeast Asia Moves; Khanh Sets State of Siege”(1964) by E. W. Kenworthy, our study is based also on the visual media by referring to the CBS News documentaries namely “Stay tuned: TV’s Unforgettable Moments- Vietnam: Denouncing the War”(1968) by Walter Cronkite, “The Unique War”(1966) by Glenn Ford , “The Battle of Ia Drang Valley (1965) - CBS News Report”(1965) and “Watch Morley Safer’s Legendary Vietnam War Report”(1965) by Morley Safer. As an endeavor to guide our thesis, sources from both audio-visual and printed documents based on the Vietnam course show the way the war was delineated by the U.S media, and how the role of media outlets helped the rise of an anti-war sentiment among the American public opinion, and thus, led the U.S to witness a bitter defeat.

Original newspaper articles printed during the Vietnam War era, together with documentaries and TV programs aired by CBS News will be addressed full consideration. These articles and programs on which the content of the dissertation will depend will be in the first place based on the events that bring together the U.S military operations targeting North Vietnam; a sequence of assaults that will soon ruin the American unethical participation in the war. As for the last part of this dissertation that will be connected with the Anti-War Movement, the study of other newspaper articles will be necessary to trace the way the popular opinion has drastically changed, resulting in the American population tipping away from the side of their government.

Endnotes:

¹² St Augustine, The City of God (J. Healey trans.), in Basic Texts in International Relations 28 (Evan Guard ed., 1992) [Herein after BASIC TEXTS] (emphasis added), quoted in Alexander C. Linn, “The Just War Doctrine and the Liability for Parliamentary War Crimes,” 34 *Ga. J. Int’l & Comp. L.* 619 (2006), 627, URL: <http://digitalcommons.law.uga.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1228&context=gjicl>

¹³ Paul Christopher, The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction to Legal and Moral Issues (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1999), quoted in Iceal Averroes E. Estrella, “On the Ethics of War,” (2012), 69, URL: http://www.kritike.org/journal/issue_11/estrella_june2012.pdf

As for the structure of our dissertation it is organized in the following manner: The first chapter will deal with the historical background of the Vietnam War beginning from the 1940’s to the early 1970’s. Hence, we will discuss the important periods that Vietnam encountered after France left Indochina, and in the same way, the episodes that drove the American civilians to oppose the war. To better understand the conflict, one needs to acquire

some essential clues about the historical events that offer insights into the history of Vietnam and the circumstances in which this war triggered.

The second chapter will be the practical part. By this, we mean the exploration of whether the U.S intercession in the war was justified, or instead, it was a questionable cause. This will be proved by applying the Just War Theory and to follow upon this idea, we will fasten upon the manner in which the Vietnam War was printed in journal articles, and presented on television using The New York Times newspaper articles along with CBS News programs, and then their implication in the popular opinion's turning against the war condemning the American practices in Vietnam. Basically, this part aims at arguing that TV news and media coverage have influenced the idea the American civilians held about their government's intervention in the war in general, and their support to the South more specifically.

The third chapter which is also the last will lay emphasis on the "Counterculture Movement" as a way wielded by the American population to revolt against their own government which was partly responsible for the atrocities engendered by the harshness of the American regime. In this part, we are set to involve this Anti-war Movement as a direct outcome that gave birth to a course of protests calling for rebellion from the American people after estimating that the American administration was violating the law of war's conventions. As an endpoint, our attention will be consecrated to the failure of the American system investigating into the why and wherefore of their downfall to mark the fulfillment of our study

Results:

After analyzing the news papers and the audiovisual materials used, we argue that the American Media during the Vietnam war had shown two sides of the conflict. On the one

hand, some journalists served the American agenda or interests of propagating to the war and showing only the positive effects of the intervention, on the other hand, another category of war reporters preferred to respect the fundamental principle of journalism which is honesty and objectivity, so they reported a vivid images of what was really happening in Vietnam without any subjective aims.

All along our analysis, we came out with some considerable results. The first result is about the Just War theory that is a fundamental step before launching in any conflict. However, The American political system did not under any circumstances showed consideration for the laws of war. Instead, it allowed itself everything building its polemic on the Domino Theory to fight against the spread of communism in Asia.

The second result concerns the Counter Culture Movement which is a reaction against the war caused by the free reporting of the Vietnam War events, the spread of the unjust actions practiced in Vietnam had an enormous influence on the American public opinion. Americans, as far as, many important figures were no longer ready to support the war and the American actions in Vietnam. They stranded against the American policy throughout different demonstrations.

Discussion:

❖ Chapter One:

1. Historical Background: The Vietnam War from the 1940's to the early 1970's:

Introduction:

It is our purpose in the present chapter to review some of the historical events that marked the Vietnam conflict beginning from the 1940's along with the 1970's. On this basis, some of these facts will be addressed full attention, starting with the First and the Second Indo-China wars. We will tackle more broadly the different episodes of the Vietnam history as a country which shares historical ties with Russia and China which were both Communists. To understand the Vietnam long collision, its context and motives, one has to figure out first its intimate kinship with the Cold War, since the Vietnam warfare derived its roots from this same war. After going through the core of the Vietnam clash and its violent touch with the U.S, we will provide an overview to the withdrawal of the American troops as an acknowledgement of their distressing defeat. In this way, we are going to examine how this string of events led North Vietnam to enjoy a landslide victory; making the triumph of Communism over capitalism in Vietnam.

1.1. History of the Vietnam War:

The Vietnam War was one of the most serious episodes of the Cold War period and a long-lasting conflict which started in 1954 and ended in 1975. Communism or the spread of the Domino Theory was the chief cause that led to the Vietnam War. According to Alan Rohn:

At the end of world war I, political and military tensions between the United States and its one— time ally-- the Soviet Union increased dramatically. The U.S. perceived communism, a social, economic and political ideology encouraged by the Soviet Union and China, as a significant threat to its national security and power. Fearing communism would spread over the Vietnam and potentially over South Asia; the U.S. first involvement in Vietnam began in

1949 when they provided military aid to France in the form of military observers and weaponry in the First Indochina War under President Eisenhower.¹

From the historical point of view, Vietnam could not be considered as a free state. The conflict revolving around Vietnam was waged during the Second World War, when the French colony Indochina, today's (Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam), was colonized by the Japanese army, and Japan was defeated in the war. As a result, France wanted to retake possession of the Vietnam colony.

1.2. The First Indochina War (1946-1954):

The First Indochina War or the French Indochina War took place in the period from 19th December 1946 until 1st August 1954. During the struggle, French Union forces namely the Bao Dai's Vietnamese National Army and the professional troops engaged together against the Viet Minh movement led by Ho Chi Minh. The chief cause of the conflict started during the Japanese defeat, when the allied powers desired to put Vietnam under the French control again.

In order to defeat the Ho Chi Minh's Guerrillas that aimed to occupy large areas of the country, France decided to fight in Dien Bien Phu location, where the Viet Minh lacked support. The attacks spent two months from March to May, 1954. This period was decisive for the French forces that lost Dien Bien Phu battle and realized that the Indochinese colonies could not remain under their control; leading to peace talks.²

Under the Soviet Union pressure, Ho Chi Minh attempted to negotiate with France in The Geneva Conference which took place from April 26 to July 21, 1954. It was a solution to end the war in French Indochina and Vietnam. The conference partitioned the country at the 17th parallel with the Viet Minh in control of the North, and the Ngo Dinh Diem formed a new non-communist state in the South called the Emperor Bao Dai.³

1.3. The Second Indochina War (1954-1975):

During the period after the Geneva Conference the Viet Minh established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in the North. Meanwhile, France and Japan formed the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) in the new South. The Second Indochina War started in the period after the Geneva Accords in 1954. The war was caused by the American indirect encroachment to support Ngo Dinh Diem's policy in South Vietnam. Ngo Dinh Diem made himself the president of South Vietnam and began to create an authoritarian regime far from the American subvention or support. Later on, Diem's unsuccessful and unjust governance pushed the Communist Party of the Northern part to use revolutionary tools to overthrow Ngo Diem's governmental policy. In 1960, the National Liberation Front was established by the Communist party aiming to reunify Vietnam and to end the American influence.⁴

1.4. China's intervention (1965-1969):

"The Vietnam War was an international conflict".⁵ It is an international conflict in the sense that other foreign nations got involved in it. In addition to the U.S which took part in the military clash with North Vietnam, China and Russia, the two major Communist powers, became directly involved as well. As for China, many scholars have spurred the debate over the circumstances in which the Chinese government got engaged in the Vietnam War. In an interview (2001) dedicated to the historian, Qiang Zhai about his book named *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, Zhai declares:

I've been interested in the Vietnam War for a long time. Whenever I read existing books on the Vietnam War, they mostly talk about it from an American perspective, drawing lessons about American mistakes. American scholars speculate about the Chinese role, but partly because of a lack of Chinese documents, they have no idea about the extent of China's involvement. As for the Vietnamese, they don't talk about the Chinese role because of their nationalist pride. They want to think that they won the war on their own, without any help from China.⁶

He goes on by affirming that:

The Chinese helped the Vietnamese train their military commanders; reorganize their defense and financial systems, including tax and fiscal policy; and create a solid economic base. They also helped the Vietnamese to mobilize the peasants to support war through land reform campaigns. Overall, there was a massive transfer of the Chinese experience of making revolution to the Vietnamese.⁷

“From the early 1990s, due to the newly released Chinese sources, historians began to realize the depth of China’s involvement in the Vietnam War, focusing on Beijing’s assistance to Hanoi and the relations between the war and China’s domestic revolution”.⁸ Reviewing China’s intercession in the war from a Chinese perspective, Xiaoming Zhang in “The Vietnam War 1964-1969: a Chinese Perspective” (1996), suggests that due to the insufficiency of Chinese information sources, China’s role in the Vietnam War has been minimized and put aside.⁹ Accordingly, it is for that reason that scholars came out to revise the Chinese interference in the conflict that opposes the Vietnam Communist to the United States Capitalist.

Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders had developed strong, fruitful and profound relationships with Ho Chi Minh throughout the period of their presidency.¹⁰ Research by Central Intelligence Agency (1963) supports that, “Communists have delivered significant help to North Vietnam since the American bombing program began”. Additionally, “Communist China has supplied over \$1 billion in economic and military assistance, and Chinese military support has concentrated on building North Vietnamese ground forces and sustaining the military effort in South Vietnam”.¹¹ Based on Chinese sources, China’s military supply to Vietnam includes trucks, buns, bullets, plans, military uniforms, and other military shipments.¹²

1.5. Russia's Intervention (1964-1973):

North Vietnam acknowledges that “the Soviet Union has been an important contributor of economic and military aid, especially since early 1965 when Moscow initiated measures to improve Hanoi's ‘defense potential’ ”.¹³ The further Time goes on, the more affinities between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam grow more and more healthy.

According to John Emory Pike, in his article “The Soviet Aid to North Vietnam”, after the Second World War, the USSR began to assist Ho Chi Minh in his eagerness to overthrow the French regime.¹⁴ Seemingly, the Soviet mission in intruding into the conflict consists of helping North Vietnamese to be well- prepared for the face-off with the hostile armed adversary. To achieve this, the soviet pledge was to send “aircraft, radar, artillery, air defense systems, small arms, ammunition, food and medical supplies”.¹⁵

The Soviet Union and China were the two notable countries that recognized North Vietnam. In his article denominated “Why did the Soviets support North Vietnam?”, Alan Rohn (2014) judges that Russia’s protection of North Vietnam is not only due to the fact that both of them are Communists, but also to the United States support of the French War in Vietnam.¹⁶ Skillfully, Rohn calls this a “proxy-war”, in the sense that the Russian government was not directly engaged in war with the American Capitalist, but used Vietnam to exert its influence on the U.S.

To follow up on this idea of the Soviet support to North Vietnam, the Central Intelligence Agency or more colloquially (C.I.A) estimates that “in addition to combat material, Communist countries have provided an increasing amount of economic assistance much of it including war-related commodities, petroleum, trucks and construction materials”; and more specifically, “the USSR has supplied \$800 million or 47 percent of the economic assistance”.¹⁷ For George C. Herring (2004), President Lyndon B. Johnson “could do nothing

to stop such aid short of the provocative measures he feared would dangerously escalate the war”.¹⁸

1.6. The Cold War (1947-1991) and Vietnam:

The Vietnam War emerged as a consequence of the Cold War (1947-1991), which revolves around the conviction by the U.S that Communism is an alarming system that is stretching out.¹⁹ Right from the beginning, the Cold War was distinguished by the straining between two opposing superpowers, i.e. the United States and the Soviet Union.²⁰ Chen Jian delineates the Cold War as follows:

The Cold War was from the beginning a confrontation between two contending ideologies-Communism and liberal capitalism. The composition of the two Cold War camps were defined along ideological lines, and the conflict between them, at its core, represented not only a contest to determine which side was stronger but also, and more importantly, a competition to demonstrate which side was superior.²¹

Being certain that Ho Chi Minh was part of the Communist bloc controlled by the Kremlin, U.S Officials came to the conclusion that their benefits and concerns were threatened by the Communist Vietnam.²² Besides, the domino theory which stipulates that the fall of Vietnam to Communism would eventually cause the deprivation of other countries, encouraged the U.S to put further attach to Vietnam and justify their intervention during the Cold War.²³

It is in this context that Vietnam has been targeted by the American administration and its persistent Capitalist ideology during the Cold War. For the U.S as for all the Capitalist countries, Communism is a system that is drifting the world off control and that needs to render harmless by all means. From this, it becomes undeniable that the Cold War and the Vietnam War are undoubtedly related.

1.7. The American Intervention in Vietnam (1964-1973):

In order to lend a hand to the French in their fight against the Viet Minh during the First Indochina War (1946-1954), the U.S decided to send troops in the Vietnam soil. After analyzing data from the American interposition in Vietnam, Professor Brandislav L.Slantchev (2014), in his “National Security Strategy: The Vietnam War, 1945-1975”, argues that “American warships in the Gulf of Tonkin had been clandestinely assisting South Vietnamese troops in attacks against North Vietnamese shore areas”.²⁴ Interestingly, the United States was willing to do anything to see not only North Vietnam, but more importantly Communism ceased to exist.

“The United States’ involvement in Vietnam began in early 1945”.²⁵ For many authors about the Vietnam War, as is the case with Alan Rohn in his article “What was U.S involvement in Vietnam War?” (2014), Rohn assumes that the Gulf Tonkin incident in 1964 “urged Congress to approve the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution on August 7, 1964, giving President Johnson the power to wage war in Vietnam”.²⁶ In other words, this incident that occurred in the waters of the Gulf of Tonkin was one among many other reasons that led Americans to wage attacks against North Vietnamese.

After former North Vietnam’s support to the launching “insurgency against the U.S” by former Viet Minh, “Johnson began bombing North Vietnam in early 1965,”.²⁷ Consequently, the American government launched a series of military attacks against its Communist opponents. Besides, an aerial bombardment known as Operation Rolling Thunder (1965-1968) has been initially conducted by the U.S Air Force and Navy in North Vietnam.²⁸ In his book The Vietnam War (2007), James E. Westheider alleges that this “massive air campaign against North Vietnam” was “designed to destroy their ability to support the Vietcong in the

South”.²⁹ He goes on to say that “the main target for American aircraft was the Ho Chi Minh Trail”.³⁰

1.8. The Tet Offensive and its impact (1968):

According to Alan Woods, in August 1963 the new American President, Lyndon B. Johnson, ordered the first bombing of North Vietnam, operation “Rolling Thunder”. After the hard bombing period, the North Vietnamese movement decided to fight against the South Vietnamese. Under the Tet Offensive, it was planned that the attacks would occur in the day when the Vietnamese celebrated their Lunar New Year, the day of the traditional celebration of happiness, peace and hope called Tet. The National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (The Viet Cong), with the help of the People’s Army of Vietnam (PAVN), ignored the pre-arranged truce and attacked South Vietnam major cities in different assaults, like Khe Sanh, Hue or Saigon.³¹

More importantly, we can say that the Tet Offensive was not a military success neither for the Communist forces nor for the Viet Cong. Both sides did not prepare any strategy to strengthen the influence of their war, “The Americans had been fighting classic guerilla tactics since 1965. Though the U.S had faced a number of conventional attacks in late 1967, most U.S military thinking was still oriented around the concept of guerrilla warfare. Therefore, the Tet Offensive took them by surprise, especially the sheer scale of it”.³²

1.9. The Vietnamization of the War (1969):

During Richard Nixon administration, the U.S president aimed to end the American influence and involvement in Vietnam. As a result, he planned the policy of Vietnamization through a program of training for South Vietnamese forces, expanding equipment and reducing the number of the American soldier to build up a strong South Vietnamese Army, which is able to take over the defense of South Vietnam as an independent non-communist

Vietnam. According to Alan Rohn, “Under fierce and intense protests and criticism in—and outside the country, Nixon and his advisers sought away disengage U.S. combat forces without appearing to abandon South Vietnam in the war against the Communist. They then came out with a new strategy called “Vietnamization”.³³ Nevertheless, the American government, which had not a well prepared plan to win the war, felt the necessity to end the conflict. By 1968, the Tet Offensive influenced the American public opinion that started to oppress the government, demanding for the president Nixon and the secretary of state Henry Kissinger the immediate departure of the American troops from Vietnam. Rohn explains:

Together with the Tet Offensive, news of U.S. soldiers massacring hundreds civilians at My Lai in 1969 in the name of fighting the Viet Cong, then the invasion of Cambodia in 1970 and the leak of Pantagon Papers in 1971 had made the war more unpopular among American people. Massive anti-war protests were held throughout the country against the nation’s war effort in Vietnam.³⁴

1.9. Paris Peace Accords (1968-1973):

“Paris Peace Accords (PPA) was an agreement between the government of the democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam), the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of (South Vietnam) and the United States to bring an end to the Vietnam war.³⁵ The Paris Peace Accords aimed to completely end the Vietnam War. On January 27, 1973, the talks were secret between the National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho the lead North Vietnamese negotiator. The accords highlight peace measures such as the ceasefire in Vietnam and the economic help by the U.S Government that refused to give any help to Vietnam without the congressional approval.³⁶ The Paris Accords were violated by North Vietnam that broke the ceasefire agreement.³⁷

1.10. The American Withdrawal from Vietnam (1969-1973):

Year 1973 marked the end of the American intervention in South Vietnam. Information based on historical documents published by Teaching American History confirm that the American people promptly turned against the war over the next few years, and more significantly, the far-reaching number of victims caused by the U.S led the American support to reach its lowest ebb.³⁸ What is more, the amplification of the civilian protests incited President Nixon to draw back his troops, resulting in the “Vietnamization” of the war (1969) and the signing of the peace treaty in Paris (1973) ending the American military involvement in the war.³⁹

In other respects, many essayists find that it is worth noting that a large-scale of strategies have been put in place to force the U.S to give up Vietnam. This is the case of Leslie H. Gelb, in his article “The Essential Domino: American Politics and Vietnam” in which he cites that without the American retreat from Vietnam, the number of casualties among the U.S. troops will only increase.⁴⁰ Behind this mask hides a strategic plan to bring pressure to bear upon the American government aiming at removing its troops from Vietnam.

Talking about strategies, President Nixon seems to have set up a sequence of programs to leave off the war. In accordance with Jeffrey A. Belanger, in his research report “Causes of the Vietnam War: An Academic Look at Wilsonism and Cold War Effect”, as part of Nixon’s procedures, the use of “Henry Kissinger, the CIA, and the FBI” were essential to implement his foreign policy.⁴¹ He estimates that a cessation of the war became the elementary target of the Americans, and Nixon set in motion a progressive withdrawal of the U.S armed forces from the South.⁴²

As mentioned earlier, Richard Nixon, at long last, decides to bury the hatchet by gradually backing off his army. This initiative to end war was kept on schedule by Nixon as a

first step towards peace. “Richard Nixon mounted huge bombing raids on North Vietnam until the North Vietnamese were forced to sign”⁴³. What is to be understood is that Nixon launched military attacks on North Vietnam as an attempt to arrange a peaceful agreement that will be finally signed in 1973; shaping the end of the American association with South Vietnam against the North or, simply put, the U.S intervention in Vietnam in general.

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⁴⁴BBC-GCSE Bitesize, “the US gets out,” Last modified August 10, 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/vietnam/usgetsoutrev1.shtml>

❖ **Chapter Two:**

2. Media Portrayal of the Vietnam War and its Conformity with the Ethics of

War:

Introduction:

In this second chapter of our work, we will put forward U.S media report of the war in the light of CBS News television programs, together with authentic and reliable historical newspaper articles from The New York Times. Drawing inspiration from these main sources that date back to the Vietnam wartime, we will proceed by dividing this part of media report of the war into two units addressing both the government intervention in the depiction of war events, and the various programs that leaked the veiled face of the American interposition in Vietnam, turning the conduct of the war upside down. But beyond putting in the foreground this issue of the American invasion of the Vietnam territory, we will engage into the questioning of its accordance with the morality of war through revisiting principally the Just War Theory principles whereby this hostile struggle was a fiasco and completely absurd. To bring down the curtain, we will move to the impact that the fickleness of the war had on the public opinion as it is framed by media.

2.1. government intervention in the depiction of the Vietnam war events:

It is globally known that the Vietnam War has been chiefly mediatized. To go into more detail, mass media “allowed the people of the United States to witness the goings-on of the warfront and created a much more visual experience that had not previously existed for people at home”¹. Most of the American News channels were extremely concerned with the coverage of the Vietnam War as it is the case with CBS News, in which programs were hosted solely to bring into light the affecting Vietnam War experience.

In the matter of media censorship, media outlet misled the public tremendously through distorting the news and covering up the truth about what the war really was. What is worth noting about the press from Clarence R. Wyatt's opinion is that, "a system of battlefield censorship restricted the release of information from the front"². The chief purpose in doing so is to keep away from any disturbance for the American military progress in Vietnam, and avoid all kind of embarrassment for the U.S Officials. For David Lawrence, World Report editor, "about the only information that the public may get officially will that which the President and his political advisers deem good for the administration's political fortunes"³.

A damning testimony conducted by South Kingstown High School students in an interview (1998) dedicated to Theodore Gatchel, a United States Marine Corp (USMC) backs up this line of argument as Gatchel testifies that "It's astounding when you know what was going on first-hand and then watching American television. It was like there were two completely different wars that were being fought and reported on"⁴. Likewise, in her research journal termed "Media and War", Jennifer Ellis harbors suspicions about the American government which deprived the public from harrowing facts so that the U.S command prevents spoiling its honor and national esteem⁵.

Meanwhile, in his book, *Paper Soldiers: The American Press and the Vietnam War*, Wyatt drives our attention also to John Kennedy's close relationship with some journalists as Arthur Crock from The New York Times, Joseph Alsop from the Washington Post, or also Charles Barlett from Chattanooga Times. According to Wyatt, "Kennedy's natural interest in and affinity for members of the press was not without calculation"⁶. That is, by developing symbiotic relationships with some news reporters, President Kennedy sought to act out of self-interest by gaining their trust and put them on his side so he can manipulate the news as desired.

The newspaper article and the CBS documentary under consideration support the American intervention in Vietnam, to influence Americans' point of view and keep them far from the painful reality. "Congress Backs President on Southeast Asia Moves; Khanh Sets State of Siege," is an article written by E. W. Kenworthy, a Washington correspondent for The New York Times who occupied many governmental works. Kenworthy served as a mirror of the government's points of view, and presented via his articles ideas that influenced the Americans and pushed them to stand behind the American intervention in Vietnam.

Throughout the article, Kenworthy gives justifications for the American military interference in Vietnam by saying that the American government aims to limit the communist violent expansion in Southeast Asia, showing that the U.S is against all kinds of oppression and is ready to defend any subjugated country⁷. By reiterating that the intervention is for a good reason meaning that it is justified, the American policy gained agreement from its citizens.

Propagating for war and preparing the American minds to accept this intrusion in Vietnam were the major goals of the American media. "The Unique War" is a documentary narrated by Commander Glenn Ford in 1966, portrays the American aims in colonizing the Vietnam that is a small nation in need of protection and leader to end the communist unjust expansion⁸. The U.S underestimated the Vietnamese by acting as a protecting nation that helps the submissive Vietnam nation to heal from Communism. In the case of the aforementioned program, the army chief addresses a bunch of soldiers under his command by saying that they have a humanitarian mission, and that they are heroes who are responsible of saving lives of million people in Vietnam.

As Ford insists, the relationship between the Americans and the Vietnamese is a relation of concord and good-fellowship. This precious kinship "Is not obtained easily. But with

patience and effort, it can be won”⁹. The reporter shows that the Vietnamese cannot trust the American fighters. For this reason, the soldiers did their best to win their confidence by introducing the “Civic Action Plan that supports every military operation”¹⁰. In order to reinforce the interests between the two opposing sides, Americans supplied the Vietnamese with food, clothing and medical treatment. “Such gifts are deeply important and the gesture of giving becomes deeply meaningful”¹¹. The Civic Action Plan was an opportunity for the Americans to stress their supposed just-cause paved with good intentions towards Vietnamese.

2.1.1. Programs that disclosed Government Intervention and uncovered the

Hidden Face of the War:

After the government resorted to trickery in order to garner the support of the public opinion by limiting the scope of the news, the reporters began to have some free access shortly afterwards through reporting from the heart of the battlefield. At the beginning of the American escalation in Vietnam, the policy fostered by the U.S administration was built upon a load of propaganda as an endeavor to brainwash people and throw them off the scent, and therefore, come out as the world saver and a heroic government that fights for a humanitarian cause; a strategy that paid off at the very start and made American people put the U.S sovereignty on a pedestal.

Paradoxically, the reality of what goes on in backstage was quite different when compared with the reports recounted by the governance. But not long after that, the events were leaked to the press; the whole truth came out and the reality did not take long to reach people’s ears. Morley Safer, CBS News anchor, who aired a loathsome report about Marines setting fire on Vietnamese hamlets on August, 5, 1965 referred to as “Watch Morley Safer’s Legendary Vietnam War Report”, is one example amongst many others, which speaks volumes about these dreadful practices that are beyond comprehension.

This report in hand reviews the misery inflicted to the Cam Ne villagers as a group of Marines deliberately burned the villagers' modest houses, which for the vast majority represent their only property. As it has been sustained by Safer, "in Vietnam like everywhere else in Asia, property, a home is everything"¹². This outburst of violence performed by Marines mainly by means of Zippo lighters following "the days operation", "Burned out 150 houses, wounded 3 women, killed 1 baby, wounded 1 Marine"¹³. Their chief intention in doing so was clear; causing the enemy to suffer emotionally in order to knock him down, and eventually abolish the Communist system as planned.

While everything was quite at home, anguish and heartbreak became the hallmarks in the frontline and were rooted deep inside the Vietnamese' hearts. As assaults fell upon the enemy in the war zone, American men and women continued to have access to the rare footage from which they were deprived for a long time. A telling example of this occurred between November 14 and November 18, 1965 during the Battle of Ia Drang Valley, as detailed by CBS News reporter, Morley Safer on November 30 of the same year in a program termed "The Battle of Ia Drang Valley (1965) - CBS News Report". The United States Army arranged helicopter gunships and many other sophisticated armament ready for attack. The paramount tactical objective behind this referring to Safer's viewpoint was "to find them [North Vietnamese], fix them, and kill them"¹⁴.

Three years later, another program pointing the finger at the American usurpation of Vietnam, was voiced by Walter Cronkite. In this program accredited as "Stay Tuned: TV's Unforgettable Moments- Vietnam: Denouncing the War", Cronkite avows that "in early 1968, [I] travelled again to Vietnam to see the war for [myself]. [I] concluded that [our] presence there was neither doable nor practical"¹⁵. Within the same report and in compliance with Don Hewitt, 60 Minutes' CBS News magazine creator, "Walter went to Vietnam and came to the conclusion that it was a wrong war in a wrong place"¹⁶. This is the way journalism was

instrumental in the growing awareness of the needless slaughter in Vietnam. Thanks to media, everything turned suspicious, and more importantly, the public adherence to the struggle has definitely gone down.

Within the newspaper article under the title of “Vietnamese Say G.I.’s Slew 567 in Town”, Henry Kamm implies that “a heavy artillery barrage awakened the villagers, around 6 A.M. It lasted for an hour then American soldiers entered the village meeting no opposition. They ordered all inhabitants out of their homes”²³. The article demonstrates the role that the print media played during wartime as a means of disclosure of the information being sworn to secrecy to speed up the proliferation of the truth that did not fit the fiction recounted by the government, thus the U.S troops’ exodus from Vietnam. This is the same idea shared by Raymond Walter Apple within the article termed “Vietnam: The Signs of Stalemate” from The New York Times newspaper, in which Apple singles out the highly-developed armaments used by U.S army to take over the Vietnamese.

Despite American authority’s endless attempts to delay the press by hindering the news, the authentic and blunt truth spilled out. Relationships between media and military forces began to get better as media restrictions faded away. As is evident, the two clans, that is, the American armed forces and media outlets turned a corner by breaking the chains and working hand in hand, so people can make up their own mind about this merciless fighting. Right from that moment when a great deal of TV programs took the wraps off, the efforts flowed by the U.S command to justify its countless actions were in vain.

2.2. The Vietnam War in the Light of the Just War Theory:

The Vietnam War was a large covered subject in both print and visual media. This helped the Americans to monitor the war and judge the U.S government actions in Southeast Asia, leading us to question the legitimacy of the American involvement in the war. By

referring to articles dated from the 1960's, we intend to show how the conflict was portrayed, and to which extent does it demonstrate the unjust side of the war or the law of the armed conflict. The law of armed forces is conceptualized in the categories of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. These aspects are a set of rules that govern and guide conflicts between nations.

2.2.1. Jus ad bellum

Various political debates either published or broadcasted through live reports, justify the American intervention in Vietnam using the *jus ad bellum* law. It is a law of recourse to force; in other words, it is the law that justifies the use of force, meaning that countries all over the world have the right to colonize any country using violence. This convention has many principles that are commonly held to “be having just cause, being a last resort, being declared by a proper authority, possessing right intention, having a reasonable chance of success, and the end being proportional to the means used”¹⁷.

The newspaper article under consideration is entitled “Congress Backs President on Southeast Asia Moves; Khanh Sets State of Siege,” written by E. W. Kenworthy and published in August 7th. In this article, Kenworthy sheds light on the strategy followed by President Johnson to fight Communism and limit its influence over the world. “The House of Representatives and the Senate approved today the resolution requested by President Johnson to strengthen his hand in dealing with Communist aggression in Southeast Asia”¹⁸. As we can understand, the American government used the alleged fight against Communism under the pretence of justifying its intervention in Vietnam. But more importantly, American policy aimed to legalize its brutal actions against the Vietnamese by passing the resolution in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Within the same article, Kenworthy writes that “The resolution gives prior Congressional approval of ‘all necessary measures’ that the President may take ‘to repel any armed attack’

against United States forces and ‘to prevent further aggression’¹⁹. So, the resolution guaranteed the congressional agreement in case the American government takes any decision against the Vietnamese, regardless to the damages that can touch Vietnamese innocent lives. In addition to this, Jus Ad Bellum is inevitably an important step before launching in any forced attack to avoid ‘war crimes’. Brian Orend explains that “aggressive leaders who launch unjust wars commit ‘crimes against peace’ ”²⁰.

Among Jus Ad Bellum principles, we find the precept of having a just cause, and the American government’s coverage in Vietnam hinges on the philanthropic assignment that the U.S armed forces had hard time realizing. “The Unique War” (1966) is probably one of the most appropriate examples mounting all the American positive deeds and the protection given to the Vietnamese. Via the program referred to, the U.S diplomacy sought to win the minds and the hearts of both Vietnamese and American population. America gained total support and played a heroic role in Vietnam, as soldiers educate, treat, feed, clothe and civilize the Vietnamese who still” live in an age of want”²¹. The U.S Officials had long been striving to prove that behind this intervention, hides a beneficial agent that would climb the Vietnamese out of the abyss. Unfortunately, the reality of the situation was much gloomier.

2.2.2. Jus in bello:

“Vietnamese Say G.I.'s Slew 567 in Town,” a newspaper article by Henry Kamm shows that Jus in Bello is totally ignored during the war. Throughout the article, Kamm reported the huge number of unlawful Vietnamese victims; among whom we find unarmed women and children. ”A group of South Vietnamese villagers reported today that a small American infantry unit killed 567 unarmed men, women and children as it swept through their hamlet on March 16, 1968”²². Americans destroyed everything regardless to the law that regulates and limits people that the American soldiers should fight, meaning that the U.S breaks the Jus in

Bello agreement and harms both legitimate and illegitimate Vietnamese targets. Additionally, this act shows the brutality of the war and the illegal deeds that the U.S army practices in South Vietnam; making the war unjust.

When we come to reckon with the above programs voiced by CBS News, namely “Watch Morley Safer’s Legendary Vietnam War Report,” (1965), “The Battle of Ia Drang Valley (1965)- CBS News Report,” (1965), “Stay Tuned: TV’s Unforgettable Moments-Vietnam: Denouncing the War,” (1968), we are ultimately condemned to face the dilemma inflicted to the Vietnamese civilians by the American armed forces which in no way did they show a glint of mercy for all the immolate lives. The fact of being armed to the teeth, and setting ablaze rural zones in a way far from being inadvertent, bears out the jus in bello law being literally put aside. Parallel to the cloak-and-dagger running operations being inadequate, Walter Cronkite himself admitted openly that the war was doomed to failure.

For many scholars, the Vietnam tragedy is devoid of all sort of accordance with the fairness of justice. Often qualified as “unbearable”, this enmity was a total injustice towards the Communists. It was such a pointless war often fed by hate, resentment, rumors and ignorance of the unknown. Robert J. Myers for instance, maintains that the Vietnam War challenged the legitimacy of the Just War theory. In his book *Notes on the Just War Theory: Whose Justice, Which Wars?*, Myers quotes “the goal of Just War theory [then] is to limit the frequency of war to burden conduct with moral opprobrium when Just War rules are not followed”²⁴. Meanwhile, Mulford Q. Sibley holds the view that “all war is forbidden” and more specifically, “the Vietnamese War is forbidden”²⁵.

Regarding Myers’ point of view in relation to the American involvement in the war, there was “a situation where the reasons for intervention were faulty and the Secretary of defense was fighting a crusade”²⁶. This implies that U.S Officials’ strong belief in the

legitimacy of their cause led them to set up all necessary means, even though these latter are inadequate and blemished. In his view, “the Vietnam War balance failed the test of the Just War criteria”²⁷. From this, we are set to ask the following question: on what ground did Americans invade Vietnam?

American theorist Michael Walzer is one of those theorists who prone violence when coming to the violation of a territory by a foreign agent²⁸. His view of aggression, “focuses narrowly on actual... invasions and physical assaults. Otherwise, it is feared, the notion of resistance to aggression would have no determinate meaning”²⁹. To stick to America’s deployment of military forces in Vietnam, Walzer stresses on the view that:

The war cannot be won, and it should not be won. It cannot be won, because the only available strategy involves a war against civilians; and it should not be won, because the degree of civilian support that rules out alternative strategies also makes the guerillas the legitimate rulers of the country³⁰.

Concluding that the U.S administration would do anything to achieve its outlined goals, Walzer spurred on the excessive resort to violence. For him, this double-dealing government that was constantly in total denial of the demeaning situation has crossed the Rubicon by daring to cast unfair and pitiful onslaughts that should never have happened, violating each corner of what constitutes a just war.

As time went by, the war reached a low point since it was not justified anymore in the popular opinion. In both the public’ and military’s vision, the war was already lost for the Americans. To bring more explanations, as the war reached its highest desperation, the American troops began to join the public opinion, questioning the worthiness of the American intervention in Vietnam. Among the veterans, “there were mix of feelings about whether the war was justified and winnable, but they all feel that the war has drastically changed their lives, among them is Kerry Orr, who was wounded in 1969”³¹. Additionally, many critics

hold the view that Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, committed war crimes by advising President Richard Nixon to bomb Vietnam's neutral neighbor, Cambodia.

To give legitimacy to its escalation, the U.S has, in essence, investigated unethical military assaults on North Vietnam under the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in early August, 1964. On the authority of the Office of the Historian, this supposed resolution "became the legal basis for the Johnson and Nixon administration's prosecution of the Vietnam War"³³. Two destroyers, namely: the Maddox and the Turner Joy were deployed in the Gulf of Tonkin ready to attack. Later, President Johnson ordained the inauguration of the Operation Rolling Thunder in 1965, an aerial bombardment on North Vietnam, as part of his warfare program³⁴.

Speaking about the Operation Rolling Thunder, "it was the longest strategic bombing campaign in the history of the United States Air Force"³⁵. For Kyle Hadyniak, the bombing marked out the weakening of North Vietnam's steadfastness in pursuing the war³⁶. On the surface, the operation's military results were unmistakably satisfactory as the American power wanted to make the people believe, but on a deeper level, the outcome of the bombing campaign was fruitless and shockingly bad. In his book *Crosswinds: the Air Force's Set up in Vietnam*, Earl H. Tilford (1983: 158) confirms that:

Rolling Thunder had involved 300,000 aircraft sorties to drop 600,000 tons of bombs at a cost 382 aircrew know to have been killed and another 702 missing in action. The United States lost 392 aircraft in 1968, 257 to ground fire, at a cost \$450 million in that year alone. The total number of combat aircraft lost was 900³⁷.

Noting that North Vietnamese were not as frail as they looked, and that under no circumstances were they weakened or mentally shaken, the U.S forces overwhelmed them with heavy attacks to contain the threat of communism, with no consideration for the rules of war. Referring to the ideas developed in "Vietnam: The Signs of Stalemate," a newspaper article by The New York Times, "the enemy has progressed from captured rifles and skimpy supplies to rockets, artillery, heavy mortars, a family of automatic infantry weapons and flame

throwers”³⁸. Despite the American austerity, local Vietnamese are not demoralized, instead, they “continue[s] to fight with tenacity, imagination, and courage, and no one knows when [they] will stop”³⁹. Being frustrated by North Vietnamese’ persistence, “the allies have turned increasingly to the use of artillery and airpower to hurt the enemy [North Vietnamese]”.⁴⁰ Beyond this, the U.S tried to justify its acts lying behind the domino theory, which is paralleled most of the time with a plague under the influence of Communism touching North Vietnam and threatening to contaminate the neighboring countries, boosted by the conviction that Communism will automatically wreck the world; an unrealistic belief entirely lacking in principles.

The dramatic televised incidents also include the rural destructions due to the “Agent Orange” (1961-1971). To undermine the ecological system in Vietnam, the Agent Orange was used by Marines to destroy the crops and villages, aimed at creating famine among North Vietnamese. It is even worse when alluding to what really makes the war illegitimate, i.e. the widespread bombings across the Vietnam nation, which broke every single norm of what a just war should be. Arguably then, this array of gloomy attacks accumulated over time caused the war to spill a lot of blood, because of a government that was consumed with greed for world domination. In retaliation to the steady stream of violence acted as a looking-glass of the war animosity, the ratings turned down, the government’s plausibility blew away, and the war became faulty and irrational.



Picture released on December 19, 1972 of Vietnamese people carrying victims of the American air raids on Hanoi and North Vietnam. The Linebacker II operation, US aerial bombing campaign, called 'the December Raids' and 'the Christmas bombings' on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) last from 18 to 29 December, 1972 during Vietnam War. Getty images⁴¹.



B-52 Bomber, Undated image of a B-52 bomber dropping conventional bombs over Vietnam. Getty images⁴².

2.3. Public Opinion as it is shaped by the Media:

After the release of war milestones, television constituted a key tool both in making the war known on the international rank, and exposing the U.S government in an unfavorable light. Historian Daniel Hallin (1986) writes in his book “*The Uncensored War*”: *The Media and Vietnam* that “because it is a visual medium, television shows the raw horror of war in a way print cannot”⁴³. As a matter of fact, pictorial representations of civilians were transmitted by the media from the bottom of the battlefield. One fine example of these images that marked the spirits is the famous “Napalm Girl”, which caused the disillusionment and the demoralization of the American people towards their government’s decision to surround the Vietnam War⁴⁴. During the face to face between the two sides, the visual occupied a primary place in putting an image to North Vietnamese daily pain. Immediately after the genocide has been hosted, the American citizens lost faith in their governance, and the degree of revolt reached its height, simply because judged a crime against humanity. For the U.S Officials then, it was the beginning of the end.

A rain of bad news crashed down the American population soon after the media decided to stand behind for truthfulness. The publication of the Napalm photo in which we can clearly see the nine year old, Phan Thi Kim Phuc, has put the world in a more upsetting indignation than ever. Robert Hariman’ and John Louis Luciates’



Vietnam – Facebook Censors the “NAPALM GIRL”. Credit: Asia Media⁴⁵.

argument lays principally in the view that “the photo violates one set of norms in order to activate another; propriety is set aside for a moral purpose. It is a picture that shouldn’t be shown of an event that shouldn’t have happened”⁴⁶. Right from the moment when the image reached Americans at home, their opinion about the war was no longer the same. The intensity of emotions attained its climax, and the Vietnam War experienced a great upheaval in its dealing with the U.S outsider.



Houses Burned by American Soldiers during the My Lai Massacre on March 16, 1968 in My Lai South Vietnam,” Getty Images⁴⁷

Likewise, the My lai Massacre as described by dozens of historians, is possibly the most unbearable event ever came upon in Vietnam, since the U.S troops were fiercely determined and had no limit. Through these shockingly violent and abnormal images, the American citizens could experience blood-ship via media news. Information retrieved from The New York Times in an article termed “Vietnamese Say G.I.’s Slew 567 in Town,” communicate that on March

16, 1968, an American military section slaughtered 567 Vietnamese civilians; among them women and innocent children⁴⁸. One of the villagers, Do Hoai, testifies that “when the houses had been cleared, the troops dynamited those made of bricks and set fire to the wooden structures... Then the villagers were gunned down where they stood”⁴⁹.

As a whole, violence within the broadcasted images chilled the Americans to the bone. As for the Napalm girl altogether with the other children around, one can read the grief in their eyes; the fright expressed in their faces tells a lot about the circumstances of the war. The same goes for the burning houses during the My Lai Massacre, which unmasks the harshness of the American oppressive regime. Partly in response to this malice towards innocent lives, the warfare knew a remarkable rate decrease and became considerably unpopular, dishonoring the U.S prestige. As just noted, such emotional aired pictures were nonetheless vital in shaping the public opinion by media, and motivated people to reason against the U.S immoral policy in Vietnam. There is scattered evidence that after hearing a myriad of disgraceful stories, the American citizens felt manipulated and betrayed by their own administration, and were more likely to rebel so that to urge the troops to shift from the Vietnamese' property. The American collapse is unavoidable, knowing that the public approval to any given war in general is of high importance so as to sweep to victory.

Conclusion:

From what has been reiterated all along this chapter, we reach the conclusion that, on the one hand, U.S. Officials naturally failed in their strategy to cut harming classified information that did not suit their motivations, on the other hand, the retaliation was immediate as the disruptive truth finally saw the light of the day. Similarly, using facts as a basis within this part of the dissertation entailing the Just War Theory, we judge that not under any circumstances the American political system showed consideration for the laws of war. Instead, it allowed itself everything building its polemic on the Domino Theory, which was used as a blanket device to say that Communism was evil and was more likely to lead the world to a chaos. Also, considering the whole attacks enacted on the North, the media authorized the public opinion to look at the U.S meddling in Vietnam's affairs through a different lens, spawning what is called the "Counterculture Movement". The most ironic part

about this is that people in America rebounded upon their government's authority, giving rise to a domestic enemy within the U.S area, who is none other than its own public.

Endnotes:

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³David Lawrence quoted in Wyatt, *Paper Soldiers*, 16.

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⁶Clarence R. Wyatt, *Paper Soldier: The American Press and the Vietnam War*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 28.

⁷E. W. Kenworthy, "Congress Backs President on Southeast Asia Moves; Khanh Sets State of Siege," *New York Times*, August 7, 1964. Accessed June 28, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0807.html>

⁸Glenn Ford, "The Unique War," YouTube video, 24:16, a program hosted by Directorate for Armed Forces Information and Education Department of Defense in 1966, posted by Nuclear Vault, August 20, 2009, <http://www.m.youtube.com/video/x2tfv8c>

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¹⁰Ibid ,18 :32.

¹¹Ibid,19 :45.

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²⁰Brian Orend, "Michael Walzer on Resorting to Force," vol. 33, no. 3 (2000), 524, <http://www.jstor.org>

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²² Henry Kamm, "Vietnamese Say G.I.'s Slew 567 in Town," *New York Times*, November 17, 1969. Accessed June 24, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0316.html>

²³Ibid.

²⁴Robert J. Myres, *Notes on the Just War Theory: Whose Justice, Which Wars?* , (1996), 116-125, <http://www.colonelby.com/teachers/krichardson/Grade%2012/Carleton%20-%20Int%20Law%20Course/Week%2012/NotesOnJustWarTheory.pdf>

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³¹ Greg Flakus, “For Many US Veterans, the Vietnam War Continues,” YouTube video, 2:54, posted by VOA News, May 22, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgOxQHcWqBs/> at 0:28

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³³Office of the Historian, “U.S Involvement in the Vietnam War: the Gulf of Tonkin and Escalation, 1964,” Last modified May 16, 2017, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/gulf-of-tonkin>

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⁴¹“Picture released on December 19, 1972 of Vietnamese people carrying victims of the American air raids on Hanoi and North Vietnam. The Linebacker II operation, US aerial bombing campaign, called ‘the December Raids’ and ‘the Christmas bombings’ on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) last from 18 to 29 December, 1972 during Vietnam War,” Getty images, December 19 1972, <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/picture-released-on-december-19-1972-of-vietnamese-people-news-photo/157631299#picture-released-on-december-19-1972-of-vietnamese-people-carrying-picture-id157631299>

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⁴⁵ Katie Trinh, "Vietnam – Facebook Censors the 'NAPALM GIRL'," Asia Media, October 26, 2016, <http://asiamedia.lmu.edu/2016/10/26/vietnam-facebook-censors-the-napalm-girl>

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⁴⁹Ibid.

❖ Chapter Three:

3. The U.S Intrusion in Vietnam in the Context of the Counterculture:

Introduction:

The purpose around this last chapter is basically to cover some specific topics that relate to the late 60's and early 70's, while focusing more precisely on the anti-war protests generated by the global indignation among the popular opinion with regard to the U.S resolution to surround the Vietnam War. For the purpose at hand, we intend to scrutinize how the U.S experience sapped both American people's and veterans' will to fight, and raised this overwhelming anti-war rebellion resulting in a domestic opposition to the war. This will be done distinctly by borrowing authentic data from articles belonging to The New York Times newspaper. After coming to grips with the notion of the Counterculture Movement, we will be engaged into the Veterans' sequels brought about the atmosphere of the war. One of the features of this chapter will be an attempt to learn about some of the important historical figures who were particularly skeptical concerning the Vietnam affair, and refused explicitly to adhere to the fight. To complete, we will supply our work with a glimpse of the agents that served the American repulse when facing the enemy in the ground more specifically, and the Vietnam War as a whole.

3.1. American Anti-War protests:

Right after the exhibition of the unbearable sphere in Vietnam, the war took an upturn and knew a shift in the public opinion. The latter has become aware of the seriousness of the situation that did not spare even innocent civilians. To express their outrage in proportion to the instability of the American regime, the American public retaliated against these appalling attacks, which made the U.S administration feel down in people's esteem, bringing into play the creation of a countercultural movement as a means to overthrow the U.S government. The

anti-war movement (1965-1971), as it has been stressed by Hodbod'ova (2008), implied a great deal of “university students and tutors, and members of college campuses” which extended to “middle class suburbs and labor unions” along with worldwide famous figures as “Muhammed Ali” or also “Martin Luther King”¹.

On November 15, 1969, an article bearing the title of “500,000 War Protesters Stage Peaceful Rally in Washington; Militants Stir Clashes Later,” published in The New York Times by Joan Herbers, writes that “a vast throng of Americans, predominantly youthful and constituting the largest mass march in the nation’s capital, demonstrated peacefully in the heart of the city [today], demanding a rapid withdrawal of United States troops from



On November 15, 1969, more than 500,000 protestors flooded into Washington, D.C., for the Moratorium March—one of the largest anti-war demonstrations in U.S. history. Credit: Vintage Everyday²

Vietnam”³. To express their dismay, crowds of young peace lovers flooded the streets to hasten the end of the U.S involvement in the war. Herbers asserts that despite violent excitements occurred between some militants and the police, “the tone of the march and the assembly at the Washington Monuments was peacefully and subdued”⁴. To do things

properly, banners were carried with diverse slogans as “Vietnam: Love it or leave it”, with one particular cautionary catch-phrase as saying “Nixon: This is our last march. The fire next time”⁵. In spite of demonstrating smoothly and not firing up, Americans still threaten to take matters too far by putting up warning signs addressed to the government’s members; violent approaches that will, not take long to happen over the next mass gatherings.

In 1971, things got out of hand and the situation deteriorated. On May 4 of the same year, an exclusive article under the title of “7,000 Arrested in Capital War Protest; 150 Are Hurt as Clashes Disrupt Traffic” was published by Richard Halloran in The New York Times. As introduced by Halloran, “About 150 were [also] injured in the six hours of disturbances as



Arrest of Vietnam War Protesters,
May 1971. Credit: Vintage Everyday⁷

the protesters, demanding an immediate halt to the war in Vietnam were thwarted in their plan to stop Government operations”⁶. Shortly after, a number of turbulences had occurred hampering traffic order, which delayed government’s attendance to their offices using different threatening objects by the demonstrators⁸. On the contrary,

with the sole intention of counterattacking, “the police fought these tactics with tear gas and nightsticks”⁹. On the subject of police duty, after civilians turned to be disobedient, and “small groups blocked the doors of Government buildings and allowed themselves to be arrested”, the police found it necessary to take measures so that to stop the riots of unprecedented violence settling the American landscape¹⁰.

Once the unfortunate demise of North Vietnam has been denounced by means of media tools, the American students took the project to a new level, raising a wave of protests all around the country through gathering in campuses to be heard. Grasping that the government turned a deaf ear to their requirements ultimately encouraged them to implement additional anti-war objections, this time much more violent, in the immediate aftermath of U.S blowing up of North Vietnam. The whole protests coordinated at Stanford University are an example of pacifist method that has been left out giving way to force and wildness. In harmony with The New York Times, at Stanford, “the students tossed rocks after the police used their clubs”¹⁵. From what has been highlighted in the article, we deduce that things started to sour to the point where a tense confrontation blasted between police service and students.

To continue on the same topic, it is imperative to touch upon the role executed by the young hippies throughout the period of peace appeal. In the matter of their political care, the hippies had developed “strongest feelings for the Vietnam War” doing this “in many ways including musical shows, pacifist folk songs and through peaceful sit-ins”¹¹. The same idea has been shared by Maura Eileen (2009) in her essay, “What was the Role of the Hippie in American Culture?”, in supporting the view that “a large portion of hippies protested against the United States of America involvement in Vietnam because they did not agree with the actions their government took”¹². Eileen continuously stands by maintaining that “The hippies



A tall hippie wearing peace symbols on his pant at a demonstration protesting the war in Vietnam, San Francisco, California, late 1960s. Credit: Harold Adler/Underwood Archives/Getty Images¹⁴

highlighted the importance of making your government responsible for its choices and decisions by reiterating the importance of protests”¹³. The leading idea surrounding the previous arguments by Eileen is crucially based on the notion that by organizing anti-war protests time and time again, the hippie society expected to turn the spotlight on the government in terms of its political responsibilities and face facts, cherishing the hope of making it aware of both its political and military faults.

3.2. The Case of the Veterans:

As it has already been said in the first chapter, in March 29, 1973, the American troops detached from Vietnam. Soldiers, after coming back home, felt marked deep inside their guts by their terrible experience in Southeast Asia, as they found themselves with a heavy heart and a troubled conscience, having no choice but to shoulder the burden of the war that haunted their spirits and continues to weigh on the American memory until today. Historian Tom Valentine (2014) points the fact that unlike the American soldiers who fought during WWII, who were warmly welcome, Vietnam veterans were “mistreated” and people rallied against them¹⁶. From this starting point, we infer that instead of being thankful for their military services and endangering their lives for the security of the American nation, the veterans were coldly welcomed by the U.S citizens for having been held responsible for the mass slaughter.

The brutality of the events is still enshrined in veterans’ minds. Also, the positive image that they used to retain of their so-called idyllic government, which blinded them all the way, began to fall away forthwith after realizing the U.S political tyranny that was its typical feature. Accordingly, they developed a sense of shame and humiliation because looked upon as puppets being able to get manipulated by the government to its wish. Nevertheless, it would be contradictory to treat the veterans’ subject without going into the large part of them

who “came home wounded or amputated”¹⁷. As a prelude to their torment through which they went in Vietnam, the veterans carried physical disabilities mirroring the hardships of the guerilla warfare. This eventually acted as a curtain-raiser to other real dilemmas, which are nothing but mental handicaps.

Similarly then, the veterans appeared in a poor light as they have not been spared by uncommon lasting effects due to the far-reaching terror in Vietnam. This is the prevalent view embraced by Josh Hochgesang, Tracye Lawyer, and Toby Stevenson (1999) in an article, “The Psychological Effects of the Vietnam War”, implying that “upon the veterans' return to the states, many exhibited significant psychiatric symptoms” and that “these ranged from difficulty sleeping to vivid flashbacks, and are now recognized as *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*”¹⁸. From this, it may be understood that besides the physical sufferings due to the fierce battle between the two opposing sides, the troops carried acute damaging effects on their psyche that manifested under various mental disorders.

For the veterans, the U.S executive's intentions in becoming embedded in the war goes beyond their thirst for breaking off the Communist system. Accordingly, it may be judged that its motives revolve around its intense desire to take over the world because of its lust for power. Not only were they let down by their supposed venerable government, but they were also badly treated by the citizenry once at home. Feeling doubly punished and diminished at the highest level, this drove them into a spiral and pushed them, in turn, to revolt in their own way in the hope of clearing their names. One prominent example of this rebellion against the American system resides in the “Dewey Canyon III” demonstration, a nonviolent anti-war protest shaped on April 19, 1971 by Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), in which manifold figurative acts have been done so they can put into words their frustration that kept tormenting them day and night. On April 23, the veterans came to the decision to throw their

“awards, medals, ribbons, commendations and many other materials” on the Capitol to symbolize their emphatic refusal of the fighting empty of all moral reasoning¹⁹.

3.3.Important Figures Disapproving the War:

3.2.1. Muhammad Ali (1942-2016):

Muhammad Ali is probably an outstanding figure in boxing and an undisputed heavyweight champion that the world has never known. In 1966, he was drafted to fight in the Vietnam War within the American military ranks. However, he refused to fight against the innocent Vietnamese. In 1967, Muhammed Ali has been contacted for admission, yet he refuses to belong to the American army leading to his condemnation. In March 1967, the U.S Supreme Court called Ali for judgment and the latter declared:

Why should they ask me to put a uniform and go ten thousand miles from home and drop bombs and bullets on brown people in Vietnam while so-called Negro people in Louisville are treated like dogs and denied simple human rights? No I am not going ten thousand miles from home to help murder and burn another poor nation simply to continue the domination of white slave masters of the darker people the world over²⁰.

“Fans on every continent adored him, and at one point he was the probably the most recognizable man on the planet”²¹. So, Ali was an influential man. Via his ideas and strong beliefs, he contributed to the anti-war movement and argued that the U.S intrusion in Vietnam was not just. For him, if it was a matter of saving lives of Vietnamese, he would be the first one to engage in the war. Throughout his speeches and political opinions, Muhammed Ali expressed freely his categorical opposition to the Vietnam War by explaining that:

The real enemy of my people is right here. I will not disagree with my religion, my people or myself by becoming a tool to enslave those who are fighting for their own justice, freedom and equality... If I thought the war was going to bring freedom and equality to 22 million of my people they wouldn't have to draft me, I'd join tomorrow. But I either have to obey the laws of the land or the laws of the Allah. I have nothing to lose by standing up for my beliefs. So I'll go to jail. We've been in jail for four hundred years²².

3.3.2. Martin Luther King(1929-1968):

Martin Luther King's anti-war position emerged for the first time in March 1965 by saying that "millions of dollars can be spent every day to hold troops in South Viet Nam and our country cannot protect the rights of Negroes in Selma"²³. In his famous speech referred to as "A Time Break Silence", Luther King presents the three reasons that pushed him to stand against the Vietnam War. The reasons are: wars against the poor, the selective death rate of the war, commitment to non-violence²⁴. As a man of peace, he took this opportunity to express his peaceful tenets by saying:

I am convinced that it is one of the most unjust wars that have ever been fought in the history of the world. Our involvement in the war in Vietnam has torn up the Geneva Accord. It has strengthened the military-industrial complex; it has strengthened the forces of reaction in our nation. It has put us against the self-determination of a vast majority of the Vietnamese people, and put us in the position of protecting a corrupt regime that is stacked against the poor²⁵

3.4. The U.S. Downfall:

Americans entered the war optimistic that they could sustain democracy in the falling of the South and contain Communism, but North Vietnamese or the communists achieved their goals of reuniting the whole Vietnam and winning total independence. South Vietnam under the American support lost the war. "The US was (and is) the most powerful economic and military force in the world. Their no. 1 position is maintained by the intervention into countries they deem 'hostile to US interests'. But superpower status has not always brought victory"²⁶. The Vietnam War is still a debatable subject, and when analyzing the Vietnam War, we can say that the reasons behind the American defeat over the Vietcong are divided into external and internal reasons.

3.4.1. The External Reasons of the U.S Downfall:

External reasons deal with the circumstances on which the war was fought in Vietnam and the different factors that influenced the U.S soldiers and the Vietnamese such as the American brutal tactics commonly known as Operation Trail Dust in 1962, Strategic Hamlets in 1962, Operation Rolling Thunder in 1968, and Search and destroy mission.

3.4.1.1. Operations Trail Dust/Ranch Hand (1962-1971):

These Operations consist of using chemical products; such as Napalm and Agent Orange aiming at destroying South Vietnam's rural zones. "From 1962 to 1971 the air force performed aerial spraying missions over South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, under an operation known as Ranch Hand. The idea was to defoliate jungle areas—along the Ho Chi Minh Trail--thus depriving communist insurgents of cover and to destroy crops that would sustain the enemy"²⁷. This tactic seemed very useful for the Americans, since it helped them exterminate the Vietcong in a short period of time. Americans ignored that the herbicidal war program is first against nature, and second against humanity. The chemical tactics awakened the consciences of the Vietnamese protesting against "the various herbicides used, each had a color name, such as Agent Purple, Blue, White, Orange or Pink"²⁸. The use of herbicides caused many health problems, as Vietnamese were exposed to the horrors of the toxic products and illnesses. Jeanne Mirer and Marjorie Cohn explain that:

The Vietnamese, who were the intended victims of this spraying, experienced the most intense, horrible impact on human health and environmental devastation. Second and third generations of children, born to parents exposed during the war and in areas of heavy spraying hot spots, suffer unspeakable deformities that medical authorities attribute to the dioxin in Agent Orange²⁹.

3.4.1.2. Strategic Hamlets (1962- 1963):

In order to avoid the communist entrance to the South, the U.S and South Vietnam supported the Hamlet Program proposed by Sir Robert Thompson in 1961. “Strategic Hamlets were special villages, which had barbed wire or bamboo fence surrounding the hamlet to keep it away from Vietcong”³⁰. In 1962, South Vietnam government, under Ngo Dinh Diem policy, started the program execution with the financing and advice of the U.S. The aim of Strategic Hamlet was to isolate South Vietnamese from the influence of the Viet Cong or the National Liberation Front (N.L.F). In 1963, President Ngo Dinh Diem has been overthrown, and the program has been cancelled. Consequently, peasants moved back into their old homes, causing the failure of the Strategic Hamlet Program. According to Thomas Ladenburg, the Hamlet Program failed because of the peasants who refused to live in the hamlets governed by unpopular and misleading village chiefs. Additionally, the special villages were sometimes far from the peasants’ places of work, and the social helps promised by the U.S were not given³¹.

3.4.1.3. Operation Rolling Thunder 1965- 1968:

“Operation Rolling Thunder was a frequently interrupted bombing campaign that began on 24 February 1965 and lasted until the end of October 1968, the longest aerial--bombardment campaign in the history of American air power”³². According to Tom Valentine, on August 7, 1964, the U.S Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and enabled the American military forces to use power in South Vietnam without a war declaration. In 1965, President Johnson allowed the bombardment operation against North Vietnam’s industrial bases and transportation systems. The purpose of the campaign was to

isolate the North from the South to stop any supplies given to the South and to put more pressure on North Vietnamese pushing them to accept diplomatic solution³³.

3.4.1.4. Search and Destroy Missions:

Search and Destroy Missions refer to a military strategy followed during the Vietnam War. It generally aimed to search the enemies and destroy them. The U.S. soldiers locate the Vietcong units in the villages, then they kill them³⁴. According to Alan Rohn,

Search and Destroy or Seek and Destroy (S&D) was an integral part of General William Westmoreland's strategy to destroy the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War. Westmoreland was convinced that attrition warfare, which required wearing Down the Viet Cong's personnel and materiel until they lost either the capacity to continue their military effort or their will to fight, against the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army³⁵.

Rohn explains that Search and Destroy strategy was to weaken and discourage the Viet Cong. However, it costed lives of many American soldiers, who were acting brutally towards North Vietnamese Army. The strategy did not play in the favor of the Americans in the sense that it made the mission of winning hearts and minds of the Vietnamese harder or impossible³⁶.

3.4.2. The Internal Reasons for the U.S Downfall:

As mentioned earlier, thanks to print and visual media, the brutalities of the Vietnam War were shown to the Americans leading to the anti-war movement that became more powerful throughout the course of the war. The movement was principally created by the students clamoring for the American withdrawal from Vietnam and expressing the emergency to stop the injustice committed on Vietnam³⁷. The anti-war movement grew into an unstoppable force pressuring American leaders to reconsider its commitment in Vietnam. Famous leaders all around the world contributed to the anti-war sentiment and this was shown

via television programs and newspapers, where they expressed their refusal to the American intervention in the Vietnam.

Conclusion:

Throughout the anterior part, it is now clear that the flow of news molded American people's minds efficiently as an array of protest marches rose all over the countryside, spouting bumper sticker slogans in the streets to show that the American public is not dupe. Parallel to the American civilians who took matters into their own hands, the same can be said of the veterans for whom things were all the more arduous, since they have witnessed first-hand the very casual aggressive acts of the U.S military forces to wear down North Vietnamese' willpower to pursue their fighting. Paradoxically, though the American political authority strained for years to prevail, it ultimately suffered a major setback casting doubt upon its military potency and calling its pride into question. This failure in particular, and the Vietnam War as a single unit, have been somewhat deciphered later through providing a look back at the underside of this all-out war, and bringing to the fore both the internal and external reasons why the Americans did not thrive.

Endnot

¹Suzana Hodbod'ova, "The Vietnam War, Public Opinion and American Culture,"(Diploma Thesis, Masaryk University Brno, 2008): 43,

URL:https://is.muni.cz/th/96666/pedf_m/Vietnam_War.pdf

²"On November 15, 1969, more than 500,000 protestors flooded into Washington, D.C., for the Moratorium March—one of the largest anti-war demonstrations in U.S. history," Vintage Every day: 30 Color Photographs of Anti-Vietnam War Protests in the U.S from the 1960s-70s, April 9, 2015, <http://www.vintag.es/2015/04/30-color-photographs-of-anti-vietnam.html>

³ Joan Herbers, “250,000 War Protesters Stage Peaceful Rally In Washington; Militants Stir Clashes Later,” *New York Times*, November 15, 1969, URL:

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/1115.html#article>

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶ **Richard Halloran, “7,000 Arrested in Capital War Protest; 150 Are Hurt as Clashes Disrupt Traffic,”** *New York Times*, May 4, 1971, URL:

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0503.html>

⁷“Arrest of Vietnam War protesters, May 1971,” Vintage Every day: 30 Color Photographs of Anti-Vietnam War Protests in the U.S from the 1960s-70s, April 9, 2015,

<http://www.vintag.es/2015/04/30-color-photographs-of-anti-vietnam.html>

⁸**Richard Halloran, “7,000 Arrested in Capital War Protest; 150 Are Hurt as Clashes Disrupt Traffic,”** *New York Times*, May 4, 1971, URL:

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⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹D.N, “The Hippie Movement,” (Special Field, 2003): 7. Accessed July 6, 2017, URL:

<http://www.fundus.org/pdf.asp?ID=12004>

¹²Maura Eileen, “What was the role of the hippie in American culture?” (2004): 1-2. Last updated August 29, 2009, URL: <http://www.bhsclof70.org/essay2004.pdf>*

¹³Ibid, 2.

¹⁴ Harold Adler, “A tall hippie wearing peace symbols on his pant at a demonstration protesting the war in Vietnam, San Francisco, California, late 1960s,” Getty Images, January 1, 1968, URL: <http://www.gettyimages.ca/detail/news-photo/tall-hippie-wearing-peace-symbols-on-his-pants-at-a-news-photo/586958321#tall-hippie-wearing-peace-symbols-on-his-pants-at-a-demonstration-picture-id586958321>

¹⁵ Martin Arnold, “Campus Protests on War Continue,” *New York Times*, April 22, 1972, URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/1972/04/22/archives/campus-protests-on-war-continue-some-violence-occurs-but-most.html>

¹⁶ Tom Valentine, “Vietnam War Veterans,” The Vietnam War, April 7, 2014. From: <http://thevietnamwar.info/vietnam-war-veterans/>

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸ Josh Hochgesang, Tracye Lawyer, and Toby Stevenson, “The Psychological Effects of the Vietnam War,” Ethics of Development in a Global Environment (EDGE) War & Peace: Media and War, Updated July 26, 1999, URL: https://web.stanford.edu/class/e297c/war_peace/media/hpsych.html

¹⁹“The Throwing of the Medals: Operation Dewey Canyon III Historical Protest Project,” A History of Protest, October 14, 2016, Accessed on July 27, 2017, <https://publish.illinois.edu/samalthaus/2016/10/14/the-throwing-of-the-medals-operation-dewey-canyon-iii-historical-protest-project/>

²⁰Aaron Kasel, “Muhammad Ali Refuses to Fight in Vietnam War,” January 4, 2016, URL: <https://wearechange.org/muhammad-ali-refuses-fight-vietnam-1967/>

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³ Peter Dreier, “Fifty Years After King’s Famous Anti-War Speech, America Is Again Debating Guns Versus Butter,” Common Dreams, April 4, 2017, URL: <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2017/04/04/fifty-years-after-kings-famous-anti-war-speech-america-again-debating-guns-versus#>

²⁴Laura Carlsen, “Martin Luther King’s Reasons for Opposing the Viet Nam War Apply to Drug War Today,” January 1, 2016, URL: <https://www.alainet.org/en/articulo/174823>

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶ James Ferns, “Why did the US Lose the War in Vietnam,” International Socialist Group, August 2, 2012, URL: www.internationalsocialist.org.uk

²⁷“Ranch Hand in Vietnam,” Air Force Magazine, October, (2013):58, URL: <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Magazine%20Documents/2013/October%202013/1013vietnam.pdf>

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Jeanne Mirer and Marjorie Cohn, “The Toxic Effects of Agent Orange Persist 51 Years After the Vietnam War,” August 7, 2012, URL: <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/10729-the-toxic-effects-of-agent-orange-persist-51-years-after>

³⁰Kenny Rogers, “Strategic Hamlet Program,” VIETNAM WAR, November 6, 2014, URL: <https://thevietnamwar.info/strategic-hamlet-program/>

³¹Thomas Ladenburg, “Fighting Against Guerrillas: The Strategic Hamlet Program,” (2007):14, URL: http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/teachers/lesson_plans/pdfs/unit12_4.pdf

³²John Pike, “Operation Rolling Thunder,” May 30, 2016, URL: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/rolling_thunder.htm

³³Tom Valentine, “Operation Rolling Thunder,” January 4, 2014, URL: <https://thevietnamwar.info/operation-rolling-thunder/>

³⁴Alan Rohn, “Why did Search and Destroy fail in Vietnam,” VIETNAM WAR, May 2, 2016, URL: <https://thevietnamwar.info/why-search-destroy-failed-vietnam/>

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Mark Barringer, “The Anti-War Movement in the United States,” Modern American Poetry, 1998, URL: <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/vietnam/antiwar.html>

General Conclusion:

On the basis of the preceding analysis of the Vietnam War, it can be inferred that the war is, in point of fact, a crucial chapter in both Vietnam and American history, anchoring plenty painful visual memories of that era with all its gory details. To recapitulate, Communism was a highly-priority target for the U.S Command. To bring its Machiavellian plan to fruition, the American government shaped the war to convince the public of its benevolence in respect to North Vietnamese and that they are acting in good faith, luring everyone on the other side of the Pacific. On that sense, with a very specific purpose, which was to assist the Vietnamese people being bruised by the American burdensome methods, the two prodigious Vietnam Communist partners, namely Russia and China scrambled for North Vietnam and formally stood up to the global military superpower that is, the U.S, by equipping the North with cosmopolitan armament.

To lift the veil on the entire American tactics to bring the war to a successful conclusion, we found it appropriate to revive the debate within the sphere of the American propaganda serving one purpose, which is the upgrade of a positive impression with regard to the American people who were acutely under its sway at that period of time. To put it rather simplistically, the White House turned to be the chief controller of what should appear on television. However, the bursting of the truth was inescapable regarding the progress of the warfare. All the way through our dissertation with its warts and all, we have tried to show how the factual images being given away by the reporters on the spot, played a moderating role in prevailing upon both the American civilians and the military that their government's entrance in Vietnam was a thoroughgoing miscarriage with reference to the sequential furtive and ubiquitous raids perpetrated all over the Vietnam area. From then on, it was no longer a matter of prestige for the U.S public, but it was about humanity and common sense. With the

benefit of hindsight, we were set to question ourselves whether the war was worth it when glancing at all its draconian measures taken by the American government.

Being exceedingly filled with anger after their government bypassed the laws in the name of Communism, the alleged American supporters of the U.S policy in Vietnam became its opponents in the aftermath of the war, giving themselves the green light to consider anti-war massive rallies to cope with a stoical government that used inhuman means to daunt the enemy. From this, fairly appears the efficiency of the U.S media in playing an intermediary role between the events and world in general. With reference to the veterans whose name was dragged through the mud, and were hard-pressed to position themselves in the American society after joining their homeland, they also showed solidarity with Vietnamese after being dubious about the legality of the U.S intervention in Vietnam. Consequently, they pitched their overall awards as a general outcry to fast track the pull-out of the entire American servicemen from the war zone, and help North Vietnamese who were under the force of the U.S blows, escape the spiral of violence and achieve the long-awaited peace.

Our research corroborates the assumptions that U.S involvement in the Vietnam affair was a buffoonery and utterly groundless. Moreover, the war is still stuck in the American minds for having received a chaotic outcome, and makes a huge debate to the present day. Getting back to the subject of the public opinion, in succession to the lost of the government of its people's appeal, it did not stand any hope of winning the war, since the public opinion is substantial to rejoice over a victory. However, we definitely cannot say with certainty that the public recourse to demonstrations had systematically led to the U.S withdrawal from Vietnam, and thus, its repulse. The reason is that citizens cannot force their government to pull back, although they put pressure on it by uttering threats if that government is sharply convinced to win the war. The important factor that needs to be appreciated is the fact that the American authority that is often dubbed as jingoistic lost the war. By "jingoism", we hint at

any nation (here the U.S.) that nourishes a feverish tangle of self-confidence and an outsize ego to the point of believing to be superior and the savior of the world.

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