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Comparison Essay

From the past, no, even until this very moment, genocide is everywhere, sometimes even closer than you imagined it would be. There is no escaping it, there’s no escaping the nature of men who seeks for power, seeks for domination over others. But, although these genocides have been exterminating races all over the world, there are quite a number of survivors. You would think that these survivors are alive merely because of luck. Well it’s not exactly wrong to think that way, since there are many survivor that survived out of luck, but here I will be discussing about two survivor that survived not just by luck, both survivor of two biggest genocides in human history, The Holocaust and The Rwandan Genocide.

Elie Wiesel, this winner of the nobel peace prize, the writer of Night and 28 other books is actually a Holocaust survivor, a survivor of Auschwitz, the biggest, most ruthless, most evil Jewish concentration camp ever existed. His bestseller book, *Night*, was written based on his experiences in the concentration camp.

Now, Elie’s only concern at that time is his and his dad’s survival, nothing else. This has created a passion within him, the energy to not die, to be with his father until his last breath. This is the only reason he could be free from the concentration camp, and live his life to the fullest. He was lucky his father died in his last days in the concentration camp, because if the Holocaust were to continue any longer, I believe he would not make it, since the only thing that is keeping his spirits up that whole time is gone.

Violette, a Rwandan Genocide survivor, has a completely different story. She, like every other Tutsi during that period of time, 1994, was desperate to find a safe place to live. This genocide is not the first one, and based on experiences they had at the first genocide, they took refugee in churches, because the priests protected them from the killers. But this time, the Hutus knew they would once more hide in churches, so they threatened the priests to help them kill the Tutsis. The Tutsis didn’t know about this, so they hid in the churches. The priests were told to gather as many Tutsis as possible, and then the Hutus would come and kill them all in one blow.

Violette hid in one of the churches near her house, knowing nothing about the priests being threatened by the Hutus. She was there with her two sons and husband. Then suddenly, the Hutus barged in and bullets start flying everywhere. Violette has to witness her own husband being brutally murdered. Fortunately, Violette is smart enough to camouflage them between the dead bodies by spraying blood all over her face and body. Luckily, the Hutus didn’t realize this and they were saved.

Violette is able to expand her business from harvesting grain from other people’s lands to a full-fledged business of making sorghum (their local grain)-based drinks (<http://www.womenforwomen.org/global-initiatives-helping-women/stories-women-rwanda.php> ). She was able to rise from her seemingly messed up life, to become what she is now. I admired her, because if I am in her place, I’m not sure I will have the will to continue my life, after losing my husband and experiencing a near death experience. She is a tough woman, who is saved from the genocide by her own ability, if she couldn’t figure out how to hide from the Hutus at that time, it was over for her.

So basically, there have been a lot of people survived because of many different reasons, some of them are merely lucky, some of them is tough enough to survive. I honestly cannot imagine myself in front of the circumstances they are facing at that time. If I am put in a concentration camp, without any of my family beside my father, or watching my own neighbors killing each other, or watching my wife being murdered, I would not survive any more than 3 weeks. I would be crumbling down by then, crushed by the fact that I am alone, that death can approach me anytime, anywhere. I, from the bottom of my heart, respect Elie. He’s more or less my age when he’s in the concentration camp, and with the physical and mental abilities I possess now, I would commit suicide in the train, crumbling from the pressure, giving up all hope even before reaching Auschwitz. The same goes with Violette. If you ask me to live through the Rwandan genocide, I would at least need a friend, no, a lot of friends, Hutu friends, for example to make me a fake ID that says that I am a Hutu, or to give me shelter until the genocide ends, to let me hide in his/her house, so that I would have a better chance to survive. If I lack even one of these things, I would be killed by the Hutus, like many other Tutsis.

Bibliography

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