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Deanna Middlestetter

10/9/10

History of Vietnam

Instructor Joe Escbar

Assignment # 1

Tran Thi Gung (Part #1)

("I was stuck in a tunnel for seven days ")

This story caught my attention for the fact that the story is about a woman named Ginger. This is unusual for that time period and I found it interesting and somehow inspiring due to her age at the time and her reasons for the action she took. She is recalling events that took place during the Vietnam War. As a young woman she experienced the murder of her father by the "Puppet Soldiers". She vowed that she would have revenge for her father's death and so at the young age of seventeen, she joined the Guerrillas. Ginger goes on to say that she lived in an area of, "poverty and deprivation", and that the people there were continually, "brutalized by the police and puppet soldiers." (pg 16) She explains that she felt that she was helping her country and her people by fighting against the Americans. At one point she said, "I killed so many GI's I was awarded a decoration with the title, "Valiant Destroyer of American Infantry Men". (pg 17) She then goes on to explain some strategies they used and also some weaponry.

I believe that her story is a reliable source. As she tells her story from her point of view she gives her reasons for her quest. As a young woman she is traumatized by the death of her father and outraged by what is happening to her people.

I feel like trauma many times makes events so clear in our mind it is as if it happened just yesterday or it sometimes has the opposite effect and we block it out completely. I believe her description is factual and objective perhaps she is a bit biased but aren't we all for one reason or another? As for the time that has passed, I don't think that any amount of time that passes for this particular woman

will cause her to forget this part of her life.

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Luyen Nguyen (part #2)

"She divorced her second husband and waited for me"

This story was one of the most disappointing one for me to read. This is because of the unfair treatment the man in the story and his team of student commandos received. Luyen Nguyen was told basically that these commandos were above the law and could do whatever they wanted. This to me obviously creates tyranny. I do not see how you can execute justice without a set of strict rules and ethics. It is disappointing to see that their motivation was money and not the cause that was at hand. It was frustrating to read about how this man, Luyen Nguyen, tried to instill some moral standing in these young inexperienced men but was ridiculed and ignored for this. He and the young men were captured by the enemy. When asked why they fought they said because they needed money and said the Americans were trying to take over the country. One of the saddest things about those statements is that these young men's cause for fighting was themselves. They believed this was a good investment in their own freedom unable to see the bigger picture.

The unfortunate twist of this story is that the man who tried to help them understand what they were actually doing there was captured and repeatedly tortured for twenty one years. He lost his life not his mortality, but was left for dead.

A positive part of this story is that even in these brutal and horrifying circumstances this man stayed loyal to what he believed, who he loved, and showed true character and courage in the face of his enemies in a time that they and everyone expected him to turn his back on it all. He was eventually released and reunited with his family. He is a true hero, blessing, and inspiration to anyone who will and has read this story. I have no doubt that he inspired many of his captors who with disbelief watched this loyal and courageous man.

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