

The stereotypical gender roles in the film are not surprising as we tend to see such traditional and conservative understanding in many cultures, particularly but not limited to Asia. Vietnamese women are described as obedient individuals and they themselves characterize obedience as a “virtue” and a way of life. Interestingly, despite the outstanding role of the Vietnamese women during the liberation of the country and many sacrifices they faced including venturing their lives, when peace comes back to the country, they just happily returned back to their traditional living by taking care of husband, kids, and house matters.

I think the gender of the authority plays a vital role in understanding the implications for who is given the authority. Following many emotional pictures from the documentary, it was striking but frankly ungrateful to see the men of Vietnam turning their backs again to the women and considering public leadership as if the natural function and right of the men. As seen through the end of the film, when it comes to make decisions at the discretion of women following an election of a woman at a senior position -as in the case of Vice President Binh- better conditions from the stand point of economic, political, and social rights could be provided for female population. We have seen from the film that, notwithstanding suffering economy and all the insufficiency, some special rights -such as maternity privileges- and a business environment of equal pay could be given for women apart from the adequately representation at every level. This, I believe, is a clear sign of the difference which could be made by women decision-makers as authority figures and an implication for society to equalize the privileges of women as with those of men.

We talk about a *technical challenge* when there is no need to change the mindset of people and an *adaptive challenge* when there is an unavoidable need to have a strong leadership in order to present the dangers and opportunities. In this stance, The Long Haired Army under the command of General Dinh performs an adaptive work because of the lucent factor that fighting with the enemy and defending the country are normally attributed as the natural duties of the men of the nation. In fact, by organizing a fighting group of peasant women who clashed

with almost 10,000 men by using primitive weapons such as arrows, Dinh executed an adaptive challenge and fulfilled a big mindset change.

All of the women figures have created a tremendous admiration in my thinking and it really is difficult to detach one from the other. Yet, Vice President Binh has been the most impressive character to me throughout the movie. The main reason is the hardship for a woman to climb the ladder to the senior level positions when it comes to the issue of statecraft following an independence battle. She became the foreign minister in provisional government, sat at the negotiation table during the peace process which ended the war, and today has become the Vice President of Vietnam.

The adaptive work faced in the form of a leadership challenge is miraculous for Vietnamese executives. Some aspects of it are well beyond their control such as the functioning of free market and globalization, as also given in the film. Economic liberalism has been a new term for Vietnam which increases the gap between rich and poor. For a traditional culture such as Vietnamese, power and money have become the dominant parameters which are the underlying factors behind the prostitution. The government officials face the consumer economy as an adaptive challenge and it is more than cruel to see the women who fought in the war for their countries' liberation by spending an enormous effort to try to survive their daughters from being prostitutes. Moreover, the Vietnamese leaders have also faced a trade embargo as another leadership challenge and struggle which has been the high price of their independence. I think the most vital adaptive work for Vietnamese senior officials is to adapt their people's economic thinking which is mostly based on agricultural production and and collectivist benefits. The challenge in shifting economic perceptions starts with the introduction of facing the international game's values, habits, practices, and priorities. As Vice President Binh notes, Vietnamese philosophy is such that there should be no obsession for power and money and the real need is to work for the good of mankind. Yet, it is sad to admit that such a noble understanding is not enough to make Vietnamese recognize the reality of consumer economy as the whole idea starts

from the individualistic thinking in economic liberalism as opposed to the collectivist traditions of this country.

I believe that in order to improve the gender inequality, the strongest tools are tolerance, freedom of speech and education. The dominant values of many Asian cultures promote the superiority of men in business, bureaucracy, diplomacy, and military since the women are still characterized as domestic figures taking care of family matters. The main value needs to be shifted in society would be that men and women, having being created as human beings no matter what their X or Y chromosomes tell, have equal rights at every stage of social, business, and academic institutions. As such, society needs to be well informed that women's cognitive, communicative, and administrative skills are no less or inferior by any means, as opposed to the claims of primitive thinkers, the worst of all academic figures, even existing in the most developed parts of the world. Whereas legislation such as affirmative action could be a handy tool, the whole idea arises, first from the truth of education and second from the attitude of leaders as determined role models.

The adaptive challenge surrounding gender issues in Turkey is not identical with the case of Vietnam; yet, many similarities exist as well. It is not surprising to see families, in mainly rural areas, first withdrawing their daughters from the school when an economic problem occurs. School enrollment ratios for boys and girls are still to the favor of the former, despite the improvements mainly in the last decade. In political sense, Turkish Parliament and past cabinets are far away from reflecting a numeric equilibrium in representative or senior positions. "Equal pay for the equal job" has been still an ideal, rather than a practical term based on the fact that the negotiation power of women is still low mainly in business settings. After all, the biggest similarity would be the belief that women are seen as an aide or a companion of the man, which is based on the idea of a complementary role.